

# 2018 – 2021 Circuit 8-Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Advisory Board-3 Year Comprehensive Plan

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**Section 1: DJJ's Mission:** To increase public safety by reducing juvenile delinquency through effective prevention, intervention, and treatment services that strengthen families and turn around the lives of troubled youths.

**Mission Statement:** The Board will advise the DJJ of its priorities for Circuit 8 to increase public safety by strengthening families and increasing resources to prevent juvenile delinquency.

## **Section 2: Benchmarks**

### **Benchmark 1: Reduce Truancy:**

The Board believes truancy leads directly to delinquent/harmful behavior. Likewise, truancy contributes to school drop-out, family issues, and future negative impact on young adults. The Board believes if we can have a positive impact within each school district reducing truancy, the entire community will benefit.

### **Benchmark 2: Non-Intimate Partner Domestic Violence Awareness and Intervention**

Domestic violence is an indicator of more serious issues which left unaddressed can grow into delinquent behavior, both as an adolescent and later as an adult. The intent is to identify early signs of anger/trauma and provide effective intervention.

### **Benchmark 3: Improve Re-Entry/Transition Services:**

Youth returning from residential commitment programs are at high risk of returning to delinquent behavior and continuing with

criminal activities as adults. The Board believes this is a very specialized population and requires a specialized approach. Therefore, we will work towards improving and maintaining a small caseload ratio with specific focus in areas of school enrollment/attendance, vocational training, family, and community reintegration to facilitate recidivism reduction.

### **Section 3: SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) Analysis**

#### **Benchmark 1: Reduce Truancy:**

##### **1. Strengths:**

- Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) supportive with truancy services.
- School-to-Prison Pipeline/system of care (Alachua County Only)
- Probation sanctions to attend school.
- SNAP (Stop Now and Plan) Program (Alachua County Only)
- CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services, Inc. (CDS) Interface Youth Shelter(s)
- Productive, effective, and consistent school attendance review boards (SARB) (Alachua, Baker, Bradford only)
- Educational SNAP (One school in Alachua County only)
- Parent Academy (Alachua only)
- Parenting Classes (Baker County) Court ordered

##### **2. Weaknesses:**

- Need for non-residential CINS/FINS services in each county.
- Only 4 truancy officers in Circuit 8. (Alachua – 2; Gilchrist -1; Levy – 1)
- Lack of MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between schools and DJJ regarding truancy.
- Inconsistency amongst school principals to focus on truancy.
- Lack of leverage in Florida Statutes.
- SNAP program only available in Alachua and Levy Counties
- Lack of enforcement of probation sanctions for school attendance
- Educational SNAP (Only in one school in Alachua County)
- Lack of Parental Engagement/Empowerment

### **3. Opportunities/threats across the Circuit:**

- Increase development of the SNAP Program to all counties in the circuit.
- Increase/Expand SARB to all counties in the circuit.
- Expand/Add Mentor programs.
- Increase the number of truancy officers.
- Promote awareness of the value of education

### **4. Which areas need focus:**

- Request data for the number of youth (by grade level) with 20 or more unexcused absences to determine the extent of the truancy issue in each county
- Increase emphasis throughout the circuit regarding truancy prevention/SARB
- Obtain consistency throughout the circuit for addressing truancy issues

## 5. Additional comments:

### Benchmark 2: Non-Intimate Partner Domestic Violence Awareness and Intervention

#### 1. Strengths:

- Contract with DJJ, Florida Network and CDS for increased domestic violence respite beds.
- Follow up with CDS Family Action counselors (non-residential services) is completed to follow family after child returns home from shelter/respite care.
- Pace Center for Girls (Alachua County only)
- Positive change in law enforcement attitude towards domestic violence- ("not an automatic arrest").
- River Phoenix Center for Peace Building/Restorative Circles (Circuit-wide)
- Public Awareness of domestic violence issues.
- System of Care (Alachua County only)

#### 2. Weaknesses:

- Limited outreach/non-residential services to outlying rural counties.
- Expansion needed for SNAP Program.
- Parental participation is an ongoing challenge.
- More attention needed as to gender differences.
- Lack of parenting skills and "don't always blame the child".
- Lack of DJJ contracted trauma therapy provider

#### 3. Opportunities/Threats across the Circuit:

- Increased funding with focus on expansion outside Alachua County.
- Become more proactive as opposed to reactive.
- Expand referrals to River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding /Restorative Circles into regional counties
- Encourage DJJ to contract with trauma therapy provider(s) circuit wide
- Provide trainings/awareness programs for early intervention: domestic violence, ACEs, Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Trauma Informed Care.

