



Pennsylvania  
**Commission on Crime  
and Delinquency**

**2025**

# **Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Plan**

*Prepared for the Honorable Josh Shapiro, Governor, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*

*By the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency's Juvenile Justice and  
Delinquency Prevention Committee*

*November 2025*

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## LETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIR

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Dear Governor Shapiro,

We are pleased to present the 2025 Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Plan. This plan has been prepared on behalf of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee (JJJPC).



During my tenure as a judge in the family division, where I primarily heard juvenile court cases, and in my prior role as a prosecutor in the Allegheny County District Attorney's office, I have seen firsthand key issues facing Pennsylvania's youth. I have seen how trauma, poverty, hunger, and housing insecurity can be root causes of youth's justice system involvement, and how creating safe spaces where young people and their families feel heard can be transformative.

I have also seen the issues facing youth-serving systems and professionals, such as the current detention crisis, chronic and acute workforce challenges, limited options for youth with complex needs, and community-based resources and programs stretched to breaking points and how all of these factors can negatively impact youth experiences once they are involved in the system.

And as a long-time member – and now chair – of Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee, I've also seen how dialogue and commitment at the state level can result in significant and sustained system-wide improvements.

This plan arrives at a meaningful moment for Pennsylvania. Thirty years have passed since Pennsylvania adopted Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ), which has long guided the Juvenile Justice System's pursuit of accountability, community protection, and the development of youth competencies. This strategic plan reaffirms our commitment to BARJ's core principles while continuing to improve our approach to meet today's needs.

A central priority throughout the planning process and a defining feature of this plan, was the intentional inclusion of youth voice. For the first time, youth with lived experiences contributed directly to the development of this plan. Their insight and candor sharpened our understanding of gaps in the system and key issues facing them and their peers. Their perspectives underscore the importance of designing a system that not only holds youth accountable but also listens to them and empowers them to succeed.

It is our hope that you can use this plan as a building block for investing vital funding and prioritizing key actions to meet this moment and address issues facing our juvenile justice system and our communities.

On behalf of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee, thank you for your ongoing leadership and support in improving the lives of Pennsylvania's youth and making our communities safe. We look forward to working with your Administration on the implementation of this plan.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "KBC Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Judge Kim Berkeley Clark  
Chair, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee

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## INTRODUCTION

Since 1978, the ***Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD)*** has supported justice system improvements, victim services and compensation, and other initiatives responsive to the needs of practitioners, communities, and the Commonwealth. In recent years, the agency has also been tasked with addressing emerging public safety issues like improving school safety, responding to the overdose and behavioral health crises, and addressing gun violence.

As Pennsylvania's justice planning and policymaking agency, PCCD brings together a wide range of people and perspectives necessary to understand the issues facing Pennsylvania's communities, identify potential solutions, and invest in effective strategies. PCCD also serves as Pennsylvania's State Administering Agency (SAA) for federal justice-related funding, administering a wide range of programs, funding streams, and initiatives aligned with our mission.

PCCD is also Pennsylvania's designated state planning agency for juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, pursuant to the requirements of the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. PCCD is required by state law to "prepare and at least once every two years update a comprehensive juvenile justice plan on behalf of the Commonwealth based on an analysis of the Commonwealth's needs and problems, including juvenile delinquency prevention."<sup>1</sup>

The agency's **[Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee \(JJJPC\)](#)** aids the Commission in this work, and is comprised of representatives from the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC), juvenile court judges, law enforcement, chief juvenile probation officers, victims' services, non-profit prevention and treatment service providers, special education specialists, youth, and other related stakeholders.

By law,<sup>2</sup> the JJJPC is tasked with:

- Advising the Commission in developing the Commonwealth's comprehensive juvenile justice and delinquency prevention plan;
- Advising the Commission on funding decisions, standards, and programs;
- Collaborating with state agencies on planning and programming related to juvenile delinquency prevention and the reduction of violence by and against youth; and
- Advising and assisting the Commission in designing and promoting comprehensive, research-based initiatives to help communities promote the positive development of children and reduce youth delinquency, violence, and risky behaviors.

## BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

The [Juvenile Act of 1972](#)<sup>3</sup> codified Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system, which is comprised of a blend of state, local, and public/private entities. Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system's statutorily defined mission is centered on the principles of Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ). This framework was formally established through Act 33 of 1995, which amended the Juvenile Act to redefine the system's focus and purpose:

***“Consistent with the protection of the public interest, to provide for children committing delinquent acts programs of supervision, care and rehabilitation which provide balanced attention to the protection of the community, the imposition of accountability for offenses committed and the development of competencies to enable children to become responsible and productive members of the community.”***

Unlike early system iterations focused on punishment and rehabilitation, Pennsylvania's BARJ mission requires that the juvenile justice system pursue three co-equal goals: 1) Community Protection, 2) Victim Restoration, and 3) Youth Redemption. After three decades - and with the adoption of Pennsylvania's **Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES)** - BARJ continues to shape statewide policy, practice, and funding decisions under the JJDC, and remains a model for states and jurisdictions across the country seeking to align juvenile justice systems with restorative principles and evidence-based practices.

### **Exhibit 1: Pennsylvania's BARJ Mission<sup>4</sup>**

<b>Balanced &amp; Restorative Justice (BARJ)</b>		
<b>Community Protection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Affirms the right of all Pennsylvanians to be safe and feel safe from crime.</li></ul>	<b>Victim Restoration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognizes that when a young person commits an offense, they harm both the individual victim(s) and the broader community, and therefore is obligated to repair that harm to the greatest extent possible.</li></ul>	<b>Youth Redemption</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reflects the belief that young people have strengths, are capable of positive change, can earn redemption, and can grow into responsible, productive members of their communities.</li></ul>

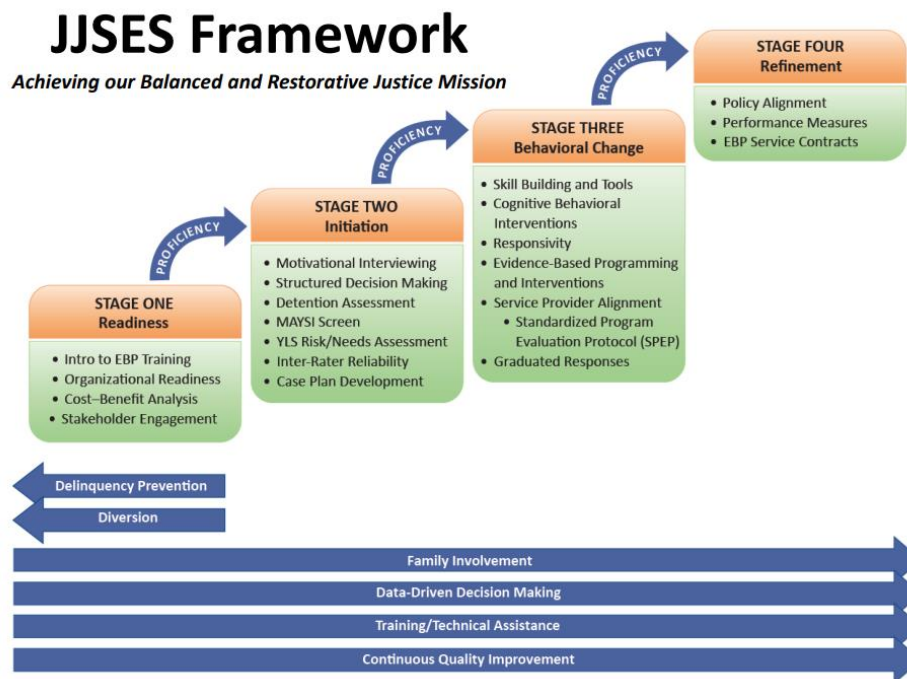
Building on its BARJ mission, Pennsylvania adopted the JJSES in 2010 to translate legal principles into consistent, systems-level practice. The JJSES framework aims to prevent delinquency, reduce the need for out-of-home placements, and improve long-term outcomes for youth, families, and communities. The JJSES is guided by a Statement of Purpose that emphasizes collaboration, evidence-based practices, and data-informed approaches:

*"We dedicate ourselves to working in partnership to enhance the capacity of Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system to achieve its balanced and restorative justice mission by:*

- *Employing evidence-based practices with fidelity at every stage of the juvenile justice process;*
- *Collecting and analyzing the data necessary to measure the results of these efforts; and with this knowledge,*
- *Striving to continuously improve the quality of our decisions, services, and programs."*

These principles - coupled with a commitment to advancing practices of family engagement, continuous quality improvement, and training/technical assistance - emphasizes that all impacted stakeholders have a role in justice - and that Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system must continually adapt and improve to fulfill its mission of community protection, victim restoration, and youth redemption. The JJSES framework and state law emphasize the importance of hearing victims' voices and supporting their needs, while also recognizing that many system-involved youth have experienced trauma and victimization themselves. This highlights the need to expand access to victim services, trauma recovery, and restorative practices that promote healing for all.

**Exhibit 2: Pennsylvania's JJSES Framework<sup>5</sup>**



In addition to state law and related frameworks, Pennsylvania's juvenile justice and delinquency prevention initiatives are also guided by the federal [Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act \(JJDP\)](#) and its 'Core Requirements':

- ***Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO)***:<sup>6</sup> Prohibits secure detention of juveniles not criminally charged within adult jails, adult lockups, juvenile detention centers, or juvenile correctional facilities.
- ***Separation of Juveniles from Adult Inmates (“Sight-and-Sound Separation”)***:<sup>7</sup> Requires that juveniles who are securely detained must be separated from adult inmates such that they do not have contact (sight or sound).
- ***Removal of Juveniles Prosecuted as Adults from Adult Facilities***:<sup>8</sup> Requires that juveniles accused of delinquent offenses may not be securely detained or confined in adult jails or lockups for more than six hours, with limited allowable exceptions (e.g., brief periods before/after a court hearing, etc.).
- ***Racial and Ethnic Disparities/Disproportionate Minority Contact***:<sup>9</sup> States must address racial and ethnic disparities within juvenile justice system contact points through the development of policy, practice, and system improvements.

## JJDPC CORE PRINCIPLES

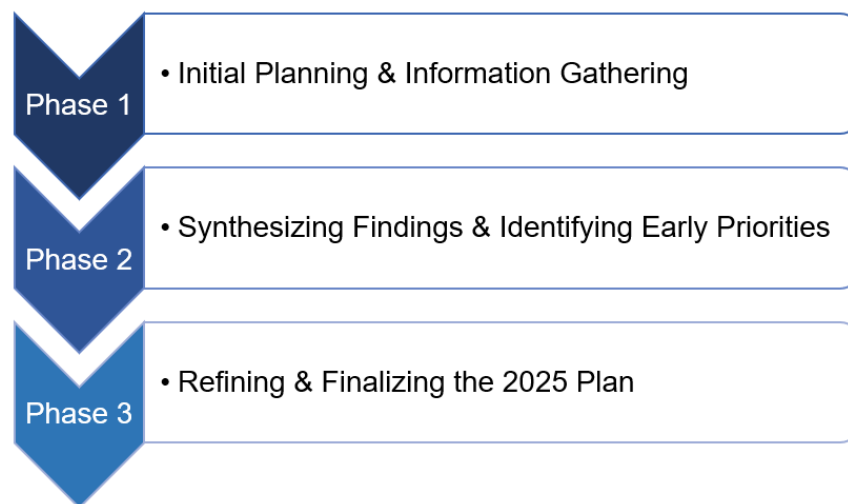
- **Balanced & Restorative Justice.** Pennsylvania's Act 33 of 1995 codified goals of balanced and restorative justice in its juvenile justice system, emphasizing the equal importance of promoting positive youth development, ensuring community safety, as well as ensuring accountability and victim restoration.
- **Accountability & Oversight.** Ensuring proper standards and practices at all levels is paramount for the well-being and rights of every youth involved in the juvenile justice system, as well as their families, victims, and communities.
- **Prevention.** Preventing delinquency is a core tenet of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee's statutory charge and is critical for improving the well-being and success of Pennsylvania's youth, families, and communities. Investing in these supports strengthens youths' protective factors while mitigating associated risk factors.
- **Engaging Youth & Families.** Engaging youth and families in discussions about the juvenile justice system and other youth-serving systems is crucial, as their firsthand experiences and insights can inform more effective and compassionate policies and practices.
- **Race Equity & Inclusion.** Achieving race equity and inclusion in Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system is essential as addressing and reducing racial and ethnic disparities ensures fairness and justice for all youth.
- **Adequate & Sustained Funding.** Adequate and sustained funding is vital to bolster effective youth-serving systems and ensuring that both juvenile justice and delinquency prevention initiatives can thrive and provide essential support for at-risk youth.
- **Policy & Legislative Reforms.** Pennsylvania has a strong track record of advancing key reforms through policy and legislation and they remain crucial for driving forward progress in juvenile justice and delinquency prevention.
- **Commitment to Data & Evidence.** Since 2011, Pennsylvania's JJSES has emphasized the importance of implementing evidence-based practices for advancing the goal of balanced and restorative justice, which requires proper data collection for comprehensive planning.

# PENNSYLVANIA'S 2025 PLANNING PROCESS

In undertaking its latest strategic planning process, PCCD and the JJDPC identified the following goals for Pennsylvania's 2025 *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Plan*:

- Provide a common understanding of key issues facing Pennsylvania's youth, communities, and the juvenile justice system.
- Acknowledge areas of strength and progress as well as opportunities for improvement.
- Take a balanced approach, seeking input from a wide range of stakeholders, including youth, families, justice practitioners, victim services, educators, and other stakeholders who are involved with and/or impacted by the juvenile justice system.
- Identify the top priorities and recommendations for the Governor's consideration that can be championed and/or accomplished through legislation or executive actions.
- Identify actions for the JJDPC to pursue over the next two years, including through its subcommittees.
- Focus on the most urgently needed actions, resources, and/or decisions and provide a clear framework that can be used by decision-makers at the state level.
- Provide a basis for measuring impact and success, including identifying opportunities for improved data sharing/collection/analysis and/or research.

As with prior strategic planning cycles, PCCD utilized a three-phased strategic planning process to inform the development of the 2025 Plan, as described below.



**Phase 1** ***Engaging Youth, Families, and System Stakeholders***

PCCD recognizes the importance of capturing feedback from our stakeholders. To that end, a comprehensive survey was developed and deployed in Phase 1 to collect input from system practitioners, youth-serving stakeholders, as well as youth and community members, to ensure the plan reflects the needs of communities the system serves. In addition, a separate survey was

released to the JJDPCC and its subcommittees to gather additional input on new and continued priorities, building on the 2023 Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Plan. These stakeholder surveys garnered significant response:

- Members of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee and Subcommittees. (48 responses)
- Juvenile Justice System Partners & Related Stakeholders (e.g., juvenile probation court services, local law enforcement, local government, community-based organizations, juvenile and family court judges, victim services, prosecutors, mental/behavioral health, etc.) (607 responses)
- Directly Impacted Individuals (e.g., youth with lived experience and family member/caretakers of youth with lived experience) (42 responses)
- Community Members (81 responses)

The external stakeholder survey was used for community members, youth, and system partners to eliminate the need for individuals to choose which survey applied to them. Survey skip logic was used to route respondents to relevant questions based on whether they were a community member, system professional, or youth/family, with all respondents asked to weigh in on what they view as the greatest system and/or community needs.

PCCD was also interested in understanding how youth and families with current or former involvement with the juvenile justice system felt about their treatment at various points of system contact, from arrest to confinement. A summary of key findings and response data is available in Appendix A.



### **Synthesizing Findings & Identifying Early Priorities**

A number of common themes and priorities emerged from PCCD’s stakeholder surveys, as shown in Exhibits 3 and 4 below.

#### **Exhibit 3: Top 5 “Biggest Issues” Facing Communities as Identified by Both System Professionals v. Youth, Families and Community Members**

<b>System Professionals</b>	<b>Youth/Families/Community Members</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Availability of community-based resources &amp; programs (48%)</b></li> <li>• <b>Alcohol &amp; Drug use offenses (46%)</b></li> <li>• <b>Responding to mental/behavioral health emergencies (43%)</b></li> <li>• Limited availability of beds (39%)</li> <li>• Social Media/Technology (e.g youth usage of social media and the internet) (39%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Alcohol &amp; Drug use offenses (58%)</b></li> <li>• <b>Responding to mental/behavioral health emergencies (47%)</b></li> <li>• Lack of referral services/awareness of services (40%)</li> <li>• <b>Availability of community-based resources &amp; programs (39%)</b></li> <li>• Poverty (39%)</li> </ul>

When asked about the biggest issues facing young people and communities today, many youth, families, and community stakeholders responding to the survey emphasized mental/behavioral health (47%) and substance use (58%). Many also pointed to the availability and accessibility of referral services (40%) and community-based resources (39%). System professionals emphasized many of the same issues as youth, families, and community members, but also raised up system issues, including availability of beds (39%) and concerns with social media or technology (39%).

**Exhibit 4: Top Areas of Need Identified by Juvenile Justice Stakeholders**

System Practitioners	Youth/Families/Community Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mental/Behavioral health care (27%)</b></li> <li>• Diversion &amp; Early intervention programs (26%)</li> <li>• <b>Access to community services and supports (25%)</b></li> <li>• <b>Adequate staffing (25%)</b></li> <li>• Access to detention and treatment beds (19%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Access to community services and supports (33%)</b></li> <li>• Building/improving trust with youth, families, community, etc. (28%)</li> <li>• <b>Mental/Behavioral health care (23%)</b></li> <li>• <b>Adequate staffing (21%)</b></li> <li>• Drug prevention, treatment, and response (21%)</li> </ul>

**Youth Engagement with JJDPC Strategic Planning Process:**

As part of its commitment to bringing youth perspectives and voices to the decision-making table, PCCD invited members of Pennsylvania’s Youth Justice Advisory Boards (YJABs) to participate in the JJDPC’s August 2025 quarterly meeting. Youth were actively engaged in the planning process through their participation in discussions on the findings of PCCD’s survey of system practitioners, youth, family, and community members. They contributed valuable feedback and recommendations informed both by the survey results and their own lived experiences.



To ensure youth perspectives were meaningfully incorporated, the second half of the JJDPC’s August meeting featured breakout sessions on the survey’s top priority areas, including mental and behavioral health, data sharing, and education. In these sessions, youth worked collaboratively with members of the JJDPC to synthesize actionable recommendations for this strategic plan.



Throughout this process, youth provided critical insight into the challenges they and their peers encounter in their communities; challenges that too often place them at risk of justice system involvement.



### ***Refining & Finalizing the 2025 Plan***

Following the JJDPC’s strategic planning session in August 2025, PCCD staff worked to further refine and synthesize potential goals, objectives, and underlying strategies to incorporate within a draft plan. In developing this plan, PCCD worked closely with state partners to assess progress on the priorities identified in the 2023 Juvenile Justice Plan. Encouragingly, the majority of the 2023 goals were either completed in part or remain actively in progress. For instance, this year the JCJC unanimously approved the statewide requirement for all counties to utilize an evidence-based intake process to include not only the Youth Level Services/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI), but also the Pennsylvania Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (PaDRAI), the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument-2 (MAYSI-2), and a Mental Health Screening Tool such as Child Trauma Screen (CTS) or the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). This requirement will take effect in July 2027, marking a major step toward standardizing intake decision-making across the Commonwealth.

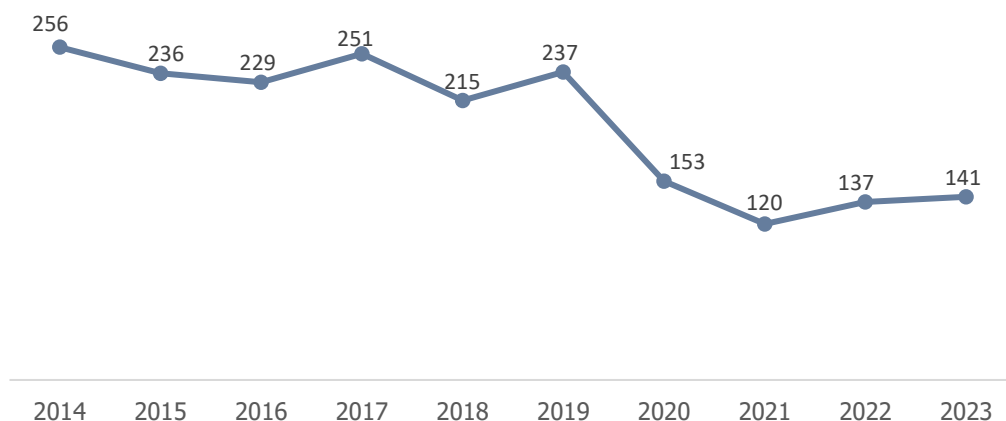
In partnership with the JCJC and the Departments of Human Services (DHS) and Education (PDE), and other state partners, PCCD revised existing goals to reflect progress already achieved and developed new priorities based on feedback from the JJDPC’s August planning session and ongoing cross-agency initiatives. For the first time, the JJDPC formally advanced its own set of recommendations and priorities to guide statewide juvenile justice reform efforts over the next two years.

As part of the drafting process, PCCD staff engaged in an extensive vetting effort. The priorities and recommendations outlined in this plan were presented to each of the JJDPC’s subcommittees, which provided input leading to further refinement. PCCD also sought feedback and support from key partners, including JCJC and DHS, to strengthen collaboration and ensure alignment in implementation. In addition, PCCD worked with its Office of Gun Violence Prevention (OGVP) to include a report on youth involvement with firearms, providing critical data and context to inform strategies moving forward.

## RECENT DATA & TRENDS

Over the past two decades, Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system has made significant progress in improving community safety and accountability, thanks to sustained investments, cross-system collaboration, and the widespread use of evidence-based practices. These efforts have led to steady, long-term declines in youth arrests, referrals, dispositions, and placements, with the juvenile arrest rate for violent crimes remaining near historic lows -- down 45% since 2014.<sup>10</sup>

**Exhibit 5: Juvenile Arrest Rate (per 100,000) for Violent Crimes in PA, 2014-2023<sup>11</sup>**



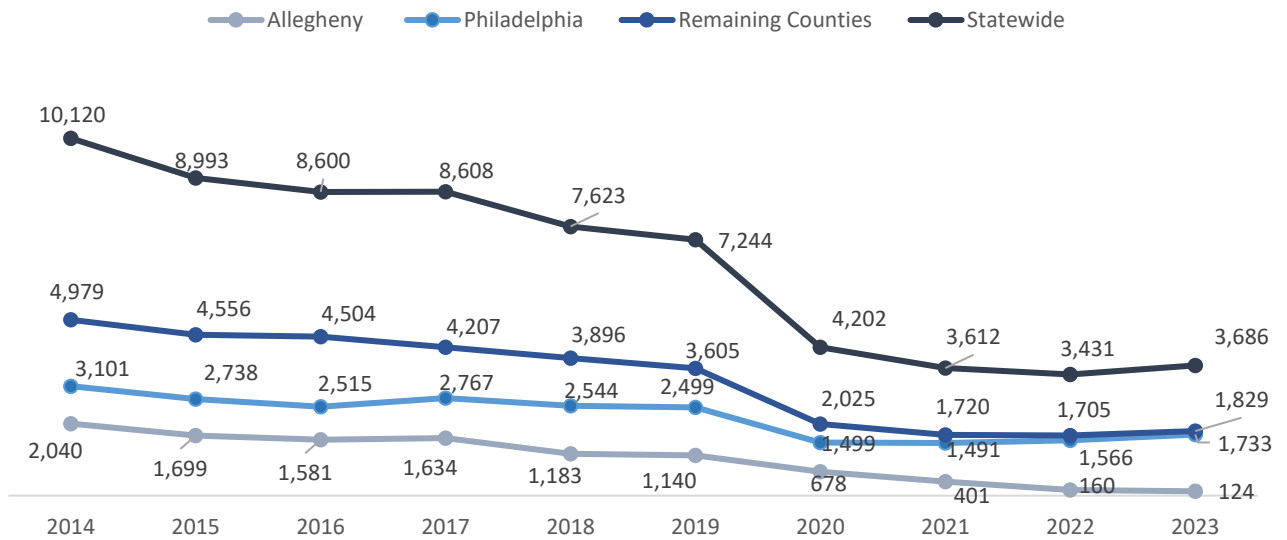
At the same time, recent data show some year-over-year increases: total juvenile arrests rose 14% between 2022 (27,423 arrests) and 2023 (31,229 arrests),<sup>12</sup> with delinquency-related allegations up 16% and delinquency-related placements up 13%.<sup>13</sup> Much of this growth has been attributed to a rebound from unusually low levels of juvenile justice allegations during the pandemic, though continued monitoring is needed to assess whether these trends persist beyond 2023. The most common delinquency dispositions in 2023 involved simple assault (2,432), theft-related offenses (2,305), non-payment of fines (2,284), possession of drugs (1,766), weapons offenses (1,353), aggravated assault (903), and terroristic threats (862).<sup>14</sup>

In addition, youth involvement in Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system has declined significantly over the past decade. In 2023, referrals were 21% lower than in 2014.<sup>15</sup> Also in 2023, the number of youth receiving a juvenile justice disposition (comparable to a sentence in the adult system) increased by about 15% from the previous year but remained 33% below 2014 levels.<sup>16</sup> Delinquency placements have also decreased by 64% over the last decade, leading to an estimated \$102 million reduction in juvenile delinquency placement expenditures in FY 2022-23 compared to FY 2013-14.<sup>17</sup>

While continued progress is needed to expand the use of pre-arrest diversion, Pennsylvania has made significant strides in establishing pre-adjudication diversion as a standard approach for youth. Over the past several decades, the Commonwealth has experienced overall declines in both referrals and secure placements, reflecting the success of these efforts. According to the JCJC, there were 3,686 secure detention

