

Annual Report

2024



FAIRFIELD
COUNTY • OHIO

JUVENILE & PROBATE COURT

Judge Terre L. Vandervoort

Forward by Judge Vandervoort

Page 1

From intake to case closure, Fairfield County Juvenile Court commits its resources, interventions and decisions to achieving these principles:

- protection of the community,
- offender accountability, and
- skill and competency development.

If Fairfield County Juvenile Court becomes an unplanned stop on a child's journey through adolescence to adulthood, we owe it to that child and the future of our community to make the detour worthwhile.

Using a restorative justice approach, Fairfield County Juvenile Court has developed services to bolster youth competencies in five major skill areas:

- pro-social skills to address conflict resolution and anger management;
- moral-reasoning skills which focus on connecting thoughts and actions;
- academic skills;
- workforce development; and
- independent living skills.

Guided by the premise that each child is a unique individual, the interventions and services developed by the Court are evidence-based practices that vary in scope and intensity to match the risk level and needs of each offender.



To reduce the likelihood a youth will reoffend, research indicates that courts should focus resources on individuals most likely to offend. By aligning our programs with nationally recognized models, all levels of intervention are tailored to the specific risk level of each youth. Fairfield County Juvenile Court uses research-based risk assessment tools to determine whether each juvenile offender poses a low, medium, or high risk of reoffending.

Research also indicates that most delinquents outgrow their offending behaviors because they acquire skills; obtain employment; establish close, caring personal relationships; and form attachments and bonds to pro-social groups and institutions.

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Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative

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Fairfield County Juvenile Court is a Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) court. Supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, JDAI is one of the nation's most successful and widespread juvenile justice system reform initiatives. The focus of JDAI is to reduce reliance on juvenile detention where youth have often been needlessly detained with long-term negative consequences for both public safety and youth development.

JDAI was created to significantly and safely reduce detention populations through appropriate screening, assessment, and placement into detention alternatives.

While JDAI's efforts are primarily focused on the detention phase, detention reform is a major catalyst for other changes in juvenile justice which include the following Core Strategies:

- Promoting collaboration between juvenile court officials, probation agencies, prosecutors, defense attorneys, schools, community organizations and advocates;
- Using data collection and analysis to guide decision-making;
- Implementing alternatives to detention programs in lieu of locked detention;

- Utilizing objective admissions criteria and risk assessment instruments to reduce subjective decision-making regarding placement in secure detention facilities;
- Instituting case processing reforms to expedite the flow of cases through the system;
- Reducing the number of youth detained for probation violations or failing to appear in court and the number held in detention awaiting transfer to a residential facility;
- Combatting racial and ethnic disparities by examining data to identify policies and practices that may disadvantage youth based on race or ethnicity.
- Monitoring and improving conditions of confinement in detention facilities.

During 2024, two primary focus areas for the Court under JDAI were school attendance and detention screening. Engagement and collaboration with community partners on work in both of these focus areas resulted in positive planning and action steps that would continue into early 2025.

Juvenile Court Array of Services

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Resource Center Services		Diversion Services		Court Services		
Community Request for Services	Law Enforcement and On-Call	Informal Conference	Diversion	Levels of Supervision	Detention	Department of Youth Services
<p>Resource Center (Assessment Services)</p> <p>Supports for At-Risk Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Management and Service Linkage (Voluntary) • Service Coordination and Referral 	<p>Resource Center (On-Call/ Assessment Services)</p> <p>Supports for At-Risk Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergencies • After-Hours Calls and Service Coordination • Coordination and Referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warn and Release • Mediation • Curfew 	<p><u>3 Categories</u></p> <p>Expedited</p> <p>General</p> <p>Intensive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal Processing • Direct Referral from Prosecutor • Individual Contract • Care Coordination and Referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Adjudicated/Disposition Intervention • Court Services Engagement • Probation • Community Intensive Services Program (CISP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placement for up to 90 days per charge or violation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-run juvenile facilities • Youth placed for minimum of 6 months or 1 year based on offense
Resource Center				Behavioral Health		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting Services • Assessment Services • On-Call • Workforce Development • Mentoring/Community Outreach 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral Health Treatment • Care Consultation • Program Consultation • Community Outreach and Education 		

Guiding Principles

Page 5

Community Protection

- Identify Risk.
- Manage Risk.
- Minimize Risk.

Community Protection

- Accept Responsibility.
- Victim Impact
- Restitution
- Community Service

Diversion Services

- Informal Conferences
- Diversion Accountability
- Safe Harbor
- Positive Youth Development
- Mediation
- Mentoring

Behavioral Health Services

- Counseling/Consulting
- Multidisciplinary Team Coordination
- Family Engagement
- Resiliency Training

Resource Center Services

- Assessment Services
- Reporting Services
- Community Request for Services
 - Skill Building
 - Pro-Social Skills
 - Moral Reasoning
 - Academics
 - Workforce Development
 - Independent Living
 - Group Mentoring

Court Services

- Community Control
- Court Services Engagement
 - Probation
 - Supervision
 - Case Management
 - Graduated Sanctions
 - Positive Incentives
 - Cognitive Interventions
- Community Intensive Services Program

Specialized Dockets

and Strategic Initiatives

- Excel (formerly Family Court)
- Protecting and Advocating for Children Together (PACT)

Interventions

- **Assessment Center**
- **Informal Conferences**
- **Diversion Services**

- **Community Control**
- **Court Services**
- **Detention**

Assessment Center

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The Assessment Center (AC) is part of the Fairfield County Juvenile Court Resource Center (RC) located in Connexion West, a community center located in a former elementary school in Lancaster.

The AC provides individualized screening, processing, and referral of at-risk youth and juvenile offenders. Staff respond to immediate crises as well as ongoing needs of youth and their families while increasing law enforcement availability to the community through provision of timely service.

The Assessment Center partners with community-based agencies to provide coordinated best-practice and cost-effective responses, services and resources to youth and their families — including screenings, assessments, and referrals.

The AC has a dual goal:

1. Prevent the progression of behaviors that put the youth at risk of juvenile justice involvement.
2. Prevent the use of secure detention for youth who can be safely served while maintaining family stability.

The AC process for law enforcement agencies begins with an officer or deputy bringing an at-risk youth to the Center. The youth's parents/guardians are contacted to come in as well. As RC staff begin their assessment, the law enforcement official can clear the case and return to duty.

RC staff provide Assessment Services after hours to law enforcement via phone through On-Call Services.

There are several possible outcomes of this initial referral, as based on results of the screenings and interview:

1. Youth returns home with parent/caregiver; or
2. Youth stays with relative/other adult overnight; or
3. Youth may be taken to detention by Court staff; or
4. Emergency respite may be provided.

The Assessment Center staff interact with the Fairfield County Prosecutor to determine if a case can be diverted, should be formally filed, or will be handled informally.

Assessment Center Data

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	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Community Track (Community Request for Services) Number of Youth Referrals. Service provided/attempted for all.	76	59	50	40	48	36
Law Enforcement Track (On-Call) Number of Youth Referrals. Service provided/attempted for all.	38	33	61	19	22	<i>Opening in 2020</i>

Informal Conferences

When a youth is referred to Fairfield County Juvenile Court as the result of a citation issued by law enforcement, usually for a curfew violation or other minor misdemeanor (such as tobacco possession), a Court case manager meets with the youth and parent(s). Through a

brief interview, recommendations can be made for preventive or other services, and the youth is admonished and released. Informal conferences do not become part of a juvenile's record.

Informal Conferences Data

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Informal Conferences Caseload	60	64	55	69	86	58	98	85	188	168

Diversion Services

Page 8

Diversion Services incorporates a vast variety of interventions that may be utilized both within the Court (General Diversion, Safe Harbor Diversion, School Attendance and Engagement, Mediation Services) and community as alternatives to formal case processing of a youth or family. The intervention utilized is dependent upon the offense, extent of harm to victim or community, and risk of the youth to reoffend.

Extensive research conducted during the past 25 years shows that juvenile offenders deemed at low risk for reoffending benefit most from minimal court intervention. Conversely, research indicates that providing intensive monitoring and treatment to low-risk youth can have a detrimental impact on them. Diversion Services accepts referrals directly from the County Prosecutor or from the Judge/Magistrate when a youth:

1. Is alleged to have committed an offense that can range from a status offense to a misdemeanor*,
2. Admits to the offense,
3. Is deemed at low or moderate risk of reoffending as determined through administration of the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS) questionnaire.

In a diversion case, the delinquency or unruly matter proceeds through informal processing as opposed to adjudication. Since 2022, youth are no longer ordered to Diversion once they have entered the Courtroom. If a case is referred from the Judge or Magistrate, the matter has already been filed formally. The youth then enters an admission or is found delinquent or unruly; the disposition order is completion of Diversion Services.

Diversion also provides the youth and their family an opportunity to access needed resources, with the goal of preventing further involvement with the juvenile justice system while allowing the youth to acknowledge responsibility for their actions.

When a youth is referred to Diversion Services, a comprehensive interview with the juvenile and parent(s) is scheduled and facilitated by a Diversion Case Manager. During the assessment interview, the Diversion Case Manager gathers information regarding school behavior, academic challenges, peer relations, and family dynamics while also identifying the strengths of the youth and family.

continued on next page.

Diversion Services (*continued*)

In addition, specific screenings are administered for mental health and substance abuse issues, as well as prior or current exposure to trauma. If concerns are identified that may indicate a need for intervention, the Case Manager refers the youth and family to appropriate resources; these recommendations are included in the youths Diversion Contract.

Other terms of a youth's Diversion Contract may include the completion of an apology letter, an essay relative to the offense, payment of restitution directly to the victim, community service, referral to mentoring opportunities, or referral to other programs offered through the Court or within the community.

These terms are included within the contract as a means of restoration for a victim and to enhance the youth's protective factors in the areas of work, education, relationships, community, health, and creativity.

Youth who are accepted into Diversion Services remain with the department until all terms of the agreed-upon contract are fulfilled. Upon Diversion completion, which averages 90 days, the youth is successfully terminated, and their record is sealed if formally filed. The amount of time between

successful termination and sealing of a Diversion case depends on the level of the offense and whether the youth reoffends during a specified period of time. If a youth fails to complete the terms of the contract or commits a subsequent offense while in Diversion, the case can be terminated unsuccessfully and returned to the Prosecutor for formal processing or is returned to the Court for further orders if already adjudicated.

NEW in 2024!

Diversion Services began development of a new intervention in fourth quarter 2024: Restorative Justice Circles. The concept of Restorative Justice is ages old and can be found throughout much of the world's cultures and history. Restorative Justice focuses on three core pillars:

1. addressing harm and needs,
2. accountability and responsibility,
3. and engagement in the process.

The purpose of Circles of Restoration is to provide a space for youth engaging in delinquent behavior where there is an identifiable victim an opportunity to be held accountable for their actions and to understand the implications of those actions in an age-appropriate and developmentally informed way.

Diversion Services Data

Page 10

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Youth Referred to Diversion	131	144	226	229	200	255	229	313	183	144
Successful Completion	85%	90%	93%	94.9%	86.5%	90%	83.6%	91.4%	84.9%	85.6%
Unsuccessful Completion	10%	10%	6.6%	3.8%	12.5%	9.2%	15.8%	8.3%	12.4%	13.4%
Neutral Outcome Due to Medical Reason	5%	0%	0.4%	1.3%	1%	0.8%	0.6%	0.3%	2.7%	1%
Offense Level: Felony	0	0%	3.1%	0%	1.1%	0.8%	0.4%	1.9%	0%	1.4%
Offense Level: Misdemeanor	89%	90.4%	78.3%	68.1%	60.6%	69.4%	78.8%	73.3%	70.4%	92.1%
Offense Level: Status (curfew, tobacco, etc.)	11%	9.6%	18.6%	31.9%	38.3%	29.8%	20.8%	24.8%	29.6%	6.5%

Safe Harbor

Page 11

Ohio consistently ranks in the top 10 states in the country for reported human trafficking cases, a 2024 UC Health article said. In 2019, University of Cincinnati researchers identified 4,209 youth in Ohio at risk as victims of domestic minor sex trafficking. This staggering number affects every area of the state, including Fairfield County.

Human trafficking of women and children is a reality for the Fairfield County community. Trafficking in a rural setting may look different than it does in larger urban communities, but its prevalence is increasing.

Ranging from the traditional out-of-state runaway arrested at an airport to young people living in hotels with no visible means of support or parent engagement, these cases were the impetus to an initiative led by Juvenile Court. Community partners that joined the initiative include Protective Services, the Community Action Homeless Youth Program, Family and Children First Council, as well as Gracehaven in Columbus.

The name Safe Harbor comes from Ohio legislation that provides special handling of these cases. Safe Harbor automatically diverts some charges, such as prostitution and soliciting. In rural Ohio, juveniles typically do not receive those types of charges. However, charges of truancy, theft, and runaway/unruly youth are red flags for possible human trafficking.

National and other Ohio best practice protocols were used to develop the Court's Safe Harbor program. Cases diverted through Safe Harbor receive behavioral health assessments and referrals, skill-building, Protective Services involvement, empowerment and support for the youth, and support in addressing charges they did receive.

Once confirmed into Safe Harbor, the youth is considered a victim or survivor of human trafficking. The Court's Behavioral Health team developed a human trafficking screening protocol for all youth who interact with the Court, regardless of which pathway they enter the Court.

Safe Harbor Data

	2024	2023	2022	2021
Youth Identified for Safe Harbor Services	1	0	4	5

School Attendance and Engagement

Page 12

The catastrophic effect of COVID 19 on school attendance continued to be seen in 2024. Ohio Department of Education data shows that 25 percent of Ohio Students are missing 10 percent of the school year.

Due to the April 2017 implementation of HB 410 school attendance (truancy) legislation, responsibility for early intervention for school attendance was assigned to the schools.

Juvenile Court partnered with each school district to support individual youth school attendance intervention plans. Youth who subsequently receive truancy charges were then served through the Court's Diversion programs when at all possible.

Through a community partnership with Fairfield County Family and Children First Council, a community-based school attendance intervention was implemented in October 2022.

his diverted families challenged with school attendance issues to the Council, where they are assessed to determine the needs of the youth/family and address underlying concerns that may be contributing to the youth's lack of school attendance.

Through this effort, vulnerable families can receive needed service linkage and collaboration of community providers without having to be under any form of Court supervision.

During 2024, a Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) primary focus area was to review and revamp this community intervention to better serve youth and families. Among those gathered for discussions and planning were representatives from the Court, Fairfield County Educational Service Center, school districts, prosecutors, Protective Services, and workforce development. Rollout of modifications was slated for early 2025.

