

Santa Cruz County Probation Department

Juvenile
Probation
Division
Annual
Report

2016

The Juvenile Probation Division is responsible for the intake, investigation, pre and post adjudication services (which include alternatives to detention programs and community supervision), placement, and prevention of out of home placement for juveniles referred to the Probation Department.

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Introduction: The Santa Cruz County Probation Department, Juvenile Probation Division is responsible for the intake, investigation, pre and post adjudication services which include alternatives to detention programs and community supervision, out-of-home placement, and prevention of out of home placement for juveniles referred to the Probation Department. The Juvenile Division incorporates a system of care model that consists of six essential values when working with juveniles and their families. The six values are family preservation, interagency collaboration, utilizing the least restrictive setting, family involvement, natural setting and cultural competency.

Goals: The Juvenile Division is committed to ensuring public safety through the reduction of recidivism by increasing the life skills and competencies of the youth and families we serve. The Juvenile Division accomplishes this by adhering to the Principles of Risk, Need and Responsivity which focuses on key supervision strategies including evidenced based supervision, family engagement, decreasing criminogenic risk factors, increasing protective factors, utilizing alternatives to detention, and providing services/interventions and programs that increase critical thinking skills. Probation has strategically and successfully partnered with community stakeholders to support the Juvenile Divisions efforts to provide comprehensive and culturally responsive supervision and services that the court, court partners, and community rely on to enhance community safety.

The Juvenile Division has adopted the following evidenced based or best practices for community supervision to meet our objectives of reducing recidivism, reducing victimization, increasing life skills and family engagement.

Key Strategies	Supervision	Methods	How we are implementing strategies ...
1. Use empirically-based assessment to guide decisions.		Use of Risk Based Supervision: matching dosage with risk/needs.	Utilization of risk/needs assessments and reassessment: <u>Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS)</u> . ¹
2. Family Engagement.		Placement Screening Committee and Family meetings.	Youth/Family participate in planning meetings to contribute to program determination/case planning and commitment from identified team members.
3. Focus on skill enhancement and reduction of criminogenic risk factors		Effective use of supervision practices and tools.	Utilization of <u>Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS)</u> ; ² <u>Aggression Replacement Training (ART)</u> .
4. Increasing protective factors.		Increasing youth/family understanding of needs, and mental health diagnosis; engaging support, services and prosocial activities.	Specialized caseload assignments: FUERTE-application of <u>Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)</u> and <u>WRAP-Family Engagement</u> . Provide education to access community services, treatment and pro-social activities. Aztecas soccer program
5. Utilizing alternatives to detention.		Offering appropriate programs to youth in lieu of detention such as Home Supervision, EMP Evening Center and OASIS program	Utilizing the Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI) at the Intake level to assess the risk to reoffend and/or appear for court hearings pending adjudication
6. Redirect antisocial thinking and behaviors		Application of graduated responses	Use of Rewards/Incentives; utilization of Violation Response Grid.

¹ The JAIS identifies the underlying reason for criminal behavior and classifies offenders into supervision strategy groups, giving officers the techniques that are most likely to be successful in managing each offender.

² The EPICS model targets higher risk offenders and their criminogenic needs using cognitive-behavioral interventions and core correctional practices, and provides the structure for officers to identify high-risk thinking and anti-social attitudes that lead to criminal behavior.