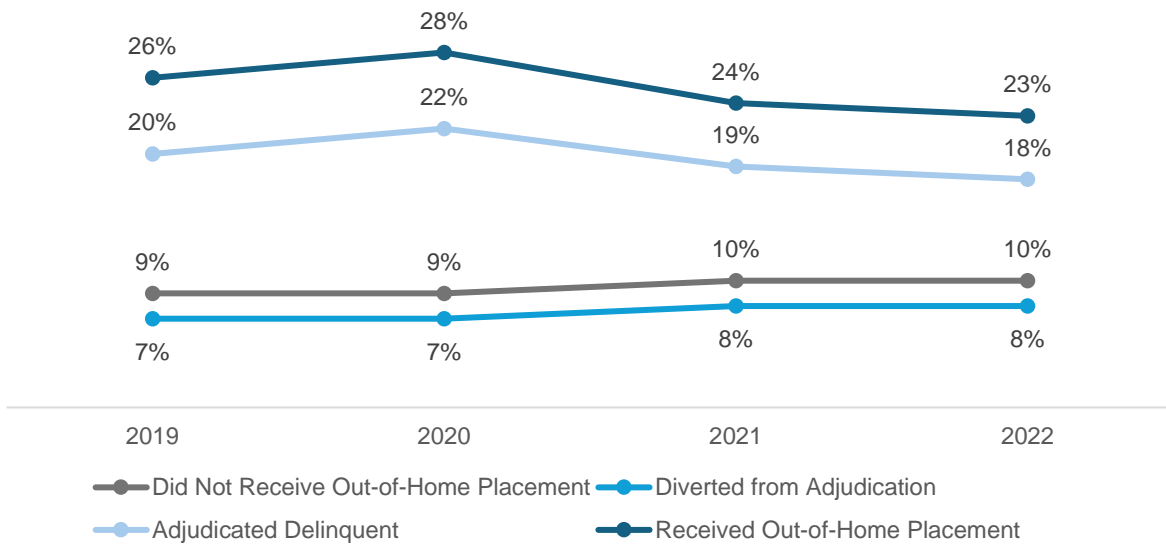
admissions in Pennsylvania in 2023 – a 64% reduction compared to 2014 (see Exhibit 6).<sup>18</sup> In addition, residential placement dispositions represented just 4% of all juvenile justice dispositions in 2023.<sup>19</sup>

**Exhibit 6: Secure Detention Admissions (2014-2023)**



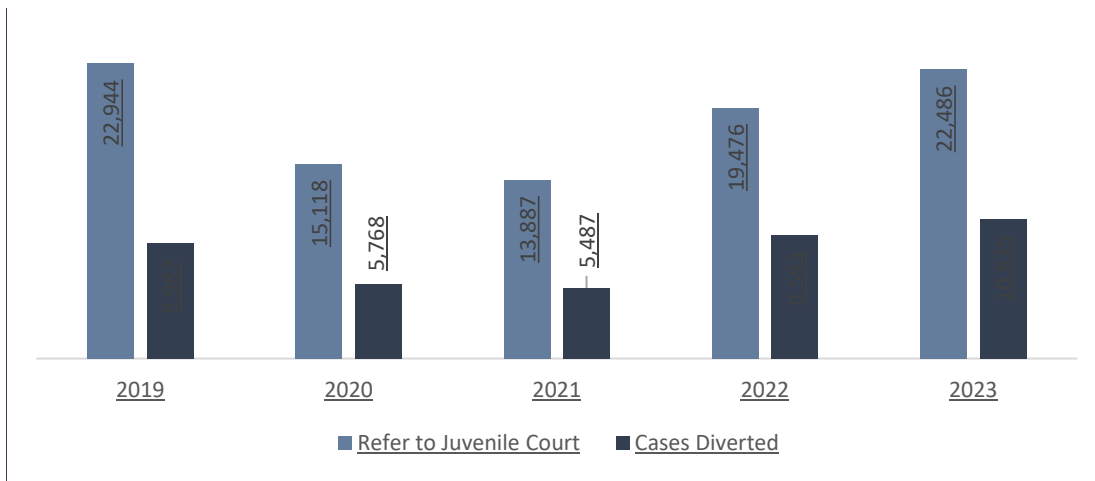
In addition, fewer youth are returning to the system after their initial involvement. Research from the JCJC found that the state’s two-year recidivism rate was roughly 13% in 2020. As illustrated in Exhibit 7, recidivism rates varied by system involvement. Youth who received Out-of-Home placement demonstrated higher rates of recidivism compared to those who did not receive Out-Of-Home placement or were diverted from adjudication.<sup>20</sup>

**Exhibit 7: Recidivism Rate by System Involvement, 2019 – 2022<sup>21</sup>**



Pennsylvania has also prioritized efforts to prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice system altogether. In 2023, more than three-quarters of all cases were diverted from formal court processing, including 84% of first-time offenders.

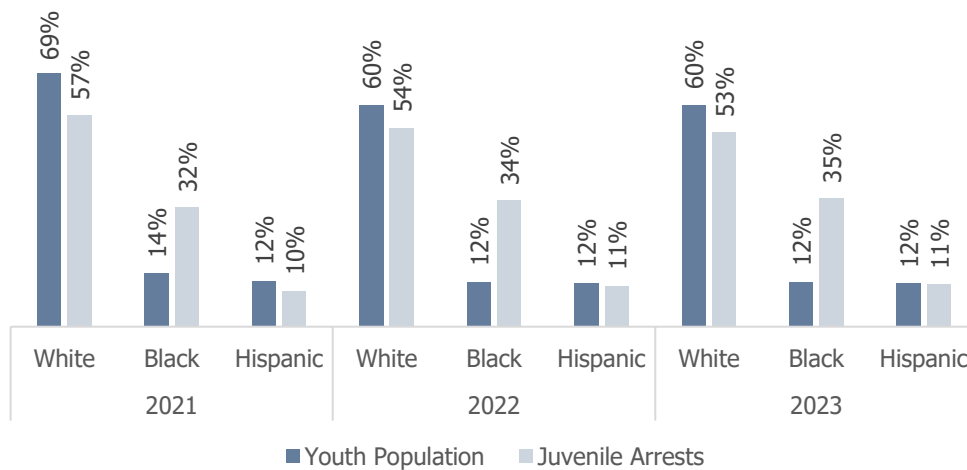
**Exhibit 8: Pennsylvania 5-Year Referrals & Diversions (2019-2023)**



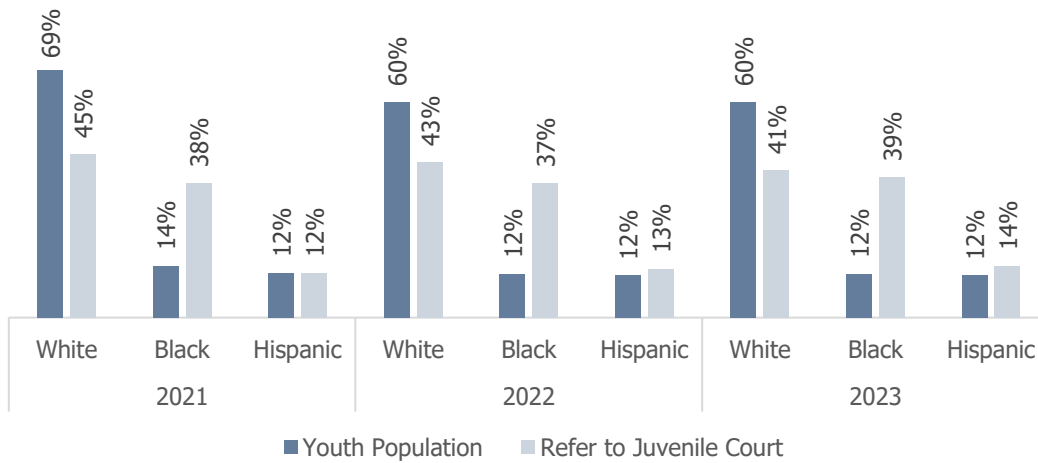
Despite this progress, racial and ethnic disparities, along with other equity concerns, persist in the application of pre-adjudication diversion and in the broader trends of declining arrests, referrals, and secure placements. As shown in Figures 9<sup>22</sup> and 10a and 10b,<sup>23</sup> Black youth in Pennsylvania are still significantly more likely than White youth to be arrested, detained, confined, and transferred to adult court.<sup>24</sup> Black youth make up only 12% of the state’s population, but represent 39% of delinquency allegations, more than a third (35%) of arrests, and 61% of secure detentions.

Broader system inequities persist beyond the juvenile justice system as well. Youth of color are more likely to live in communities that face concentrated poverty and disinvestment.<sup>25,26</sup> A recent analysis of evolving juvenile justice trends in Philadelphia identified a clear correlation between areas of concentrated poverty and youth involvement in the justice system.<sup>27</sup>

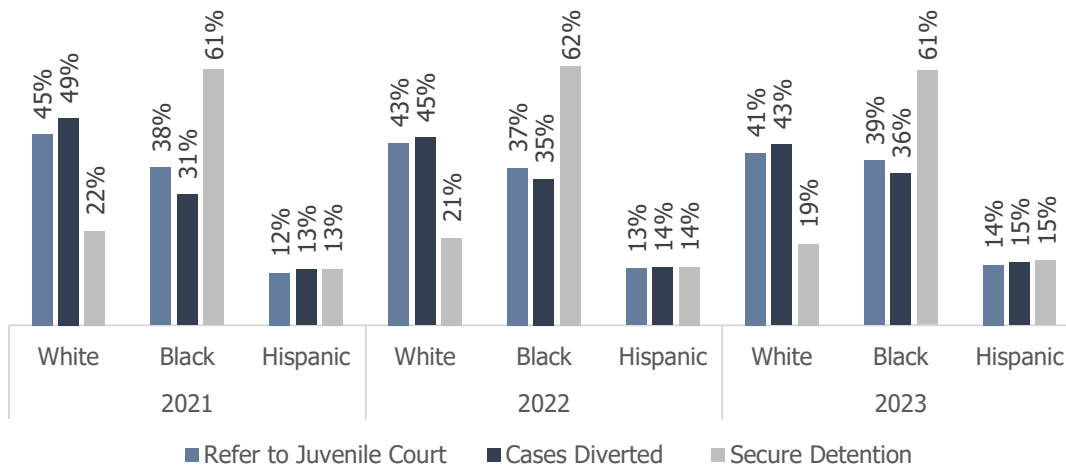
**Exhibit 9: Percent of Youth Population Arrested by Race/Ethnicity (2021-2023)<sup>20</sup>**



**Exhibit 10a: Juvenile Justice System Referrals by Race/Ethnicity (2021-2023)<sup>21</sup>**



**Exhibit 10b: Diversions and Secure Detentions by Race/Ethnicity (2021-2023)<sup>21</sup>**



Beyond the data presented in this section, subsequent sections include additional analyses addressing specific areas within the juvenile justice system.

# **STATE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT & JUVENILE DETENTION**

## ***Residential Treatment Centers***

The positive advancements of Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system achieved through decades of investments and reforms have also led to new challenges. Following years of declining dispositions and placements, the system now faces a critical juncture, driven by the impacts of workforce shortages, increasingly complex cases, and facility closures which, together, created a shortage of available placement beds.

The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS), which has licensing and oversight responsibilities for all residential placement facilities, reports most of the secure state-run Youth Development Centers and Youth Forest Camp #3 (non-secure), are over capacity. Identified below are the state-operated residential treatment facilities, their licensed capacity, and a snapshot of the number of youth served. All but two facilities are currently exceeding their facility capacity.

***Exhibit 11: DHS Residential Treatment Facilities Capacity & Snapshot of Current Youth Served (as of October 10, 2025)***

<b>DHS/Bureau of Juvenile Justice Services Facilities</b>	<b>Facility Capacity</b>	<b>Current Youth Served</b>	<b>Youth Served vs. Capacity</b>
South Mountain Secure Treatment Unit	30	34	+4
Loysville Youth Development Center	47	50	+3
North Central Secure Treatment Unit – Boys Program	44	50	+6
North Central Secure Treatment Unit – Girls Program	36	42	+6
Northeast Secure Treatment Unit	40	47	+7
Western Secure Treatment Unit	20	24	+4
Southeast Youth Development Center (newest facility)	26	21	-5
Youth Forestry Camp #3 (non-secure)	36	35	-1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>+24</b>

## ***Juvenile Detention Centers***

Youth awaiting admission to residential placement facilities often spend that time in secure juvenile detention centers. More extended stays for some youth can create a burden on detention and secure placement by increasing the number of youth who are confined. While both are licensed and overseen by DHS, detention serves a distinctly different purpose. In Pennsylvania, secure detention is intended as a temporary measure for youth based on the severity of the alleged offense, the likelihood of returning to court, and whether that youth’s behavior poses a threat to community

safety. Detention is authorized only after all non-secure alternatives have been deemed insufficient. Unlike residential placement facilities, by virtue of their short-term design, detention centers do not provide treatment services, making them less ideal settings to address the therapeutic needs of youth.

While Pennsylvania has 549 available/licensed detention beds, limited staff means only 476 beds are available for youth.<sup>28,29</sup> Furthermore, limited eligibility for some of these detention centers means that not all 476 beds available are open to any referring agency (e.g., detention centers who only accept youth from their county). This limited capacity and eligibility sometimes results in counties choosing to send youth to detention centers outside of the state. Exhibit 12 below shows the licensed capacity and the operational capacity of Pennsylvania’s current secure juvenile detention centers. Exhibit 12 does not include the use of out of state detention beds.

***Exhibit 12: Pennsylvania Juvenile Detention Centers’ Licensed Capacity & Operational Capacity<sup>30</sup>***

<b>Detention Center</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Licensed Bed Capacity</b>	<b>Operational Bed Capacity<sup>31</sup></b>	<b>% Difference (Operational Capacity vs. Licensed Capacity)</b>
Abraxas Academy (New Morgan)	Berks	54	54	0 / 0%
Bucks County Youth Center	Bucks	36	36	0 / 0%
Central Counties Youth Center	Centre	14	8	-6 / -43%
Chester County Youth Center	Chester	48	36	-12 / -25%
E. L. Thomas Adolescent Center	Erie	20	20	0 / 0%
Fayette Detention	Fayette	12	6	-6 / -50%
George Jr. Republic Secure Detention	Mercer	11	11	0 / 0%
Highland Detention	Allegheny	12	12	0 / 0%
Lancaster County Youth Intervention Center	Lancaster	48	25	-23 / -48%
Manor Detention	Cambria	12	12	0 / 0%
Middle Creek Detention Center	Allegheny	2	2	0 / 0%
Montgomery County Youth Center	Montgomery	36	36	0 / 0%
Northampton County Juvenile Justice Center	Northampton	36	24	-12 / -33%
Juvenile Justice Services Center	Philadelphia	184	184	0 / 0%

Westmoreland County Regional Youth Services Center	Westmoreland	16	8	-8 / -50%
York County Youth Development Center	York	8	8	0 / 0%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>549</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>-67 / -12%</b>

Ten of the 16 detention centers report full capacity (e.g., operational bed capacity is the same as the center’s licensed capacity); however, five detention centers are currently operating below full capacity, ranging from 25% to 50% below licensed capacity levels. Taken together, the state’s operational bed capacity in October 2025 was 13% below licensed capacity levels.

## **YOUTH GUN INVOLVEMENT & GUN VIOLENCE**

One of the top priorities identified by members of the JJDPC was addressing concerning trends related to youth gun involvement and gun violence. In a survey of JJDPC members and subcommittee members, 85% identified preventing youth gun involvement and gun violence as a high or moderate priority. This was also a top area of interest for Pennsylvania Youth Justice Advisory Boards in 2024 and was a topic of discussion in their annual convening.

**“Youth gun involvement”** refers to participation by youth in any activity connected to firearms, not necessarily violent, such as exposure, possession, or presence of guns in the home or among peers.<sup>32</sup> **“Youth gun violence”** refers to intentional harm, or threat of harm, involving firearms, committed by or against youth, such as shootings, gun homicides, or gun-related assault.<sup>33</sup> Recognizing the growing concerns related to increasing rates of youth firearm suicide, this term also encapsulates self-directed youth gun violence. This conceptual framework is consistent with youth violence prevention frameworks, such as the CDC’s *Public Health Approach to Preventing Community Violence*, which acknowledge suicide and self-harm as integral elements within the continuum of youth and community violence.<sup>34</sup>

Youth gun involvement and gun violence are distinct, but inextricably linked; research suggests that youth who carry or have access to firearms are more likely to engage in or be victimized by gun violence over time.<sup>35</sup>

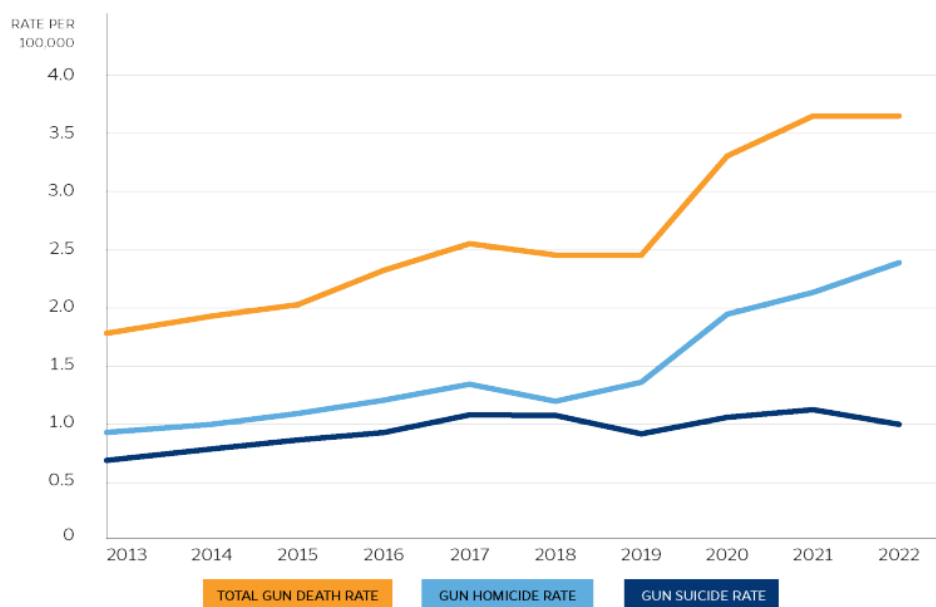
This section of the *2025 Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Plan* outlines key trends in these areas. Recommendations for how the Commonwealth can more effectively reduce the potential for firearm-related harm and injury among children, youth, and young adults are captured in Strategic Priority #2 and other recommendations.

### ***National & Statewide Trends in Youth Gun Violence***

Young people are disproportionately impacted by gun violence, which is the leading cause of death among members of Generation Z (11-26 year olds).<sup>36</sup> Firearm-related injuries remain the leading cause of death among children and adolescents nationally and in Pennsylvania.<sup>37, 38</sup> In 2023, gun violence resulted in the death of 2,566 youth across the U.S, increasing the overall youth gun death rate by 1% between 2023 and 2022.<sup>39</sup>

Between 2021 and 2023, over 2,000 youth between the ages of 11-22 were injured by firearms and treated in Pennsylvania hospitals.<sup>40</sup> Pennsylvania’s rate of firearm deaths among youth increased 36% between pre-pandemic (2016-2019) and pandemic years (2020-2023).<sup>41</sup> Despite young Black males (ages 15-34) only making up 2% of the state’s population, they accounted for 38% of all gun homicide deaths in 2023.<sup>42</sup>

**Exhibit 13: Gun Death Rates (Per 100,000) for Youth (Ages 1-17) From 2013-2022<sup>43</sup>**



### **Youth Firearm Suicides**

More than half of gun-related deaths in Pennsylvania are suicides, and firearms are the most lethal means of suicide. While most suicide attempts do not result in death, those involving guns are fatal about 90% of the time.<sup>44</sup>

Although gun homicides have declined in recent years, firearm suicides remain a significant and growing concern - especially among youth. In 2020, youth suicides with a gun outnumbered youth suicides by all other methods for the first time in two decades, suggesting a shifting trend.<sup>45</sup> Nationally, the overall gun death rate for young people (ages 1-17) nearly doubled (95%) between 2014 and 2023.<sup>46</sup> That includes sharp increases in gun suicide rates among Black and Latino youth ages 10-19, which have increased by 245% and 98%, respectively, from 2014 to 2023.<sup>47</sup> There is also an emerging body of research suggesting that exposure to gun violence is linked with increased depression and higher use of mental health services, as well as higher rates of suicidal ideation.<sup>48</sup>

In a national survey of youth, one in five students seriously considered attempting suicide over the 12 months prior to the survey and nearly one in ten (9%) had attempted suicide.<sup>49</sup> The 2023 *Pennsylvania Youth Survey* showed similar results: 16.1% of students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 said they had seriously considered suicide in the past year and over 37% of students reported they felt sad or depressed most days in the past year.<sup>50</sup>

Most young people who die by firearm suicide use a gun owned by a family member (79%).<sup>51</sup> Children and youth living in homes where firearms are more securely stored (e.g., unloaded, locked, ammunition stored separately) have a lower risk of suicide.<sup>52</sup>

**What Stakeholders Said:** Both youth gun involvement and mental/behavioral health were key issues that continued to be highlighted this year by JJDC members and stakeholders.

***“All the issues are obviously intertwined...a lot of them are worried about housing and that combines with mental health problems to cause substantial issues over the longer term.”***

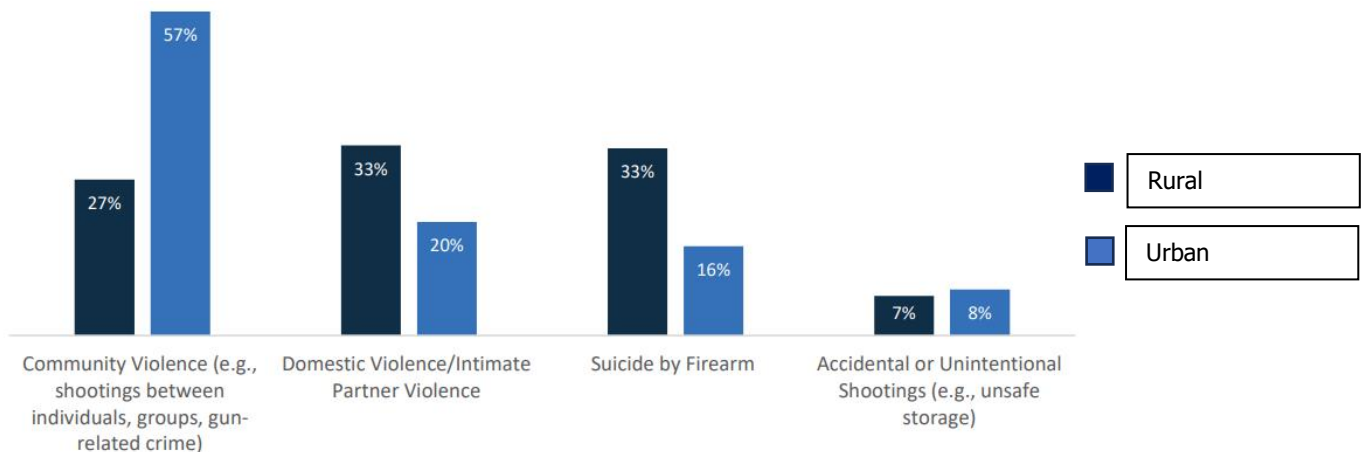
### **Rural vs. Urban Gun Violence**

In a survey of youth across the U.S, 40% of youth reported having at least “somewhat easy” access to a gun, with 21% reporting they had “very easy” access.<sup>53</sup> Compared to urban youth, rural youth have greater access to firearms and higher rates of firearm carrying.<sup>54</sup> Rural youth are also more likely to carry firearms for social and recreational uses such as, for hunting and sport shooting.<sup>55</sup>

Youth living in urban communities had higher rates of witnessing gun violence and hearing gunshots in public than non-urban youth.<sup>56</sup> Another study on roughly 25 million adolescents across the United States found that adolescent handgun carrying was most common in rural counties, but the association between violence and handgun carrying was stronger in urban counties than in rural counties.<sup>57</sup>

Studies on firearm use have also revealed that rates of firearm suicides are higher in rural areas than in urban areas.<sup>58</sup> These echo findings from a stakeholder survey conducted in 2024 by PCCD’s Office of Gun Violence Prevention, which found that rural respondents were more than twice as likely to identify firearm suicide as a top issue compared to urban respondents.<sup>59</sup>

**Exhibit 14: Rural vs. Urban Stakeholders’ Perspectives on Gun Violence<sup>60</sup>**



### **Youth Firearm Access & Possession**

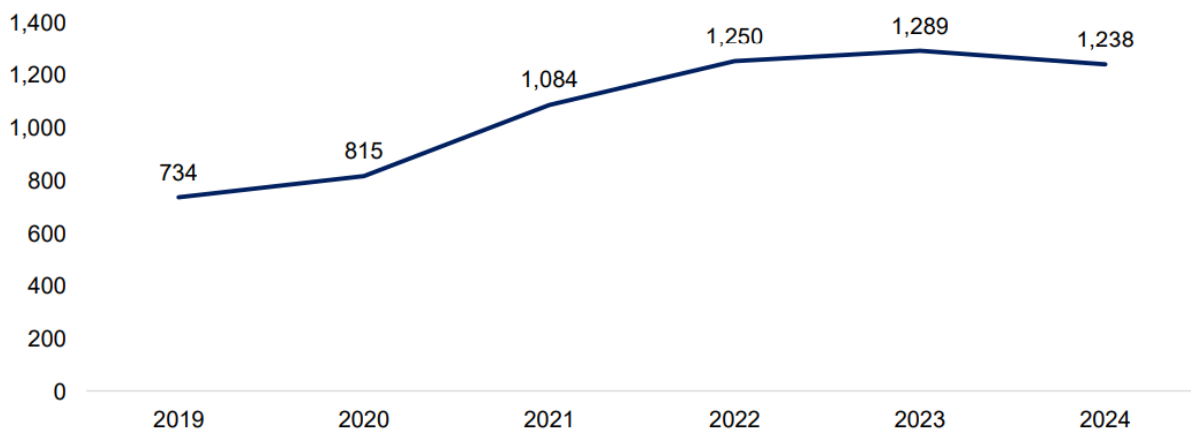
Research on what drives young people to carry firearms often calls out environmental factors, including exposure to violence and fear of or prior experience with peer

victimization.<sup>61</sup> Cultural norms and availability of firearms may also influence youth decision-making in this respect, as can protective factors associated with positive youth development.<sup>62</sup> A large part of the discussion at the JJDPC’s May 2025 meeting centered on how youth gun involvement is normalized differently among urban and rural communities.