School Attendance & Engagement Data

Page 13

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Truancy Cases	79	87	81	69	47	56	65	71	89	55
Truancy Cases Diverted	33 by the Court; 34 by the Community	54 by the Court; 33 by the Community	42 by the Court; 39 by the Community	69	47	56	30	50	51	9
Successful Diversion of Truancy Cases	76%	56%	85%	86%	71%	73%	67%	88%	80%	88%
Unsuccessful Diversion of Truancy Cases	21%	41%	13%	9%	25%	25%	30%	12%	20%	12%
Diverted Truancy Cases Closed with Neutral Stats	3%	3%	2%	5%	3%	3%	3%	NA	NA	NA

Mediation Services

Page 14

Mediation is offered to youth who may otherwise incur a formal charge of disorderly conduct, misdemeanor assault, criminal mischief/damaging, menacing, or other misdemeanor offenses that do not pose a serious threat to the community or to themselves.

A trained on-staff Mediator can conduct mediations via Zoom to be more accessible to the community. Referrals come from the Fairfield County Prosecutor's Office, a Juvenile Court judicial officer, Court Services, or Diversion.

Research has shown that youth who engage in physical conflict benefit from learning alternative ways to resolve issues with their peers. It offers both (or additional) parties an opportunity to identify their conflict, own their own part in the conflict, and work toward an understanding of the other person's point of view.

Mediation offers an identified victim a chance to ask questions that only the offender can answer—such as the how and why of the offense. Mediation is also an opportunity for the victim to express frustrations and concerns. Mediation gives the offender a chance to take responsibility for their actions by facing the victim and working together to create an agreement that is acceptable to all parties.

The goal of the agreement reached through the process is to restore in some manner what was lost by the victim. The Mediation Agreement also makes the offender personally accountable for the loss, injury, or damage done against the victim.

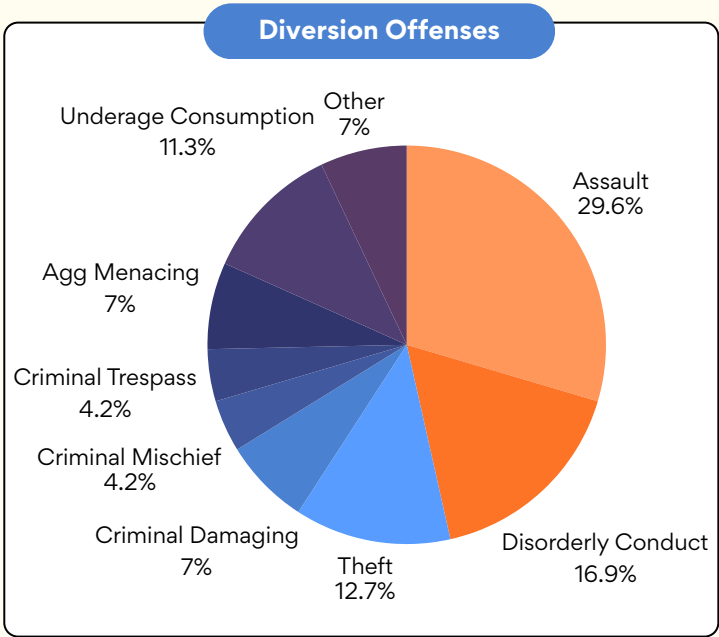
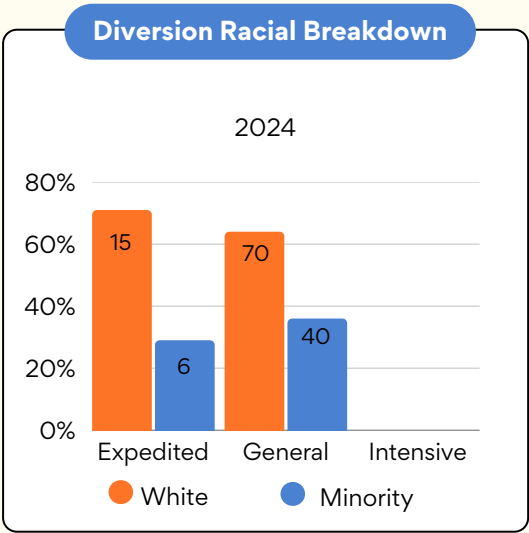
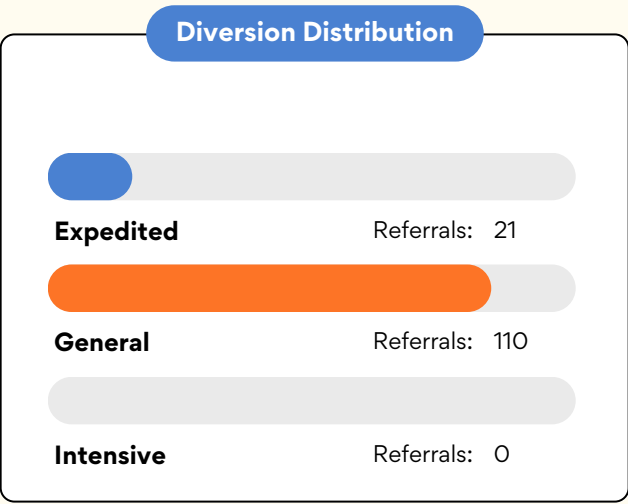
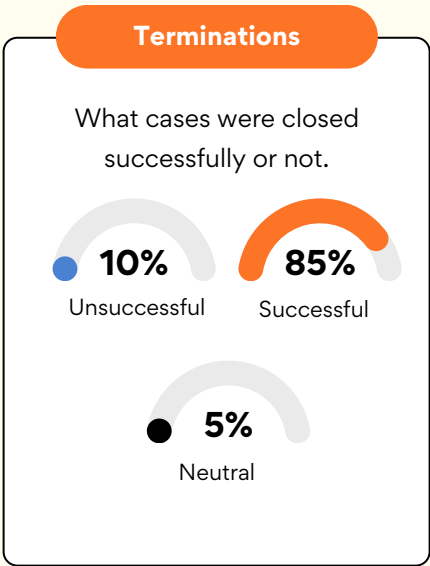
Once a youth completes the Mediation process and, if they experience no further conflicts for a period of at least 30 days, the matter is closed successfully, and no formal charges are filed.

Mediation Services Data

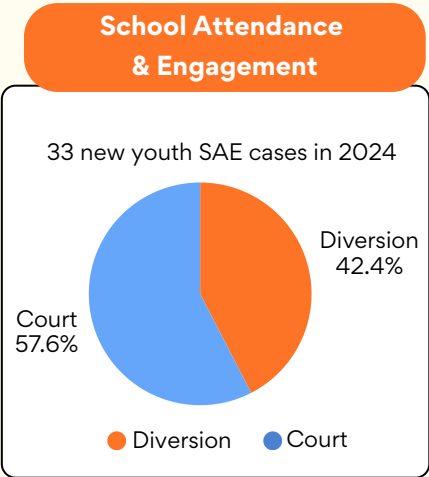
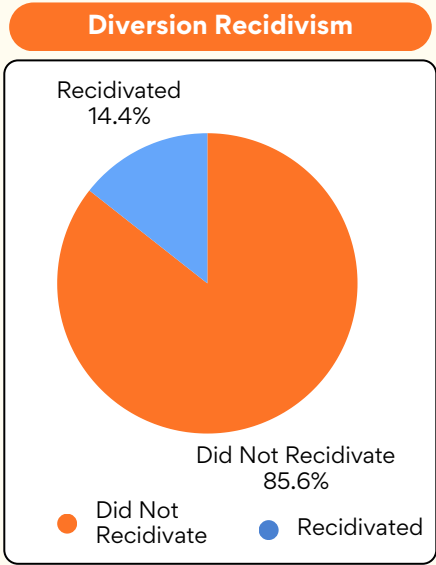
	2024	2023	2022	2021
Youth Referred to Mediation Services	14	5	35	23

2024 - Diversion Services

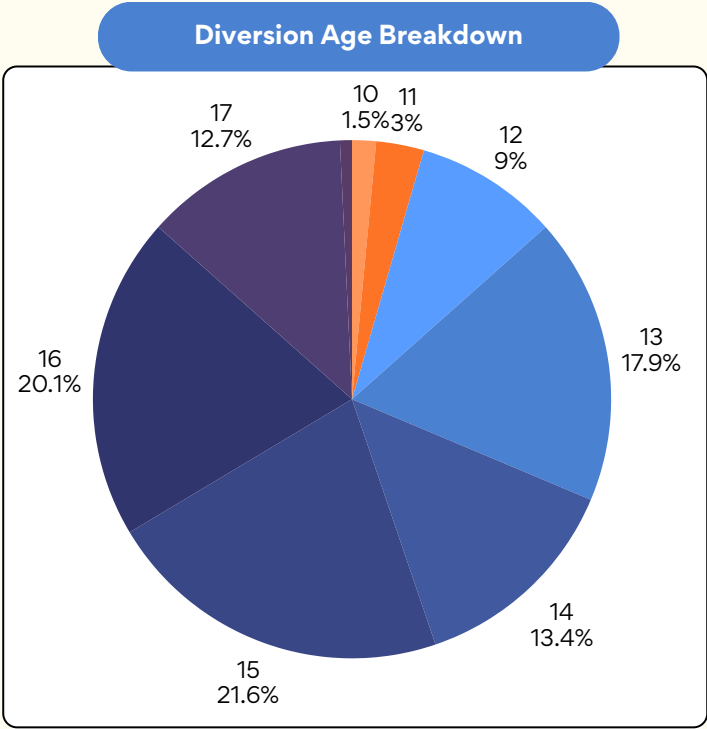
→ A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF KEY RESOURCE CENTER DATAPOINTS IN 2024



- ### DS Outcome Measures
- Average Length of Stay:
 - Expedited Diversion: 30-45 Days
 - General Diversion: 60-90 Days
 - 80% or more Diversion cases to be terminated successfully.
 - 75% or more of youth will not receive new charges within 12 months of completing a diversion services program.
 - 80% of youth served in diversion services will not have their case moved to court services.
 - 75% of youth will not receive an additional diversion referral while involved with diversion services.



- ### Other Programs
- Mediation had 14 new referrals.
 - Safe Harbor received 1 referral.
 - 11 youth were TOR in 2024. Up from only 1 youth in all 2023.
 - There were 60 new informal referrals.
 - The average length of an Expedited Diversion Case was 40 Days.
 - The average length of a General Diversion Case was 80 Days.
 - All TOR cases since 2020 did not recidivate within a year.



Court Services

Page 16

The Court Services Department was created in 2022 to allow all youth facing formally filed delinquency charges to be managed in a single department.

Additionally, that youth and family can typically work with a single case manager from the time the case is filed until the youth completes his or her involvement with the Court.

Previously, services and functions now under Court Services were divided between the Intake and Assessment and Probation departments.

The Court Services structure has helped foster strong bonds between youth and Case Managers and has enhanced the ability to address any barriers to youth and family success.

Immediately following the formal filing of a charge by the Prosecutor, a Court Services Case Manager is assigned to evaluate the risk level and needs of the

juvenile. As part of this process, the Case Manager contacts the family to gather preliminary information about family background, education, mental health and/or substance abuse issues, and pro-social activities.

The staff member also meets with the family at the time of the initial hearing, while providing a brief update to the Court during the hearing. The judicial officer may find that no further formal Court involvement is necessary and order a Pre-Adjudication/Disposition intervention, which is described on page 18. Typically, however, the case will go through a lengthier formal process.

As the case moves through the formal legal process, the Case Manager continues to work closely with the youth and family and also assesses the long-term needs of the youth.

continued on next page

Court Services (*continued*)

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As part of this process, multiple evidence-based tools are used, including the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS), the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI-2), and the Child Trauma Screen.

Additionally, the Case Manager contacts collateral sources (for which releases of information have been signed by the parent or guardian) including schools, counselors, and others to gather more information.

In most cases, all of the information described above is compiled into a

Pre-Disposition Report (PDR) which includes recommendations for further monitoring and intervention.

The PDR is distributed to the judicial staff, prosecutors, the attorney and Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) for the youth and typically guides the Court in making appropriate orders for the youth.

Generally, the PDR will recommend one of several specific interventions which are described on page 18 in the Court Services Array of Interventions.

