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October/2016



JUVENILE DETENTION ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE — JDAI

JUVENILE ENGAGEMENT



Every year, nearly 30,000 Minnesota youth under the age of 18 stay in some type of out-of-home placement (Wilder Research Center, 2003). These out-of-home placements could be in a publicly supervised treatment program, a foster care home, a correctional facility, or a shelter. According to the National Juvenile Justice Network (2007), “youth are the population most directly affected by the juvenile justice system and yet, all too frequently, those who aim to improve the system fail to involve young people meaningfully in the process”.

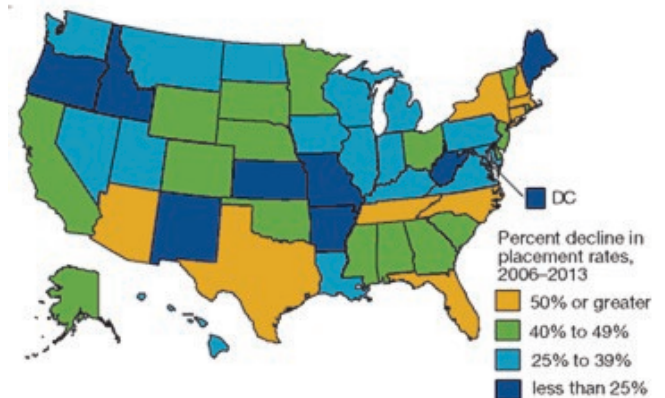
There is rising concern that the complex nature of the justice system makes it nearly impossible for the wider community, particularly youth, to have a voice in how decisions the impact court-involved youth are made. According to the National Collaboration for Youth (2007), engaging youth in juvenile justice reform allows these individuals to experience greater self-efficacy, connectedness, and feelings of responsibility for the well-being of their communities. By providing youth with the opportunity to be meaningfully involved, they can contribute to significant institutional and systemic reform.

Dakota County has a history of engaging youth in the community through the Juvenile Advisory Council (JAC). The group has an overarching assignment of using experiences with probation and the courts to identify barriers to success, and to develop and implement strategies to reduce those barriers. JDAI is working to restart the JAC groups within the community as well as in the Juvenile Service Center (JSC) and New Chance Day Treatment Program. Tony Hunter, a New Chance Assistant Probation Officer, expressed his excitement about the JAC program. “I have a lot of ideas for proceeding and I know the youth in New Chance will be excited to have the opportunity to contribute to the programming.”

For more information about the JAC program, contact Charlene Forbes at charlene.forbes@co.dakota.mn.us.

DID YOU KNOW?

Juvenile placement rates declined in every state from 2006 to 2013; nine states cut their rates by one-half or more.



Data source: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

A NEW APPROACH TO SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

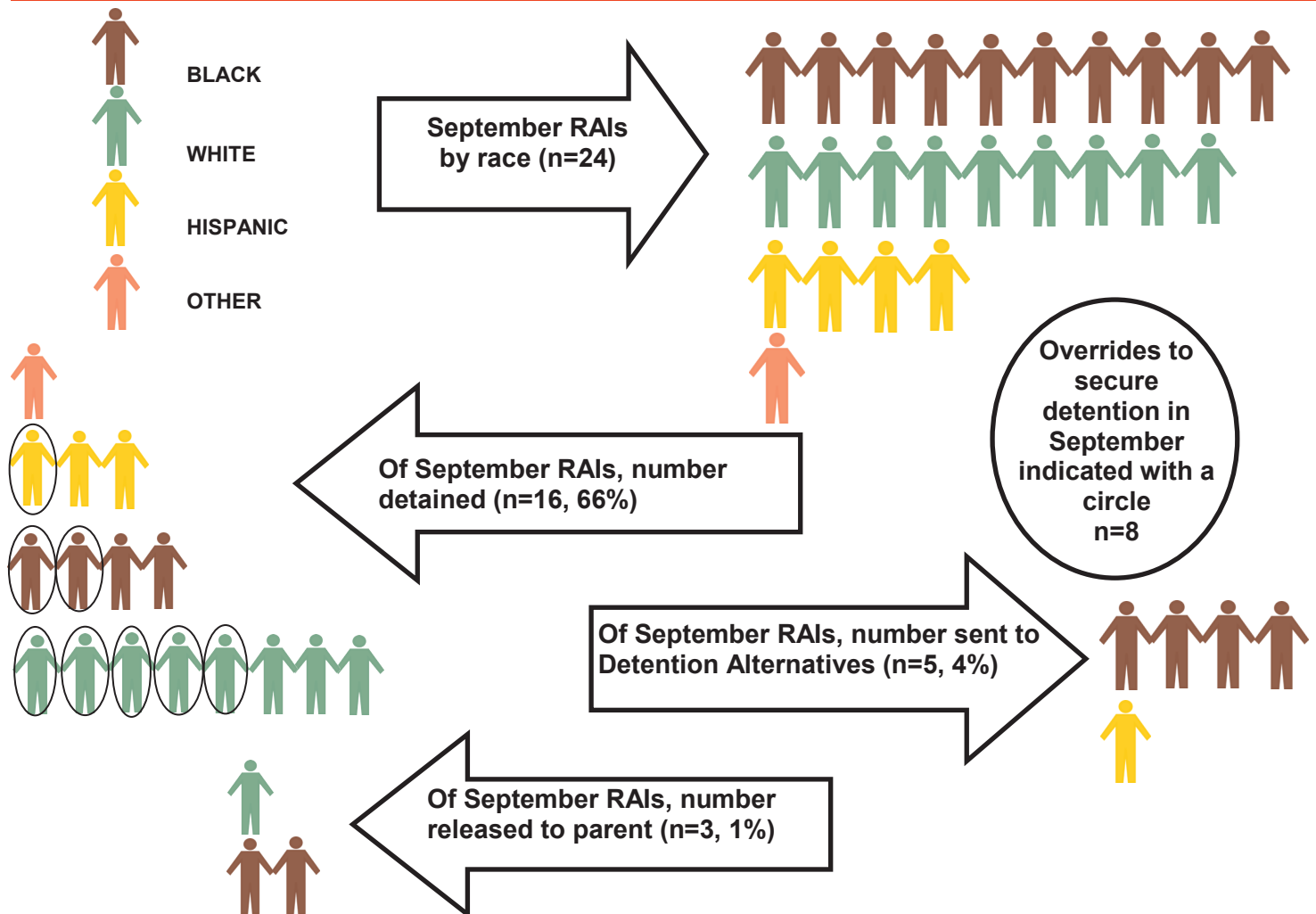
Robert W. Coleman Elementary School in Baltimore has decided to take a different approach to discipline — it is offering students meditation. Instead of suspending students or sending them to detention when they act out, this school has created a safe space where students can go to calm down and re-center. Meditation has been used in various ways for thousands of years. Studies have shown that meditation reduces stress, anxiety, and depression, improves concentration, memory and attention, increases happiness, and improves overall health (Huffington Post, 2014).