Nationally, the number of gun crimes committed by juveniles has increased in recent years.<sup>63</sup> According to data from JCJC youth gun possession has become one of the most common firearm-related charges youth face.<sup>64</sup> Surveys have shown that roughly 5% of youth (ages 12-17) in the U.S. carry a firearm each year,<sup>65</sup> and that share does not appear to have increased in recent years.<sup>66</sup> While a large share of youth report “easy” access to a firearm<sup>67</sup> and rates of youth gun carrying are similar across races and ethnicities,<sup>68</sup> a disproportionate number of firearm possession cases nationally and in Pennsylvania involve Black youth.<sup>69</sup>

In Pennsylvania, juvenile arrests for weapons-related offenses in 2024 (734) were slightly lower than in 2019 (799).<sup>70</sup> However, during the same period, written allegations received by Pennsylvania juvenile probation departments for firearm-related offenses rose by 69%, and allegations for violations of the Uniform Firearms Act (VUFA) offenses more than doubled.<sup>71</sup> According to JCJC, the most common VUFA offense committed during this timeframe was possession of a firearm without a license.<sup>72</sup>

**Exhibit 15: Firearm-Related Offenses Written Allegations, 2019-2024<sup>73,74</sup>**



It is important to note that rising youth referrals for firearm-related offenses may not necessarily mean that youth violence is rising; however, some local jurisdictions, including Pennsylvania’s largest city, have reported upticks in the number of children and teens charged with gun violence-related offenses. As an example, while the number of homicides in Philadelphia has reached historic lows, the number of juveniles charged with homicide and nonfatal shootings in 2024 was significantly higher than in years past.<sup>75</sup> Community leaders, local law enforcement, experts, as well as youth at the August JJDPC meeting, have pointed to the rising use of social media as a new element that may be helping to fuel these trends in Philadelphia and other places.<sup>76</sup>

**What Stakeholders Said:** A critical issue emphasized by JJDPC members throughout the planning process was the growing number of youth carrying firearms. This increase in firearm-related written allegations and VUFA offenses likely means that juvenile probation departments are managing higher, and more complex, caseloads, which could strain existing staffing, resources, and capacity. Furthermore, JJDPC members discussed concerns about the easy access youth have to guns, and raised questions about whether enforcement strategies should be equally focused on the supply side (e.g., those illegally selling guns to youth) as well as for youth who are carrying weapons.

### ***Juvenile Justice System Responses to Firearm Offenses***

While many jurisdictions across the U.S. and Pennsylvania utilize diversion approaches, youth with firearm charges are often considered ineligible.<sup>77</sup> Some jurisdictions, however, have made efforts to establish dedicated programs for youth, or have taken steps ensuring that youth with gun-related charges are able to participate in existing programming and resources. Nationally, the Kings County District Attorney's Office in Brooklyn, NY, offers the Youth and Community in Partnership (YCP) program that allows youth charged with a first-time felony offense (including simple possession of a firearm) an opportunity to have their conviction dismissed and sealed.<sup>78</sup> Youth who have completed this program have had a 22% lower rearrest rate within three years than others in their 16-24 age group who went to prison and were then released.<sup>79</sup>

Minneapolis, MN also offers diversion for firearm-related charges through their Pathways to New Beginnings program that began in 2017.<sup>80</sup> The Pathways to New Beginnings program was created in partnership with the Minneapolis City Attorney's Office and a local community-based organization.<sup>81</sup> This program requires those with nonviolent firearm-related charges to participate in a nine-month program that includes case management and group coursework.<sup>82</sup> The program is still relatively young, but early data suggests that graduates of the program also have lower recidivism rates compared to peers who went through more traditional processing.<sup>83</sup>

In Pennsylvania, there are a handful of programs that offer diversion to youth with more serious charges, including gun-related offenses. One of these programs is run by the Bench Mark Program in Lancaster, PA, which collaborates with partners in the court system, local school district, and other community entities to take referrals of young people.

Additional recommendations related to improving the ability of programs - existing and new - to serve and support all youth, including those with gun-related offenses, are presented under "Strategic Priority #2" on pages 26-28.

## **ADDITIONAL ISSUES FACING YOUTH, FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM**

- **Rising youth behavioral health needs are outpacing the capacity of community-based services.** Mental/behavioral health care was identified as a top area of need by nearly a third of system practitioners (27%); system partners also identified responding to mental/behavioral health emergencies as another challenging issue (43%). Nationally, the number of youth diagnosed with anxiety, depression, and other mental health conditions continues to rise.<sup>84</sup> In addition, recent data from [PAYS](#) shows increasing levels of depression and other mental health concerns among middle and high school students; four in 10 students reported feeling depressed or sad most days in the past year, and the share of students reporting self-harm, suicide ideation, and suicide attempts has also increased in recent years. In a survey of youth nationally, one in five students seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year.<sup>85</sup> Pennsylvania's youth face growing challenges in accessing mental and behavioral health treatment, with the shortage most acute among those in the juvenile justice system. Many justice-involved youth lack private treatment options or live in communities with limited or no behavioral health services. Research shows that justice-involved youth experience higher rates of mental illness and behavioral health needs than their peers,<sup>86</sup> yet many have never been formally diagnosed or treated, leaving significant gaps in care. Furthermore, the strong correlation between trauma and justice system involvement underscores the heightened vulnerability of these youth, as trauma histories often contribute to the onset of behavioral and developmental health concerns.<sup>87</sup>
- **Complex cases (e.g., youth with intersecting concerns, needs, and/or multiple system involvements) present a significant challenge to Pennsylvania's juvenile justice and youth-serving systems.** Youth with complex cases<sup>88</sup> often face intertwined challenges, with research indicating around two-thirds have one or more mental or behavioral health issues.<sup>89</sup> Many of these youth have encountered traumatic events<sup>90</sup> that may include sexual identity and gender expression issues and have ties to the child welfare system,<sup>91,92</sup> which, alongside their involvement in the juvenile justice system, creates a complex web of challenges for both youth and the supporting professionals.<sup>93</sup> To address this, comprehensive and coordinated efforts are essential for effective intervention, with action needed to ensure providers and other system partners have the capacity and oversight to adequately meet the cross-system needs of these youth, especially as many private sector providers are reluctant to accept such cases, often leaving state-operated Youth Development Centers as the sole recourse.
- **Pennsylvania continues to face widespread and acute shortages of high-quality treatment supports and qualified staff across its juvenile justice**

**continuum.** Secure detention and residential treatment remain important components of Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system, offering structured environments that balance public safety with rehabilitative and therapeutic care. The Commonwealth has made progress in aligning placement decisions with objective tools, such as the PaDRAI, which now informs the majority of youth detention admissions. However, persistent gaps remain due to limited availability of appropriate treatment services or settings, as well as the ongoing constraints of private providers to accept youth with complex needs. These challenges are compounded by a strained workforce; a national survey of more than 200 juvenile justice agencies found that approximately 85% face moderate to severe difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified staff, which directly impacts service delivery and system responsiveness.<sup>94</sup>

- **Families, youth, and community members often lack trust in the system and providers.** A lack of trust in the system and providers has pushed youth away from critical services. Studies on attitudes towards the juvenile justice system have found that many find the system to be “broken” but the public is split on whether the system is too harsh or too lenient.<sup>95</sup> The overall sentiment towards the system is that youth who enter the juvenile justice system often end up in the criminal justice system. This lack of trust in the success of the system can be what keeps families from accepting services from providers both in the system and outside of the system.
- **Poverty and lack of basic necessities significantly impact Pennsylvania youth.** Many Pennsylvania youth are dealing with constant pressure, and for some, that includes basic access to necessities like food, clothing, and shelter. In 2023, approximately 16% of youth in Pennsylvania lived in poverty.<sup>96,97</sup> PAYS data show the number of students who indicated having the stress of worrying that food at home would run out increased from 9% in 2021 to almost 21% in 2023.<sup>98</sup> Almost 11% of students reported having the stress of having to skip a meal due to a lack of money. The PAYS also found a correlation between family financial stress and drug use, with more regular worry about food correlating with a higher level of youth drug use.<sup>99</sup> Of the students who reported they were bullied in 2023, 51% reported that the perceived reason was related to their appearance (e.g., clothing). Additionally, youth in poverty are more likely to perform poorly in school and be exposed to and affected by crime.<sup>100</sup>
- **School-based referrals remain a significant pathway into in the juvenile justice system for many youth in Pennsylvania.** Often described as the ‘school-to-prison pipeline,’ these referrals can escalate minor infractions into formal system involvement - especially in schools with limited access to supportive interventions. Nearly 26% of juvenile delinquency allegations in Pennsylvania are identified as school-related incidents.<sup>101</sup> Pennsylvania has also experienced high rates of school police notifications.<sup>102</sup> In the 2023-2024 school year, Pennsylvania public schools reported calling police 16,345 times; nearly

30% of law enforcement calls resulted in arrests (4,708).<sup>103</sup> Although school-based diversion<sup>104</sup> programs are proven to reduce school-based arrests and recidivism, their use statewide remains limited.<sup>105, 106</sup>

- **Victim services face growing demand and resource constraints, impacting the ability to provide timely, trauma-informed support to youth victims.** Like many states, Pennsylvania is facing declines in federal support for victims' services programs through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) program, as well as increasing caseloads, workforce shortages, and other challenges. A 2025 survey of VOCA-funded victim service programs found staffing had already decreased by 33%, with 74% reporting increased workloads and mounting burnout. Nearly all programs (94%) anticipated future funding cuts would further undermine their ability to meet victims' needs. Many youth who experience trauma and victimization - including justice-involved youth - face barriers to accessing counseling and other services. Strengthening Pennsylvania's victims' services infrastructure is foundational to fulfilling the Commonwealth's BARJ mission and ensuring victims are supported throughout the justice process.
- **Counties are increasingly turning to alternatives to secure placement, though some approaches carry unintended consequences.** More than half of juvenile justice practitioners surveyed by PCCD reported that electronic monitoring is available in their communities as an alternative to secure detention. While intended to preserve community connections and protect public safety, research has highlighted unintended consequences, including privacy concerns for youth and families and over-surveillance.<sup>107</sup> Evidence on the individual impacts of electronic monitoring, such as effects on mental health and educational outcomes, remains limited.<sup>108</sup> Youth also frequently face compliance challenges, particularly those with unstable living situations or limited support systems. This year the usage of other alternatives has increased, with after-school/out-of-school programs (35%) and in-home confinement (35%) being the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> most reported alternatives to placement.
- **While investments in out-of-school time opportunities have increased, the need and demand for upstream prevention funding continues to outpace available resources.** Decades of research demonstrate that evidence-based upstream prevention programs can positively impact the lives of youth and families while strengthening the health and resilience of communities. These programs have proven both effective and cost-efficient, while also helping to build protective factors identified through tools such as [PAYS](#). PCCD has long invested in such programs to address the root causes of violence and delinquency and to support youth in reaching their full potential. Pennsylvania also recently enacted new, dedicated state funding to support out-of-school time programs through the Building Opportunities for Out-of-School Time Grant Program, which was established in FY 2024-25. However, the need and demand for these programs significantly outpaces available resources, suggesting additional investments are needed.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Strategic Priority #1: Elevate and center the voices and experiences of people most impacted by the juvenile justice system, including youth, families, and victims.**

A top priority of the JJDPC is advancing strategies and programs that are guided by community members with lived experience. The committee has invested in initiatives to engage directly with impacted individuals and communities, particularly youth and families with current or prior system involvement, as well as victims. This commitment focuses on ensuring voices are heard, addressing the holistic needs of youth and families, and enhancing public safety. As an example, Pennsylvania has continued to engage with its eight Youth Justice Advisory Boards (YJABs), emphasizing issues like prevention and intervention strategies, safety of youth and staff in detention programs, support for justice-involved youth, and more. Through initiatives like the YJABs, the committee ensures youth perspectives inform statewide policies. Guided by the principles of Balanced and Restorative Justice, JJDPC has also historically emphasized the equal role of victims in the accountability process, the importance of acknowledging harms experienced by individuals and communities, and the need for healing-informed approaches that repair harm and strengthen public safety.

#### **ADMINISTRATION Recommendation 1.1:**

Promote statewide policies that bring youth, family, and victim voices into the decision-making process.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 1.1.A.</b> Increase representation of impacted youth, families, legal guardians, and victims on state-level commissions, boards, and advisory groups.	Governor's Office	Short-term (6-12 months)
<b>Strategy 1.1.B.</b> Encourage incorporating youth experiences into juvenile justice-related policies, such as through entry and exit surveys.	Governor's Office	Short Term (6 12 months)
<b>Strategy 1.1.C.</b> Develop a sustainable funding stream and related policies to support meaningful youth and family engagement (e.g., stipends, transportation, training/development) across state agencies.	Governor's Office; General Assembly, State Agencies	Long term (>24 months)

#### **JJDPC Recommendation 1.2:**

Expand opportunities for youth, family, and victim voices at the state and local levels.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
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<b>Strategy 1.2.A.</b> Continue to support innovative models of youth engagement and decision-making, like YJABs.	JJDPC Youth Engagement Subcommittee; Supporting Youth Success Subcommittee	Short-term ( <i>&lt;12 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 1.2.B.</b> Create entry and exit surveys or questionnaires for youth receiving services in the juvenile justice system to incorporate youth experiences into policy decisions at the state and county level.	JJDPC Youth Engagement Subcommittee, and JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee	Short-Term ( <i>&lt;12 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 1.2.C.</b> Support additional opportunities for youth, family, and victim voice in decision-making through membership on county advisory or collaborative boards (ex: Criminal Justice Advisory Boards, Children's Roundtables, Juvenile Justice Boards, and others).	JJDPC Youth Engagement Subcommittee; Victims' Services Advisory Committee (VSAC); Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC); Mental Health & Justice Advisory Committee (MHJAC)	Mid-term ( <i>13-24 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 1.2.D.</b> Establish recommendations for structured opportunities for victims to provide input into youth accountability processes, such as through diversion or restorative justice models.	JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee; Youth Engagement Subcommittee; Victims' Services Advisory Committee (VSAC)	Long term ( <i>&gt;24 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 1.2.E.</b> Create mechanisms for young people to increase their involvement in co-design of prevention strategies and shape programs that reflect their realities and needs.	JJDPC Youth Engagement Subcommittee; Prevention Subcommittee	Long term ( <i>&gt;24 months</i> )

**Strategic Priority #2: Address increasing levels of firearm access, use, injuries, and fatalities among children and youth in Pennsylvania.**

As described previously, firearm-related injuries are now a leading cause of death for young people in the Commonwealth, and levels of gun carrying among juveniles appears to be increasing. These trends point to an urgent need to address youth gun involvement and gun violence - both interpersonal and self-directed - to prevent further harm and build safer communities.

**ADMINISTRATION Recommendation 2.1:**

Champion common-sense approaches to reduce the accessibility of firearms by children and youth.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 2.1.A.</b> Direct state agencies to identify potential strategies they can advance to reduce youth gun access and reduce firearm-related injuries and fatalities among children.	Governor's Office	Immediate ( <i>&lt; 6 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 2.1.B.</b> Reduce barriers to gun owners obtaining devices to secure firearms and firearm safety training (e.g., explore tax credits or other funding mechanisms for individuals and community-based	Governor's Office; State Agencies (PCCD, PSP, DOH, DHS, PDE)	Short-term ( <i>6-12 months</i> )

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
organizations), with an emphasis on reaching households with children.		
<b>Strategy 2.1.C.</b> Support Child Access Prevention legislation requiring secure storage practices for gun owners in households with children.	Governor's Office; General Assembly	Short-term (6-12 months)
<b>Strategy 2.1.D.</b> Continue to advance investments through the state budget process to improve the safety and well-being of youth, such as through PCCD's School Safety and Mental Health, Violence Intervention & Prevention (VIP) and Building Opportunity through Out of School Time (BOOST) grant programs, etc.	Governor's Office; General Assembly	Long term (>24 months)

### JJDPC Recommendation 2.2:

Identify and advance promising practices and evidence-based strategies to improve systems' responses to youth gun involvement and violence, including firearm suicide.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 2.2.A.</b> Collaborate with the PA Office of Gun Violence Prevention to research and inventory currently available programs, strategies, and practices through PCCD's network of state and local partners (such as those engaged in the Building Continuums of Care for Youth project and those represented on PCCD's relevant advisory committees and subcommittees).	PCCD (Office of Gun Violence Prevention); Other State Agencies (DHS, DOH, DDAP, PDE, JCJC)	Short-term (<12 months)
<b>Strategy 2.2.B.</b> Elevate support for existing statewide initiatives like the OAG's Safe2Say Something Program to provide awareness education and self-reporting/peer reporting options, resources available through PCCD grant programs, as well as initiatives supported by sister agencies like DHS/OMHSAS and PDE.	PCCD; Other State Agencies (DHS, PDE, JCJC, OAG)	Mid-term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 2.2.C.</b> Partner with other youth-serving agencies to advance comprehensive suicide prevention curriculum and awareness education programs focused on increasing adoption of effective prevention/peer response strategies.	PCCD (Office of Gun Violence Prevention); Other State Agencies (DHS, DOH, DDAP, PDE, JCJC)	Mid-term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 2.2.D.</b> Identify potential strategies (funding, policy, legislation, etc.) where JJDPC and/or its partners might invest in community-based youth suicide prevention and intervention programs, including programs specifically focused on justice involved youth and their families.	PCCD; Other State Agencies (DHS, DOH, DDAP, PDE, JCJC)	Mid-term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 2.2.E.</b> Work with law enforcement partners to identify trends in the supply of	PCCD (Office of Gun Violence Prevention); Other	Mid-term (13-24 months)

firearms to youth (e.g., sales/trafficking to minors) and develop recommendations to the Governor's Office, Commission, and JJDPC to address these trends.	State Agencies (JCJC, PSP, OAG)	
<b>Strategy 2.2.F.</b> Develop recommended diversion protocols for first-time, non-violent VUFA possession offenses by youth, including recommended screening protocols and referral resources. These protocols should identify barriers that may limit referrals from law enforcement to community-based organizations, as well as mechanisms for ensuring victim input.	JJDPC; State Agencies (JCJC, DHS, PSP, PCCD)	Long term (>24 months)
<b>Strategy 2.2.G.</b> Collaborate with the PA Office of Gun Violence Prevention to explore and identify youth treatment courts that could include youth with non-violent VUFA offenses (e.g., possession only).	JJDPC, PCCD (Office of Gun Violence Prevention); JCJC	Long Term (>24 months)
<b>Strategy 2.2.H.</b> Advance strategies to improve conflict resolution and bullying prevention across schools and communities as part of upstream gun violence prevention efforts.	PCCD (Office of Gun Violence Prevention); Other State Agencies (PDE)	Long Term (>24 months)

### JJDPC Recommendation 2.3:

Use available resources to improve quality and availability of data and research related to youth gun trends.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 2.3.A.</b> Identify data elements that can be used to track statewide and local trends related to youth gun access, carrying, and utilization/victimization.	PCCD (Office of Gun Violence Prevention); Other State Agencies (JCJC, DOH, PSP, DHS)	Short-term (<12 months)
<b>Strategy 2.3.B.</b> Execute relevant data sharing agreements and protocols, and include relevant data sets within the PA Office of Gun Violence Prevention's public-facing data dashboard.	PCCD (Office of Gun Violence Prevention)	Mid-term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 2.3.C.</b> Explore opportunities to advance data sharing, analysis, and/or research designed to increase understanding of common sources and drivers of gun involvement/violence among youth in PA.	JJDPC; PCCD (Office of Gun Violence Prevention)	Mid-term (13-24 months)

**Strategic Priority #3: Increase the capacity of the system and the community to respond to youth mental and behavioral health needs.**

***“I think everyone means well, but it’s a huge systemic problem to not have educated and experienced mental health professionals available for youth crisis situations.” – Youth/Family/Community Member***

The juvenile justice system is increasingly encountering youth whose primary needs stem from unmet mental and behavioral health needs. National data shows nearly one in five children have been diagnosed with a mental, emotional, or behavioral health condition,<sup>109</sup> and in Pennsylvania, about 30% of high school students reported poor mental health in the past year.<sup>110</sup> In PCCD’s survey of stakeholders and community members during JJDPC’s strategic planning process, there was overwhelming consensus that mental and behavioral health care were both a top need for communities and a challenge within communities, with many noting that inadequate resources often leave law enforcement or detention as a response to youth in crisis. Pennsylvania’s capacity to address these needs is constrained by systemic workforce shortages<sup>111</sup> and inadequate funding structures. Low state reimbursement rates for secure placements and detention<sup>112</sup> - unchanged for more than five decades - limit the ability of providers to recruit and retain qualified staff, leaving youth and families waiting for services. Stakeholders surveyed by JJDPC emphasized that solutions must expand community-based options alongside more intensive care delivery settings, with coordinated efforts across schools, treatment providers, law enforcement, child welfare, and juvenile justice practitioners. In response to this growing need, Pennsylvania has made strides in including mental health and trauma screening tools for justice involved youth across the commonwealth. Starting in July 2027, JCJC will begin requiring a mental health screening tool to inform all probation intake decisions.

**ADMINISTRATION Recommendation 3.1:**

Advance policies and investments that increase youth-serving systems’ and victim services programs’ ability to effectively respond to youth mental and behavioral health needs.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 3.1.A.</b> Continue to advocate for policies and investments that enhance the mental health of youth, including PCCD’s Violence and Delinquency Program and School Safety and Mental Health Grants.	Governor’s Office	Immediate ( < 6 months)
<b>Strategy 3.1.B.</b> Incentivize juvenile justice stakeholders through funding and policy reforms to coordinate with behavioral health providers and school entities to prioritize the	General Assembly, Governor’s Office; State Agencies (DHS, PDE, PCCD)	Short-term (6-12 months)

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
co-location of behavioral health interventions in schools.		
<b>Strategy 3.1.C.</b> Continue to advocate for investments that would stabilize, sustain, and enhance Pennsylvania’s victims’ services and compensation programs.	Governor’s Office	Short-term (6-12 months)
<b>Strategy 3.1.D.</b> Fund and advance strategies like the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) model, and other approaches that equip law enforcement, first responders, crisis workers, and other professionals how to handle situations involving people in crisis.	Governor’s Office; State Agencies (PCCD, DHS, PDE)	Long term (>24 months)
<b>Strategy 3.1.E.</b> Explore potential strategies to incentivize Residential Treatment Facilities (RTFs) to accept more youth with complex cases and enhance RTFs’ ability to effectively serve youth with complex needs.	Governor’s Office; State Agencies (DHS, JCJC, PCCD)	Long Term (>24 months)

### JJDPC Recommendation 3.2:

Take steps to expand the availability of mental and behavioral health services and increase utilization of de-escalation and trauma-informed protocols.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 3.2.A.</b> Identify actionable, lower-cost strategies to increase awareness and utilization of diversion programs, particularly for youth with mental/behavioral health concerns. This should include collaborating with healthcare, behavioral health, and community partners to better coordinate proactive supports and interventions for youth in crisis.	JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee; State Entities (e.g., Governor’s Behavioral Health Council, DHS’ Blueprint Workgroup, AOPC Mental Health Workgroup, etc.)	Short-term (<12 months)
<b>Strategy 3.2.B.</b> Explore and implement mechanisms for providing support and incentives to counties to implement evidence-based models like CIT, Systems of Care, the Crossover Youth Practice Model, or its more recent iteration, the Multi-System Integration Pilot (MSIP), among others.	JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee; MHJAC (CIT)	Mid-term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 3.2.C.</b> Collaborate with PCCD’s School Safety & Security Committee to review and revise the School Security Personnel Training Standards to include greater emphasis on de-escalation and trauma-informed approaches, including integrating these practices with school-based diversion programs.	JJDPC; PCCD School Safety & Security Committee; JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee; JJDPC Diversion Subcommittee	Mid-term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 3.2.D.</b> Explore and incorporate healing-centered approaches into community behavioral health services to provide youth with alternatives to traditional mental health approaches and emphasize the inclusion of	JJDPC Racial & Ethnic Disparities Subcommittee, JJDPC Diversion Subcommittee	Mid-term (13-24 months)

mentors or coaches for youth that have lived experiences in the system.		
<b>Strategy 3.2.E.</b> Strengthen the Student Assistance Program (SAP) to support students more effectively with behavioral health needs, including youth with elevated risk for justice involvement. This should also include guidelines for continued services for students who are suspended or expelled to virtual learning.	PDE, in collaboration with DHS, DDAP, JCJC, and PCCD Advisory Committees, JJDPC Diversion Subcommittee; JJDPC Prevention Subcommittee	Long term (>24 months)
<b>Strategy 3.2 F.</b> Explore and expand access to upstream prevention and youth supports to intervene early to identify and prevent youth behavioral health concerns, including encouraging families to serve as the first “prevention agents” for their children.	JJDPC, JJDPC Prevention Subcommittee, DHS	Long term (>24 months)

***Strategic Priority #4: Champion upstream prevention programs and increase opportunities and “safe spaces” for children, youth, and young adults statewide.***

Decades of research confirm that early prevention is critical to reducing youth violence and delinquency by fostering safe, supportive environments. With the rise of social media, rapid technological change, and shifting cultural norms, the design and delivery of prevention and intervention initiatives must be reshaped and reimaged.