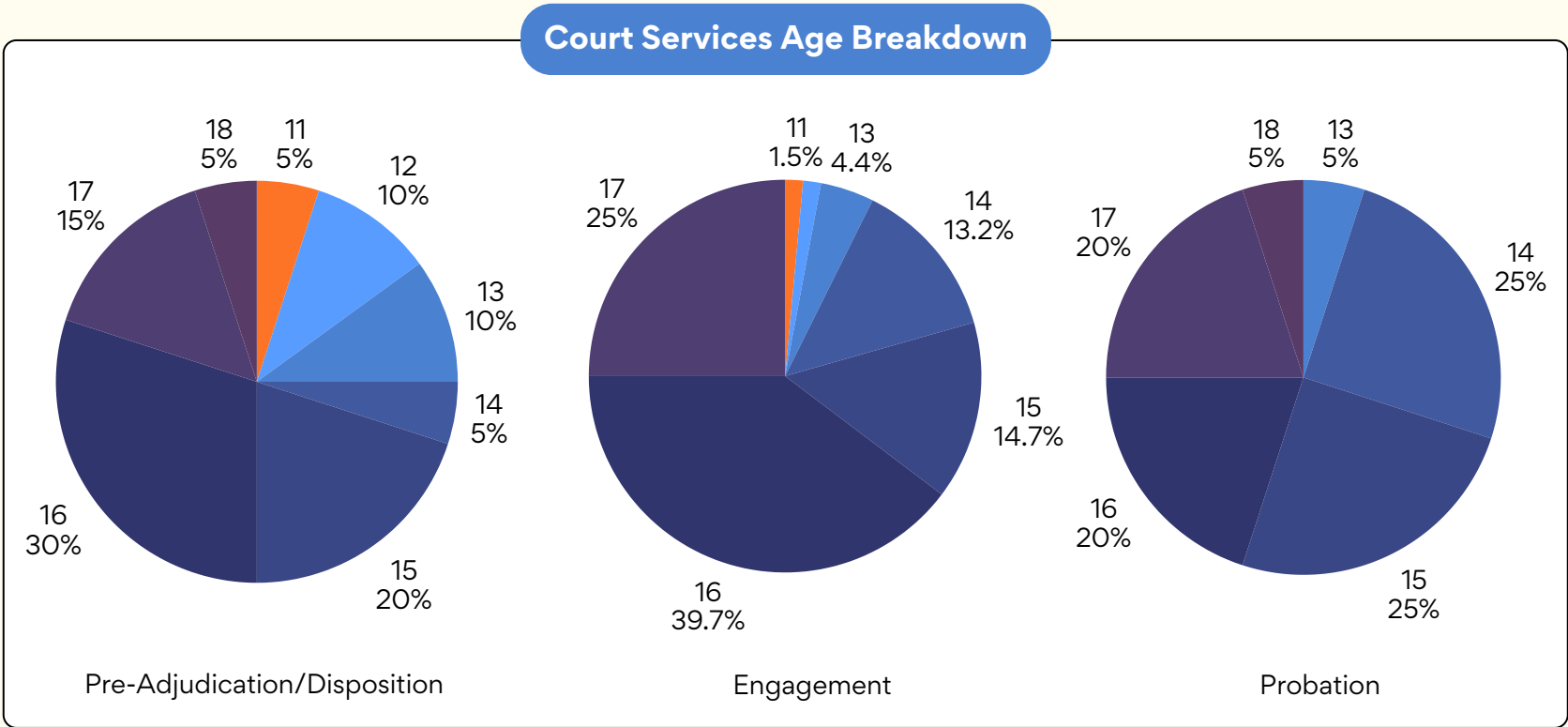
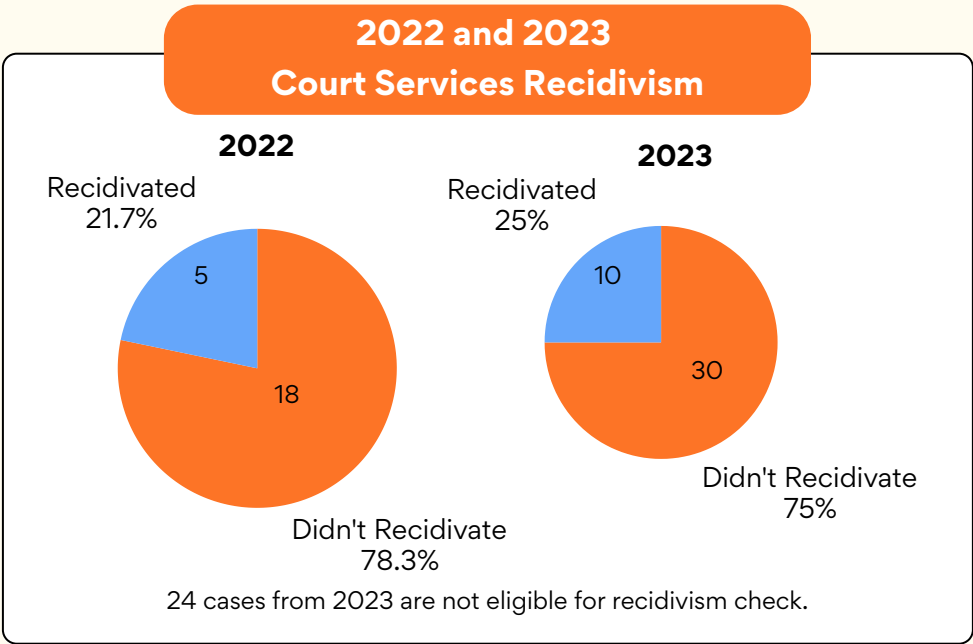
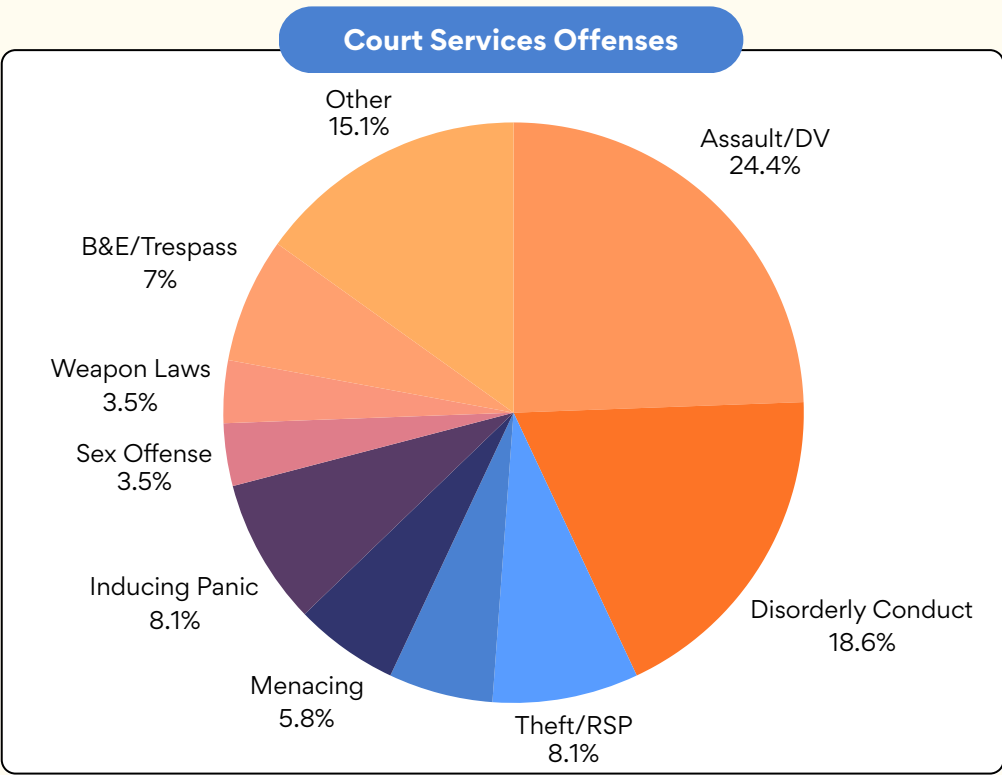
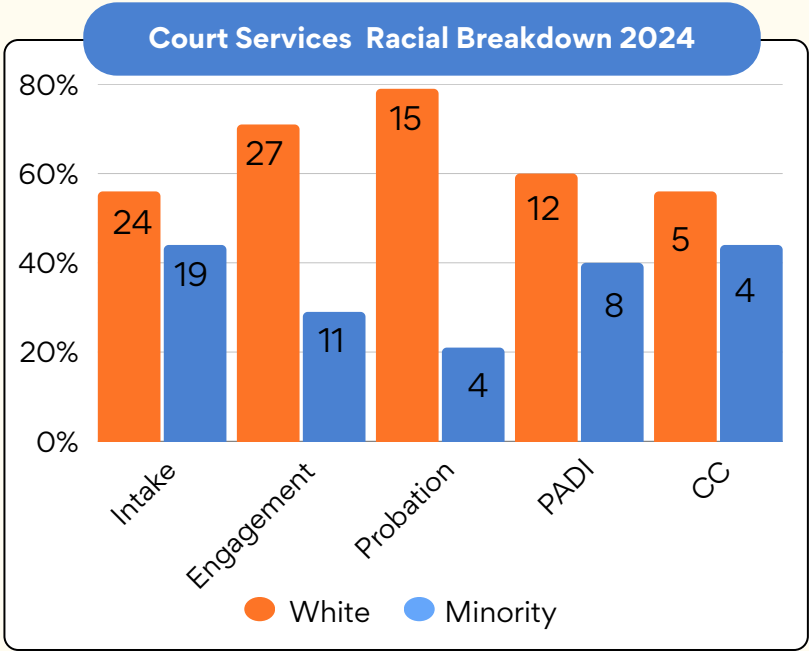
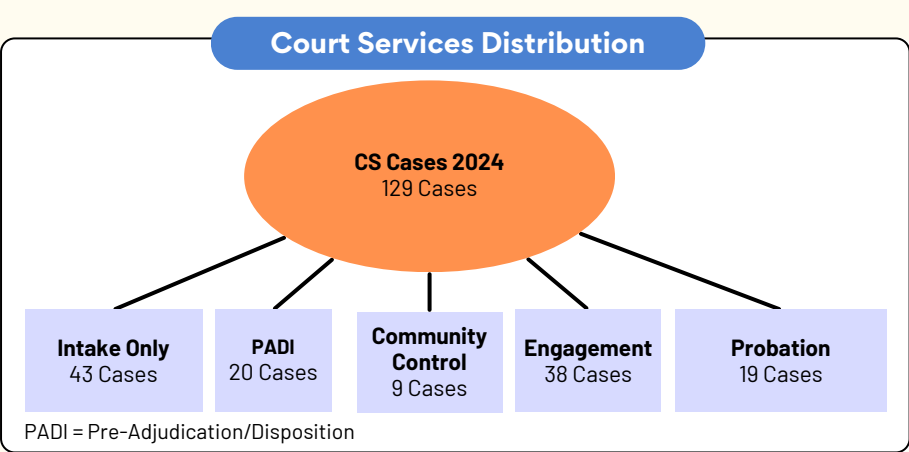
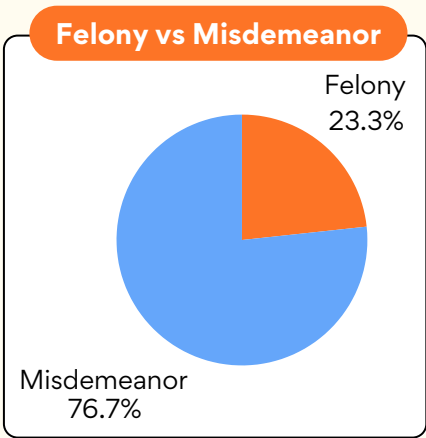
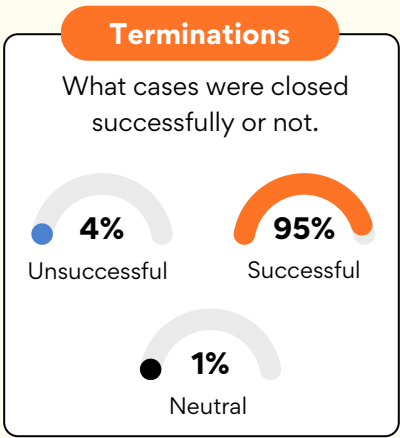
Court Services Array of Interventions

Page 18

Intervention Level #1: Pre-Adjudication/ Disposition Intervention	Intervention Level #2: Court Services Engagement	Intervention Level #3: Probation	Intervention Level #4: Community Intensive Services Program (CISP)
<p>This level of intervention is intended to serve low-risk youth who have had a formal charge filed with the Court, but where the judicial officer determines that further formal Court involvement is not necessary to protect the interest of the community, and that dismissal of the charge is in the best interest of the child.</p> <p><u>Length of Supervision</u> Typically, no longer than 90 days from the date of the youth's last Court appearance</p> <p>Written case plan optional while Case Manager monitors compliance with temporary orders and ensures youth is unlikely to commit additional offenses.</p>	<p>This level of intervention is designed to serve low- or moderate-risk youth who, either because of the youth's history or due to the nature of the charge, require further Court involvement, but whose needs can be met with an intervention less than that of formal probation.</p> <p><u>Length of Supervision</u> Target of 120 days with 30-day extensions as needed</p> <p>A written "Engagement Plan" is completed with the youth and family. The plan focuses on the needs and desires of the youth. The plan is strength-based, emphasizes Positive Youth Development principles, and is designed to foster long-lasting connections.</p>	<p>This level of intervention is designed to serve moderate or high-risk youth who, either due to the youth's history or due to the nature of the charge, require a more significant intervention designed to help the youth be successful, and to protect the safety of the community.</p> <p><u>Length of Supervision</u> Indefinite and typically longer than the lower-level interventions described above. The case is reviewed by the Case Manager and a supervisor every 30 days to determine when termination is appropriate. A written "Probation Success Plan" is completed with the youth and the family. The plan focuses on community safety, safety of the youth, and the needs and desires of the youth and family.</p>	<p>This level of intervention is designed to serve moderate- or high-risk youth who, due to the youth's history and due to the nature of the charge, have demonstrated that a significant, closely-monitored intervention is needed to avoid a long-term commitment to a secure facility, to maximize the potential for the long-term success of the youth, and to ensure the safety of the community.</p> <p><u>Length of Supervision</u> Indefinite. The case will be reviewed by the Case Manager and supervisor every 30 days and may be terminated at any time after all steps within the program are completed and youth and community safety are ensured.</p> <p>In addition to the written "Probation Success Plan" completed with the Case Manager, the youth and family will meet with the Case Manager to review and complete various other documents detailing steps associated with successful completion of CISP. These steps are monitored very closely with an expectation of strict compliance.</p>

2024 - Court Services

→ A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF KEY RESOURCE CENTER DATAPOINTS IN 2024

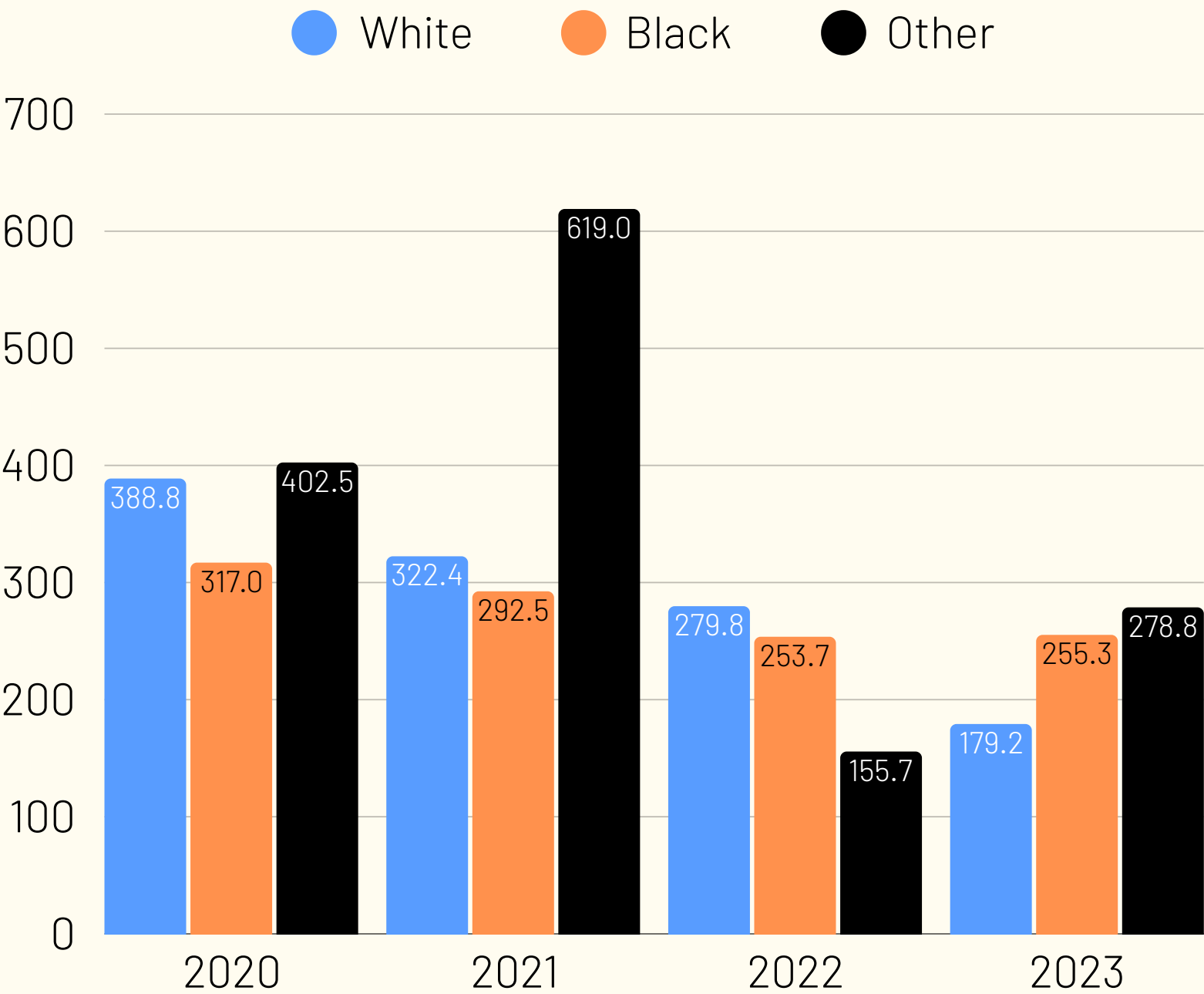


2024 - Court Services

→ A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF KEY RESOURCE CENTER DATAPOINTS IN 2024

NOTE: 2024 probation length of stay data is not finalized because not all youth in the program had exited by year's end.

