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# NEWSLETTER

February/2017

## JUVENILE DETENTION ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE — JDAI

# Black History Month

### Honoring Black History Month at Dakota County

Black History month is a time to reflect on the dedication, commitment and sacrifices of African American leaders who paved the way for equality and justice. The month is usually decorated with tributes in remembrance of iconic figures such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Malcom X, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglas, and more. We acknowledge their contributions to the betterment of the country and to the lives of people of color.

Dakota County honors Black History Month by posting civil rights facts and suggested readings for employees on the Dakota County internal website. Various departments also host events in celebration of those who have paved the way for future generations. This year, Dakota County’s Community Corrections Diversity and Inclusion Committee will be hosting a viewing of the documentary “13th”. The film explores the history of the criminal justice system and highlights the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which outlawed slavery. The film shows the impact the 13th Amendment has had on mass incarceration.

The Dakota County Juvenile Service Center (JSC) also honors Black History Month each year. “It is particularly important to the young people with whom we work” says JSC Superintendent Matt Bauer, “55% of residents of the secured facility are Black/African American, as are about 30% of youth on probation. To motivate change and provide hope with these youth, it helps to be able to point to heroes.” During February at the secured facility, you will see students on the JSC campus researching significant African Americans and their contributions, making presentation to peers, parents, and staff, receiving a person-of-the-day handout on an important African American each morning, and creating posters with pictures and famous quotes of historical figures in Black History to be showcased in the living areas.

Another event taking place at the Dakota County New Chance Day Treatment Program is the Annual Black History Month Luncheon. Students in the New Chance program will also create and make presentations on African American individuals who have made important contributions to our country. “It is important to recognize and honor those who came before us who made contributions to our great country in hopes that we live and prosper from their struggles and sacrifices,” says New Chance Assistant Probation Officer Tony Hunter. After the celebration, New Chance will host a traditional African American meal, which consists of fried chicken, greens, corn bread, and macaroni and cheese. Family members and Dakota County Community Corrections staff are all invited to the event. The New Chance Program will also be taking the students to the Stepping Stone Theater in St. Paul to see the play “Ruby! The Story of Ruby Bridges.”



MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

“If we don’t stand up for children, then we don’t stand for much.”



BECAUSE OF THEM, WE CAN...

# BECAUSE OF THEM WE CAN



MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE

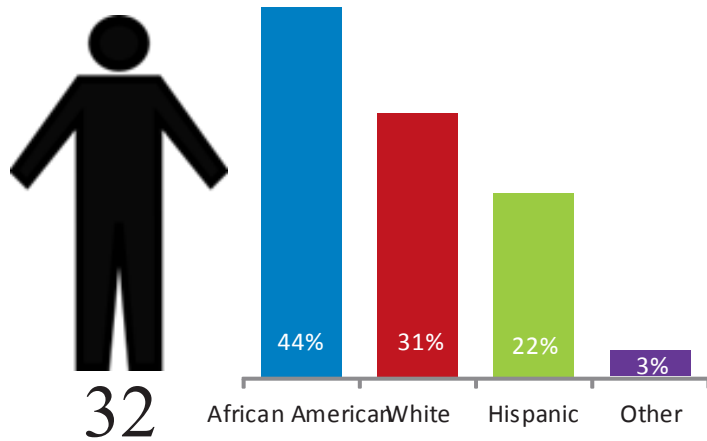
“We have a powerful potential in our youth, and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power toward good ends.”



BECAUSE OF HER, I CAN...

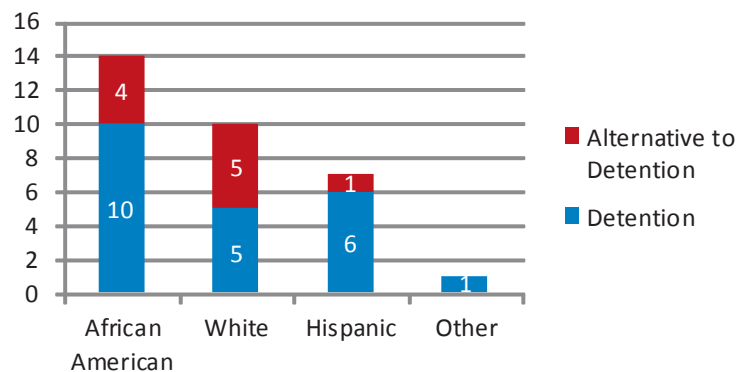
# Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI): January Screening Results

Dakota County's Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI) is the product of collaboration between Community Corrections, local law enforcement, the County Attorney's Office, and public defenders. According to Minnesota state law, secure detention can only be used between the time of arrest and first court appearance if a juvenile is a risk to public safety, and/or at risk of failing to appear for his/her first court hearing. The RAI uses objective criteria to determine a juvenile's risk level. Juveniles who pose low levels of risk are released to their families. Those who pose moderate risks may be sent to detention alternatives such as a shelter or foster care, while juveniles who pose the highest risks are held in secure detention at the JSC. RAI results may be overridden under certain circumstances by a judge or a JSC supervisor.