Pennsylvania has an opportunity to strengthen its leadership by expanding prevention strategies that meet young people where they are - whether in schools or community settings - and by creating safe spaces that promote belonging, healthy development, pro-social skill building opportunity, and resilience. Since 1995, PCCD has supported the Social Development Strategy, an evidence-based solution that provides youth the opportunity to build and grow their innate skills through positive, rewarding environments. Through this proven approach, PCCD can continue to help youth grow into successful young adults throughout all Pennsylvania communities.

The overwhelming response to PCCD’s FY 2024-25 BOOST Grant Program underscores the urgent demand for upstream investments: nearly 300 applications were submitted, but only 46 projects were able to be funded with the available \$11.5 million in funds. Additional investments in BOOST, VIP, and other youth-focused grant programs such as Violence and Delinquency Prevention Programs, will allow Pennsylvania to meet this demand, expand evidence-based programs, and deliver resources to communities that need them most.

**ADMINISTRATION Recommendation 4.1:**

Continue to invest in out-of-school time opportunities to meet the significant demand for upstream prevention and youth engagement strategies.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 4.1.A.</b> The Governor should continue to call for increased investments in	Governor’s Office; General Assembly	Immediate (< 6 months)

the BOOST and VIP Grant Programs within the state budget, as well as propose strategies to enhance the state's Violence and Delinquency Prevention Programs (VDPP) and Substance Abuse Education and Demand Reduction (SAEDR) Grant Program.		
<b>Strategy 4.1.B.</b> The Governor's Office should direct relevant state agencies to identify opportunities to utilize their agency guidance, regulations, funding priorities, grant agreements, and other policy levers to increase educational and economic opportunities for youth, including the adoption of evidence-based prevention programs.	Governor's Office; State Agencies (PDE, DHS, DCED, L&I, DDAP, DOH, PCCD)	Short-term (6-12 months)

### JJDPC Recommendation 4.2:

Strengthen prevention by working across systems and supporting proven programs.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 4.2.A.</b> Partner with state agencies and state/local stakeholders to expand school- and community-based early, upstream prevention initiatives with a focus on safe spaces that address risk and protective factors through efforts such as individualized mentoring, family-focused strategies, and culturally relevant and trauma-informed programming.	JJDPC Prevention Subcommittee	Mid-term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 4.2.B.</b> Strengthen grantees' ability to track what works by funding tools and training that help them collect and understand their own data. Support local evaluations of prevention programs, including simple tools to measure program fidelity and outcomes, so the Commonwealth can make smarter decisions about where to invest in early prevention.	JJDPC Prevention Subcommittee, PCCD Staff (OJP, ORESPD)	Mid-Term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 4.2.C.</b> Partner with state agencies and local stakeholders to identify innovative community-based strategies and evidence-based practices and increase direct investment in these approaches, including expanding them for youth without any juvenile justice involvement.	JJDPC Prevention Subcommittee	Long Term (>24 months)
<b>Strategy 4.2.D.</b> Increase school participation in the PAYS and encourage the utilization of the data results by schools and their community partners to develop and improve decision-making processes that influence prevention programs in the community.	JJDPC Prevention Subcommittee; PDE; DDAP	Long Term (>24 months)
<b>Strategy 4.2.E.</b> Partner with prevention coalitions in communities across Pennsylvania to increase the direct	JJDPC Prevention Subcommittee; JJDPC Youth Engagement Subcommittee	Long Term

involvement of youth and families in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of prevention programming.		(>24 months)
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**Strategic Priority #5: Advance system-wide reforms to reduce disparities, enhance system-wide accountability, and improve outcomes for system-involved youth.**

Federal law requires Pennsylvania to address racial and ethnic disparities in its juvenile justice system - a mandate the Commonwealth has embraced for more than three decades through the JJPC and its R/ED Subcommittee. Building on this foundation, Pennsylvania has developed and advanced policies and practices designed to reduce disparities, promote non-discrimination, and ensure fair treatment for all youth.

In recent years, Pennsylvania has also taken steps to standardize processes within the juvenile justice system to improve outcomes and alignment with evidence-based practices. This includes evaluating programs' implementation of evidence-based approaches through the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP), as well as requiring all county juvenile probation offices to use the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory™ (YLS/CMI). Starting in July 2027, the Pennsylvania Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (PaDRAI), the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument-2 (MAYSI-2), and a Mental Health Screening Tool will also be required to inform probation intake decisions. As mentioned in previous sections, Pennsylvania has also made strides in standardizing trauma screening tools across the Commonwealth. These tools improve decision-making, but gaps remain; for instance, YLS/CMI results do not always follow youth into facilities and mental health services are not always readily available in communities. In addition, victim services are often siloed from youth-focused interventions, and face persistent resource and capacity challenges. To fulfill the Commonwealth's BARJ mission, greater investment is needed across the system - including in victim services - to ensure youth and families receive appropriate supports and that practices are coordinated, trauma-informed, and equitable statewide.

Pennsylvania has also made progress in advancing pre-adjudication diversion efforts. In 2024, 88% of cases diverted from adjudication had no new written allegations within six months of disposition.<sup>113</sup> In addition, 75% of all cases that year resulted in a non-adjudication outcome.<sup>114</sup>

Pennsylvania has taken steps to explore and advance comprehensive juvenile justice reform recommendations as part of efforts like the Juvenile Justice Task Force and other initiatives. As new budget proposals and legislation are considered, the Commonwealth has an opportunity to continue to position juvenile justice reform as a statewide priority by enacting new measures and increasing investments in strategies that hold justice-involved youth accountable, improve outcomes, and strengthen the systems that serve them.<sup>115</sup> This includes exploring opportunities to address the disproportionate impact that justice system involvement can have on youth and families living in poverty, such as fines and fees, while taking steps to ensure accountability and bolster funding for victim compensation and services.<sup>116</sup>

**ADMINISTRATION Recommendation 5.1:**

Reaffirm Pennsylvania’s leadership as a national model for juvenile justice practice and ensure continued progress toward fairness and accountability.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 5.1.A.</b> Call for the Pennsylvania General Assembly to dedicate resources supporting the expansion of evidence-based practices, diversionary and restorative justice programs, and community-based supports. These investments and reforms should explicitly emphasize approaches that center victim restoration and elevate victim voice as core components of a fair, accountable and healing justice system.	Governor’s Office; General Assembly	Mid term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 5.1.B.</b> Direct the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board to develop a statewide workforce assessment to identify gaps and emerging roles within juvenile justice, including possible training and certification pathways/alternate career ladders to strengthen retention and build a pipeline of diverse talent (e.g., credible messengers, peer mentors, etc.). This assessment should also include an analysis of county juvenile probation departments and their pay, to identify any pay disparities across counties and encourage more equitable funding models.	Governor’s Office; State Agencies (L&I, DHS, JCJC, PDE, PCCD, OA), & State Entities (the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP), Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers)	Short-term (6-12 months)
<b>Strategy 5.1.C.</b> Invest additional funding to increase compensation, training, and staff wellness initiatives (e.g., treatment, counseling, and team building) of juvenile justice system professionals to reduce turnover and burnout (e.g., increase the Juvenile Probation Services line item in the FY 2026-28 state budgets).	Governor’s Office; General Assembly; State Agencies (JCJC, DHS)	Long term (>24 months)
<b>Strategy 5.1.D.</b> Pennsylvania should support strategies to improve visibility and understanding of LGBTQ+ youth needs, including exploring the addition of demographic information as an option within future administrations of the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS).	Governor’s Office; State Agencies (PCCD, PDE, DDAP)	Long term (>24 months)

**JJDPC Recommendation 5.2:**

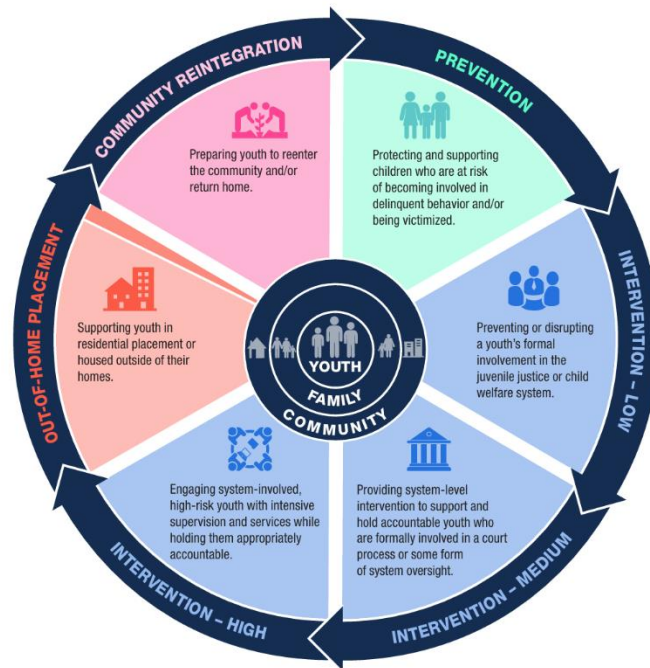
Support efforts to strengthen state and local capacity to reduce R/ED and expand use of evidence-based and innovative models.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 5.2.A.</b> Develop updated guidance relating to the notification of law enforcement by school entities that account for school-	JJDPC; JJDPC Diversion Subcommittee; JJDPC R/ED	Mid-term (13-24 months)

based diversion programs, such as those prescribed by Chapter 10 (Safe Schools) regulations and related sections of School Code.	Subcommittee; SSSC; PCCD staff	
<b>Strategy 5.2.B.</b> Support the creation of assessment centers, situation tables, centralized intakes, or other similar models across the Commonwealth as a central point of contact for community resources.	JJDPC R/ED Subcommittee	Mid-term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 5.2.C.</b> Examine potential strategies/tools that utilize technology advancements, such as predictive analytics and artificial intelligence (AI), for community providers and/or for youth/families navigating the juvenile justice system. Ensure the development and evaluation of these tools incorporate feedback from impacted individuals, including youth, families, and victims, to ensure they are appropriate, equitable, beneficial, and avoid reinforcing existing disparities or re-traumatization.	JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee; Victims' Services Advisory Committee (VSAC); State Agencies (DHS, JCJC, PCCD, <a href="#">PDE</a> )	Mid-term (13-24 months)
<b>Strategy 5.2.D.</b> Examine current 'rates' at which screening and assessment tools (e.g., YLS and PaDRAI) are utilized with fidelity and identify potential opportunities to improve consistent use of these tools.	JJDPC R/ED Subcommittee	Long term (>24 months)
<b>Strategy 5.2 E.</b> Invest in the development of a comprehensive diversion implementation manual and best practices guide as well as related training for law enforcement, school personnel, and MDJs, to establish uniform diversion practices across the Commonwealth.	JJDPC Diversion Subcommittee, State Agencies (JCJC,PDE, PCCD)	Long Term (>24 months)

**Strategic Priority #6: Increase access to a full continuum of care for youth and promote diversion strategies that prevent unnecessary or deepened system involvement.**

**Exhibit 16: OJJDP Continuum of Care Model<sup>117</sup>**



Expanding a full continuum of care for young people - across family, community, and youth-serving systems - is critical to meet the diverse needs of youth, especially those who may be at risk or involved in the juvenile justice system.<sup>118</sup> Research shows that most justice-involved youth have minimal delinquency histories and pose a low risk of reoffending.<sup>119</sup> The JJDCP’s 2023 Juvenile Justice Plan identified a need to assess statewide gaps - such as shortages of behavioral health providers, limited placement options, and family challenges - that can often lead to unnecessary or deepened system involvement. This continuum of care includes access to trauma-informed care and supports, including those provided by local victim services programs - a key resource given the common “victim-offender” overlap.<sup>120,121</sup> Importantly, this continuum includes services that extend past court involvement, and emphasizes cross-system coordination as well as collaboration among youth, family, victims, and community stakeholders. Furthermore, the continuum of care approach must also recognize and respond to the unique needs of young people who have experienced trauma and victimization, including those who have been trafficked, exploited, or subject to abuse or neglect. These youth often require specialized, trauma-informed services that address both their safety and healing.

**ADMINISTRATION Recommendation 6.1:**

Support policies and practices that strengthen Pennsylvania’s continuum of care for youth success, with a focus on advancing evidence-based diversion, trauma-informed care, and restorative practices.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
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<b>Strategy 6.1.A.</b> Continue to advocate for policies and investments that enhance the well-being and long-term success of Pennsylvania's youth and families.	Governor's Office	Immediate ( <i>&lt; 6 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 6.1.B.</b> Increase funding for programs and services throughout the continuum of care, from early upstream prevention to diversionary programs to trauma-informed care and culturally responsive healing practices, and aftercare/reentry services.	Governor's Office; General Assembly	Short-term ( <i>6-12 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 6.1.C.</b> Explore increasing investments for assessment centers, situation tables, centralized intakes, and other models to ensure youth are receiving the care they need.	Governor's Office; General Assembly; State Agencies (DHS, JCJC, PCCD)	Long Term ( <i>&gt;24 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 6.1.D.</b> Support funding and policy reforms that encourage counties to integrate victim services/advocacy and trauma recovery services within diversion, restorative justice, and reentry programs ensuring victims are engaged and supported throughout the continuum.	Governor's Office; General Assembly; State Agencies (DHS, JCJC, PCCD)	Long Term ( <i>&gt;24 months</i> )

### JJDPC Recommendation 6.2:

Use findings from PA's Building Continuums of Care for Youth Success Initiative and currently available resources to accelerate promising practices like diversion and restorative justice statewide.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<b>Strategy 6.2.A.</b> Synthesize findings from statewide focus groups and needs assessment, supported by PCCD's federal Building Local Continuums of Care for Youth Success Grant, to identify recommendations for JJDPC, its subcommittees, and other state entities.	JJDPC & SSSC Youth Success Subcommittee	Short-term ( <i>&lt;12 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 6.2.B.</b> Promote school stability and educational success for justice-involved youth, building on recently enacted state legislation and federal law/resources.	JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee; JJDPC Diversion Subcommittee; State Agencies (PDE, DHS, JCJC, PCCD)	Mid-term ( <i>13-24 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 6.2.C.</b> Establish guidelines for cross-system referral protocols to connect youth and victims to appropriate services across behavioral health, education, child welfare, juvenile justice, and victim services/advocacy systems.	Victims' Services Advisory Committee (VSAC); JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee; JJDPC Diversion Subcommittee; State Agencies (DHS, JCJC, PCCD, PDE)	Mid-term ( <i>13-24 months</i> )
<b>Strategy 6.2.D.</b> Work with other system partners to ensure a continuation of supports and services for youth exiting the juvenile justice system.	JJDPC, JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee, State Agencies (DHS, JCJC, PCCD, PDE)	Mid-term ( <i>13-24 months</i> )

<p><b>Strategy 6.2.E.</b> Leverage available state and federal funding streams (e.g., ESSA Title I/Part D, etc.) to support school-based restorative practices, diversion and referral programs that connect youth to culturally appropriate community-based services and resources as alternatives to formal processing. These efforts should be fundamentally fair, use evidence-based practices and align with BARJ principles, including consideration of victims’ needs and perspectives.</p>	<p>JJDPC Diversion Subcommittee; State Agencies (PDE, DHS, JCJC, PCCD)</p>	<p>Long term (&gt;24 months)</p>
<p><b>Strategy 6.2.F.</b> Work with other system and state government partners to identify and advance effective aftercare and reentry practices for youth, including recommending updates to PCCD’s Reentry Coalition Minimum Operating Standards.</p>	<p>PCCD; JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee; CJAC; State Agencies (DOC, JCJC, DHS, PDE)</p>	<p>Long term (&gt;24 months)</p>
<p><b>Strategy 6.2.G.</b> Explore strategies and recommendations to enhance services and supports for disconnected youth (e.g., runaway youth, truant youth, etc.), such as increasing resources for temporary respite care or shelter care</p>	<p>JJDPC System Enhancement Subcommittee, State Agencies (DHS, JCJC, PDE, PCCD)</p>	<p>Mid-Term (&gt;24 months)</p>

**Strategic Priority #7: Support cross-system collaboration and data sharing protocols connecting youth-serving systems.**

Youth involved in the juvenile justice system often interact with multiple systems, including schools, children and youth, behavioral health, and community-based organizations. These systems often operate in silos, with limited ability to share information with other youth-serving agencies in a coordinated way. This lack of integrated data sharing often results in fragmented or duplicated interventions. In PCCD’s survey of external stakeholders and JJDPC members, many reported a lack of sharing across the different youth-serving systems, like education, child welfare, and juvenile justice, as a top area of need across the Commonwealth.

Establishing cross-system data sharing protocols will allow agencies to identify at-risk youth earlier, ensure continuity of care, and better align resources and interventions. In addition to aligning with principles of Pennsylvania’s JJSES Framework, national research has demonstrated that these integrated data systems can lead to better outcomes.<sup>122</sup> For instance, integrated data systems have helped some government bodies to gain deeper insight into ripple effects between involvement in foster care and school outcomes.<sup>123</sup> Establishing these systems however, does not come without its challenges. Many systems involving youth are guided by state and federal laws in regards to data sharing making it difficult to establish these agreements. By preserving clear privacy protections and establishing appropriate governance structures, Pennsylvania can ensure that shared data is used responsibly and ethically in a way that better serves all youth-serving systems.

**JJDPC Recommendation 7.1:**

Implement and leverage existing statewide and local strategies to support cross-system data sharing and governance frameworks.

Strategy/Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<p><b>Strategy 7.1.A.</b> Identify key data points for measuring and tracking cross-system needs and progress, including current data 'owners', collection/reporting frequency, and other relevant information, necessary to establish a statewide youth data governance framework. Where possible and permissible, this should include student level data, recidivism data, educational attainment, and any other data elements that may factor into a child's involvement in the juvenile justice system.</p>	<p>JJDPC/PCCD; State Agencies (JCJC, DHS, PDE)</p>	<p>Short-term (<i>&lt;12 months</i>)</p>
<p><b>Strategy 7.1.B.</b> Work with relevant agency partners and data owners to identify barriers to developing data sharing agreements and develop these agreements or similar protocols like Shared Case Responsibility (SCR).</p>	<p>JJDPC/PCCD; State Agencies (JCJC, DHS, PDE, OA/IT)</p>	<p>Mid-term (<i>13-24 months</i>)</p>
<p><b>Strategy 7.1.C.</b> Consider and implement mechanisms for utilizing common data elements to track progress and performance across multiple systems (e.g., standardize data collection and reporting, technical assistance, etc.).</p>	<p>JJDPC/PCCD; State Agencies (JCJC, DHS, PDE, OA/IT)</p>	<p>Mid-term (<i>13-24 months</i>)</p>
<p><b>Strategy 7.1.D.</b> Publish public statewide and county-level data dashboards that show trends across systems (e.g., school discipline, school safety, youth arrests and juvenile justice referrals, placements, etc.) disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender. If available, these dashboards should include a method for submitting inquiries.</p>	<p>JJDPC/PCCD; State Agencies (JCJC, DHS, PDE, OA/IT)</p>	<p>Long term (<i>&gt;24 months</i>)</p>
<p><b>Strategy 7.1.E.</b> Use available funds or seek additional funding to pilot local cross-system data sharing initiatives or demonstration projects that integrate education, child welfare, juvenile justice, and behavioral health data, while being mindful of federal and state privacy laws and principles of ethical data use.</p>	<p>JJDPC/PCCD; State Agencies (JCJC, DHS, PDE, OA/IT)</p>	<p>Long term (<i>&gt;24 months</i>)</p>
<p><b>Strategy 7.1 F.</b> Use available funds to promote local cross-system efforts to coordinate upstream prevention planning and implementation.</p>	<p>JJDPC/PCCD; JJDPC Prevention Subcommittee</p>	<p>Long term (<i>&gt;24 months</i>)</p>



Pennsylvania  
**Commission on Crime  
and Delinquency**

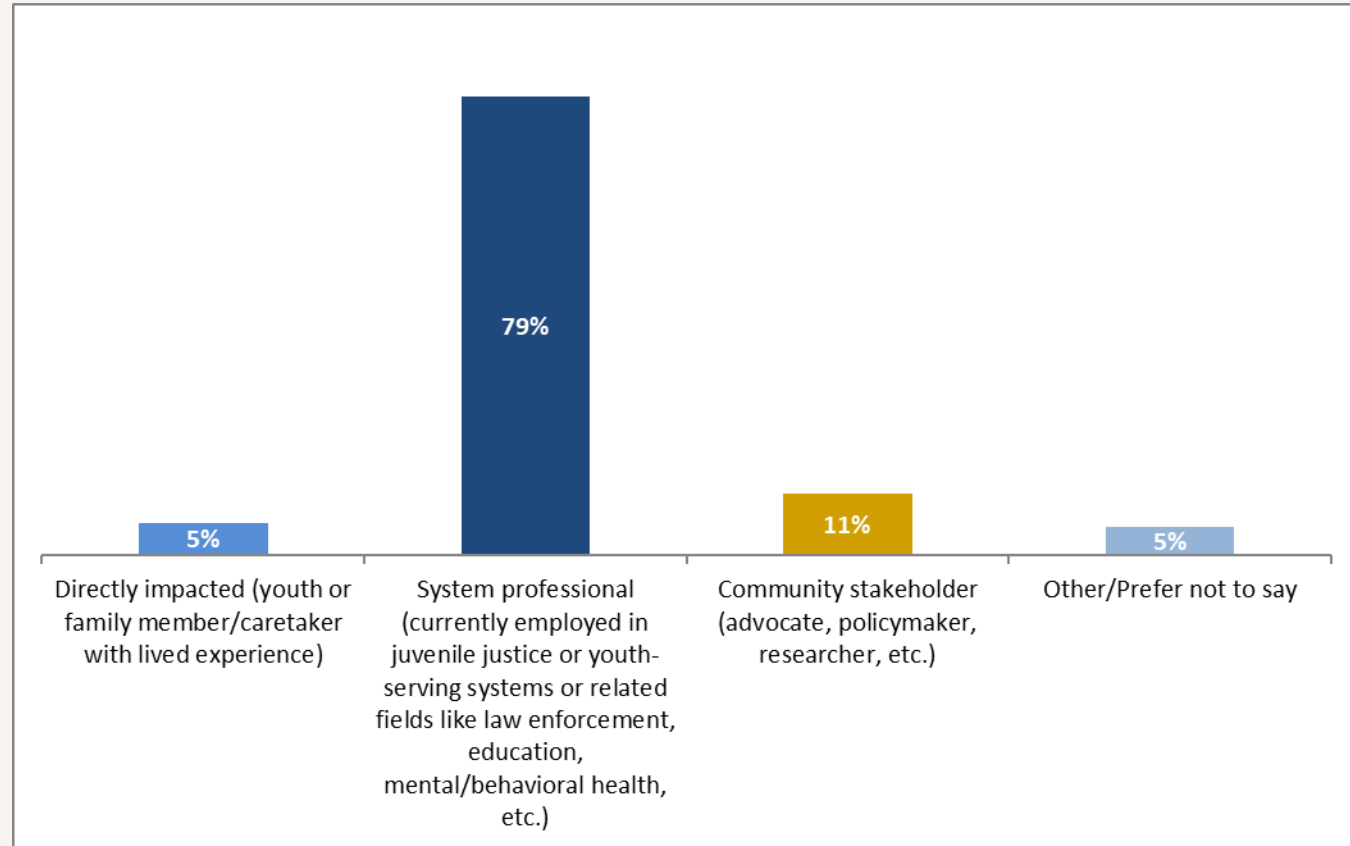
**7 AUGUST 2025**

# **2025 Juvenile Justice Plan to the Governor**

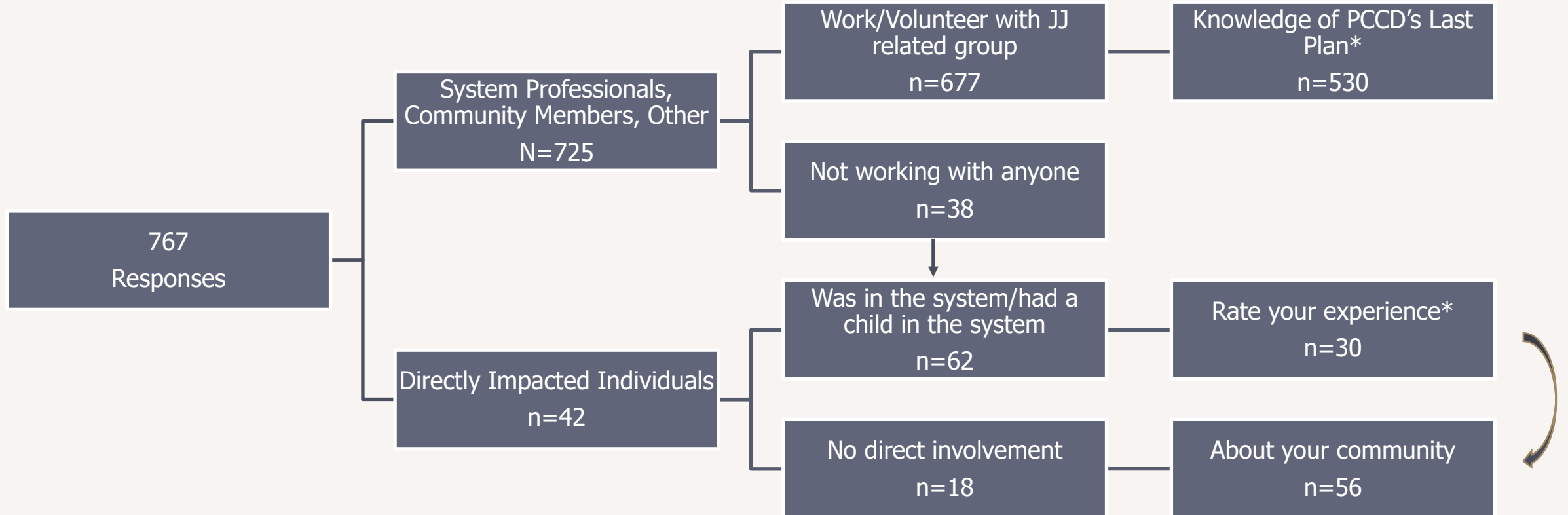
Analysis of Feedback Survey of Stakeholders  
*August 2025*