Probation Length of Stay by Race



327.2 DAYS

PROBATION: 2020-2023
Between 2020 and 2023, the average length of a probation case was 327.2 days.

153.5 DAYS

ENGAGEMENT
In 2023, the average length of an engagement cases was 153.5 days.

Detention

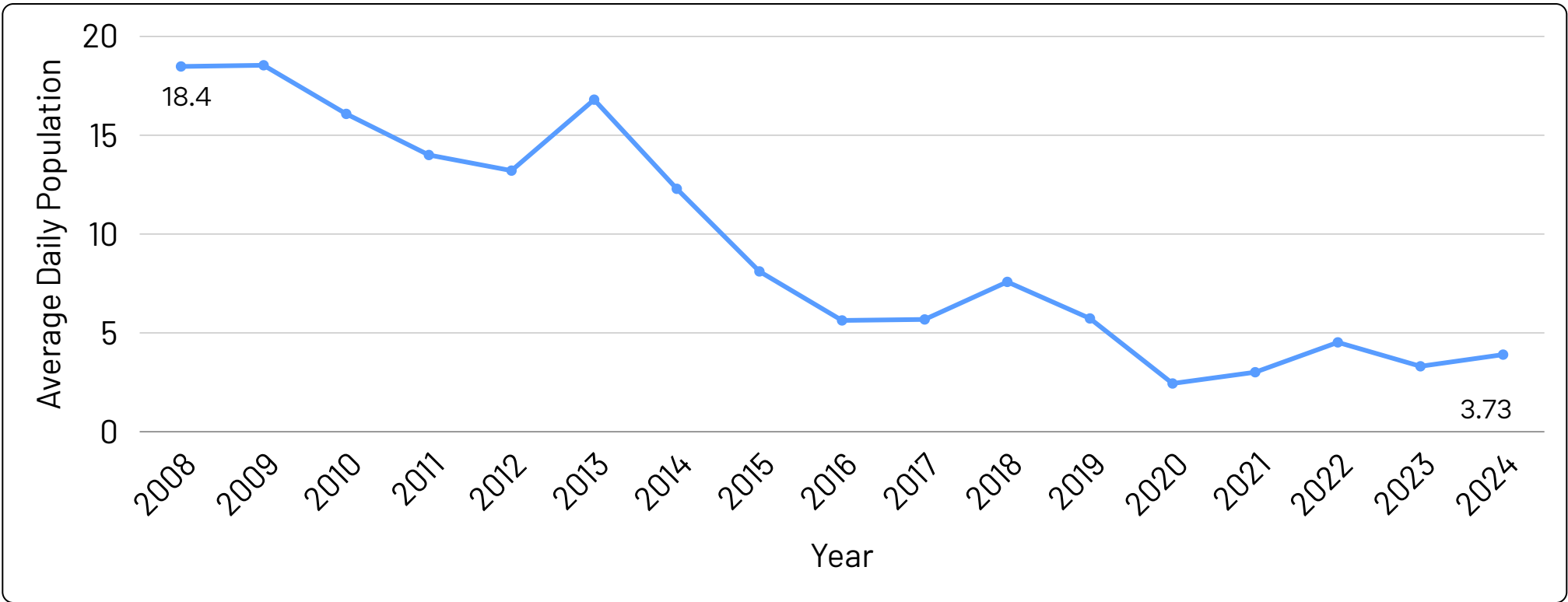
Research on the impact of detention on adolescent development and mental health indicates that its use increases the likelihood of recidivism and negatively affects future employment and educational opportunities. At Fairfield County Juvenile Court, detention is

considered only after other graduated sanctions have been attempted. While placement in secure detention may be ordered for up to 90 days per charge or violation, it is used primarily as a short-term sanction when the youth is a danger to themselves or the community, or when the youth is at risk of absconding.

Detention Data

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Total Number of Bed Days	1,364	1,209	1,648	1,098	892	2,093	2,767	2,074	2,061	2,961	4,486	6,132	4,835	5,110	5,869	6,767	6,745	6,026	5,957	4,837
Average Daily Number of Juveniles in Detention	3.73	3.31	4.52	3.01	2.44	5.73	7.58	5.68	5.63	8.11	12.29	16.80	13.21	14.00	16.08	18.54	18.48	16.51	16.32	13.35

Detention Bed Days



Programs and Services

Page 22

Behavioral Health Services

- Counseling/Consulting
- Multidisciplinary Team Coordination
- Family Engagement
- Resiliency Training

Resource Center

- Reporting Services
- Reporting Services
- Community Service
- Group Mentoring/Community Outreach
- Workforce Development
 - Subsidized Youth Employment



Behavioral Health

Page 23

Licensed social work/mental health professionals within Fairfield County Juvenile Court's Behavioral Health (BH) team provide mental health and substance abuse assessments for juveniles referred from Court Case Managers and Specialists or by the Judge/Magistrates. If through their interview with the youth and parent(s) it is determined that further counseling or treatment is needed, the team will make a referral for the youth to the most appropriate community

resource or provide short-term in-house counseling. The BH team also is available for immediate lethality screening and referral when a youth is at risk for suicide or is a threat to others. Additionally, the team provides case consultation services to all Court staff. A Behavioral Health Specialist is focused on family engagement. Her primary role is to engage, educate, advocate for, and support parents/ caregivers who have youth in Court programming; as well as to facilitate meetings to support family voice and choice.

Behavioral Health Data

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Lethality Assessments	1	12	4	3	3	6	36	10	27	31
Mental Health Assessments/Consults	49	66	41	42	67	94	116	99	57	104
Youth in Ongoing Treatment	31	40	29	13	23	44	36	10	27	31
Total Youth Served (Unduplicated)	88 Includes 20 Public Sensitivity and 6 Healthy Relationships cases.	87 Includes 14 Public Sensitivity and Healthy Relationships cases.	66 Includes 20 Public Sensitivity, Healthy Relationships, and Alcohol and Other Drugs cases.	63	77	129	156	140	158	201

Fairfield County Juvenile Court Resource Center (RC) provides a combination of interventions and program to better serve youth and families, law enforcement, and other community partners. The RC is located in Connexion West, a community center located in a former elementary school in Lancaster.

Programs and services include Assessment Services, which include Community Request for Services and On-Call Services (*described on page 6*), Reporting Services, Mentoring, Community Service, Workforce Development, and the Youth Subsidized Employment Program.

The purpose of the RC is multifaceted:

- To utilize restorative justice system best practices to provide high-risk, Court-involved youth a safe and structured environment in which to develop skills, connect to community resources, and establish positive relationships to improve daily living and reduce further involvement in the juvenile justice system;

These skills, as outlined in the Fairfield County Juvenile Court Guiding Principles include: Pro-Social, Moral Reasoning, Academic Workforce Development, and Independent Living.

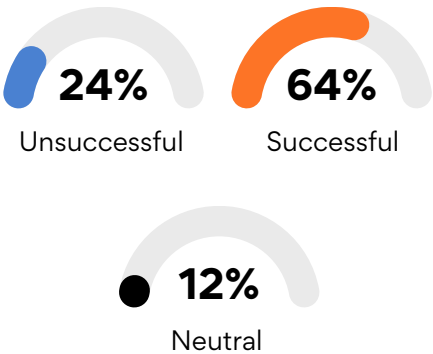
- To promote public safety through around-the-clock availability to local law enforcement for assistance with emergent needs related to juveniles displaying unruly or delinquent behaviors;
- To utilize trauma-informed practices to promote public and youth safety by encouraging local school districts, law enforcement, other community partners, and affected families to refer juveniles displaying unruly or delinquent behaviors to the RC for skills-development and/or other resources for the youths' personal development and success;
- To assess youth for underlying issues that contribute to their concerning behaviors and to intervene with development of safety plans and provision of appropriate services and referrals to behavioral health and other community partners;
- To assist youth existing detention with their transition back into the community; and
- To provide mentoring services and opportunities for positive community engagement while modeling appropriate social interaction and promoting resiliency.

2024 - Resource Center

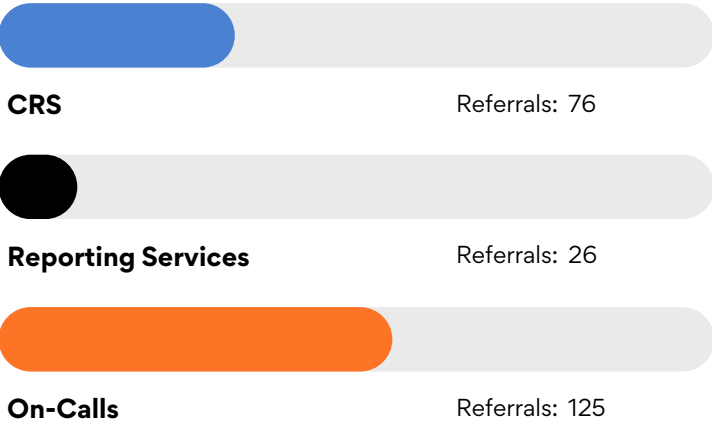
→ A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF KEY RESOURCE CENTER DATAPOINTS IN 2024

Reporting Services Closures

Success at the Resource Center (RC) is measured by whether placement in the Multi County Juvenile Detention Center (MCJDC) is avoided.



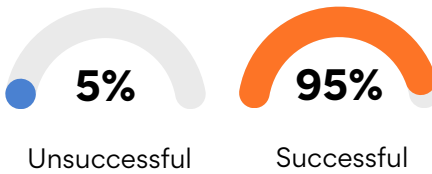
Resource Center Distribution



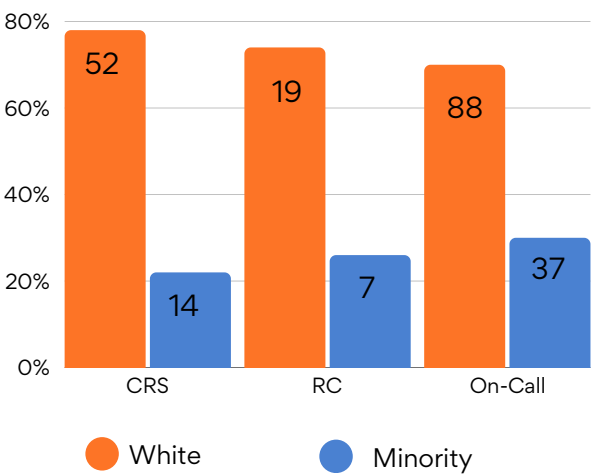
CRS = Community Request for Services

CRS Closures

Community Request for Services (CRS) success is measured by completion of the program without additional court referral.



Resource Center Racial Breakdown

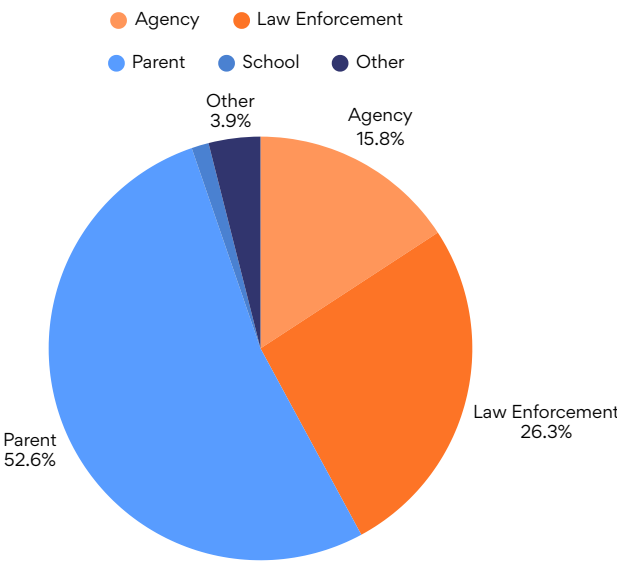


*Doesn't Include Unknowns

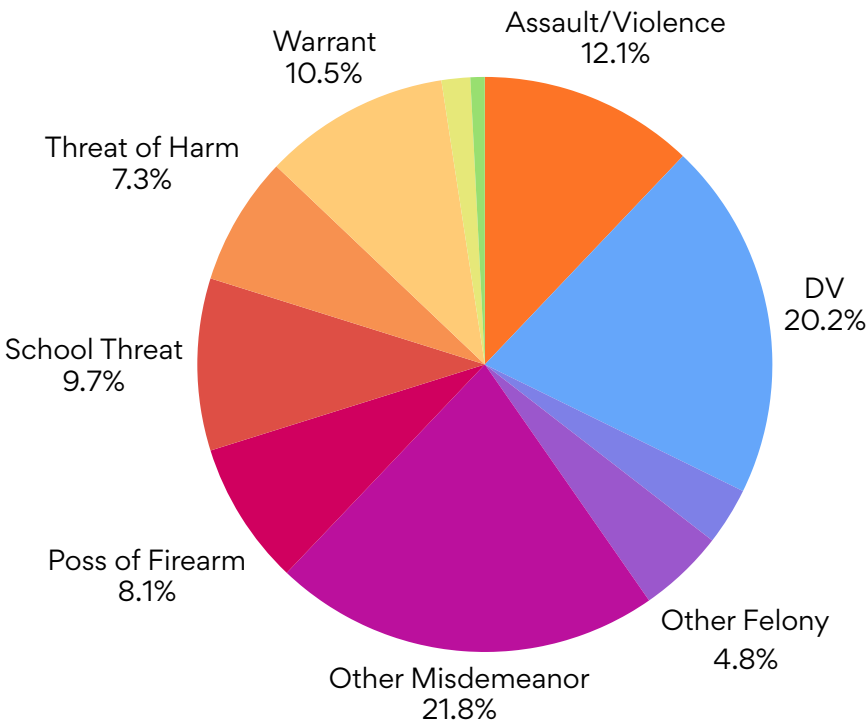
RC Outcome Measures

- Average length of a CRS case to be 30 days or less.
- 85% or more of CRS cases to be terminated successfully.
- 75% of youth will not receive new charges within 12 months of completing reporting services.
- 75% of youth will complete reporting services without going to a secure detention facility.

CRS Referral Sources



On-Call Offenses



Average Length of Stay Data

- Reporting Center referrals lasted an average of 75 days in 2024.
- CRS referrals lasted an average of 29 days.

