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JUVENILE DETENTION ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE — JDAI



KASSERIAN INGERA
HOW ARE THE CHILDREN?

In the Maasai Tribe of Northern Kenya and Southern Tanzania, it is tradition for people to greet one another by shaking hands and asking, “How are the children?” This significant greeting keeps the Maassai tribe’s highest value present to its people—the well-being of their children. In the same tradition, the answer is always given, “The children are well.” The response ‘The children are well’ means the Maassai people acknowledge and take seriously their responsibility to care for, provide for, and protect their young.

Since 2008, Dakota County’s Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) was, and continues to be, a vehicle in which to ask the question, “How are the children?” - encouraging justice system stakeholders to make the well-being of the youth its priority. The work within the JDAI addresses this question from multiple angles by asking, “How are the children in our communities, schools, homes, and within our system?” Through dialogue, conferences, presentations, and programming, the Initiative keeps these important questions present in front of its stakeholders and community members. Not only does JDAI present the question of, “How are the children?” but, through programming such as the Juvenile Advisory Council, community coaches, family and community engagement, and community focus groups, the Initiative works toward providing the answer, “The children are well.”

(continued on pg. 3)

389
YOUTH
Total Admissions in Dakota
County Facility in 2015

“CHILDREN
ARE THE MOST
IMPORTANT
ASPECT IN
A COUNTRY.”

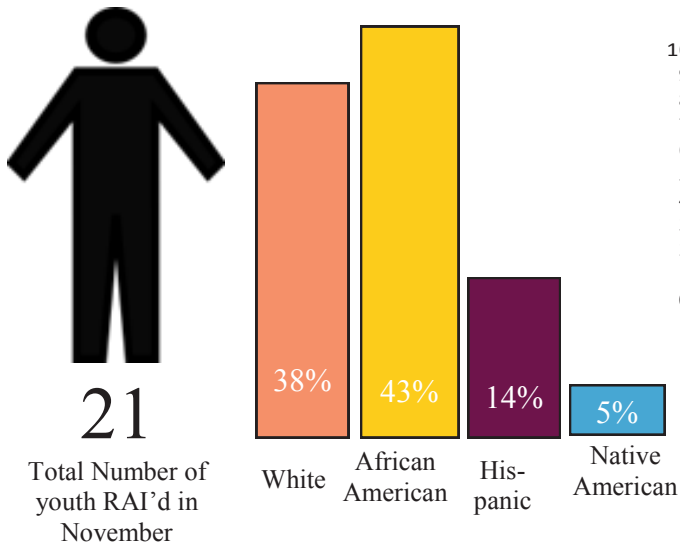
— NELSON MANDELA

48%
Of Admissions in Dakota County
Facility in 2015 were

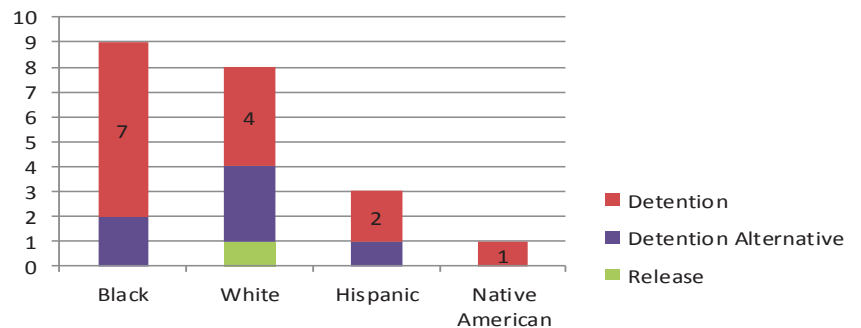
**YOUTH OF
COLOR**

Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI): November 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 circum-