Executive Summary

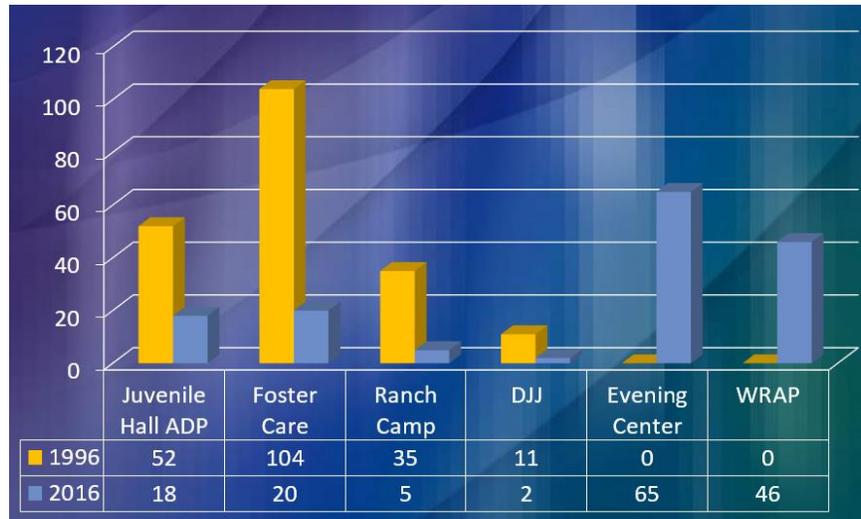
In 2016, the focus of the Juvenile Division was on solidifying the use of evidence based practices by implementing Risk Based Supervision and JAIS Assessment and Case Plan as a supervision strategy. By re-assigning caseloads based on risk levels and regularly re-assessing risk levels, the Division is able to focus intensive levels of supervision to youth assessed with moderate and high level risk factors. Additionally, through treatment/intervention matching, the Division ensures dosage is appropriate for the assigned caseloads and does not “net widen” by increasing engagement with youth assessed with lower risk factors.

In keeping with research-based and effective supervision practices, the Juvenile Division continues to implement and sustain key caseload types with 14 Deputy Probation Officer’s supervised by 4 Deputy Probation Officer III’s.

The summary table below outlines caseload types and ratios in the Juvenile Division:

Caseload Type	Caseload Ratios	County Area Served
General Supervision	30:1	North and South
Community Accountability Program (CAP)	20:1	North and South
Community Service/School	10:1	South
Santa Cruz PD	18:1	North
Wraparound	8:1	North and South
Out-of- Home Placement	20:1	North and South
Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction (MIOCR)	10:1	North and South
Title II Delinquency and Prevention (PODER)	10:1	South

The chart below illustrates how the local use of alternatives and community based intensive programs such as wraparound and the evening center have helped keep probation youth placed in their homes rather than in costly out-of-home placements and commitment facilities. The use of intensive local programs that utilize evidence based practices (EBP) have proven to be effective in rehabilitating youth and families and results in significant cost savings.



Placement alternatives will have a greater significance moving forward as a result of the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) Report that was provided to the state legislature in January of 2015. The report was part of a comprehensive two year effort by CDSS to outline a process to eliminate group homes as we know them today. Starting in 2017, use of congregate care/foster care placements will decrease dramatically. Instead, youth ordered into placement will be placed in short term residential treatment programs (STRTP) with a strong emphasis on mental health services so that the youth can successfully transition back to lower levels of care. Efforts will also focus on increasing placement of youth in local foster homes. Local efforts are underway to respond appropriately to these changes through cooperation between the Human Services Division (HSD), Probation and Health Service Agency (HSA).

It should be noted that during 2016, the Juvenile Division was very actively involved in a number of meetings with county agencies and community stakeholders. In addition to attending various meetings and working on a variety of workgroups the Probation Department also co-chairs the County CCR Steering Committee with Child and Family Services. Much of the work done in 2016 focused on identifying the changes required by the CCR and becoming more informed on those changes. It is anticipated that 2017 will transition from gathering information and discussing roles and responsibilities to actual CCR implementation. The three main areas to be targeted during the implementation phase will include decreasing long-term use of group homes, expanding capacity of home-based family care, and identifying and meeting children’s medical, emotional/behavioral, developmental and educational needs.