Reporting Services

Page 26

Reporting Services utilizes restorative justice system best practices to provide high-risk, Court-involved youth a safe and structured environment in which to develop skills, connect to community resources, and establish positive relationships.

Primary goals are to improve daily living and to reduce further involvement in the juvenile justice system. Programming is based on cognitive behavioral change and structure.

Originally funded through the Ohio Department of Youth Services, Reporting Services provides intensive supervision, as well as supportive services that address identified needs of the juveniles who are referred.

Youth ages 12 through 18 are referred most commonly by Court Services and the by the Judge/Magistrates and less frequently by Diversion Services.

Eligible youth may be ordered at various stages: pre-adjudication, by the Court at adjudication, or as a condition of probation. Eligible youth include those who are not a danger to themselves or others or to the property of others. In addition, a youth who is a flight risk is not eligible for placement with Reporting Services.

Programming is scheduled for three hours after school Monday through Thursday during the academic year and for 3.5 hours in the afternoon during the summer.

The daytime summer schedule allows youth greater opportunity to participate in community service projects and provides supervision earlier in the day when the youth may otherwise be home alone.

Transportation is provided to and from the Resource Center, which houses Reporting Services. During this transportation time, staff are able to engage in meaningful conversation with the youth.

A standard referral is for 25 days. Upon program completion, youth may return for a 10-day referral to continue their skill-building and positive relationship development and receive additional supervision.

At times, Reporting Services is used when youth on probation need temporary supervision when parent(s)/guardian(s) are unable to provide it. This service may occur outside of standard program hours if needed to best serve the youth and family.

continued on next page.

Reporting Services (continued)

Page 27

Because Court staff were unable to meet with youth in person during the COVID pandemic, Reporting Services team members developed a virtual program to enable the Court to continue to provide support to individual youth and families through a creative use of technology and increased staff engagement. Although not in use since 2021, provision of virtual Reporting Services is possible should the need arise.

Reporting Services Data

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Number of Youth Ordered in Lieu of Detention	26	55	45	41	49	106	66	82	29
Number of Hours Served in Lieu of Detention*	2,576	3,942	3,051	2,217	2,046	4,846	6,250	5,839	454

* Includes number of direct youth service hours for youth with a release date within the calendar year

Mentoring

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Mentoring provides Court-involved, at-risk youth opportunities to work one-on-one with a screened and trained adult mentor whose support and camaraderie will contribute to the development of positive skills. Studies show that more than 76% of at-risk young adults with a mentor aspire to enroll in and graduate from college, versus 56% of at-risk young adults who had no mentor. The Court's mentor program offers three different approaches: one-on-one, group, and team. One-on-one is a traditional approach through which a pre-screened adult is matched with a youth based on similar interests.

The matched pair is encouraged to meet for at least two hours weekly for six months. Evidence shows that timeframe provides ample opportunity for an engaging mentorship to evolve. Through group mentoring, two adults facilitate a group consisting of four to six youth who meet for a six-week period. The Court regularly utilizes the group approach in house. Two adult sisters mentoring one youth together is an example of team mentoring. Established youth groups and programs such as Connexion West Mentor Academy are other examples of a team mentoring approach.

Mentoring Data

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Mentoring Caseload	24*	32	26	27	36	40	50	20	27	36

* Includes 17 in-house mentoring group participants, 5 youth in community mentoring groups, and 2 one-on-one matches

Community Service

Page 29

Court-involved youth are provided the opportunity to participate in community service work, through which they may regain community trust, pay restitution, and fulfill obligations while developing new skills and building quality relationships with adult mentors. The Judge/Magistrate or Court case managers and specialists refer the youth to Community Service. Youth often complete volunteer projects with Court staff at several sites throughout Fairfield County and may work off assigned hours under the supervision of the Supportive Services Specialist. Through a blended approach, youth may volunteer independently at an established community partner site such as Connexion West,

Lancaster Parks and Recreation, Habitat for Humanity, local churches and Pickerington Food pantry. Community connections have the potential to transpire into positive mentorships after Court involvement. During the summer, Court staff collaborate with Fairfield County Sheriff's Office School Resource Officers (SROs) to work on community projects such as park cleanups, landscaping and painting. Youth work as a team with Court staff and the SROs. Lunch is provided after the hard work. Sites have included Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Lancaster and Pickerington, food pantries, Maywood Mission, Foundation Dinners, local churches, highway cleanup sites, and many more.

Community Service Data

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Number of Youth Performing Community Service	45	46	51	83	128	142	137	130	123	174
Hours Youth Completed in Community Service	711	883	1,204	1,558	1,797	1,859	1,785	1,927	2,292	3,654

In keeping with the principles of restorative justice, goals of the Workforce Development (WFD) Program are to prepare Court-involved youth for the workforce and to increase their ability to obtain and retain employment.

WFD uses this five-step approach to achieve the goals.

1. Assessment
2. Job Readiness Assistance
3. Individual Job Search
4. Job Placement
5. Job Retention

The WFD Coordinator meets with youth and parent(s) to conduct a comprehensive assessment to determine the level of assistance needed and to identify barriers and challenges.

Youth participating in WFD attend Job Readiness workshops that provide training in interviewing, time management, good work habits and

conduct, attendance, communication, conflict management, workplace relationships, good hygiene, and appropriate work attire.

The Coordinator meets with the youth to help them . . .

- create resumes,
- understand job postings,
- understand the value of networking,
- complete online job applications and employment paperwork,
- review employer expectations,
- determine work schedules,
- arrange transportation,
- balance school and work, and
- learn how to communicate with supervisors.

Workplace issues and problems are identified early and addressed as they occur to avoid resignation or firing. Support services are identified and accessed to help each youth maintain employment. School attendance and grades are reviewed on a regular basis.

WFD Program Data

Page 31

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Youth Referred to Workforce Development	38	33	24	27	45	48	52	24
Obtained Unsubsidized Employment	18	18	7	14	30	38	26	7
Retained Unsubsidized Employment for At Least 4 Months	9	11	4	8	16	20	10	4
Average Hourly Wage Earned	\$11.17	\$12.00	\$9.70	\$9.17	\$8.96	\$8.38	\$8.30	\$9.70
Completed Work Readiness Training	4	4	0	4*	18	20	19	0

*Work Readiness Training was suspended from February 2020 through October 2021 due to the COVID pandemic.

Subsidized Youth Employment Program

Page 32

The Subsidized Youth Employment Program (SYEP) provides subsidized wages to at-risk youth while giving employers incentives to provide participants with 120 hours of quality on-the-job training.

Youth can be placed with public, private, or non-profit employers. SYEP participants are youth ages 15 to 18 who have multiple barriers that have limited their employability.

The goal of SYEP is to help youth develop the necessary skills and work ethic to transition into unsubsidized employment at the conclusion of the program. Participants attend Job Readiness workshops to prepare for their placement.

Juvenile Court has partnered with TeenWorks since the SYEP's inception in 2018 to operate the program. TeenWorks provides administrative oversight. Funding sources have included the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners, Fairfield County Foundation, Columbus Foundation, and United Way of Fairfield County.

The Court's Workforce Development Coordinator maintains consistent contact with employers and youth to monitor and evaluate progress and address any issues that may arise. She provides support services to ensure participants are equipped to be successful on the job.

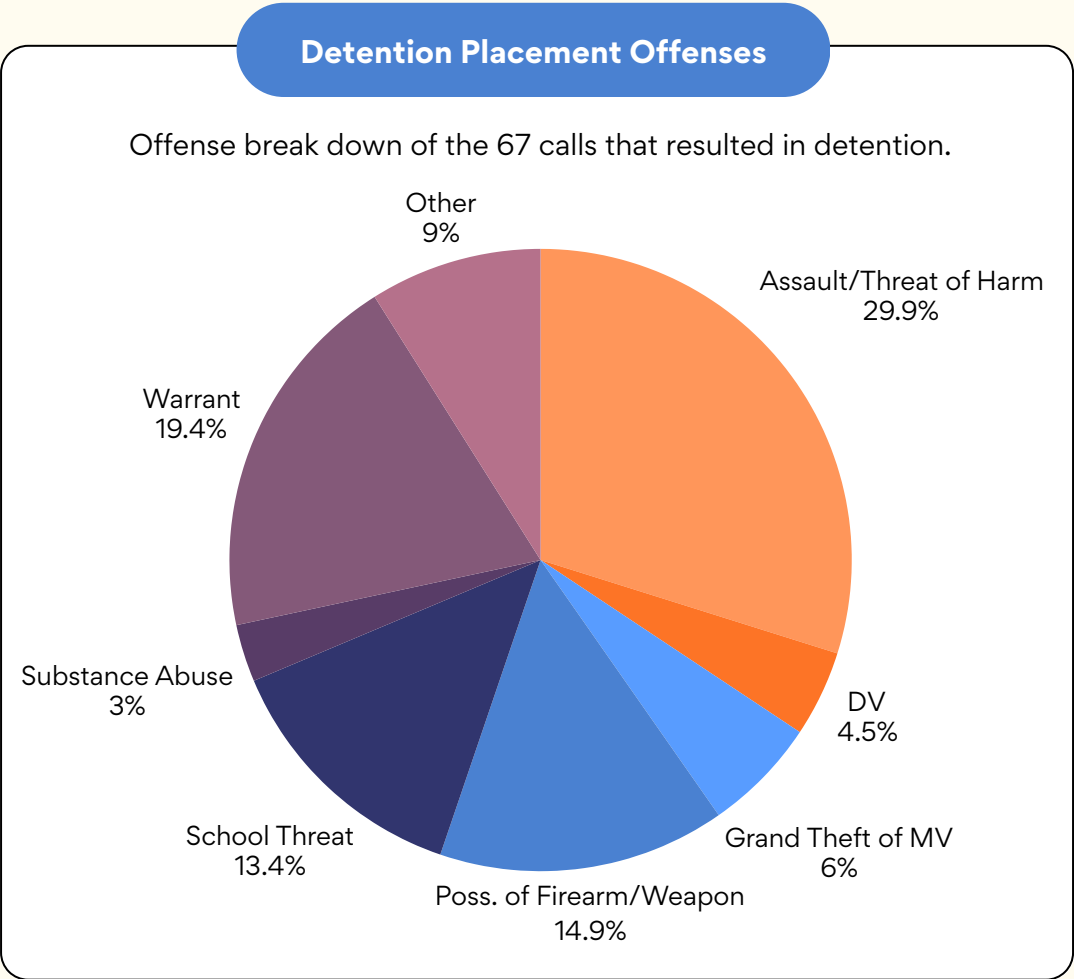
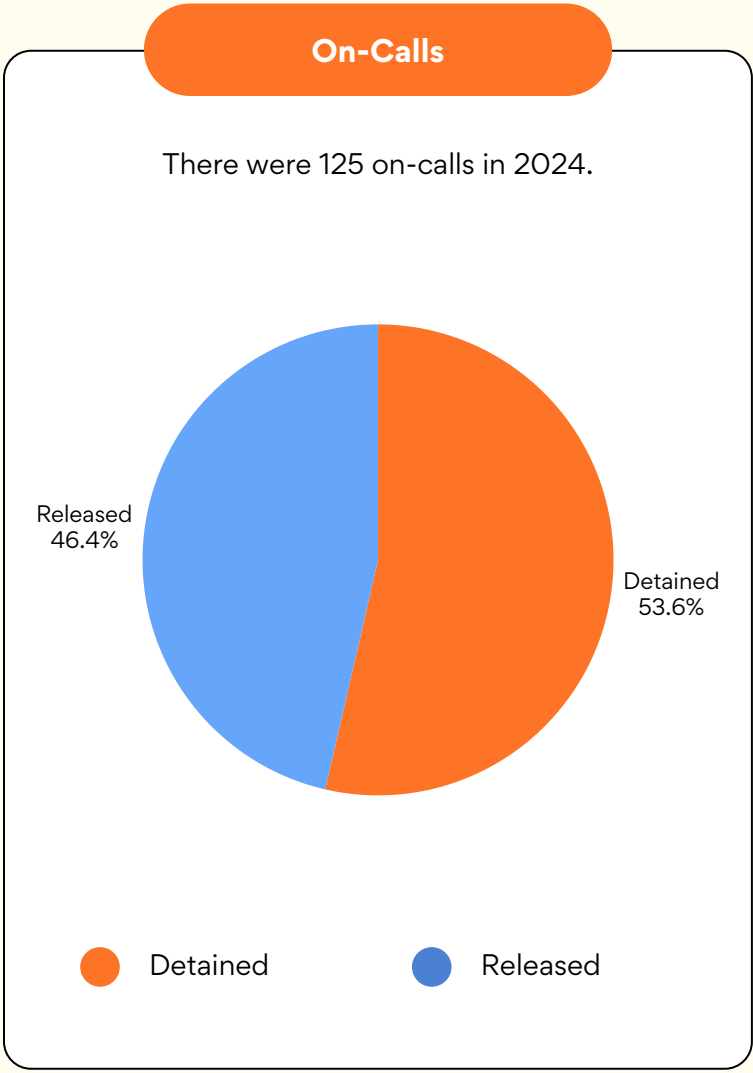
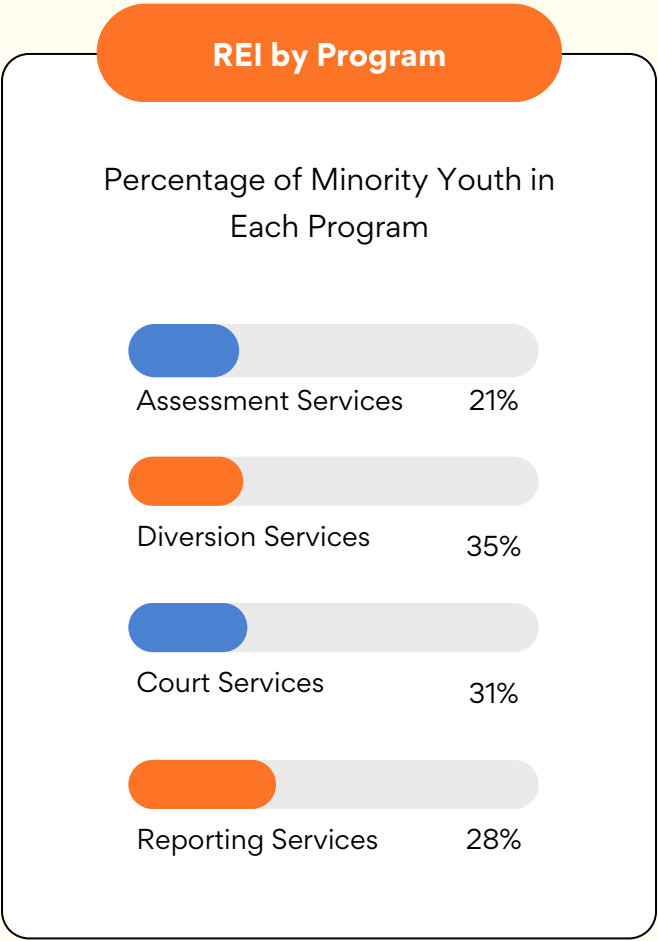
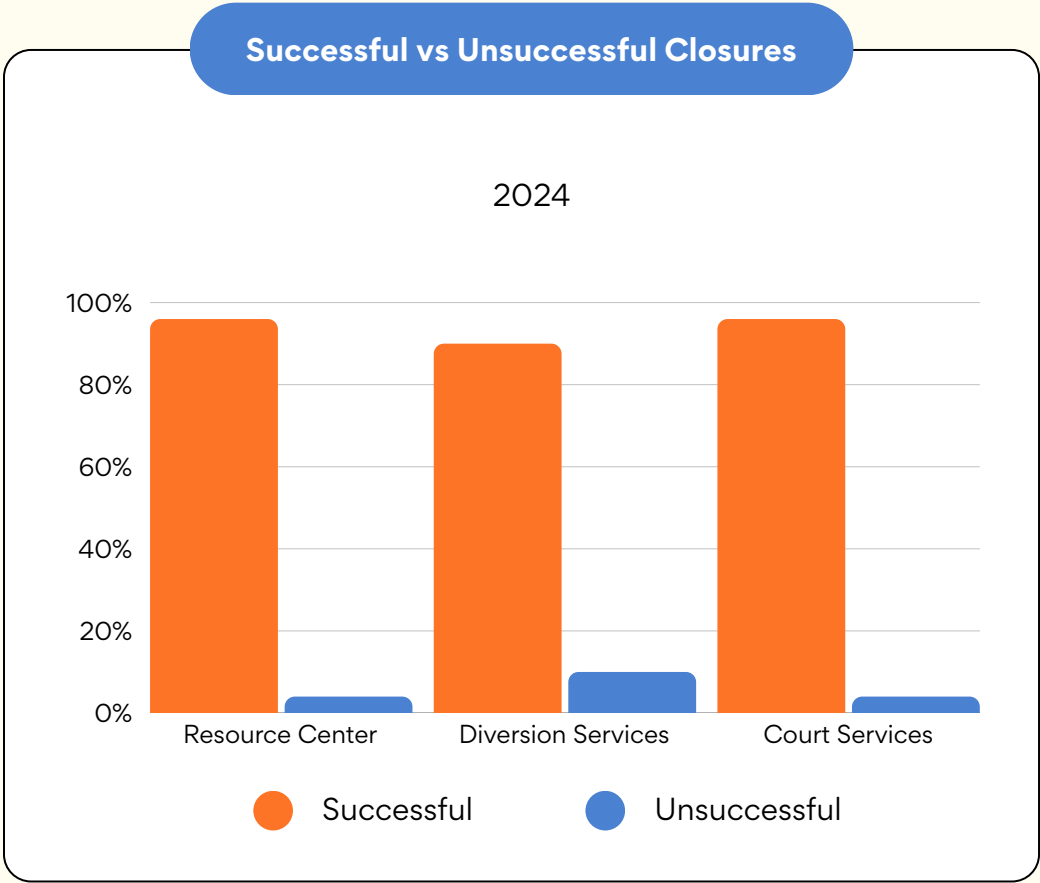
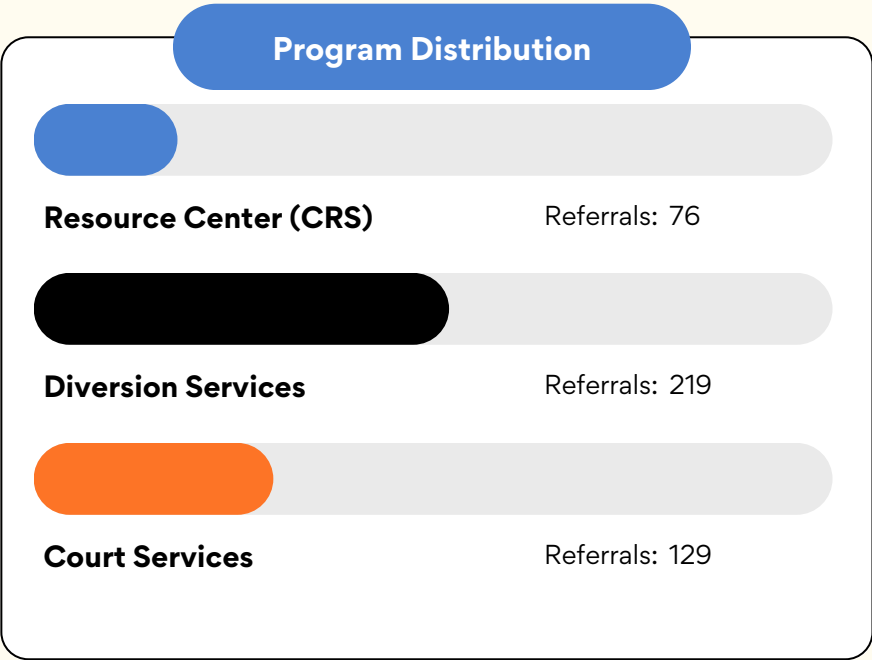
Subsidized Youth Employment Program Data