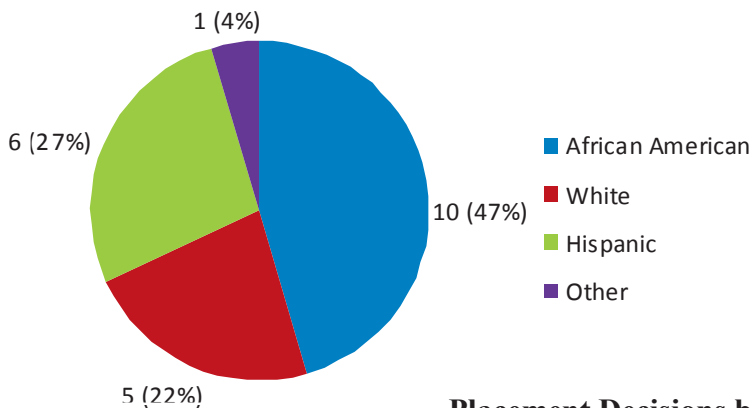


Total Number of youth RAI'd in January

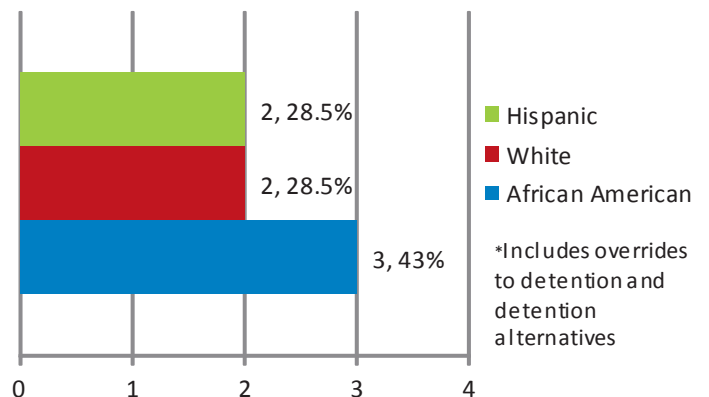
## Youth RAI'd by JSC Action



## Youth Detained by Race



## Youth Overrides



\*Includes overrides to detention and detention alternatives

## Placement Decisions by

Outcome	White	Black	Hispanic	Am. Indian	Asian	Other	Total
Released to ATD*	5	4	1	0	0	0	10
Shelter	5	3	1	0	0	0	9
GPS	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
House Arrest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Released to Parent/Guardian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Held in Secure Detention	5	10	6	0	0	1	22
Total	10	14	7	0	0	1	32

\* Alternative to Detention

## Tackling Racial Disparities in Dakota County

Reducing racial and ethnic disparities, particularly for black youth, has been the prominent focus of a number of organizations both nationally and in individual states. Despite the efforts by many, black youth are disproportionately over-represented in the juvenile justice system and the disparities grow as youth move deeper into the system.

### Dakota County Data:

The most recent Census data reports Black youth (ages 10-19) made up a little less than 6% of Dakota County's Population. Despite this percentage,

- Black youth (ages 10-19) made up 41.7% of all youth who came in contact with the Juvenile Service Center (JSC)
- Black youth (ages 10-19) made up 42.2% of youth detained
- 69% of black youth (ages 10-19) brought into the JSC were detained

### Dakota County's Approach

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, initiatives to reduce disparities are often required at the local level. In Dakota County, the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative's (JDAI) established the Eliminating Racial Disparities (ERD) Committee to address issues of disproportionate minority contact. The goals of the ERD Committee are to monitor and assess the Dakota County juvenile justice system to identify racial disparities and work to develop strategies to address and reduce the same. This is accomplished through evaluating data and ongoing decision point analysis to identify what racial disparities exist at which critical points within our system. These points include, but are not limited to, referrals and admissions to the Juvenile Service Center (JSC), use of detention alternatives, arrests and charging in communities and schools, and court process and probation practices.

The Dakota County JDAI ERD Committee is comprised of stakeholders throughout Dakota County, including the Dakota County Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, Dakota County Community Corrections, Dakota County Social Services, and community partners. Stakeholders collaborate on various efforts to ensure all youth entering the Dakota County juvenile justice system receive adequate services and equitable opportunities.

One of the collaborations between Dakota County stakeholders and JDAI is the Disorderly Conduct (DOC) Youth Accountability Program (YAP) offered by the Dakota County Attorney's Office. The DOC YAP was created in 2013 by the County Attorney's Office and provides a cost effective alternative to court for juveniles involved in disorderly conduct offenses. The DOC diversion program aims to prevent all youth from entering the juvenile justice system, but has a significant impact on youth of color. There has been 195 youth referred to the program since 2014. Of the 195 referred, 142 or 73% have successfully completed the program. The remaining 27% of youth were referred to court for either failing to complete the program or electing to have the matter addressed in court.

Engaging youth and communities is also crucial to the ERD Committee in determining what impacts the justice system has on youth of color and more specifically black youth. The ERD Committee commits to providing a venue for community members and youth to participate in discussion, analysis, and decision making surrounding this topic. Community members are invited to participate in monthly ERD meetings, focus groups, and advisory committees.

Eliminating racial disparities and reducing disproportionate minority contact continues to be at the forefront of county, state, and national efforts. Dakota County JDAI continues to look for ways in which to support Black communities, families, and youth.



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