In 2016, the Juvenile Division continued to administer the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS) by initiating use of the JAIS Case Plan. In addition to determining a youth’s level of risk to reoffend, the JAIS has three goals:

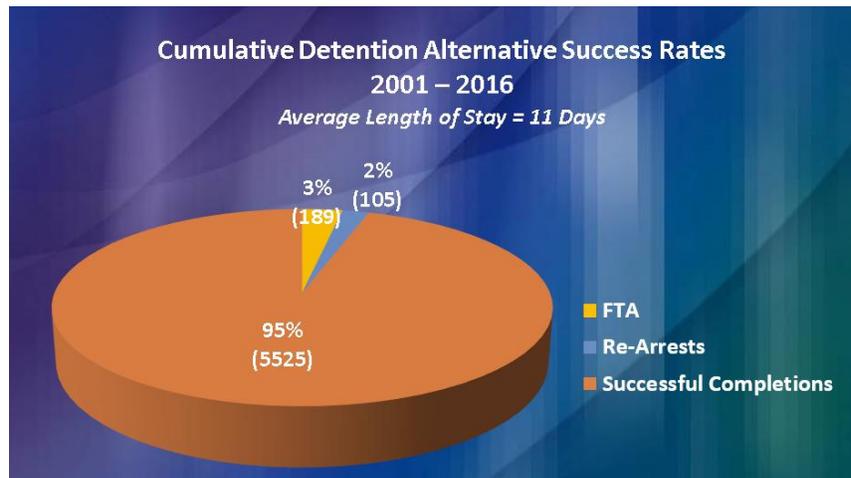
- To help probation officers quickly establish appropriate supervision strategies based on youth strengths and needs, anticipated behaviors and attitudes, and the reasons for behaviors and attitudes;
- To provide probation officers with effective strategies for dealing with problems behaviors before they escalate into law violations;
- To reduce recidivism in the community (which was 12% in 2016)³.

³ Recidivism is defined as any youth receiving a subsequent adjudication while under probation supervision.

Supervisors and division managers are monitoring administration of the instrument for inter-rater reliability a result of which is a reflection of 97% of all cases with an initial assessment of moderate and high risk having received a full JAIS assessment. Additionally, the JAIS assessment is now being reflected in court reports and in case staffing presentations.

Detention Alternatives Outcome Data

The Juvenile Division continues to be a leader in juvenile justice system reform by utilizing alternatives to detention when appropriate. The following chart illustrates the use of alternatives to detention upon contact with the juvenile system. Between 2001 and 2016, nearly 95% of all youth that were placed in an alternative to detention program made their next court appearance and did not recidivate pending court.



The decision to focus on reducing juvenile detention has been a commitment of the Juvenile Division since 1999, when the Probation Department became a model site for the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). The initiative seeks to eliminate unnecessary use of secure detention; utilize data-driven decision making; improve court processing; develop risk-based detention criteria; increase the use of community-based detention alternatives; improve conditions of confinement; reduce disproportionate minority confinement, and address inequities and needs of special populations. In 2016, the Probation Department hosted six site visits representing five different states and the Annie E. Casey Foundation Youth Council.

This initiative has also had a positive impact on the average daily population (ADP) of the Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall. As can be seen in the following chart, in 1997, the ADP was 47 youth in detention. In 2016, the ADP was 18. This represents a tremendous decrease of 62% and with the use of our detention risk assessment instrument we are able to safely avert the unnecessary detention of low risk youth.



As can be seen from the next table, the use of alternatives to detention programming has increased slightly and during this time the overall number of referrals to the Juvenile Division has remained constant. This would suggest the continued use of alternatives to detention has allowed us to maintain a low ADP in Juvenile hall while maintaining community safety.