# Who responded to the survey?

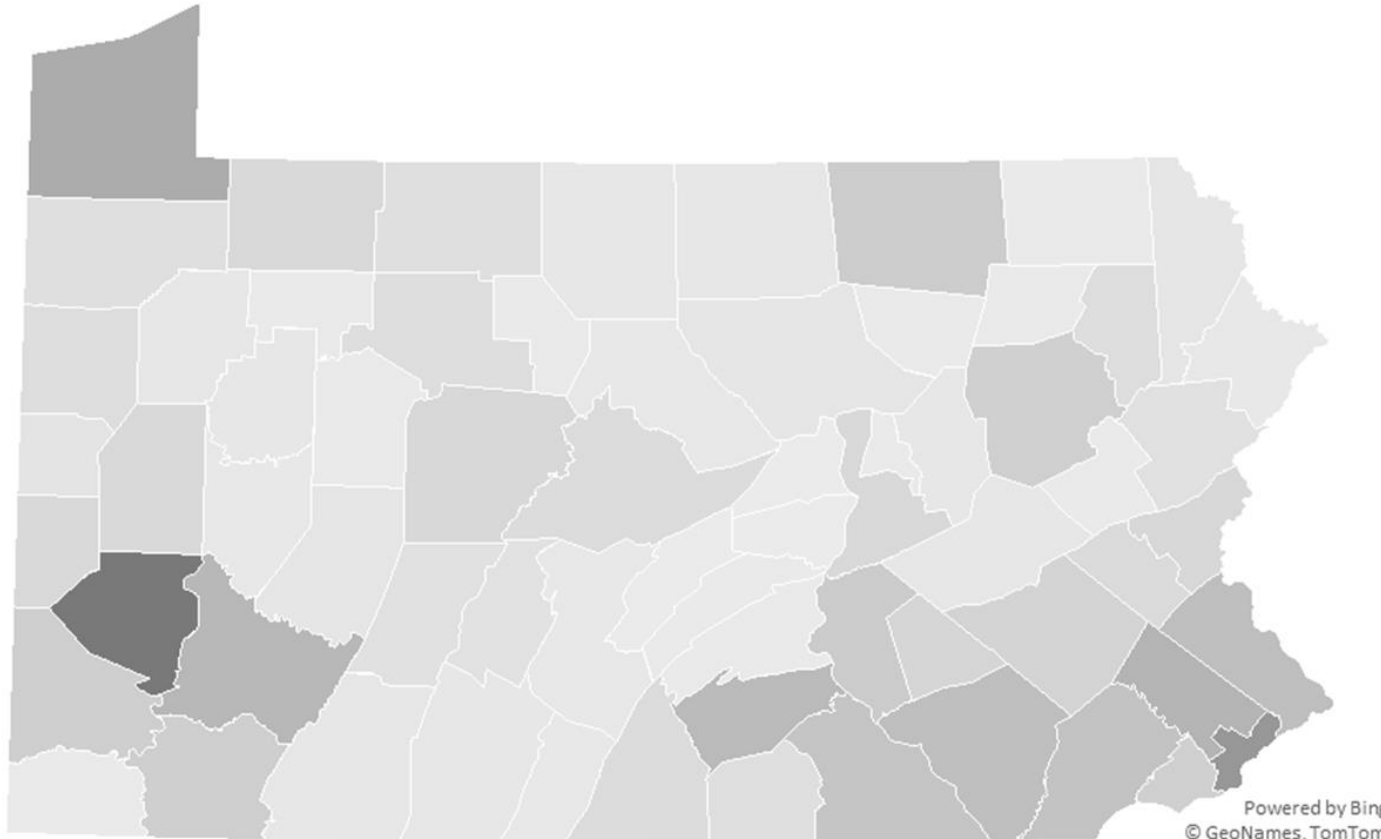
- 767 responses were received.\*
  - 607 system professionals
  - 81 community stakeholders
  - 42 directly impacted individuals



# Who responded to the survey?



# Where were survey respondents from? ( $n=767$ )



## Top 10 Counties:

1. Allegheny County (10%)
2. Philadelphia County (7%)
3. Erie County (5%)
4. Montgomery County (5%)
5. Westmoreland County (4%)
6. Cumberland County (4%)
7. Bucks County (4%)
8. Lancaster County (4%)
9. Chester County (3%)
10. York County (3%)

## Top 10 Zip Codes:

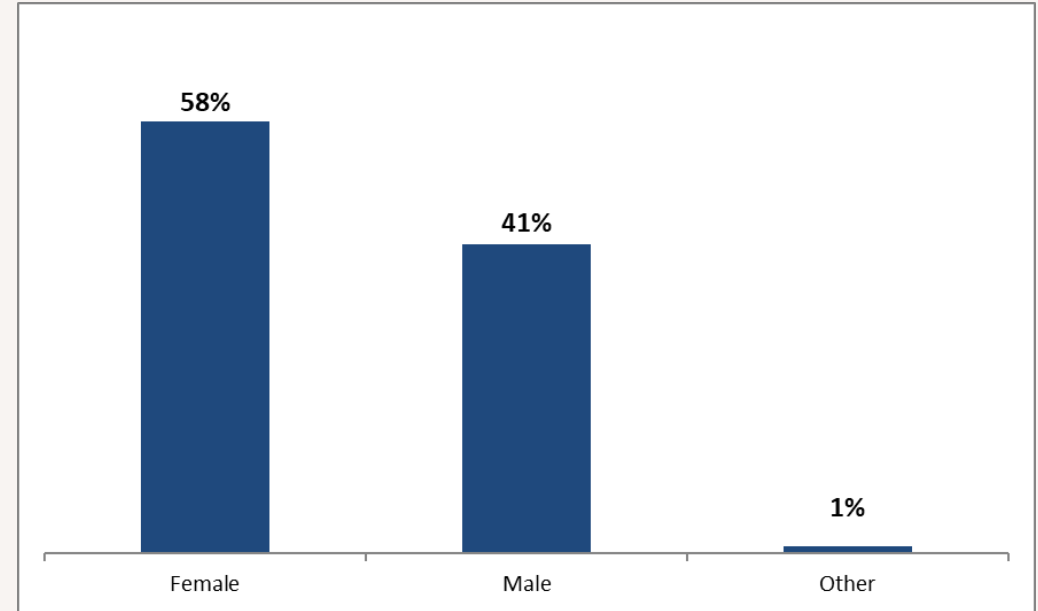
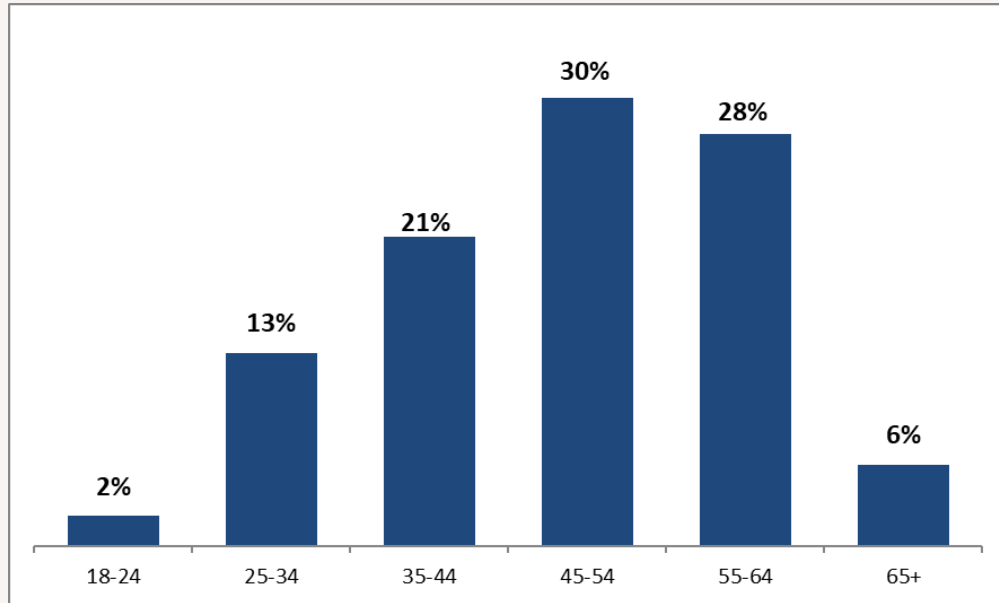
- |                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. 15601 (Westmoreland) | 6. 17603 (Lancaster)    |
| 2. 15301 (Washington)   | 7. 15642 (Westmoreland) |
| 3. 16365 (Warren)       | 8. 17050 (Cumberland)   |
| 4. 16506 (Erie)         | 9. 17055 (Cumberland)   |
| 5. 17042 (Lebanon)      | 10. 15201 (Allegheny)   |



# Demographic Data ( $n=540$ )

*What is your gender?*

*Which category below includes your age?*



White	86%
Black or African American	8%
Hispanic or Latino	4%
Asian or Asian American	0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0%
Other	2%

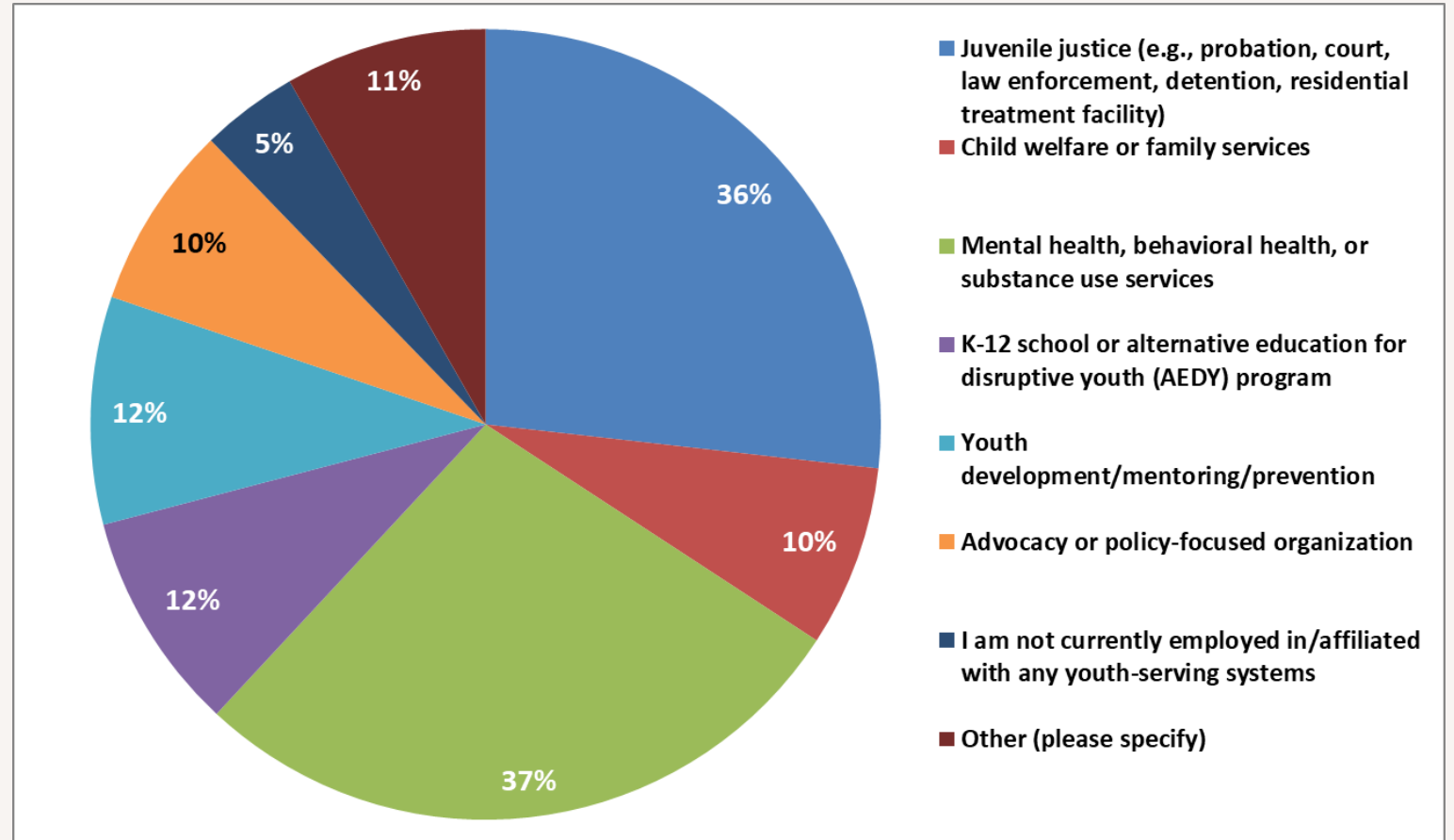


# System Professionals

# Who responded? (*n*=715)

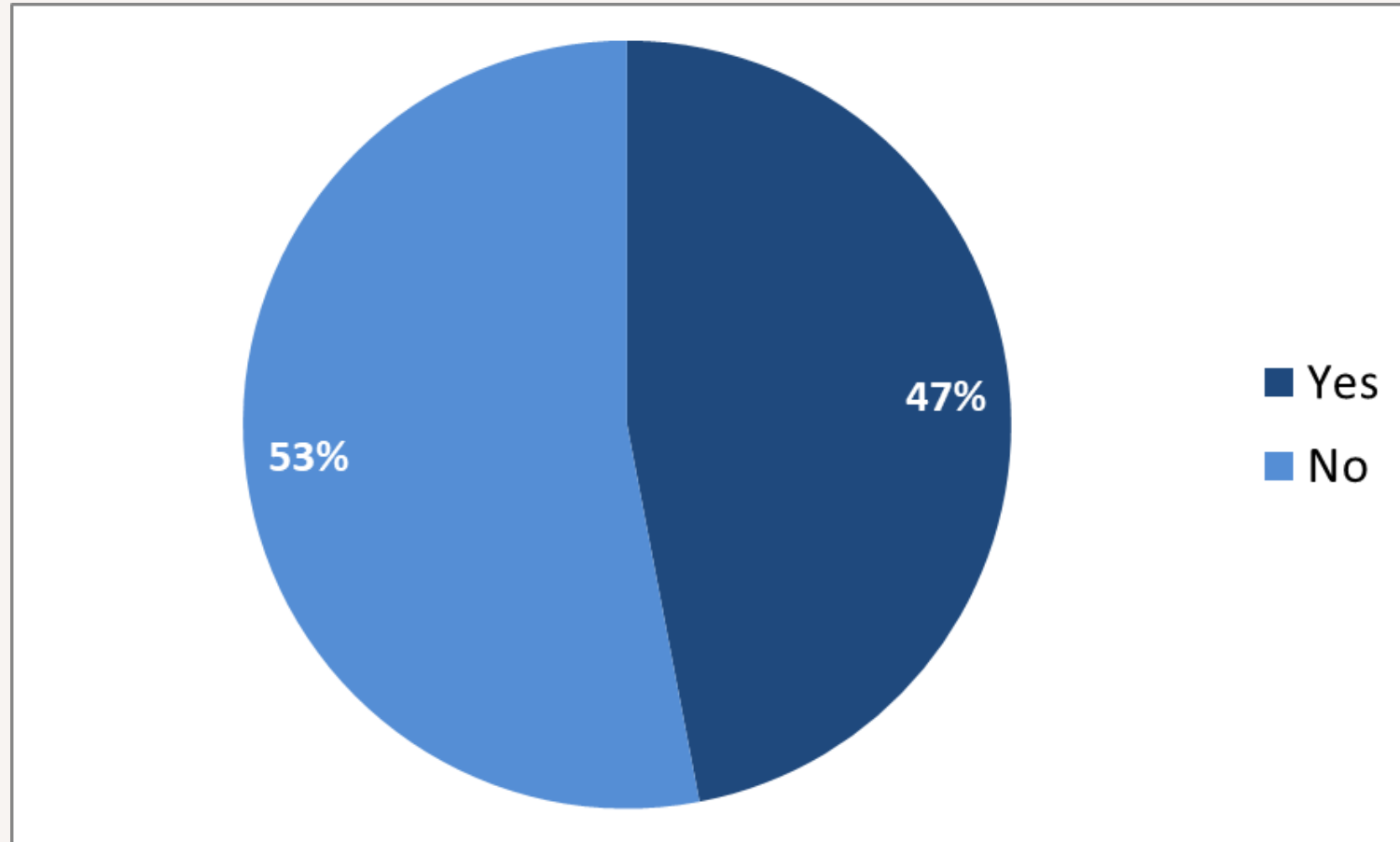
- **715 responses received**

- Majority of respondents came from the **juvenile justice system** and **mental health/behavioral health/SUD services**.
- The remaining respondents were from child welfare (10%), education (12%), youth development (12%) and advocacy (10%).
- 11% of respondents selected 'other' and included, victim services, workforce development, public defenders, intellectual disabilities, higher education, and more.



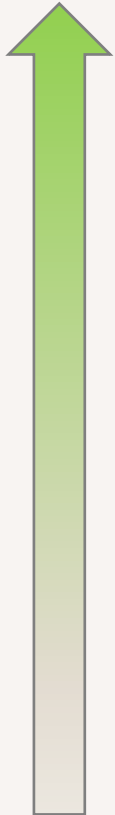
# Familiarity with PCCD's prior plan ( $n=530$ )

*Are you familiar with PCCD's current Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Plan (adopted in 2023)?*



# Ranking most essential, highest priorities (*n=530*)

*What are the top areas where you think support/improvements are most needed... (select up to 3)*

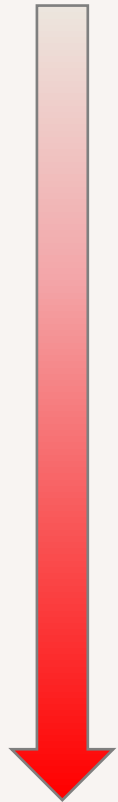


<b>Mental/behavioral health care, including suicide prevention and intervention</b>	<b>26.6%</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>Diversion and early intervention programs (including school-based)</b>	<b>26.2%</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>Access to/availability of community services/supports</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>Adequate staffing/addressing workforce challenges</b>	<b>25.1%</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Access to secure detention and treatment beds when needed</b>	<b>19.4%</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Drug prevention, treatment, and response</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Managing/referring youth with mental health needs</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Building/improving trust with youth, families, and communities</b>	<b>14.5%</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Reentry planning and support for justice-involved youth (e.g., services, plans, aftercare)</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Gun violence prevention and reducing youth gun involvement</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>72</b>
Safe and effective supervision of system-involved youth in the community	8.3%	44
Education and related services/supports	8.1%	43
Use of evidence-based programs and best practices	7.6%	40
Support for youth with disabilities or misidentified needs	7.4%	39
Reducing youth reoffending (recidivism)	7.0%	37



# Ranking most essential, highest priorities (*n=530*)

*What are the top areas where you think support/improvements are most needed... (select up to 3)*

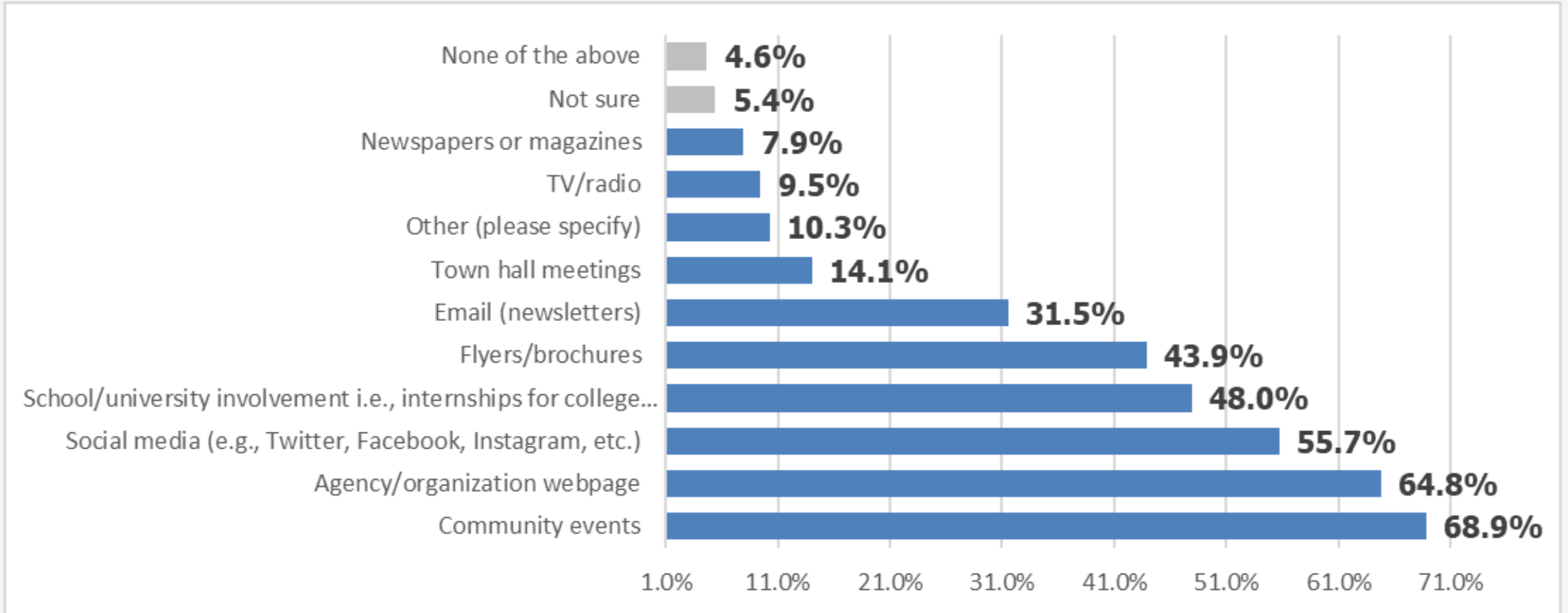


Other (please specify)	7.0%	37
Reducing youth-involved violent crime	6.6%	35
Support for dually involved youth (e.g., both child welfare and justice system involved)	6.4%	34
Better data and information sharing across systems (including improving records management, data systems, etc.)	5.9%	31
Increasing awareness of available resources	5.3%	28
Staff wellness, safety, and support	4.9%	26
Gang/group-related violence prevention and response	4.9%	26
Addressing status offenses (e.g., truancy, running away, curfew violations, etc.)	4.7%	25
System planning, coordination, and priority setting (e.g., strategic planning)	4.3%	23
Reducing racial/ethnic disparities	4.2%	22
System accountability/independent oversight (e.g., ombudsman boards)	2.3%	12
Language access and culturally responsive services	1.5%	8
Reducing case backlogs	1.5%	8
Training and technical assistance for system partners	1.1%	6
Meeting federal requirements for “Interest of Justice” issues	0.4%	2