Page 33

Program Resource: Short-term Outcome	Enrollment Achieved Goal				
	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Work Readiness Training: <i>Received a Certificate of Completion</i>	Enrolled: 1 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 3 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 3 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 3 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 2 Achieved Goal: 100%
Work Readiness Training: <i>Increased Score/Skill Level</i>	Enrolled: 1 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 3 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 3 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 0	Enrolled: 2 Achieved Goal: 50%
On-the-Job Training: <i>Completed 120 Hours</i>	Enrolled: 1 Not Achieved	Enrolled: 3 Achieved Goal: 33%	Enrolled: 3 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 0	Enrolled: 2 Achieved Goal: 50%
On-the-Job Training: <i>Conducted Pre- and Post-Program Evaluations</i>	Enrolled: 1 Pre-Program Evaluation: Achieved Post-Program Evaluation: Not Achieved	Enrolled: 3 Achieved Goal: 33%	Enrolled: 3 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 3 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 2 Achieved Goal: 50%
Workforce Development Services: <i>Obtained Unsubsidized Employment</i>	Enrolled: 0	Enrolled: 0	Enrolled: 1 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 1 Achieved Goal: 100%	Enrolled: 2 Achieved Goal: 50%

2024 - Juvenile Court Snapshot

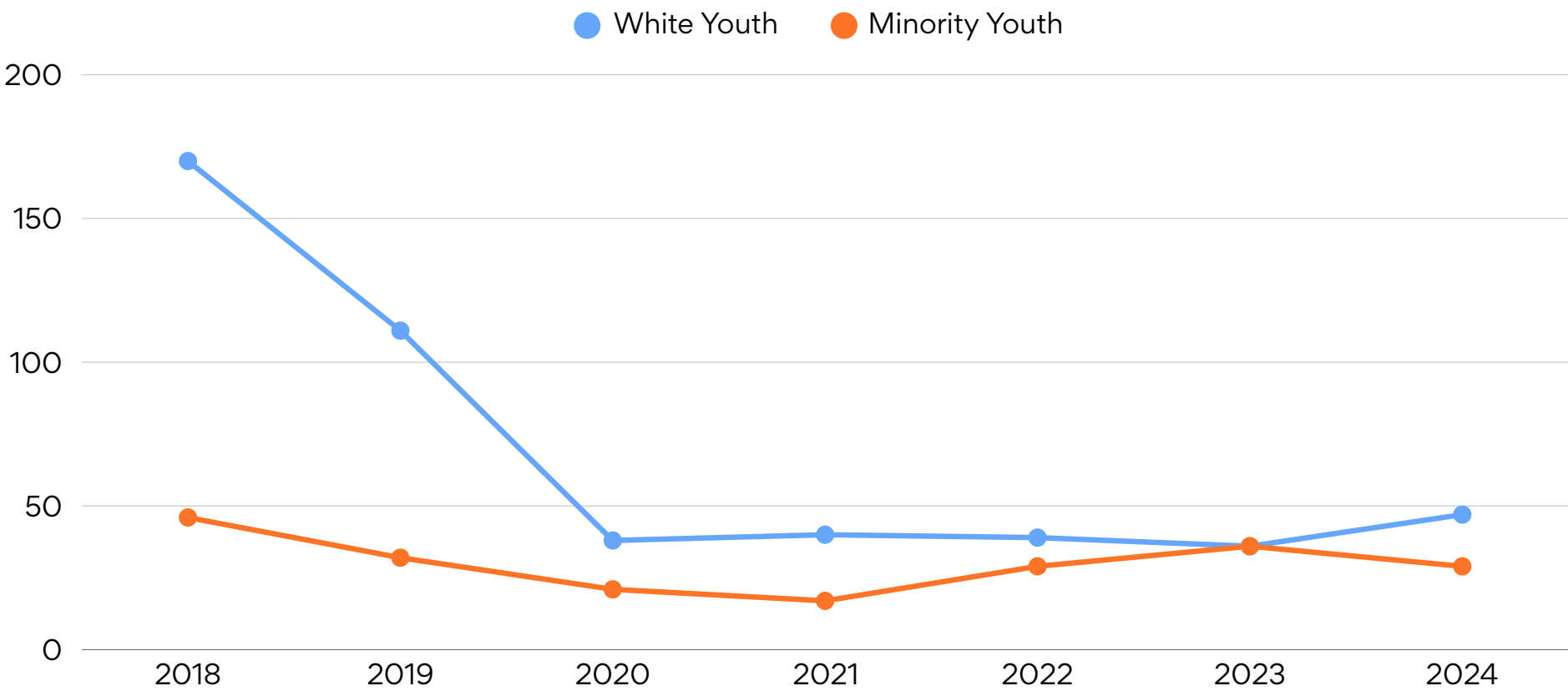
→ A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF KEY RESOURCE CENTER DATAPOINTS IN 2024



2024 - Juvenile Court Snapshot

→ A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF KEY RESOURCE CENTER DATAPOINTS IN 2024

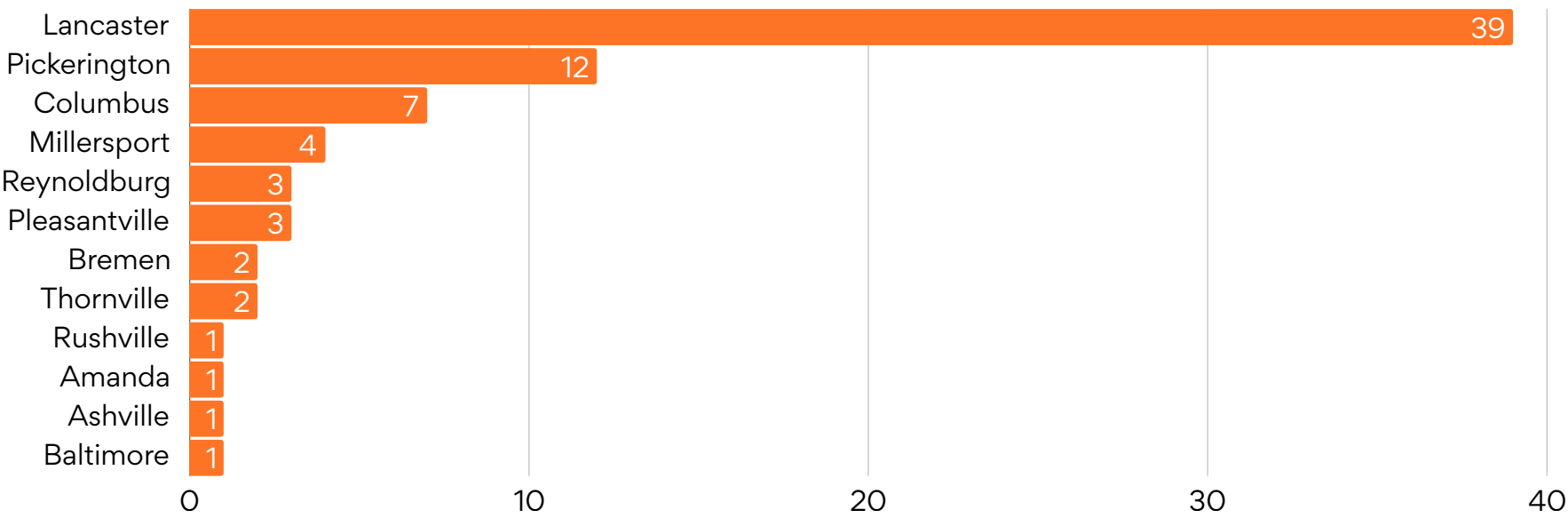
Detention Referrals by Race and Years



Other Notes

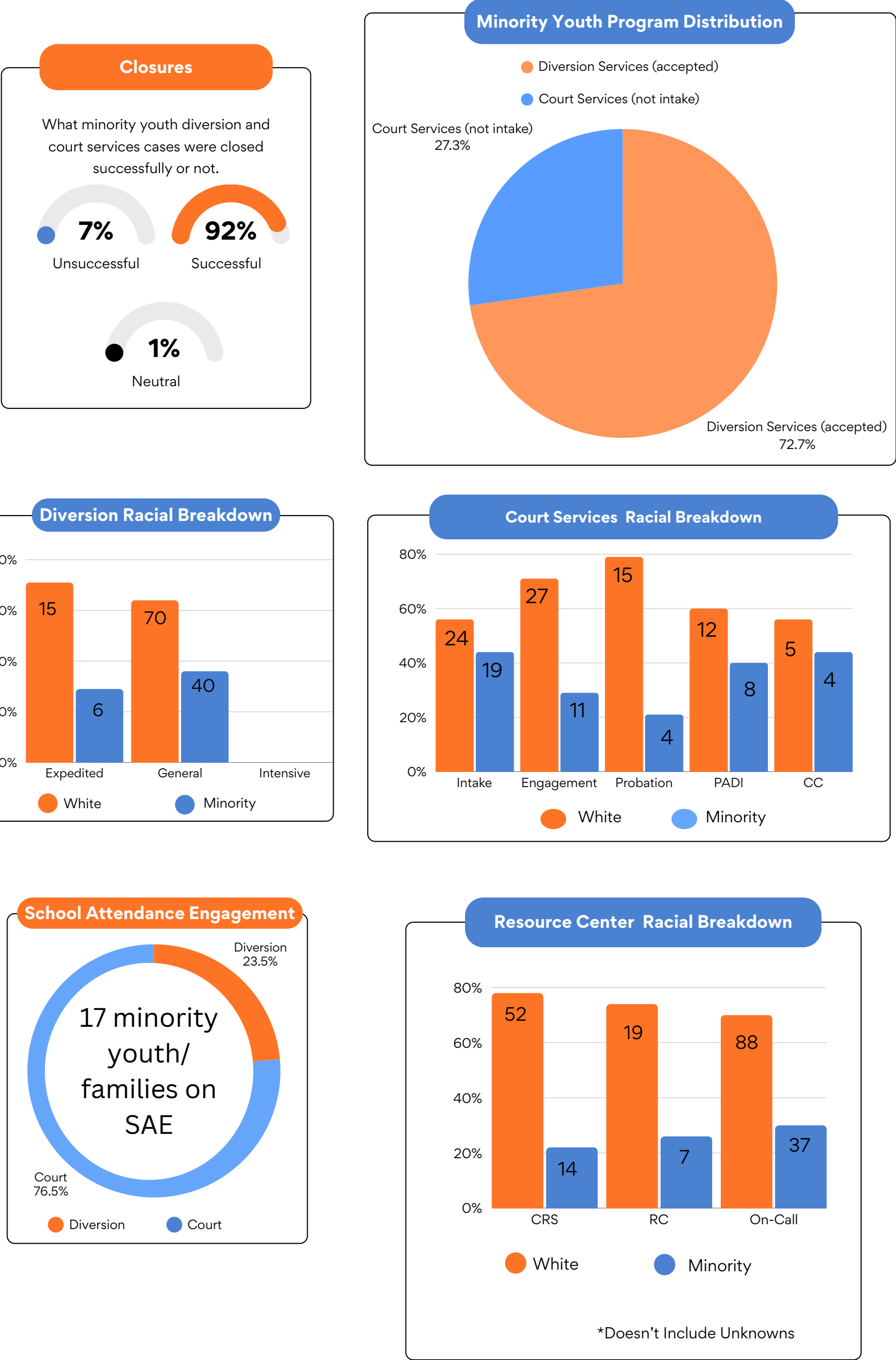
- There was one youth placed in a CCF in 2024.
- No youth were placed on the Intensive Diversion Track in 2024.
- There were 7 on-call for youth under the age of 15 for a school/community threat.