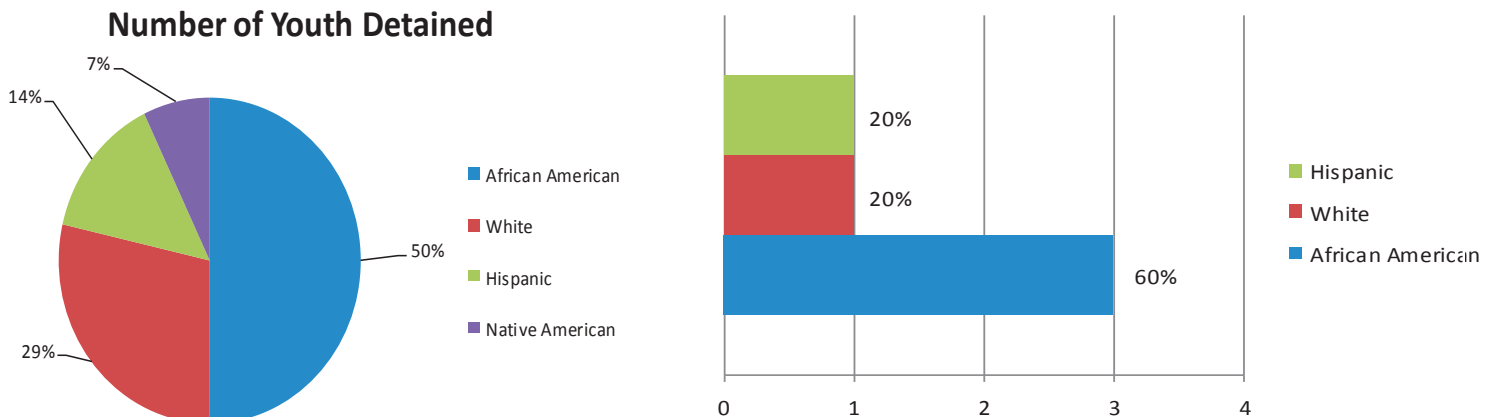


Youth RAI'd by JSC Action



- *Of the 9 African American youth RAI'd, 78% were detained
- *Of the 8 White youth RAI'd, 50% were detained
- *Of the 3 Hispanic youth RAI'd, 66% were detained
- *Of the Native American youth RAI'd, 100% were detained

Overrides to Detention



Placement Decisions by Race: 2016 Year to Date

Outcome	White	Black	Hispanic	Am. Indian	Asian	Other	Total
Released to ATD*	30	27	7	0	0	0	64
Shelter	24	23	5	0	0	0	52
GPS	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
House Arrest	4	4	2	0	0	0	10
Released to Parent/Guardian	7	8	2	0	0	0	17
Held in Secure Detention	75	82	28	4	3	3	195
Total	112	117	37	4	3	3	276

* Alternative to Detention

HOW ARE THE CHILDREN? *(continued from pg. 1)*

In order to maintain momentum, JDAI approaches 2017 with a focused work plan. The Initiative plans to continue the work of fostering relationships within community partners and schools as well as strengthening partnerships with key stakeholders. Three areas of focus for the beginning of 2017 will be: community engagement, law enforcement engagement, and data analysis in support of reducing out of home placements and improving probation practice.

Community Engagement — JDAI values the voice and response of its community members and believes that community involvement in decision-making is one of the most important ways to improve outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system. Having the voices of the families and communities as part of the case planning and service development is known to have beneficial outcomes for youth. JDAI and Community Corrections staff plan to engage communities through presentations on the work of JDAI, partnering with churches and community organizations to collaborate on services for youth and families, as well as facilitating focus groups to generate ideas.

Law Enforcement Engagement — Disorderly Conducts (DOC) referrals from schools, typically for fighting, figure into how a portion of youth enter the justice system. JDAI is working with the Dakota County Attorney's Office to facilitate the DOC Diversion Program in an attempt to keep those involved in relatively low level offenses out of the system. In furtherance of this initiative, JDAI plans to work with school resource officers (SROs) and administrators to analyze data and discuss concerns, policies, protocols, and practices related to behaviors that typically lead to DOC citations. The goal is to find solutions that benefit the youth and schools alike. The Initiative is also working to engage community members in finding strategies to make the Diversion Program more appealing to youth of color, thereby increasing the portion of these youth who successfully complete it.

Probation Practice Improvement and Reduction of Out of Home Placements Based on Data Analysis — The JDAI Deep End Initiative asks systems to use data to examine racial and ethnic disparities at important decision points. For example, Community Corrections is taking a close look at override rates — that is juveniles whose RAI scores indicate release or detention alternative but who are actually detained at the JSC. Another decision point that staff are paying close attention to is probation violations and practices — that is when a youth is not complying to the terms of his/her probation conditions, a probation officer decides when, or if, he/she should issue a violation of probation. JDAI plans to continue these efforts and work toward implementing policies and practices to reduce the number of overrides to out of home placements and probation violations.

With a proliferant work plan in hand and eager staff, JDAI continues forward with the important work of presenting, "How are the children?" and implementing programing and providing services that will provide the answer, "The children are well."

For more information on JDAI please contact:

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