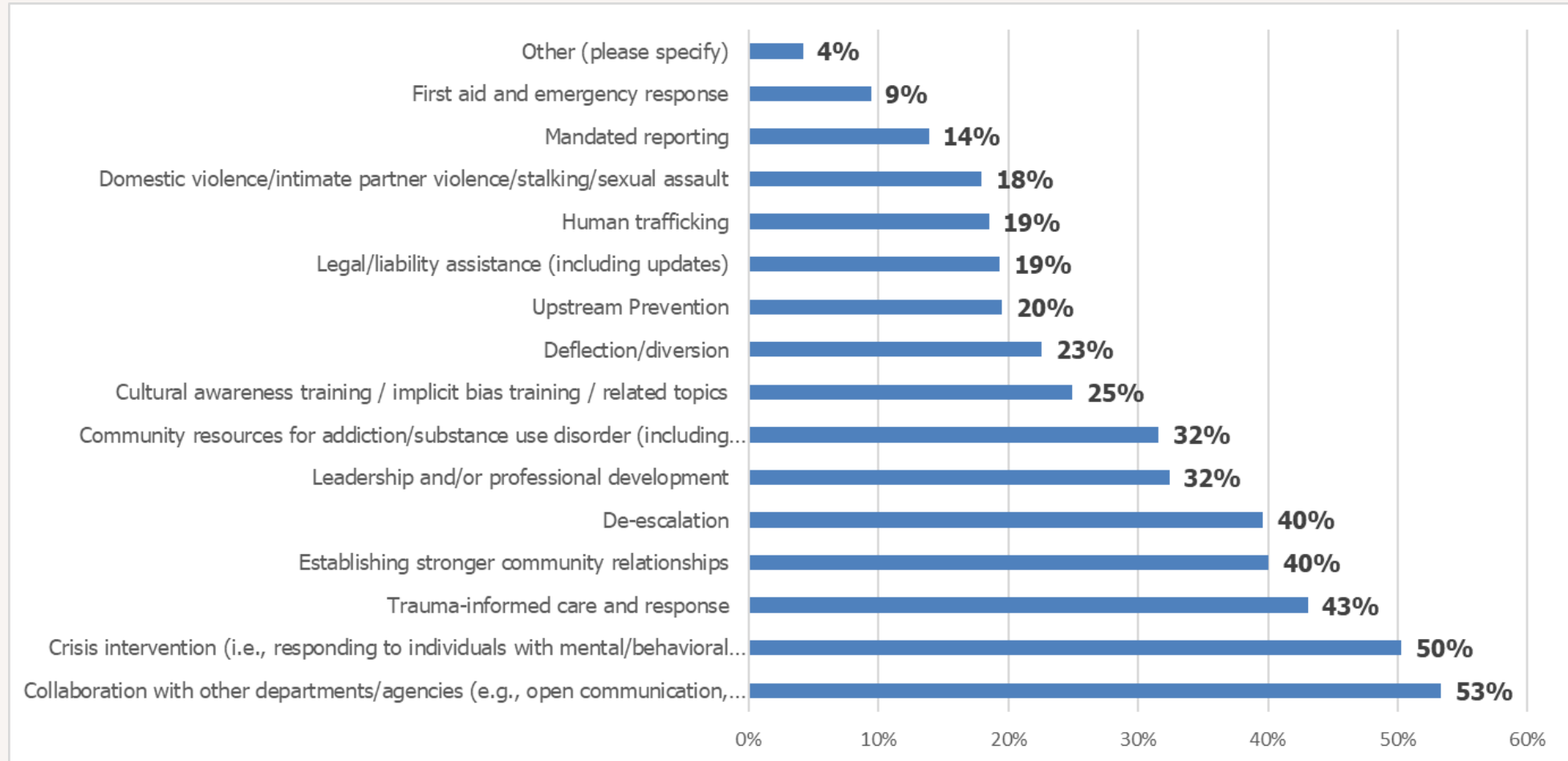
# Community Engagement (*n=517*)

*How does your agency/organization connect with the community/ies you serve?*



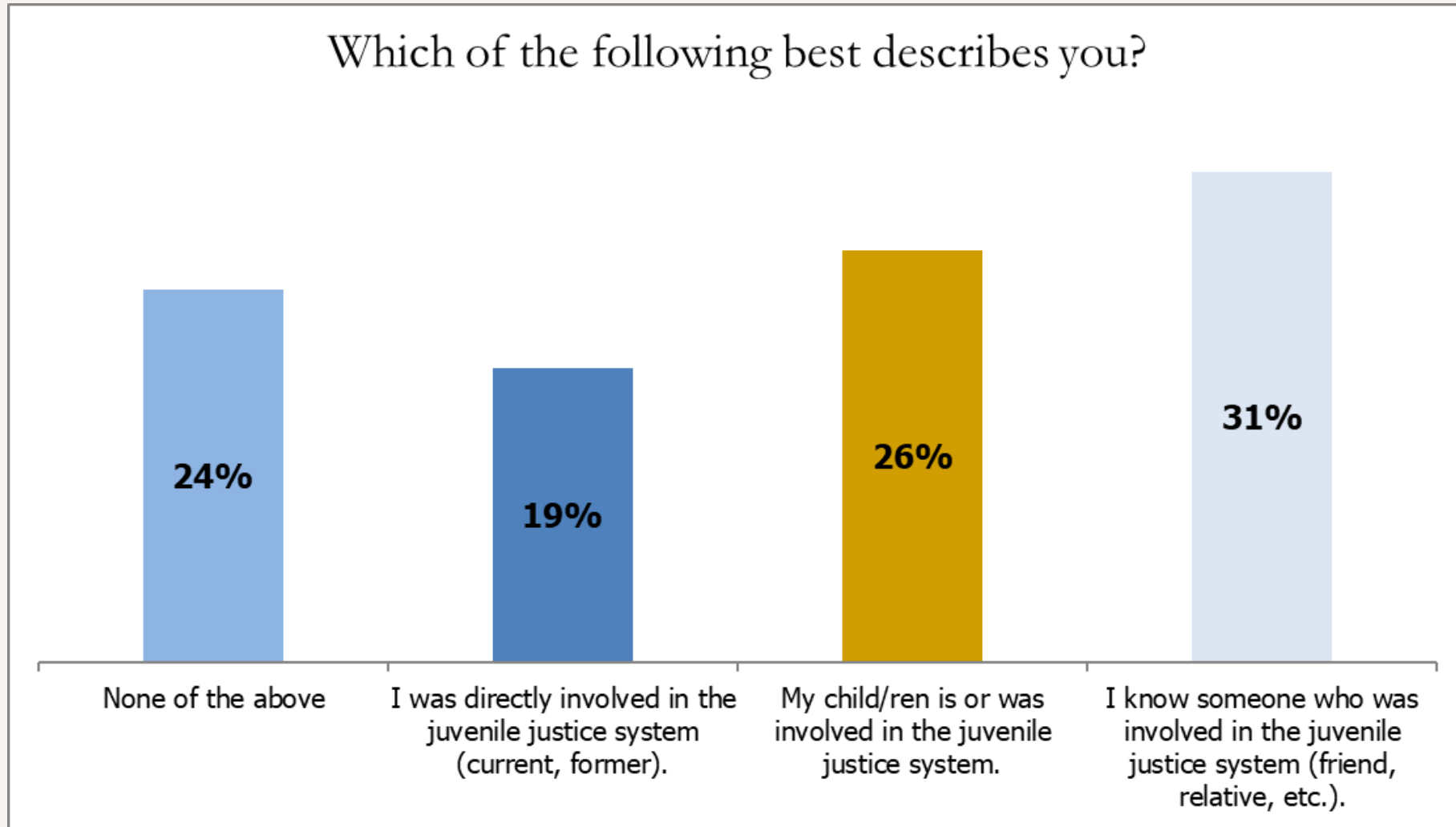
# Training Needs (n=497)

*Please select the type of training(s) that would be most beneficial to your agency/organization...*

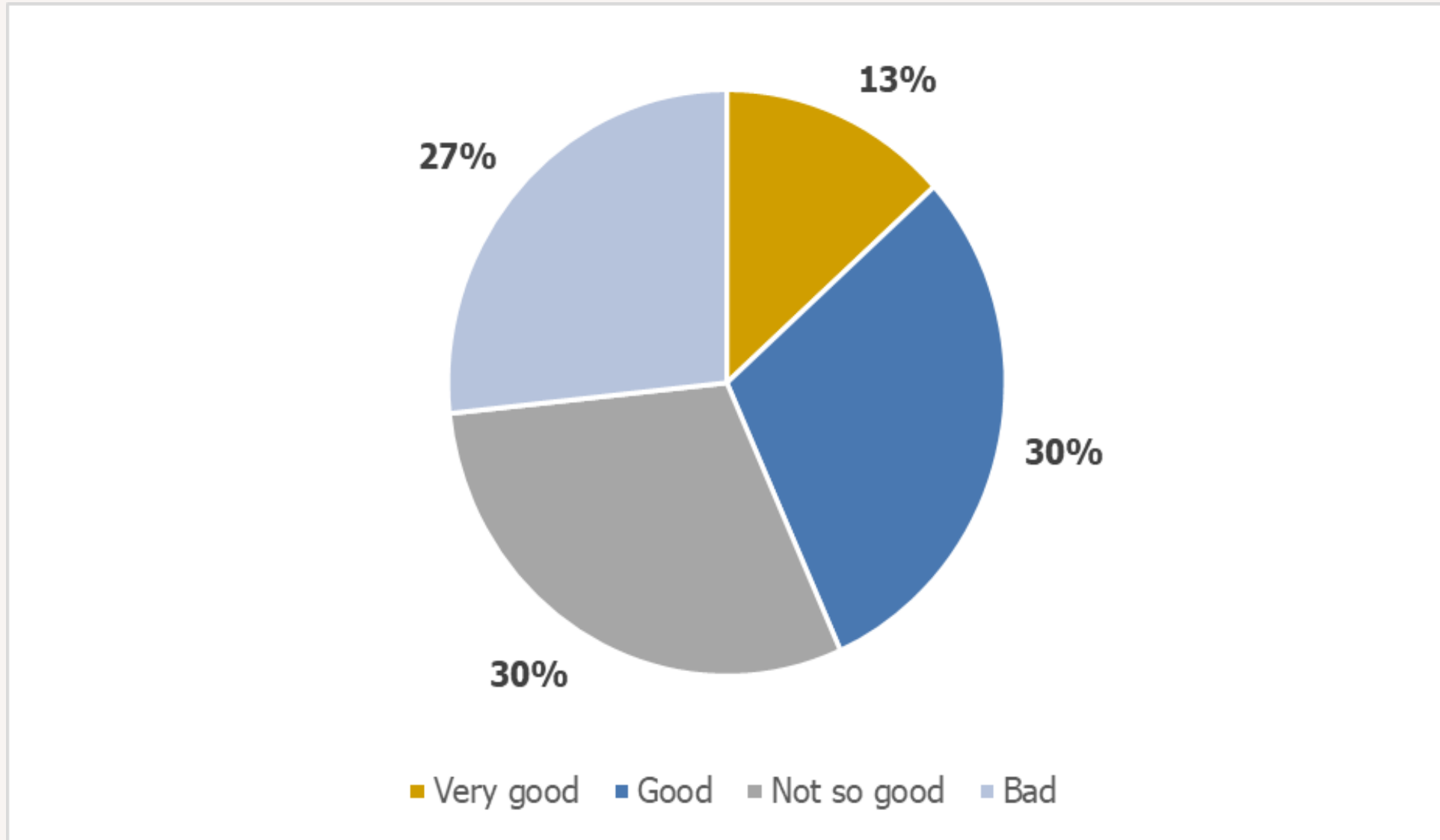


# Directly Impacted Stakeholders

# Who responded? ( $n=80$ )



# Experience in Juvenile Justice System ( $n=30$ )



“

*When the second chance for juvenile offender bill passed my son was one of the first juvenile offenders who was given the opportunity to utilized the service and honestly it was an excellent experience. The staff involved, the appointed individuals that were placed in my son's life to monitor his progress was genuinely passionate about my son successfully completing the Diversion Program and becoming a better person. **I speak highly because my son's life changed for the better and giving him this opportunity made him look at the justice system in a positive light.***

”

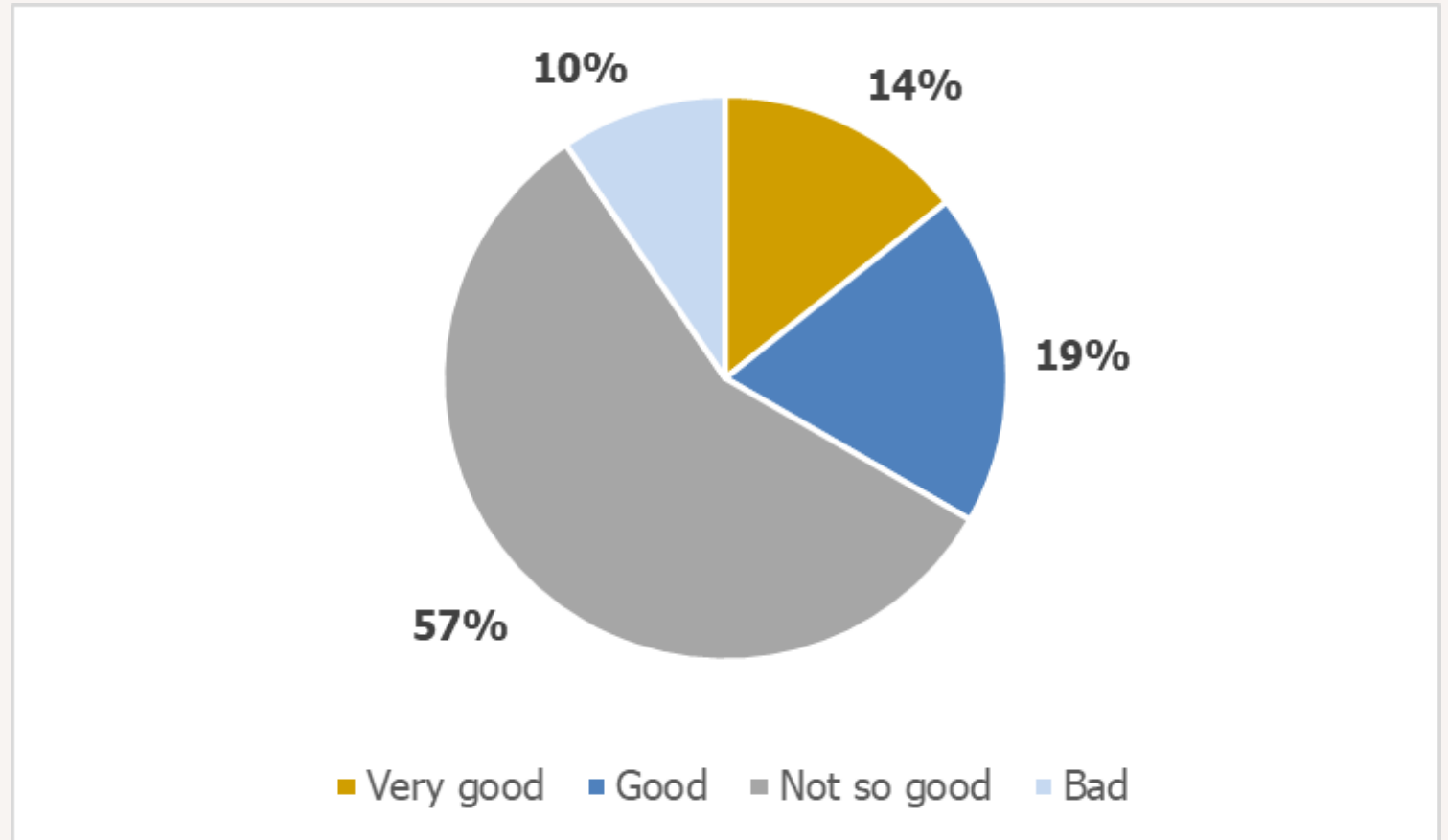


# Experience in Residential Facilities ( $n=21$ )

“

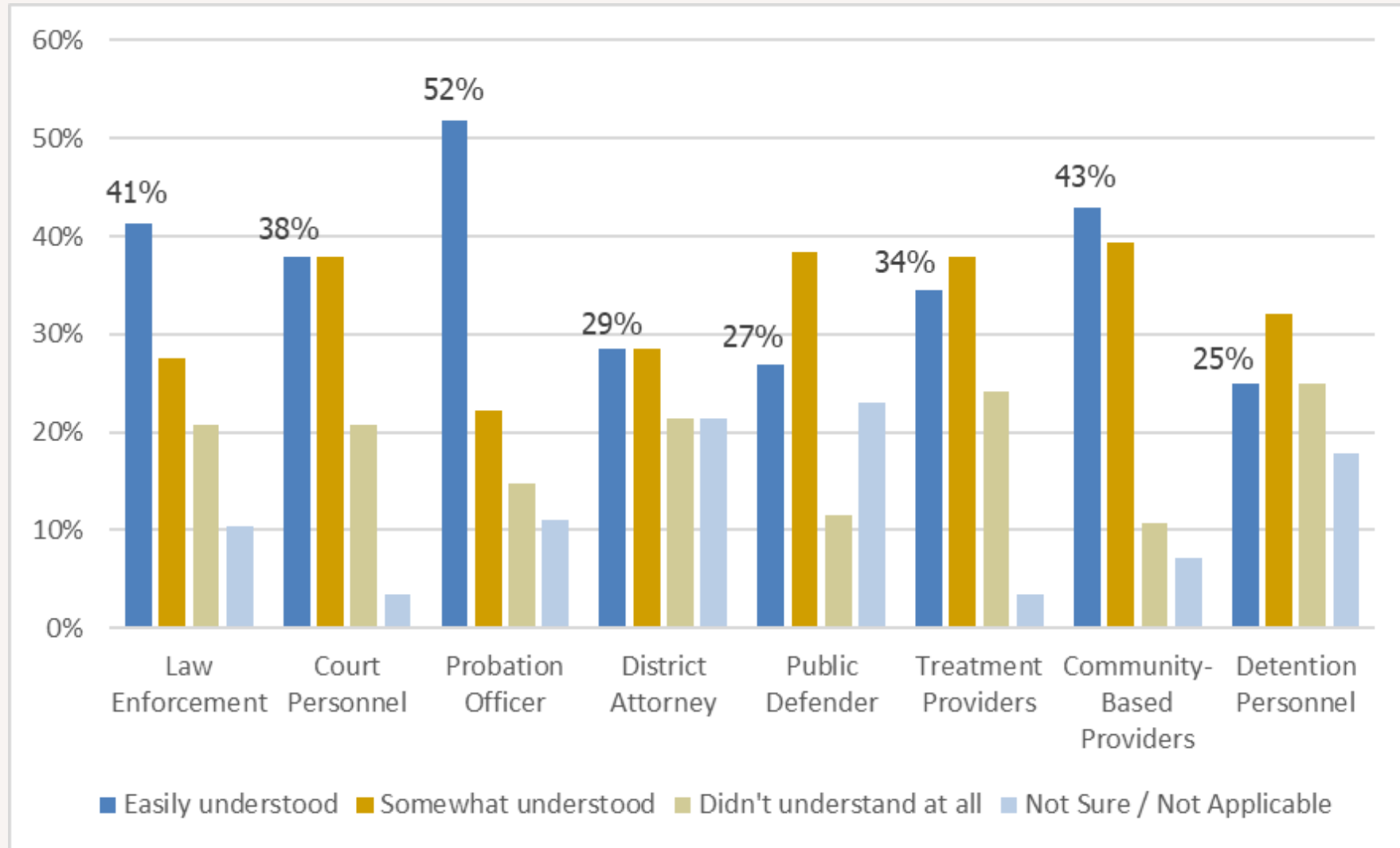
*I think everyone means well,  
but, it's a huge systemic  
problem to not have educated  
and experienced mental  
health professionals available  
for youth crisis situations...*

”



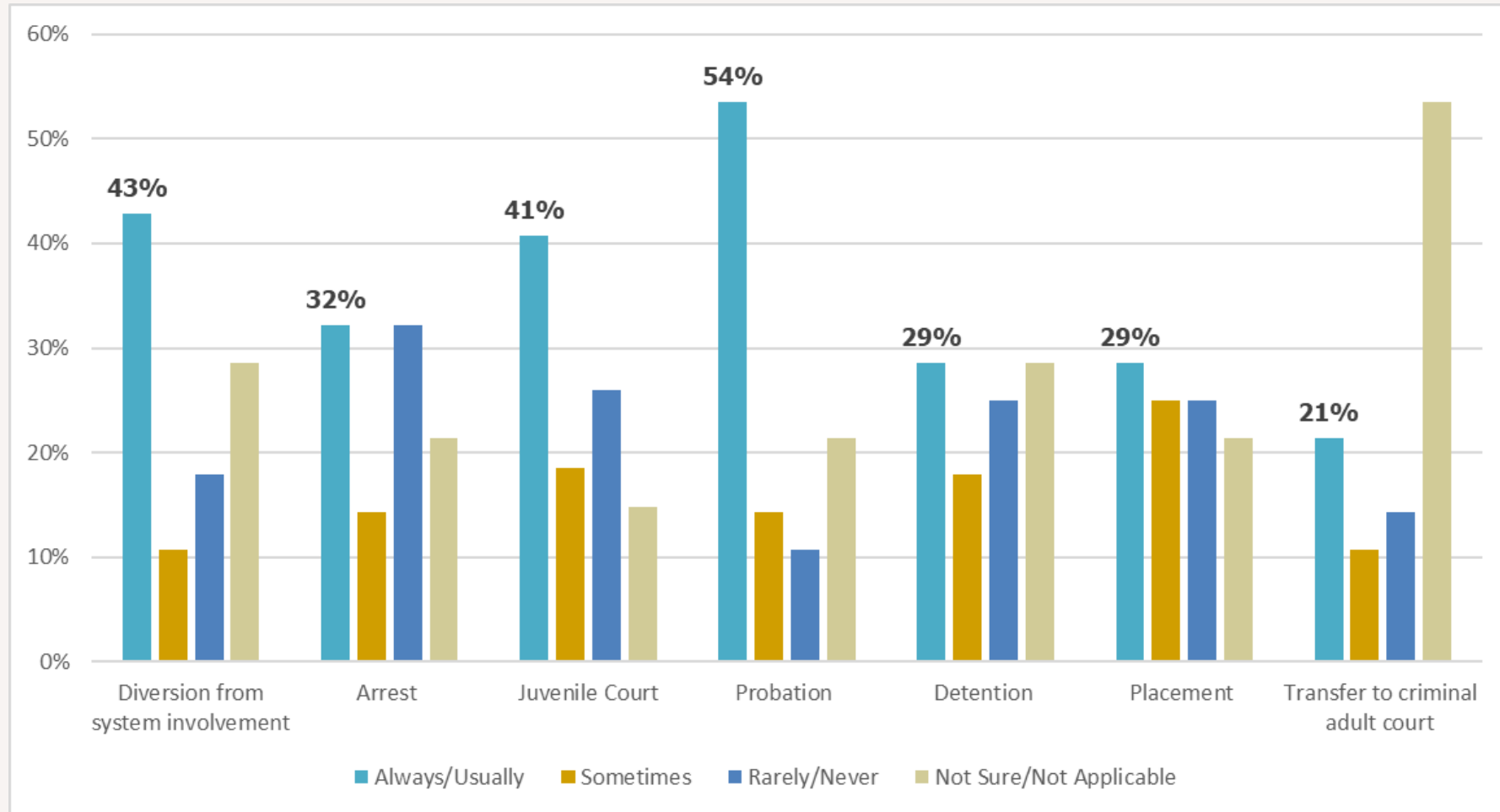
# Experience with the System ( $n=30$ )

*Thinking back to your interactions with individuals, how well did you understand what was being said or shared with you by each group?*



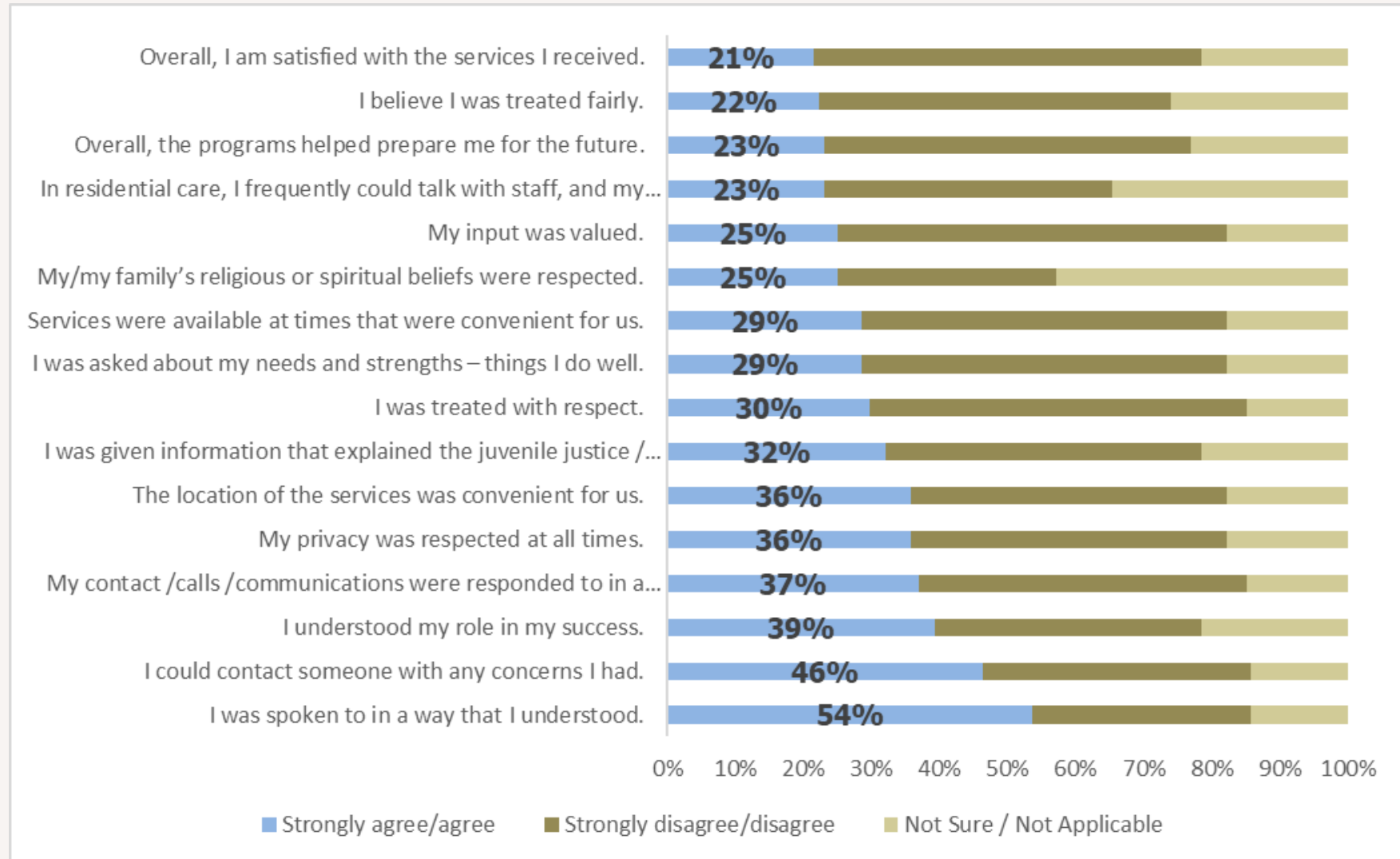
# Perceptions of Treatment ( $n=28$ )