Robert W. Coleman Elementary School has reported that since it started allowing students to use meditation rooms, suspension decreased to zero in 2015 and 2016 to date. A nearby school, Patterson Park High School, which has also implemented meditation rooms, has seen a similar decrease in suspension as well as an increase in attendance.

For the full article, visit www.upworthy.com/this-school-replaced-detention-with-meditation-the-results-are-stunning

Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI): September 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.



Placement Decisions by Race: 2016 Year to Date

| Outcome | White | Black | Hispanic | Am. Indian | Asian | Other | Total |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|----------|------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Released to ATD* | 24 | 23 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 52 |
| Shelter | 19 | 19 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 41 |
| GPS | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| House Arrest | 3 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| Released to Parent/Guardian | 5 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 |
| Held in Secure Detention | 61 | 65 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 153 |
| Total | 90 | 96 | 25 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 220 |

* Alternative to Detention

JDAI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The JDAI Executive Committee met on September 14, 2016. The members heard updates on several JDAI and Deep End efforts, including:

- **Deep End Site Visit:** An update was given on the recommendations from the Deep End site visit. Recommendations from the Annie E. Casey Foundation are pending the completion of processing data collected throughout the year. However, the Foundation did give preliminary insight into next steps. Some of the next steps include:
 - ✦ Looking into the proximity of the Juvenile Service Center to court—does the ease of access contribute to placements there?
 - ✦ Evaluate length of stay for short term programs
 - ✦ Evaluate the use of discretionary weekends
- **Deep End Convening:** The Deep End Convening will be held October 25-27, 2016 in Columbus, Ohio. Dakota County will have a delegation of 13 participants. Participants plans to meet prior to attending the Convening and will meet regularly as a working group after returning.
- **JDAI:** Members were updated on the workgroups for the ERD committee meeting. There will be a Law Enforcement Group, SRO/School Group, and Community Engagement Group.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2016, in the JSC Training Room, noon - 1:00pm.

ELIMINATING RACIAL DISPARITIES COMMITTEE

The JDAI ERD Committee met on September 22, 2016. The members heard updates on several JDAI and Deep End efforts, including:

- **Disorderly Conduct (DOC) Diversion Data:** Phil Prokopowicz of the Dakota County Attorney's Office presented information about the DOC Diversion Program. Committee members were given a brief description of the Youth Accountability Program (YAP—the DOC Diversion Program is one of these) guidelines and participation assessment instrument, and described data from the 2015-16 school year Priority Prosecution in School (PPS) data. Members discussed the challenges posed by the DOC statute which allows myriad interpretations of the statute across districts and even among schools within a district.
- **Work Groups:** Committee members discussed ways to simultaneously streamline and jump start work groups to make progress on ERD goals. Group decided on a Law Enforcement/SRO/School Engagement Work Group and a Community Engagement Group.
- **ERD Meetings Moving Forward:** Committee members discussed that in order to work in the individual workgroups, the ERD committee will meet once a quarter. Members suggested and agreed that the subcommittee workgroups will rotate meeting during the other two months.

The next ERD Committee meeting is scheduled for November 24, 2016, in the JSC Training Room, noon - 1:30pm.

For more information on JDAI please contact:

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