Referrals	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Diversion and Informal Contracts	369	243	261	409	362	180
Home Supervision	146	131	121	81	92	61
Electronic Monitoring	173	182	193	166	205	140
Average Monthly Supervision Total	478	445	468	391	386	347
Court Reports Completed	110	96	54	62	60	53

Since 2001, when Proposition 21 was passed, there has been a trend that has resulted in increasing length of stay for youth. While the length of stay remains relatively low when compared to other jurisdictions, the local impact of youth transferred to adult court as direct files has resulted in an increase in length of stay for youth in detention in Santa Cruz County. In 2016, six new youth were booked into juvenile hall and charged as adults. While going through adult court these youth are held in juvenile hall until their 18th birthday at which time they are transferred to the county jail.



The number of referrals to the Juvenile Division decreased in 2016. At the same time, the average daily population in the Juvenile Hall also decreased from an average of 20 youth to 18 youth. However, the average length of stay in Juvenile Hall increased to 21 days which is higher than it was from one year ago when it was 17 days. This may be a direct result of youth having direct file cases and possibly committing more serious offenses. Proposition 57, which repeals Proposition 21, was passed in November 2016 and allows for juvenile court judges to determine if youth accused of committing 707(b) W&I crimes should be tried in adult court and receive adult sentences. Our county has 12 youth (some now adults) who had been direct filed on and not yet sentenced, who are now having a transfer report completed on them. A transfer report (formerly known as a fitness report) will address five criteria for the court to consider prior to making a determination if the youth should be found fit or un-fit for juvenile court. It is anticipated this process as described above will increase the days of detention a youth will serve in juvenile hall and may also increase commitments to the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).

Juvenile Division Grant Projects and Programs

In 2015, we received five competitive grants which increased the number of resources and partnerships to focus on specific juvenile populations. The combined efforts of the grant projects is to improve practices that address the needs of youth who are at higher risk of serious delinquent behavior or who are in need of additional services that can prevent overreliance on the juvenile justice system. In 2016, we received additional grant funding to enhance our evidence-based training project from 2015. Outlined below is a summary of the current grant projects the Juvenile Division is involved with and working with community partners to enhance services to youth:

- Evidence-Based Practices Training Project:**
 The Santa Cruz County Probation Department (SCCPD) in an effort to reduce recidivism will integrate Trauma Informed Care Practices (TICP) in juvenile justice and probation case planning trainings, and implementation of TICP with system partners in order to complete the efforts accomplished through the 2015 grant award. The SCCPD will integrate trauma informed screening into the Juvenile Assessment and Interventions Systems (JAIS), a validated risk and needs assessment tool utilized with youth in the juvenile justice system. Integration of trauma informed and trauma specific lens will decrease chances of re-traumatization, will assist in the identification of traumatized youth in a non-threatening manner, assist families in identifying coping strategies, and allow for appropriate case planning. The initial trainings will begin in the summer of 2017 and will focus on 62 system partner participants.

- **Mentally Ill Offenders Crime Reduction (MIOCR) Grant Project:**

The Familias Unidas En Respecto, Tranquilidad y Esperanza (FUERTE) project addresses the youth and family's therapeutic needs and criminogenic risks in order to reduce recidivism, reduce unnecessary use of detention through community-based alternatives, improve individual functioning, and increase family capacity/skills. This project is specifically geared to youth with significant unmet mental/emotional health needs and related behavioral challenges. A Mental Health Clinician, Transitional Specialist and a Probation Officer are assigned to this project. In 2016, the FUERTE project was well underway working with many youth and their families and maintained an average caseload of approximately eight youth during each of the four quarters in 2016.
- **Title II Delinquency Prevention and Intervention Grant Program:**

Santa Cruz County Probation Department's (SCCPD) Positive Outcomes through Diversion for Effective Results (PODER) project effectively collaborates with community partners to increase mental health services to youth on probation to minimize recidivism and address the overrepresentation of Latino youth in the juvenile justice system. With a three pronged approach, PODER enhances the capacity of the Luna Evening Center (EC) by providing a mental health clinician during EC programming to address the needs of youth, a drop off center for the Watsonville Police Department who have contact with probation involved youth, and a Probation Officer to address the criminogenic risk factors that led to police contact and to provide risk assessments for the Camino's Diversion Program. The PODER project has worked with many youth to date and continues to provide services to youth and their families who have participated in the EC. The mental health clinician assigned to the PODER project has established a caseload of approximately 20 youth and their families and regularly contacts the family in their home providing follow-up services to the youth and their families.
- **Supporting Male Survivors of Violence:**