*The juvenile justice system has several major points of contact with young people. Thinking back to your own experience, do you feel you were treated fairly at each of these contact points?*



# Perceptions of Treatment cont. (n=28)

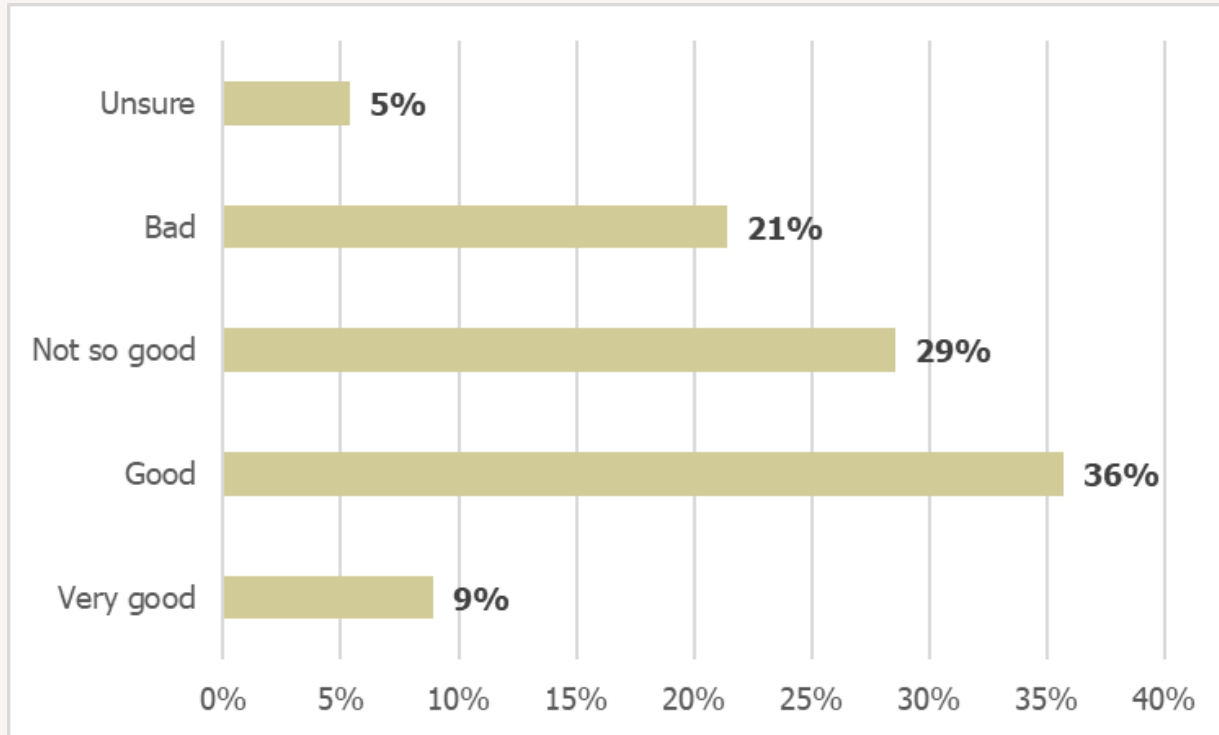
*If you've had personal experience with the juvenile justice system, please rate your agreement with the following statements.*



# Community Stakeholders

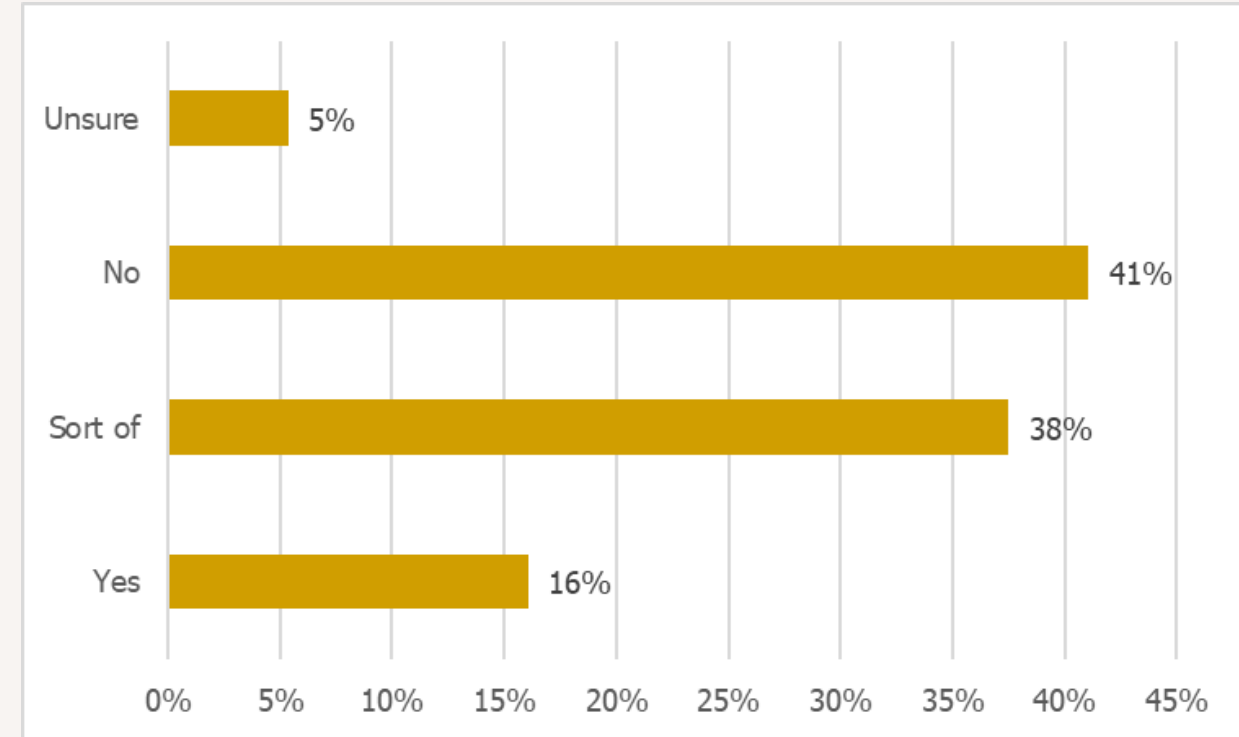
# Perceptions of community assistance ( $n=56$ )

## Meeting Youth Needs



*Overall, how would you rate your community at meeting the needs of youth?*

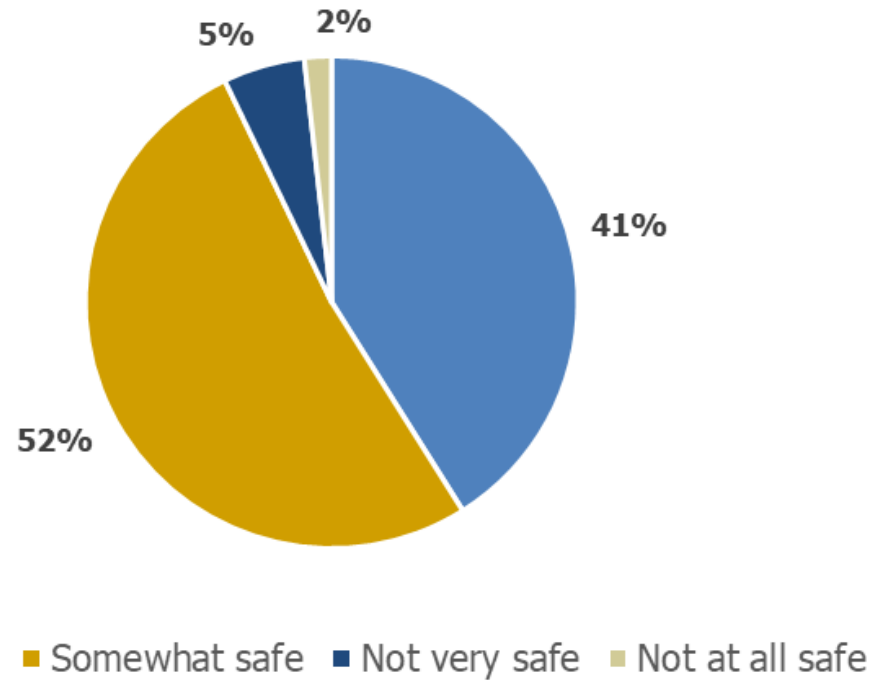
## Availability of Safe Places for Youth



*Do you feel like your community has safe places for youth to gather and 'hang out', interact with trusted adults and peers, etc.?*

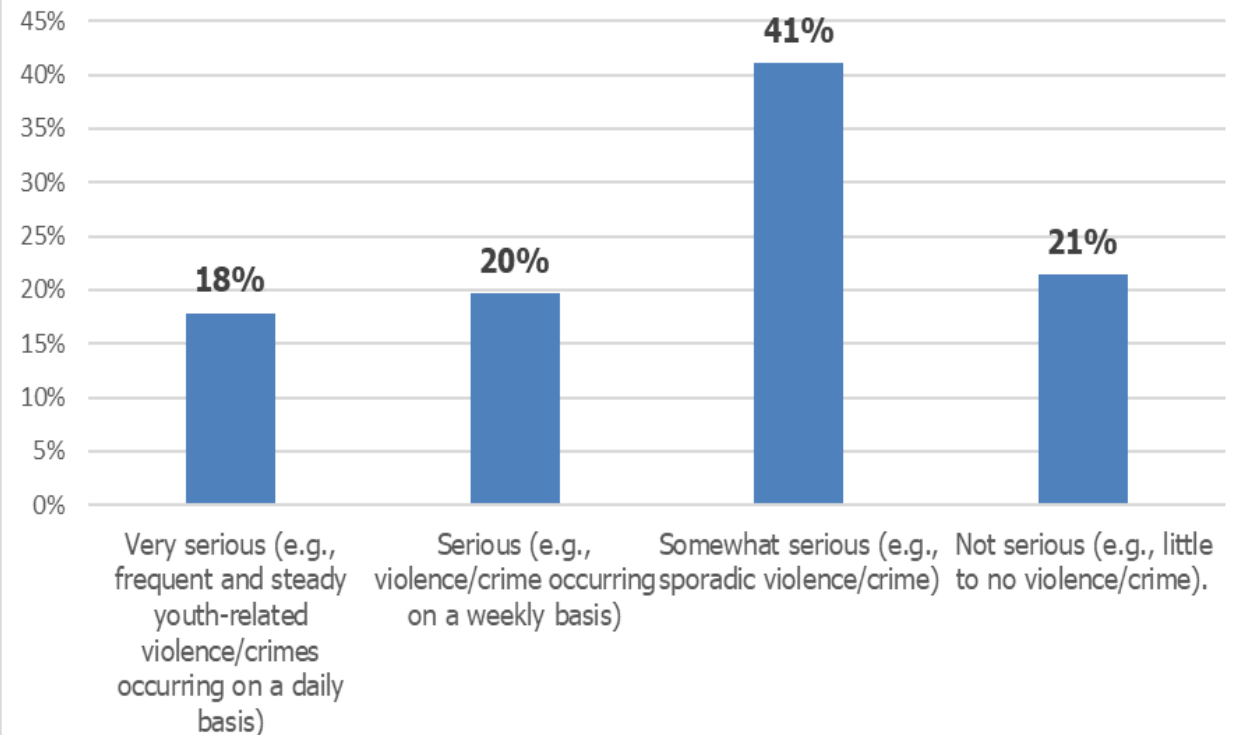


# Community safety (n=56)



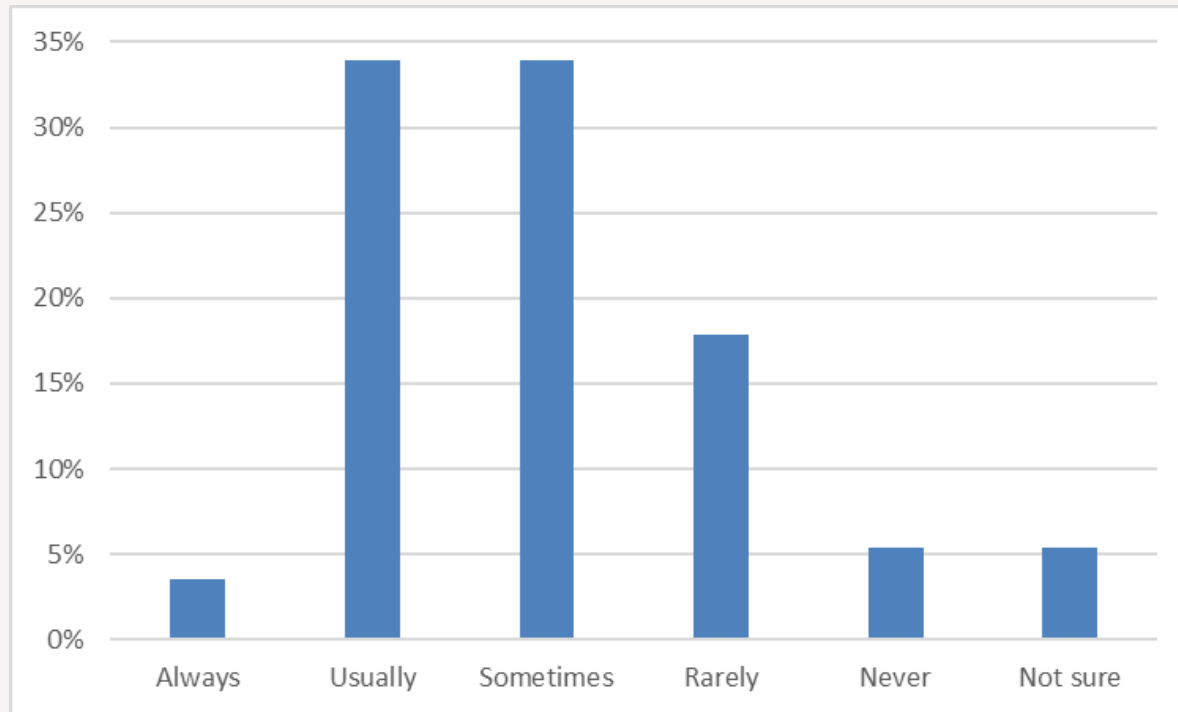
*How safe do you feel in the community where you live?*

*How serious is youth-related crime and other at-risk behaviors in your community?*



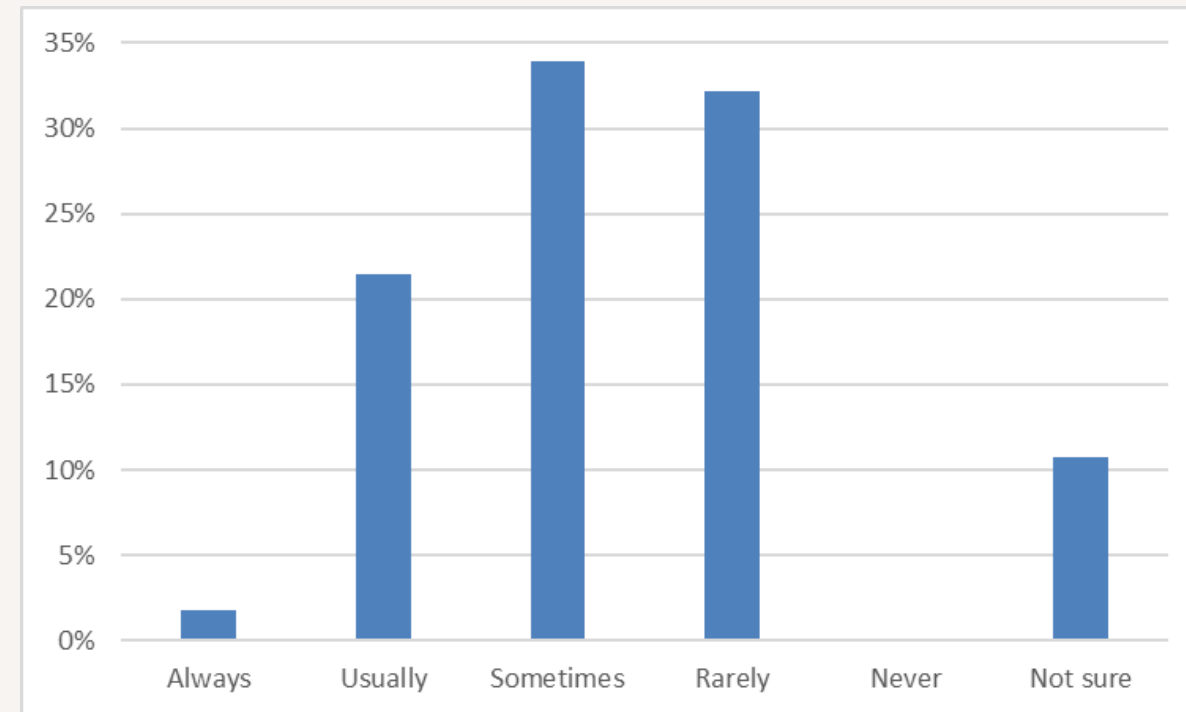
# Perceptions of juvenile justice involvement ( $n=56$ )

## Treatment of youth with first time offenses



*How frequently do you think a young person who is arrested or referred to the juvenile justice system for the first time is provided services in the community instead of placement or confinement?*

## Arrest/detention for technical violations



*How often do you think youth in your community are arrested or detained due to technical violations of probation (examples of technical violations include drinking, skipping school, breaking curfew, etc.)?*



# Biggest issues impacting youth + communities

*What issue(s) have the biggest impact on youth safety and well-being in your community?*



**47%**

Availability of Mental & Behavioral Health Services



**44%**

Bullying/Harassment



**36%**

Lack of 'safe spaces' for youth to hang out



**32%**

Alcohol/Substance use



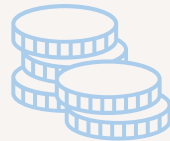
**32%**

Not enough youth mentoring/youth programs



**30%**

Food insecurity/hunger



**27%**

Poverty



**25%**

Limited education & career opportunities for youth



**25%**

School based incidents (*e.g fights, classroom disruptions*)



**20%**

Chronic Absenteeism



# Areas of top need (n=587)

*What are the top areas where you think support or improvements are most needed in Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system?*

## System Professionals



**27%**

Mental/Behavioral Health care



**26%**

Diversion & Early Intervention programs



**25%**

Access to Community Services/Supports



**25%**

Adequate Staffing



**19%**

Access to detention & treatment beds

## Community & individuals with lived experience



**33%**

Access to Community Services/Supports



**28%**

Building/improving trust with Youth, families, Community, etc.



**23%**

Mental/Behavioral Health care



**21%**

Adequate Staffing



**21%**

Drug prevention, treatment, & response



# What are the most challenging issues? (n=587)

What do you think are the most challenging issue(s) that the community/ies your organization/agency serves face(s)?  
(select all that apply)

## System Professionals



**48%**

Availability of  
community-based  
resources & programs



**46%**

Alcohol/Drug  
Use  
Offenses



**43%**

Responding to mental/  
Behavioral health  
emergencies



**39%**

Limited Availability  
of Beds



**39%**

Social Media/  
Technology

## Community & individuals with lived experience



**58%**

Alcohol/Drug  
Use  
Offenses



**47%**

Responding to mental/  
Behavioral health emergencies



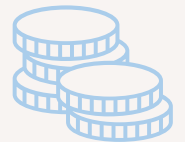
**40%**

Lack of referral  
services/awareness  
of services



**39%**

Availability of  
community-based  
resources & programs



**39%**

Poverty



“

*I would just simplify to state that all the issues are obviously intertwined. For my clients, they end up in a position where they're stuck in a juvenile justice system with insufficient community support. A lot of them are worried about housing and that combines with mental health problems to cause substantial issues over the longer term.*

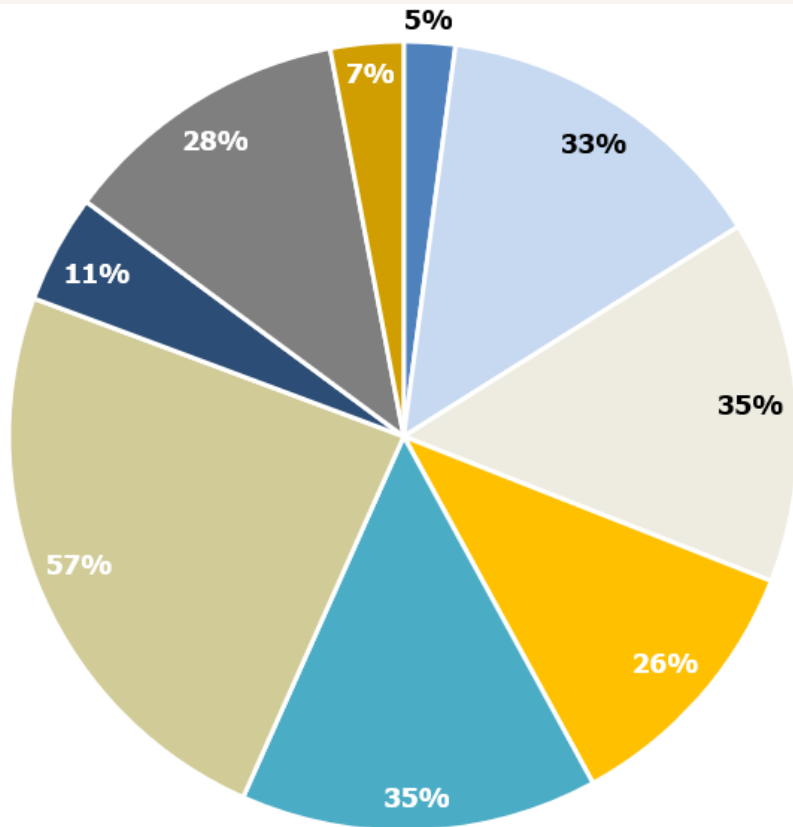
”



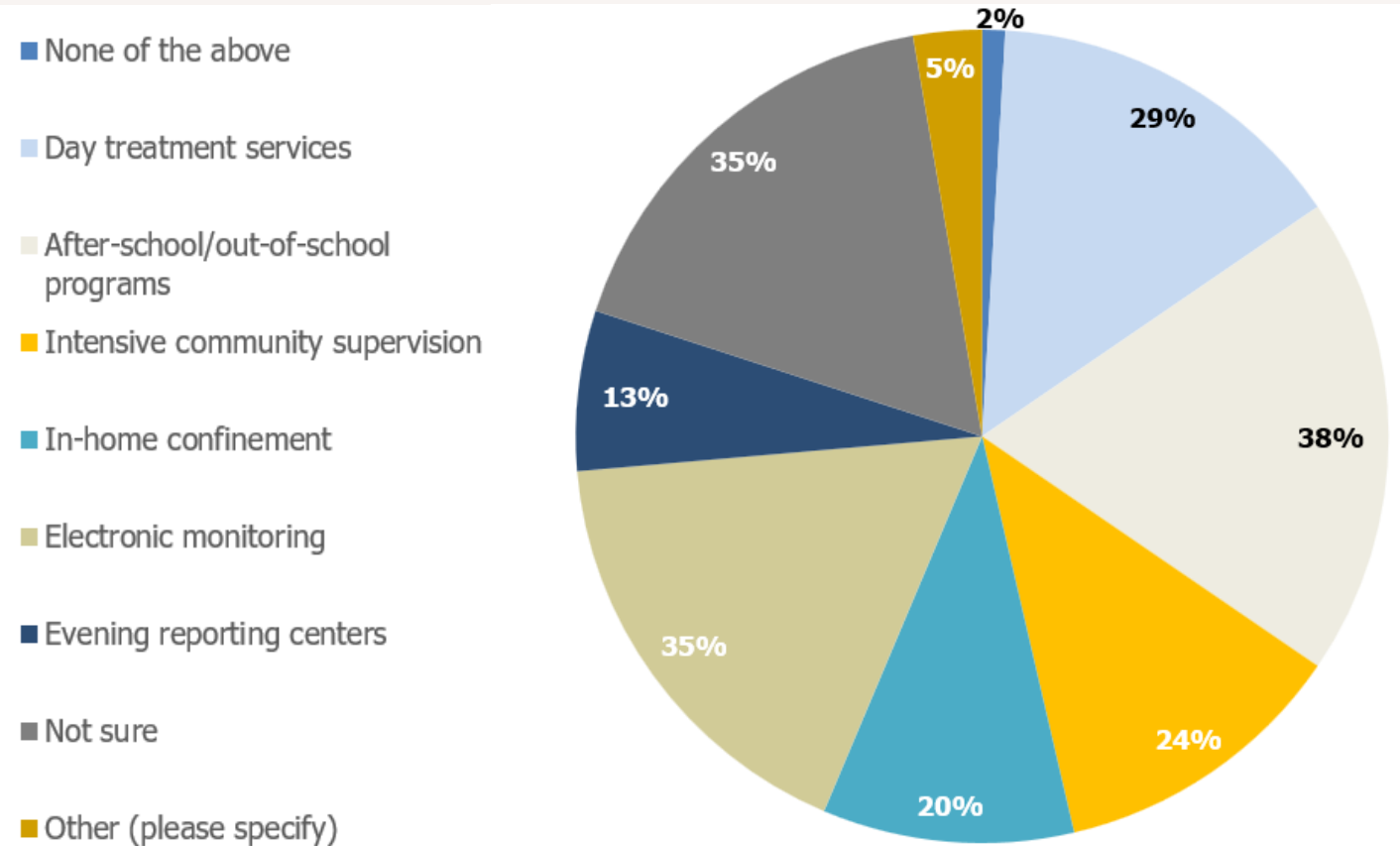
# Alternatives to Secure Detention ( $n=587$ )