**4. Which areas need focus:**

- Securing an Anger Management service provider circuit-wide
- Securing a Trauma Informed service provider for youth 12 yoa and above circuit-wide

**5. Additional comments:**

### **Benchmark 3: Improve Re-Entry/Transition Services**

#### **1. Strengths:**

- CRT (Community Re-Entry Team) process in place monthly and has multi-agency participation (Alachua County only)
- Alachua County has one designated JPO for all youth in commitment facilities.
- DJJ has a designated Re-entry Coordinator.
- Project Connect
- Career Source
- Youth Build (Alachua County only)

#### **2. Weaknesses:**

- Placement in residential commitment is often far from the family. This is problematic for visits and makes it difficult for the parents to engage in services with the child while placed in the facility.
- PCP (Post-Commitment Probation) caseloads have high recidivism rates.
- Complex re-entry cases have same treatment overlay services as probation.
- Lack of services for families of committed youth while the youth is in a DJJ program

#### **3. Opportunities/Threats across the Circuit:**

- Increased focus on education, job placement, and independent living/transitional housing.
- Youth returns to the same unstable environment that they left

**4. Which areas need focus:**

- Securing more services for families while youth is in a commitment program

**5. Additional comments:**

**Section 4: KPI's (Key Performance Indicators):**

**Benchmark 1: Reduce Truancy**

**1. Issues:**

Truancy is a key indicator to school drop-out rate, youths involved in suspensions/expulsions, and leads to delinquency.

**2. Improvements/Regressions:**

- Expand SARB circuit-wide
- Upon approval of LBR for SNAP – increase service availability

**3. Solutions:**

- Conduct data collection – obtain reports from school boards regarding the number of youth in truancy status per county (circuit-wide)
- LBR (Legislative Budget Request) to increase CINS/FINS positions and SNAP Programs
- Develop an MOU between school districts and DJJ
- LBR request for funding for increased youth/family services to address truancy

- Request school superintendents to increase truancy officer positions

#### 4. Goals (six-month increments):

1. Encourage school superintendents to grant permission and secure a plan of action to obtain requested truancy information
2. Request input at council meetings regarding truancy issues experienced within the community by schools/community members/stakeholders
3. Upon LBR request approval, encourage service providers to expand services circuit-wide to address truancy
4. Encourage School districts/DJJ to develop an MOU

Additional Comments:

### **Benchmark 2: Non-Intimate Partner Domestic Violence Awareness and Intervention**

#### 1. Issues:

Children from violent homes have higher risks of alcohol/drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, and juvenile delinquency. Being a victim of and/or witnessing non-intimate partner domestic violence is a strong predictor of juvenile delinquency, demonstration of ungovernable behaviors, absconding from home, defiant behaviors, and can contribute to adult criminality.

#### 2. Improvements/Regressions:



- Change in domestic violence policy – no longer an automatic arrest, interventions implemented in lieu of arrest when appropriate
- Increased “front end” involvement with assessment center screeners submitting referrals for youth/family services upon the youth’s initial contact with DJJ
- Designated respite care beds available for youth involved in/with domestic violence incidents

### **3. Solutions:**

- Increase data to determine specific program funding needs for prevention (SNAP) and intervention (Anger Management, Trauma Responsive) services.
- DJJ to submit an LBR to address increased funding for intervention/prevention services

### **4. Goals (six month increments):**

1. Increase data collection regarding the number of domestic violence calls/arrests circuit-wide
2. Collect data regarding the number of youth with domestic violence charges that are being referred to River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding Restorative Circles program
3. Encourage DJJ to contract with a Trauma Informed service provider circuit-wide

Additional Comments:

## **Benchmark 3: Improve Re-Entry/Transition Services**

### **1. Issues:**

The high recidivism rates lead to higher incidence of youth entering the adult system or a return to commitment establishing

the "School To Prison Pipeline". A change in approach for high risk youth is needed to facilitate improve outcomes.

## **2. Improvements/Regressions:**

- DJJ has designated JPO's for reentry youth
- Development and implementation of family re-integration model

## **3. Solutions:**

- Case management model should be specialized for re-entry youth.
- Caseload size should be no more than a 1:10 ratio of JPO to assigned youths.

## **4. Goals (six month increments):**

1. Collect data on PJO (Prolific Juvenile Offender) youth circuit-wide as well as current services provided to this specialized population.
2. Identify and reduce recidivism rates for PCP (Post-Commitment Probation) and CR (Conditional Release) youth circuit-wide.
3. Increase community (stakeholders, community partners, resource support staff) participation in CRT (Community Re-entry Team) meetings.

Additional comments:

## **Section 5: Operations Plan:**

### **Benchmark 1: Reduce Truancy**

- DJJ Board will communicate to DJJ staff the recommendations for LBR for increased CINS/FINS positions and increased SNAP Programs.
- Develop MOU with DJJ, DCF (Department of Children and Families), CINS/FINS providers, schools, law enforcement agencies, state attorney's offices and public defender's offices.
- Invite county school officials to present on truancy issues at DJJ Board meetings.
- Request for the school superintendent to increase truancy officer positions.

### **Benchmark 2: Non-Intimate Partner Domestic Violence Awareness and Intervention**

- Provide stakeholders with information about restorative circles program
- River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding to provide information circuit-wide to stakeholders regarding the available services.
- LBR for funding to prevention/intervention services
- Obtain summary of family engagement survey results from DJJ

### **Benchmark 3: Improve Re-Entry/Transition Services**

- Improve stakeholder participation in CRT meetings.
- Improve SKIPE utilization from programs during CRT meetings for youth/participants to be visually present
- Obtain summary of family engagement survey results from DJJ

## **Section 6: Executive Summary:**

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