Santa Cruz County Project Thrive is focused on addressing gaps in how we identify, support and serve boys and young men of color surviving exposure to direct or indirect involvement with violence. The effort is a highly collaborative effort involving numerous community based agencies in Santa Cruz County. The purpose of the project is to build community awareness of the impact of trauma and violence, enhance the capacity of county systems to implement evidence-based practices to meet survivor needs. In 2016, Project Thrive was very active in the community gathering information to guide and direct activities related to the effort. Specifically, surveys were sent to community based organizations, county partners and law enforcement to determine a baseline for trauma informed knowledge and interest in becoming more informed around issues of trauma informed care. The project also held several focus groups with youth and their families to identify gaps in services and service delivery. In the fall of 2017, Project Thrive will host a Trauma Informed Care Conference in Santa Cruz to focus on the development of a Trauma Informed System of Care.
- **Proud Parenting Program:**

The Proud Parenting grant program addresses the needs of young fathers involved in the justice system. The target population for the grant is parents between the ages of 14 and 25 who are involved in the justice system and or child welfare system. The goals of the grant are to increase parenting knowledge, improve attitudes about responsible parenting, improve self-esteem and improve relationships between parents and their children.

[The Juvenile Division continues to manage implementation and sustainability of previously awarded grants and projects:](#)

- **Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI):** Since 1999, the Probation Department has been a grant recipient and model site for the Annie E. Casey Foundation's JDAI. This initiative seeks to eliminate unnecessary use of secure detention through eight Core Strategies: Collaboration; Use of Data; Objective Decision Making; Alternative to Detention Programming; Expedited Case Processing; Special Detention Cases; Conditions of Confinement and Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities. Six site visits were hosted in 2016 with participants representing five different states and the Annie E. Casey Foundation Youth Council.
- **Disproportionate Minority Contact:** In 2007, the Probation Department was awarded a federal grant administered through the California Corrections Standard Authority (CSA) to deepen local efforts to reduce disproportionate minority contact (DMC) or racial and ethnic disparities. The Haywood Burns Institute assisted the department in performing high-level data analyses of how probation youth pass through key decision points in the juvenile justice system and help determine if decisions are equitable for all youth. Expert consultants also provided assistance integrating data elements to a data indicator template and provided reports of findings and outcomes associated with DMC reduction. A key part of the DMC work has been to engage division staff and stakeholders in the DMC work and provided them training and technical assistance. This grant reached its completion in December 2012 however, the division maintains sustainability by continuing to review and improve practices related to DMC given 73% of the Divisions probation caseloads represent youth of color.

Funding also helped with the development of a Violation of Probation Response (VOP) and Incentives Grid in 2011 which has been sustained. The VOP Grid was developed as a guide to help staff uniformly respond to technical violations prior to taking official court action. The goal of this tool is to ensure the probation officers respond in consistent ways to VOPs and that the responses/interventions match the risk and needs of each youth. There has been a 65% reduction in VOP related bookings in the juvenile hall since implementation of the grid. Incentives are also an important part of the response grid with staff using incentives to provide positive encouragement for youth to partake in positive and pro-social activities.