*What alternatives to secure detention are available in your community?*

## System Professionals



## Community & individuals with lived experience



- None of the above
- Day treatment services
- After-school/out-of-school programs
- Intensive community supervision
- In-home confinement
- Electronic monitoring
- Evening reporting centers
- Not sure
- Other (please specify)



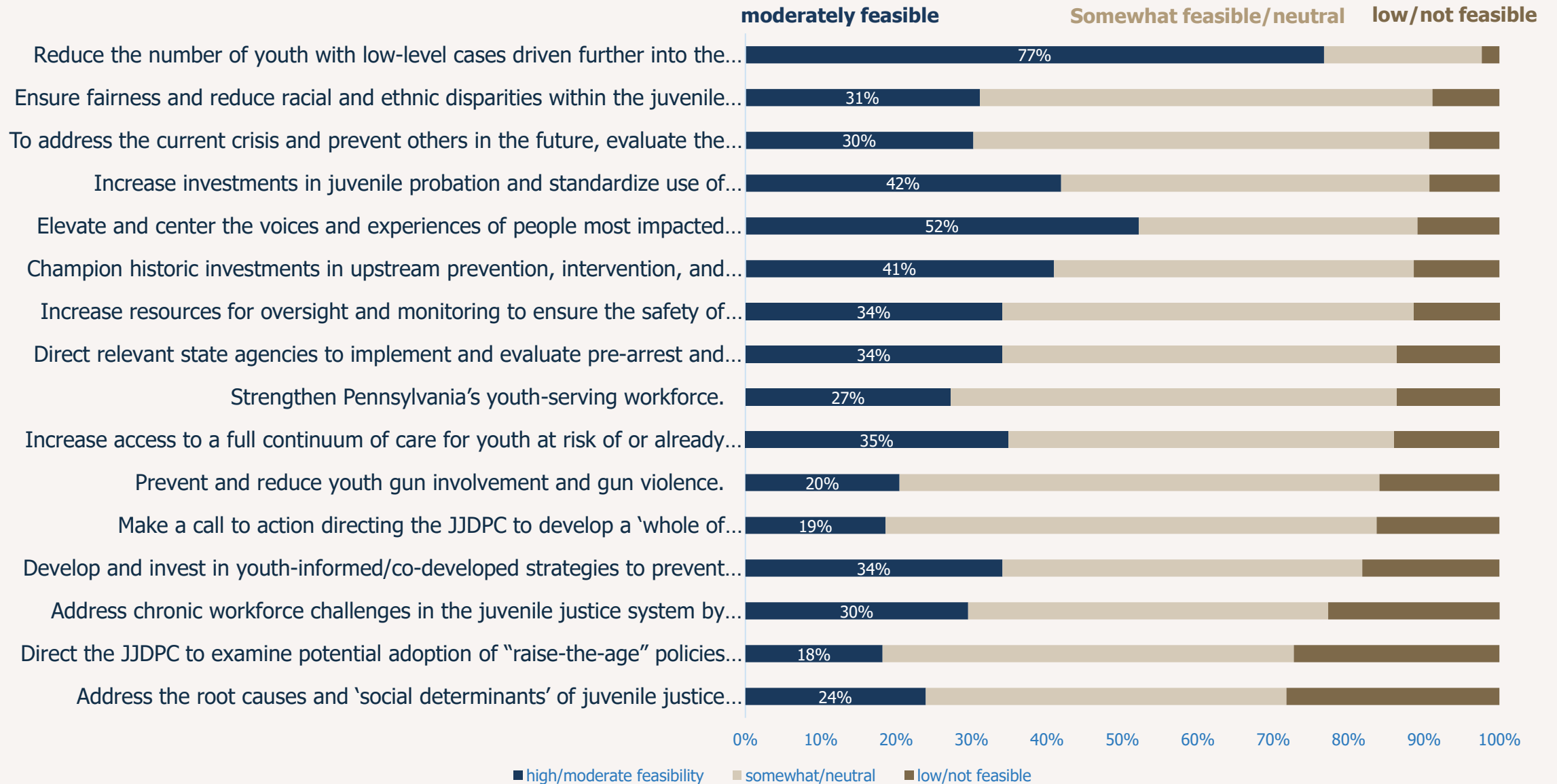
# Common Themes from Stakeholder Comments

- **Mental/Behavioral Health** – lack of treatment options and a shortage of mental/behavioral health providers, lack of a specialized response to youth with mental/behavioral health issues.
  - *"There is very little in the way of resources for children with disabilities, and very little understanding of disabilities on the side of the legal system professionals."*
- **Availability & Accessibility** – lack of resources and staff leading to limited availability of community-based supports, prevention efforts, supportive services, mental health services, and more.
- **Lack of trust in the system** – many respondents cited a commonly held belief that the system "sets up individuals to fail," as well as lack of trust in the system leading to mistrust of providers, staff, and other intervention programs.
- **Workforce Issues** – chronic staffing shortages in the system and lack of experienced professionals.

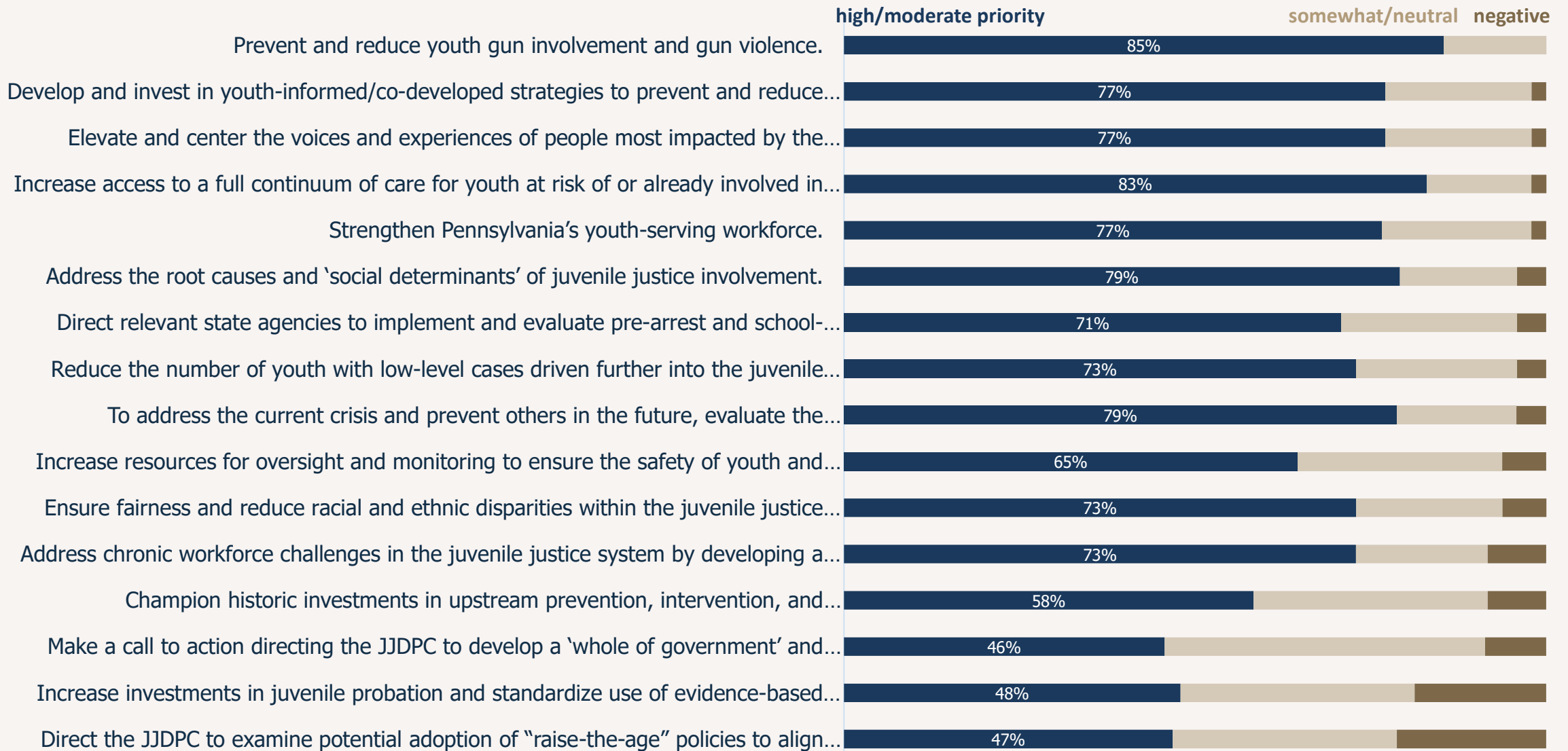


# JJDPC & Subcommittee Members' Feedback

# How feasible are ideas in the current plan?



# Continued priority level for 2023 plan ideas



# Summary of Current Plan Ideas

## **Overall High Ratings (e.g., important, making progress, and feasible)**

- Elevate and center the voices and experiences of people most impacted by the juvenile justice system, including youth, families, and victims.
- Reduce the number of youth with low-level cases driven further into the juvenile justice system.
- Increase access to a full continuum of care for youth at risk of or already involved in the juvenile justice system.

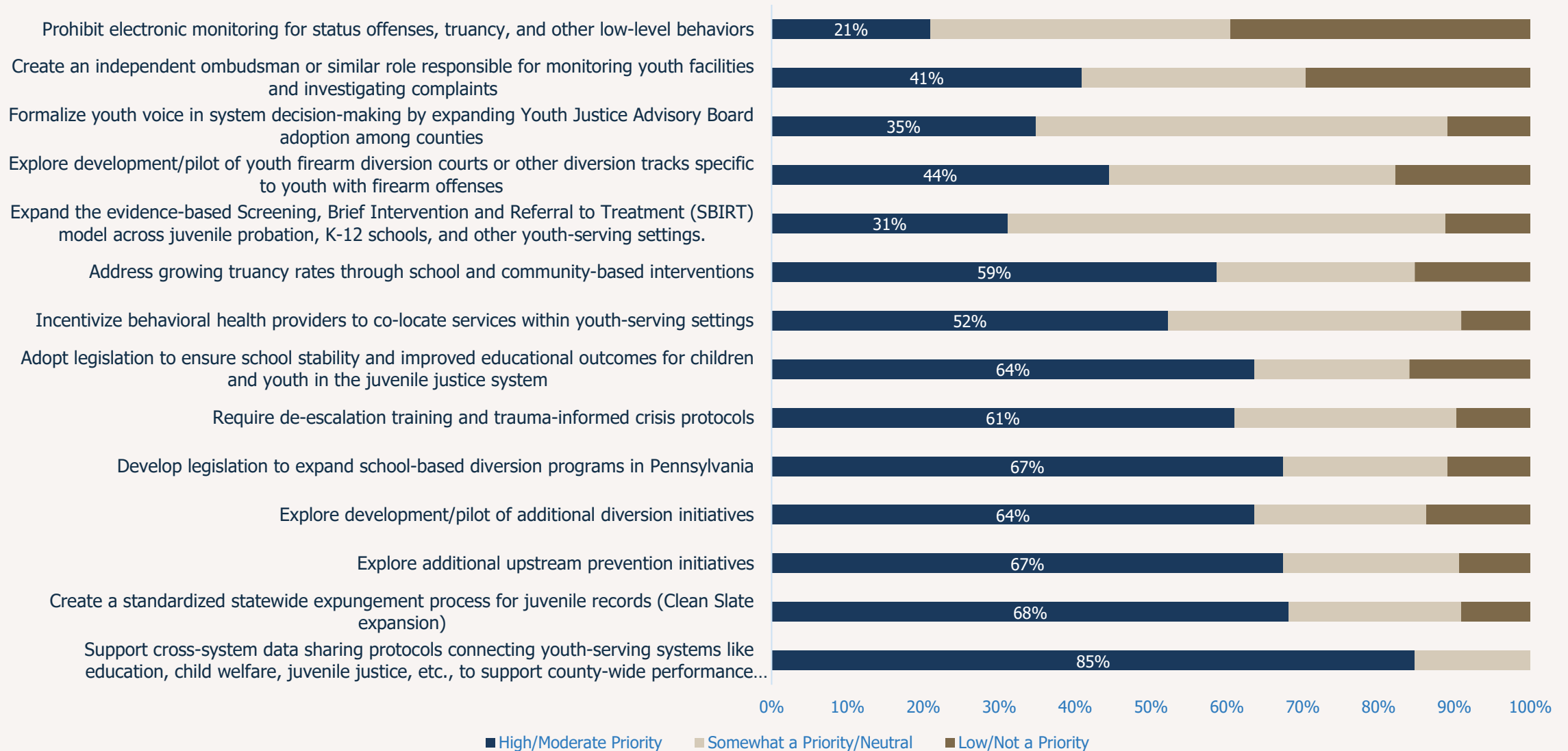
## **High Priority + Feasibility, Lower Progress (e.g., low hanging fruit)**

- Champion historic investments in upstream prevention, intervention, and engagement strategies that can pay dividends for Pennsylvania's future.
- Increase investments in juvenile probation and standardize use of evidence-based screening instruments and case management tools as a condition of funding.

## **Overall Lower Ratings (e.g., maybe things we table in 2025)**

- Direct the JJDC to examine potential adoption of "raise-the-age" policies to align Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system with the latest research on brain development and the potential for rehabilitation among young adults.

# What new ideas should be prioritized for 2025?



# Current + New Ideas with Overall High Priority Ratings from JJDPCC + Subcommittee Members

## Current Plan Recommendations

*(Weighted Avg > 3.75)*

- Reduce the number of youth with low-level cases driven further into the juvenile justice system.
- Elevate and center the voices and experiences of people most impacted by the juvenile justice system, including youth, families, and victims.
- Increase investments in juvenile probation and standardize use of evidence-based screening instruments and case management tools as a condition of funding.
- Make a call to action directing the JJDPCC to develop a 'whole of government' and community-informed statewide action plan for addressing the urgent crises facing the juvenile justice system, including supporting at-risk and justice-involved youth along an equitable continuum of care and opportunity.
- Champion historic investments in upstream prevention, intervention, and engagement strategies that can pay dividends for Pennsylvania's future.
- Ensure fairness and reduce racial and ethnic disparities within the juvenile justice system.
- Address the root causes and 'social determinants' of juvenile justice involvement.

## New Ideas

*(Weighted Avg >4.25)*

- Support cross-system data sharing protocols connecting youth-serving systems like education, child welfare, juvenile justice, etc., to support county-wide performance measurement
- Create a standardized statewide expungement process for juvenile records (Clean Slate expansion)
- Explore additional upstream prevention initiatives
- Explore development/pilot of additional diversion initiatives
- Develop legislation to expand school-based diversion programs in Pennsylvania
- Require de-escalation training and trauma-informed crisis protocols
- Adopt legislation to ensure school stability and improved educational outcomes for children and youth in the juvenile justice system
- Incentivize behavioral health providers to co-locate services within youth-serving settings
- Address growing truancy rates through school and community-based interventions

# Additional Takeaways

## **Addressing mental/behavioral health needs is a top priority for all stakeholders, including JJDPC/Subcommittee members.**

- More than half of members said MH and substance use services was the most needed investment for the state.
- 70% said PA should provide early access to MH/BH and family supports as part of diversion expansion.

## **Like community and system stakeholders, there is strong support for expanding diversion + other initiatives reducing unnecessary justice system involvement for youth among members.**

- 75% of members surveyed said this reform should be prioritized
- In addition to MH/BH supports, 2/3 said PA should prioritize increased investments in pre-arrest/community diversion + expanding youth/family informed programs addressing root causes)

## **Recognition of importance of utilizing available data (+ increasing sharing / cross-system utilization) to improve system transparency and outcomes.**

- 80% of members said PA should use data to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, services, and reforms.

## Appendix B: Additional Data Tables & Figures<sup>124</sup>

**Exhibit B.1: Arrests, Referrals, Diversions, Secure Detention, Secure Confinement, & Adult Transfer in Pennsylvania by Race/Ethnicity (2019-2023)**

	Total Youth Population *	% of Total Population	Arrests	% of Population Arrested	Referrals to Court	% of Arrested Youth Referred to Court	Diversions	% of Referred Youth Diverted	Secure Detention	% of Referred Youth Detained	Youth Petitioned to Court	% of Referred Youth Petitioned to Court	Youth Found to be Delinquent	% of Youth Petitioned to Court Found to be Delinquent	Secure Confinement	% of Delinquent Youth Securely Confined	Adult Transfer	% of Petitioned Youth Transferred to Adult Court
<b>2019</b>																		
<b>Total</b>	1,210,636		35,368	2.9%	22,944	64.9%	8,987	39.2%	7,244	31.6%	13,957	60.8%	5,730	41.1%	144	2.5%	52	0.4%
<b>White</b>	839,390	69.3%	17,797	2.1%	9,891	55.6%	4,334	43.8%	1,625	16.4%	5,557	56.2%	2,298	41.4%	36	1.6%	22	0.4%
<b>Black</b>	173,406	14.3%	13,598	7.8%	8,789	64.6%	2,875	32.7%	4,341	49.4%	5,914	67.3%	2,259	38.2%	74	3.3%	21	0.4%
<b>Hispanic</b>	145,003	12.0%	3,677	2.5%	3,137	85.3%	1,218	38.8%	1,035	33.0%	1,919	61.2%	904	47.1%	28	3.1%	8	0.4%
<b>Asian</b>	50,572	4.2%	280	0.6%	105	37.5%	50	47.6%	19	18.1%	55	52.4%	28	50.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>2020</b>																		
<b>Total</b>	1,206,186		22,348	1.9%	15,118	67.6%	5,768	38.2%	4,202	27.8%	9,350	61.8%	3,538	37.8%	110	3.1%	22	0.2%
<b>White</b>	829,280	68.8%	12,068	1.5%	6,607	54.7%	2,803	42.4%	961	14.5%	3,804	57.6%	1,559	41.0%	42	2.7%	7	0.2%
<b>Black</b>	174,127	14.4%	7,884	4.5%	5,811	73.7%	1,840	31.7%	2,567	44.2%	3,971	68.3%	1,347	33.9%	41	3.0%	14	0.4%
<b>Hispanic</b>	149,147	12.4%	2,250	1.5%	1,959	87.1%	741	37.8%	548	28.0%	1,218	62.2%	471	38.7%	21	4.5%	1	0.1%
<b>Asian</b>	51,395	4.3%	122	0.2%	57	46.7%	26	45.6%	11	19.3%	31	54.4%	11	35.5%	1	9.1%	0	0.0%
<b>2021</b>																		
<b>Total</b>	1,362,936		20,661	1.5%	13,887	67.2%	5,487	39.5%	3,612	26.0%	8,400	60.5%	3,115	37.1%	98	3.1%	41	0.5%
<b>White</b>	842,568	61.8%	11,831	1.4%	6,310	53.3%	2,703	42.8%	809	12.8%	3,607	57.2%	1,394	38.6%	44	3.2%	15	0.4%
<b>Black</b>	168,360	12.4%	6,679	4.0%	5,211	78.0%	1,709	32.8%	2,196	42.1%	3,502	67.2%	1,195	34.1%	25	2.1%	20	0.6%
<b>Hispanic</b>	155,485	11.4%	2,005	1.3%	1,733	86.4%	727	42.0%	484	27.9%	1,006	58.0%	399	39.7%	19	4.8%	6	0.6%
<b>Asian</b>	46,023	3.4%	135	0.3%	65	48.1%	33	50.8%	13	20.0%	32	49.2%	15	46.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

	Total Youth Population *	% of Total Population	Arrests	% of Population Arrested	Referrals to Court	% of Arrested Youth Referred to Court	Diversions	% of Referred Youth Diverted	Secure Detention	% of Referred Youth Detained	Youth Petitioned to Court	% of Referred Youth Petitioned to Court	Youth Found to be Delinquent	% of Youth Petitioned to Court Found to be Delinquent	Secure Confinement	% of Delinquent Youth Securely Confined	Adult Transfer	% of Petitioned Youth Transferred to Adult Court
<b>2022</b>																		
<b>Total</b>	1,359,733		27,423	2.0%	19,476	71.0%	9,593	49.3%	3,662	18.8%	9,883	50.7%	5,643	57.1%	221	3.9%	31	0.3%
<b>White</b>	816,286	60.0%	14,751	1.8%	8,455	57.3%	4,284	50.7%	761	9.0%	4,171	49.3%	2,077	49.8%	62	3.0%	12	0.3%
<b>Black</b>	164,178	12.1%	9,372	5.7%	7,294	77.8%	3,344	45.8%	2,258	31.0%	3,950	54.2%	2,409	61.0%	110	4.6%	16	0.4%
<b>Hispanic</b>	159,281	11.7%	3,041	1.9%	2,621	86.2%	1,321	50.4%	509	19.4%	1,300	49.6%	863	66.4%	36	4.2%	2	0.2%
<b>Asian</b>	45,587	3.4%	243	0.5%	121	49.8%	86	71.1%	8	6.6%	35	28.9%	26	74.3%	4	15.4%	0	0.0%
<b>2023</b>																		
<b>Total</b>	1,359,733		31,229	2.3%	22,486	72.0%	10,835	48.2%	4,003	17.8%	11,651	51.8%	6,302	54.1%	213	3.4%	37	0.3%
<b>White</b>	816,286	60.0%	16,431	2.0%	9,222	56.1%	4,662	50.6%	778	8.4%	4,560	49.4%	2,246	49.3%	44	2.0%	1	0.0%
<b>Black</b>	164,178	12.1%	10,863	6.6%	8,814	81.1%	3,918	44.5%	2,425	27.5%	4,896	55.5%	2,796	57.1%	121	4.3%	14	0.3%
<b>Hispanic</b>	159,281	11.7%	3,583	2.2%	3,229	90.1%	1,616	50.0%	615	19.0%	1,613	50.0%	942	58.4%	43	4.6%	18	1.1%
<b>Asian</b>	45,587	3.4%	325	0.7%	164	50.5%	89	54.3%	17	10.4%	75	45.7%	47	62.7%	0	0.0%	1	1.3%

- 
- <sup>1</sup> 71 P.S. § 1190.23. Powers and duties of the Commission.
- <sup>2</sup> 71 P.S. § 1190.26. Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee.
- <sup>3</sup> 42 Pa.C.S. § 6301 et seq.
- <sup>4</sup> [Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System](#), Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.
- <sup>5</sup> [Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System](#), Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.
- <sup>6</sup> 34 U.S.C. § 11133(a)(11)
- <sup>7</sup> 34 U.S.C. § 11133(a)(12)
- <sup>8</sup> 34 U.S.C. § 11133(a)(13)
- <sup>9</sup> 34 U.S.C. § 11133(a)(15)
- <sup>10</sup> The Pennsylvania State Police Uniform Crime Reports, Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.
- <sup>11</sup> The Pennsylvania State Police Uniform Crime Reports, Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.
- <sup>12</sup> The Pennsylvania State Police Uniform Crime Reports, Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.
- <sup>13</sup> [Juvenile Court Annual Report](#), Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, 2023.
- <sup>14</sup> [Juvenile Court Annual Report](#), Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, 2023.
- <sup>15</sup> [Juvenile Court Annual Report](#), Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, 2023.
- <sup>16</sup> [Juvenile Court Annual Report](#), Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, 2023.
- <sup>17</sup> The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services' Office of Children, Youth, and Families, Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.
- <sup>18</sup> [Juvenile Court Annual Report](#), Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, 2023.
- <sup>19</sup> [Juvenile Court Annual Report](#), Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, 2023.
- <sup>20</sup> [The Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Recidivism Report: Juveniles Closed 2007-2020](#), Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, March 2025.
- <sup>21</sup> Note: Recidivism rates for 2022 were calculated in 2025.
- <sup>22</sup> Calculated using data from a variety of sources including the United States Census Bureau, JCJC's Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research (CJJT&R) and the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC).
- <sup>23</sup> See Endnote #22
- <sup>24</sup> See Appendix B for youth transferred to Adult Court.
- <sup>25</sup> Prior to 2022, population figures were retrieved from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. From 2022 and forward, population figures were retrieved from the United States Census Bureau. As such, the reader is cautioned when comparing population figures for 2022 and 2023 to previous years' figures.
- <sup>26</sup> [Juvenile Court Annual Report](#), Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, 2023.
- <sup>27</sup> [Philadelphia's Shifting Juvenile Justice Paradigm: An Economic Analysis](#), ESI, May 2023.
- <sup>28</sup> Under 55 Pa. Code §3800.281 Requirements for Secure Detention, facilities operating at full licensed capacity must maintain sufficient staffing levels to meet required staff-to-youth ratios.
- <sup>29</sup> Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission's Center for Juvenile Justice Training & Research, Provided September 25, 2025.
- <sup>30</sup> Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission's Office of Research, Evaluation, and Policy Development, Provided September 22, 2025.
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