Detention Placement By ZIP Code



2024 - Race, Equity and Inclusion Data

→ A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF KEY RESOURCE CENTER DATAPPOINTS IN 2024



Specialized Dockets & Strategic Initiatives

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- **Excel (formerly Family Court)**
- **Protecting and Advocating for Children Together (PACT)**



Provided through a specialized docket of Fairfield County Juvenile Court, Excel is a court-supervised therapeutically orientated judicial approach designed to improve outcomes for families involved with Protective Services (PS) with their primary barrier to reunification being substance misuse. Participants include Fairfield County parents working toward reunification.

Goals of Excel (formerly known as Family Court) are:

1. Improve participants' recovery support systems and recovery capital.
2. Through a multi-system approach, family members will have access to services to create a healthy environment for children to grow and develop.
3. Reduce recidivism/refiling of abuse, neglect, dependency cases for participants.

Excel provides a collaborative effort that offers families the supports, services and treatment necessary to assist parents in establishing and maintaining sobriety while providing safety for their children.

Excel strives to empower families to look beyond compliance and abstinence, encouraging them to make a commitment to a lifestyle of recovery.

Excel is a strength-based program enhanced with strategic incentives. The focus is on goal-setting and achievement, with participants earning incentives for their accomplishments. Incentives have included self-care items, cleaning supplies, housewares, gift cards, and family-focused games and activities.

Referrals to Excel are made by PS. Upon acceptance into Excel, participants are provided additional support through the Excel Case Manager and through the guidance of the Magistrate/Judge during Status Hearings. Throughout the four Steps of Excel participants build their recovery and systems of support, while increasing knowledge of safe parenting in order to reunify with their children.

Excel is one of the many reasonable efforts Protective Services utilizes in their efforts to reunify parents with their children.

Excel Data

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	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Total Number of Participants	25	28	29	34	35	31	13	16	15	10
Number of Children Reunified	18	8	6	12	21	*	*	*	*	*
Number of Participants Closed	8	8	9	8	11	9	7	3	6	2
N=Neutral Exit U=Unsuccessful Exist	4N 4U	5N 3U	4N 5U	3N 5U	7N 4U	**	**	**	**	**
Number of Program Graduates/ Successful Commencements	9	4	5	8	8	4	2	7	1	6

*Data not tracked until 2020.

**Additional data (neutral and unsuccessful exits) not tracked until 2020.

Protecting & Advocating for Children Together

Page 40

Protecting and Advocating for Children Together (PACT) is a collaborative effort between Juvenile Court and Protective Services to serve families linked in both systems.

Research shows dual-involved youth present with a range of unique challenges and needs that can lead to higher costs and further system involvement than those youth without dual-system involvement.

Juvenile Court and Protective Services identify shared youth and create a family-centered team approach to serving these unique youth and families through the PACT process.

PACT teams place family needs and supports at the center of their work, creating changes that work to prevent further system involvement.

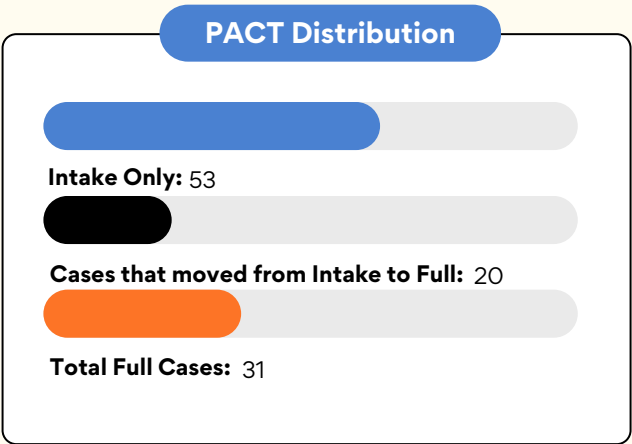
Protecting and Advocating for Children Together Data

Page 41

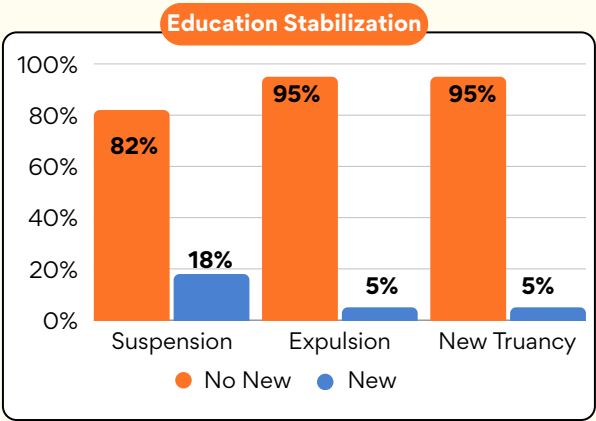
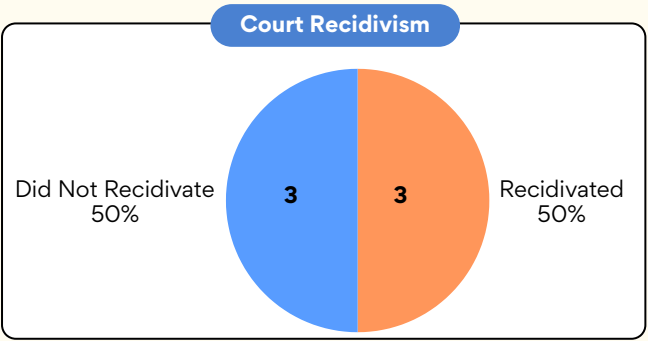
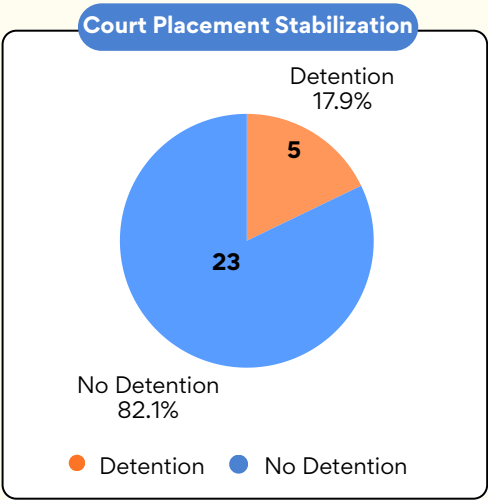
	2024	2023	2022
Families Served	17	45	30
Average Range	12-17	13-17 years	13-18 years
Average Age	14.8 years	14.5 years	15.9 years
Custodial Residence	Lancaster: 14 Pickerington: 1 Millersport: 1 Reynoldsburg: 1	Lancaster: 25 Pickerington: 3 Canal Winchester: 3 Other/Out of County: 12	Lancaster: 18 Pickerington: 10 Canal Winchester: 1 Pleasantville: 1
Offense	Felony: 1 Misdemeanor: 13 Status: 3	Felony: 3 Misdemeanor: 24 Status: 18	Felony: 4 Misdemeanor: 17 Status: 9
Court Department	Diversion Services: 6 Court Services: 11	Diversion Services: 31 Court Services: 14	Diversion Services: 25 Court Services: 5

PACT - Outcome Measures

→ A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF KEY PACT DATAPOINTS SINCE JULY 2023

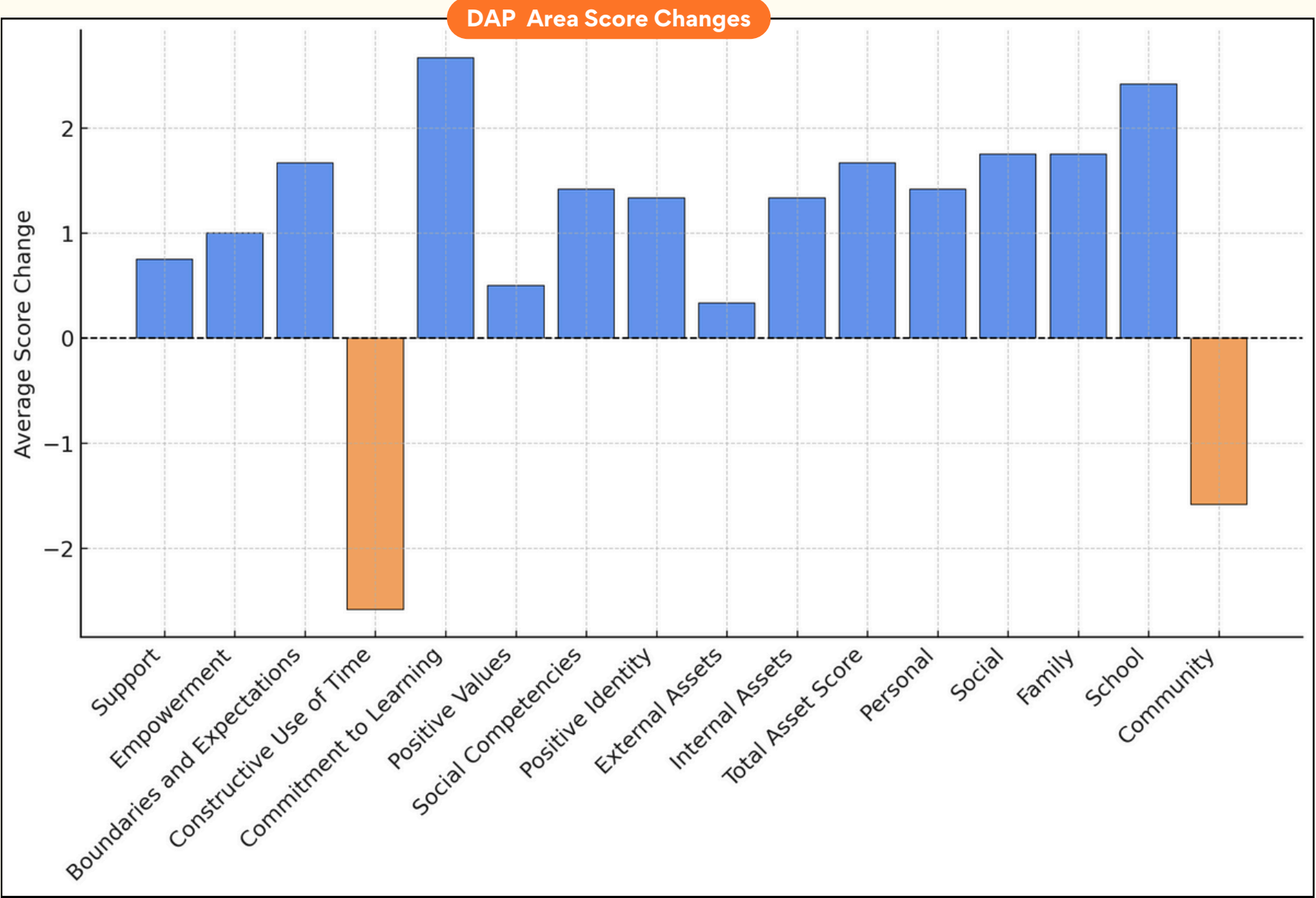


- Court Outcome Measures
- Stabilization of Placement:** 75% of youth that are served through PACT will not be placed in a juvenile justice placement while PACT involved.
 - Reduce Recidivism:** 75% of youth will not receive a new court referral 12 months post PACT-closure.
 - Stabilization of Education:** 75% of youth will not receive a suspension, 75% will not receive an expulsion, and 75% will not receive a new truancy case while PACT involved.
 - DAP:** 75% of youth will show an increase in the DAP Assessment Results from the Pre-Assessment to the Post-Assessment to be administered to the youth at PACT closure.



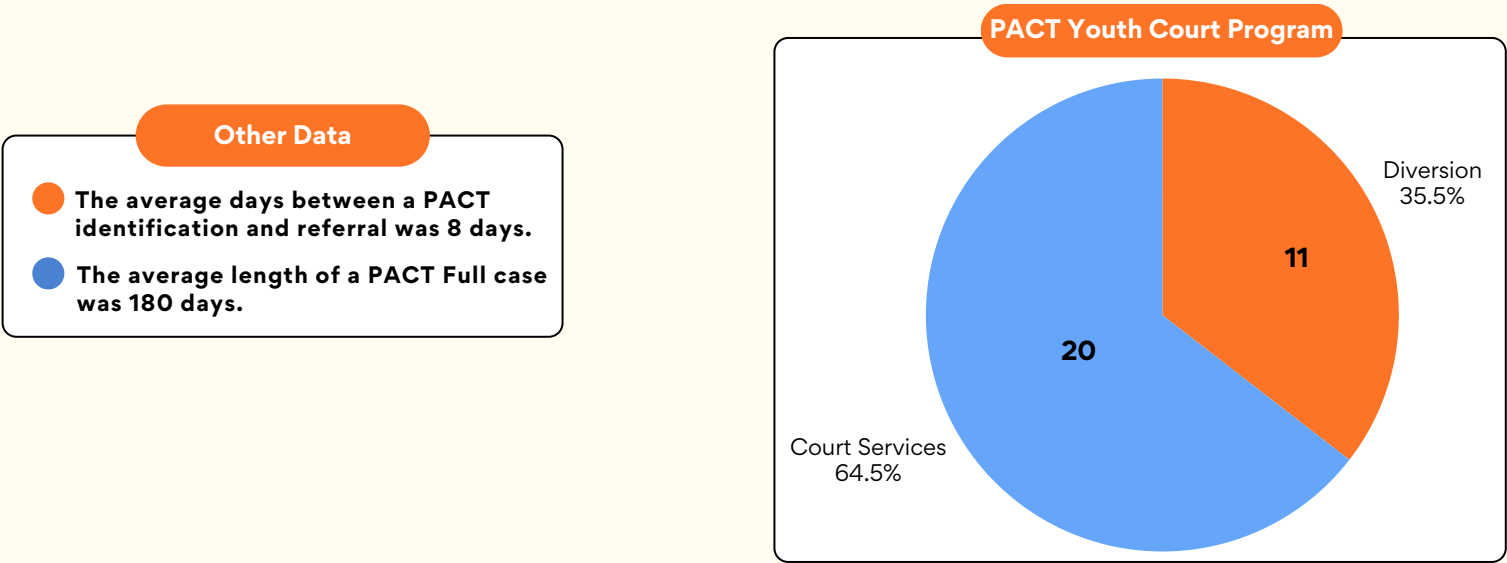
DAP Overall Score

66% of youth who completed PACT showed an increase in overall DAP score.