- **Evidence Based Practices Project (EBPP):** In 2011, Probation was awarded Evidence Based Practices Project Federal Title II Funding to participate in a systems change approach in implementing and/or expanding the use of evidence based practices (EBP) within their local juvenile justice communities. The goal of the project was to reduce recidivism of youthful offenders by providing a comprehensive and flexible funding source to probation departments that supports a systems change approach in implementing evidence based practices known to be effective in delinquency prevention. Probation has sustained the development of: 1) an EBP Quality Assurance Supervising Probation Officer III dedicated to implementing, advancing and monitoring of the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS) risk and needs assessment and other EBP interventions and; 2) the development of a collaborative re-entry program for youth returning to their communities from out-of-home placement utilizing EMP interventions. The Quality Assurance Probation Officer has been integral in reviewing and implementing the risk needs assessment and will work with supervisors and staff regarding inter-rater reliability with efforts focused on continuous quality improvements.

Aztecas Youth Soccer Academy (AYSA):

Developed in 2008, this program has grown and remains enormously popular with probation involved youth. The AYSA program has come to be recognized as an innovative intervention to reduce violence in the streets while teaching young men essential life skills in areas of leadership skills, health, civic engagement, educational achievement and how to mutually respect one another, regardless of gang affiliation. We also consider the program to be a DMC reduction strategy for several reasons. Many young Latino males enjoy the game of soccer, yet few have opportunities to participate in organized teams that offer practices and games. The Azteca team provides this resource. Latino youth comprise 70% of youth on probation. As a DMC reduction strategy, the Aztecas soccer program is helping youth engage in a healthy activity that keeps them off the streets, provides mentors as coaches and mentors as players that play side by side with them on the field and who model appropriate behaviors that teach at risk youth healthy anger management skills, which helps reduce violence and other harmful behaviors.

Community support for the Azteca's is reflected in the new non-profit partnership with Pajaro Valley Prevention Student Assistance (PVPSA) and in the ongoing annual fundraiser that features the Azteca teams playing probation and law enforcement teams. This fundraiser which also focuses on community education, began in 2012, and provides a forum that allows police and probation officers to see positive changes our youth are making in their lives and their amazing soccer skills. A by-product of the games between the Aztecas and law enforcement teams is the increased communication with police when officers are off-duty. In fact, the AYSA now has two police officers that mentor the youth.

The Aztecas also hold a one week soccer camp for youth and the first camp was held in the summer of 2015 serving 70 local youth ages 6 years old though 14 years old. The demand for enrollment was such that the following summer in 2016 the camp was expanded from one week to two weeks and in 2016, 145 local youth participated. The inaugural soccer camp added to the focus of the Aztecas Soccer Academy by including delinquency prevention. This was a win-win for all of the community.

Finally, in 2015, AYSA started another annual fundraiser, the Golden Goals. So far, in the two times it has been held, AYSA has raised over \$10,000 and brings together law enforcement, local schools, junior colleges and the business community to educate them on the program but to also give them the opportunity to speak with AYSA youth and hear about barriers to success and accomplishments. Local community businesses such as Bay Federal Credit Union, Cal Giant and Righter Farms also offer support to the Azteca's as well as community organizations such as the Freedom Lions Club, The Community Foundation and the Borina Foundation.

Results First - Juvenile Justice Benefit- Cost Analysis Model

In April of 2016, the Santa Cruz County Probation Department, Juvenile Division, initiated participation in the Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative (Results First), a project of the Pew Charitable Trusts and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Results First is working with select states and counties to implement an innovative evidenced-based policymaking approach and cost-benefit model which helps policymakers invest in policies and programs best supported by rigorous research.

The project, which is anticipated to take between 12-16 months to complete, began with a Juvenile Justice Kickoff Meeting which was an all-day meeting with the Results First team and members of the Santa Cruz County Probation Department. The goals of the project were identified to include the development of a comprehensive inventory of programs currently used in the juvenile division, collect and analyze program data, conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the division's evidence-based programs and identify ways to utilize these findings while making evidenced-based programmatic and policy decisions.

The project is nearing completion in the juvenile division and once the model is completed it will allow for a more transparent view at which programs are providing a higher degree of programming and in the most cost effective manner.