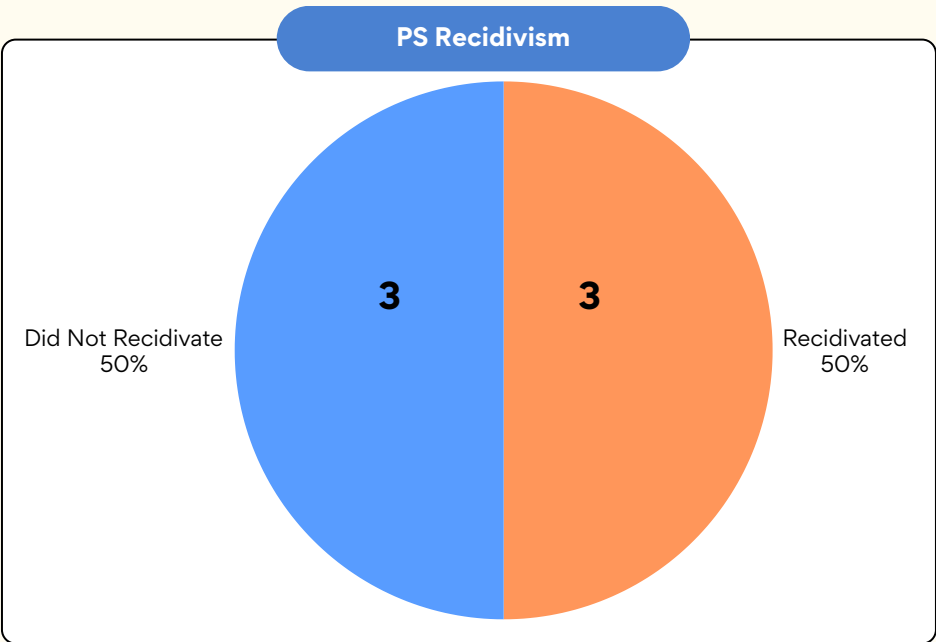
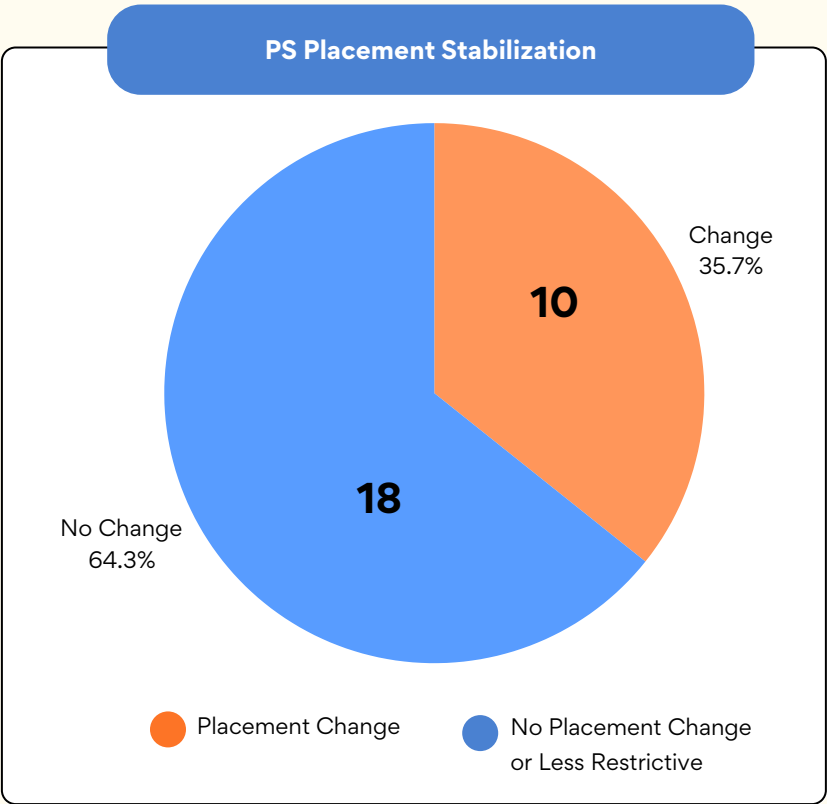
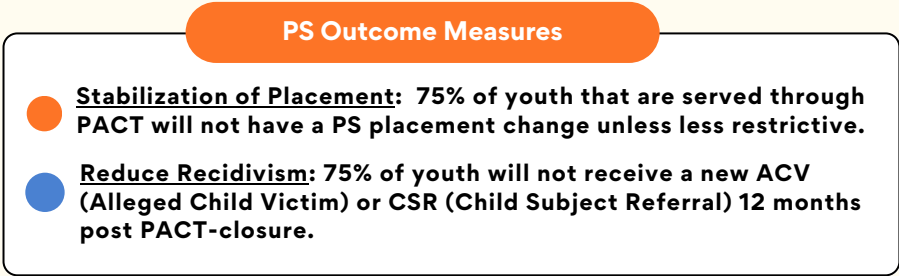


PACT - Outcome Measures

→ A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF KEY PACT DATAPOINTS SINCE JULY 2023



Protective Services (PS) Data



Juvenile Court Funding and Statistics

Page 44

- **Juvenile Court Funding**
- **Juvenile Court Statistics**
 - New Cases
 - Comparison of Charges and/or Filings
 - Violent Crime Statistics
 - Offenses Against an Individual 65 Years of Age or Older or Permanents and Totally Disabled
 - Sexual Offenses
 - Traffic



Juvenile Court Funding

Funding Source	Provides For	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Fairfield County General Fund	Court Operations and Employees	3,704,576.28	3,532,347.00	3,260,334.00	2,562,253.00	2,567,972.00	2,355,338.00	2,083,396.00	1,975,569.00	1,856,247.00	1,797,010.00
Department of Youth Services 510	Employees—Counselors, Psychological Evaluations and Trainings	1,310,705.23	1,126,632.79	970,598.25	922,843.67	842,991.08	974,868.72	714,265.97	901,004.65	779,472.73	770,616.26
Juvenile Court Recovery Fund	Employees	93.61	45.00	279.00	135.00	821.86	225.54	30,768.39	32,452.58	178,417.56	24,139.59
Computer/Computer Research	Maintenance, Upgrades to Software and Equipment, Website	8,669.05	8,311.00	9,489.00	8,634.00	17,225.36	13,974.00	14,208.12	57,568.72	15,908.64	20,479.60
Drug Court Fund Grant ODMHAS	Drug Court Operations	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	110,000.00	60,000.00	63,811.00	30,011.82	37,500.00	108,900.00	65,164.85
Ohio Multi-System Youth Fund	Mental Health Counselors	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	65,000.00	130,000.00	131,001.68	130,016.81	130,000.00	130,000.00
Title IV-E Fund	MSY Placement Shared Pool and Workforce Development	7.16 BWC Refund	47.95 BWC Refund	0.00	1,545.87	909.80	311,871.73	209,743.20	368,397.77	305,564.37	821,714.51
Total Juvenile Revenue		\$4,702,383.74	\$4,702,383.74	\$4,275,700.25	\$3,605,411.54	\$3,554,098.24	\$3,850,088.99	\$3,213,395.18	\$3,502,509.53	\$3,374,759.55	\$3,629,574.82

Juvenile Court Statistics: New Cases

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	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Adult	92	63	48	80	57	110	125	137	165	75
Delinquency	221	235	163	156	221	270	424	515	402	409
Unruly	34	26	11	19	36	56	71	36	4	1
Traffic	457	466	500	415	451	573	593	751	746	728
Abuse, Neglect, Dependency	151	145	145	138	164	143	162	128	169	186
Grandparent Power of Attorney and Misc.	26	29	33	26	31	39	35	59	50	67
Motion for Permanent Custody (including refiles)	18	25	23	21	24	37	23	29	25	23
Custody, Change of Custody, Visitation and Motions filed in A, N, D	218	192	185	184	180	131	130	137	167	121
Private Custody Transferred and Filed	Combined with above	Combined with above	Combined with above	Combined with above	Combined with above	Combined with above	Combined with above	38	19	33
Total New Juvenile Cases	1,251	1,181	1,108	1,039	1,164	1,359	1,563	1,987	1,848	1,714

Juvenile Court Statistics: Comparison of Filings and/or Charges

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Charges and/or Filings	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Felony Filings	41	65	49	41	48	41	66	55	51	71
Trespass	13	9	9	2	10	10	21	31	18	9
Criminal Mischief	6	14	9	1	9	6	8	13	7	128
Criminal Damaging/Vandalism	22	10	31	7	24	22	30	54	28	36
Theft: Petty or Grand, and Safecracking	15	17	42	16	64	42	75	66	60	74
Arson	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	5	2	1
Burglary, Robbery, Breaking and Entering	9	4	15	16	19	10	11	11	8	13
Disorderly Conduct	46	29	21	14	18	33	99	113	37	74
Drug & Alcohol	10	22	21	18	13	27	90	115	78	111
Tobacco	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0
Truancy	19	22	42	69	47	51	21	70	115	49

Juvenile Court Statistics: Comparison of Filings and/or Charges

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<div><div></div>Violent Crimes</div> <div><div></div>Sexual Offenses</div> <div><div></div>Traffic</div> <div><div></div>Other</div>	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
<div><div></div>Assault: Aggravated or Attempted, Neglect, Felonious Assault</div>	39	63	30	47	23	52	77	50	42	46
<div><div></div>Menacing/Aggravated by Stalking, Kidnapping, Abduction</div>	17	25	13	12	18	26	54	27	23	14
<div><div></div>Domestic Violence</div>	2	3	2	1	14	33	59	82	24	14
<div><div></div>Rape, Sexual Battery</div>	2	5	4	8	0	8	13	1	5	26
<div><div></div>Gross Sexual Imposition, Sexual Imposition</div>	7	4	2	10	1	16	24	15	7	27
<div><div></div>Disseminating, Importuning, Public Indecency, Pandering</div>	2	7	1	2	5	3	17	6	2	9
<div><div></div>Speed</div>	190	209	238	188	203	262	245	336	347	328
<div><div></div>Assured Clear Distance Ahead</div>	18	30	48	51	53	70	72	88	85	80
<div><div></div>Operating a Vehicle While Impaired</div>	10	7	9	12	1	2	16	10	14	6
<div><div></div>Felony Traffic Offense</div>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<div><div></div>Vehicular Homicide</div>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<div><div></div>Other <i>Significantly higher in 2023 and 2024 due to a change in new data tracking technology</i></div>	407	537	354	337	260	303	361	413	328	309

Probate Court Funding and Statistics

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- **Probate Court Update**
- **Probate Court Funding**
- **Probate Court Statistics: New Cases**
- **Guardianship Service Board**
- **Guardianship Service Board Statistics**



Probate Court Update

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2024 Accomplishments

2024 was a busy year for the Probate Court, with a total of 892 new cases filed with the Court.

In particular, 584 new estates and 84 guardianships were filed during the year. Additionally, the Court issued 822 new marriage licenses.

These numbers continue to reflect a high demand for Probate Court services in Fairfield County. See page 51 for additional Probate Court statistics.

The Court continued to push forward on implementing a Good Deeds program. The program is public outreach designed to provide County residents with information to effectively plan for the future with an understanding of how real property, vehicle titles, and other assets intersect with the Probate Court.

Judge Vandervoort, along with Clerk of Courts Branden Meyer and County Recorder Lisa McKenzie, presented the program to the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners during a weekly public meeting. The Commissioners and other officials in attendance at the meeting provided positive feedback for the initiative.

The Court also continued to enhance public access to historic Probate Court Records. Probate records from prior to 1991 were previously only accessible by reviewing them on Microfiche or by viewing hard copies of the records. Now, thanks to various funding sources, the Court has created an online search mechanism in which customers can access and view these records online.

These enhancements have provided greater access to our customers, while minimizing staff time utilized to search these records.

continued on next page

Probate Court Update *continued*

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2025 Goals

In 2025, the Court will continue to collaborate with the Clerk of Courts and County Recorder to implement the Good Deeds program.

The Court will host a meeting with the local Bar Association to solicit feedback on the program and implement appropriate updates prior to full implementation.

From there, the Court will work with Clerk Meyer and Recorder McKenzie to develop a schedule for implementation to the public.

The Court will also enhance various processes and procedures consistent with changes in Ohio law. For example, the Ohio Modernization Act will take effect in 2025.

The Act was passed in an attempt to better and more efficiently serve children and families going through the adoption process.

The Court will update its forms and processes to comply with the law and to best serve our customers.

Additionally, the Court will review its processes and procedures with respect to safekeeping of wills that are filed before or after death and ensure that the Court's procedures are consistent with best practices across the state.

Finally, the Court anticipates statewide implementation of time deadlines with respect to the opening and closure of cases. The Court will begin to develop processes and tracking mechanisms for these deadlines.

Probate Court Funding

Funding Source	Provides For	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Fairfield County General Fund	Court Operations and Employees	879,124.00	801,776.70	747,320.00	750,460.92	710,529.00	712,495.00	673,937.10	645,558.00	653,257.00	549,784.00
Computer and Legal Research	Maintenance and Upgrades	20,035.75	22,943.97	23,784.00	23,508.00	36,178.18	21,197.74	20,772.26	20,228.00	42,826.62	33,326.00
Indigent Guardian Funds	Guardians and Attorneys for Indigent Wards	12,293.53	17,560.00	18,630.00	18,120.00	13,072.00	14,988.00	14,290.00	13,620.00	13,650.00	17,299.00
Special Projects	Court Special Projects	36,240.36	41,214.23	46,107.74	43,467.66	34,180.50	45,947.79	43,763.00	46,457.50	50,278.08	33,269.26
Total Probate Revenue		\$883,494.90	\$883,494.90	\$835,841.74	\$835,556.58	\$793,959.68	\$794,628.53	\$752,762.36	\$725,653.50	\$760,011.70	\$633,678.26

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Adoptions and Placements	50	51	62	53	61	66	40	51	58	45
Civil Actions	24	23	18	15	21	14	8	19	51	49
Estates	584	641	684	633	500	562	549	511	522	589
Wrongful Death Actions	4	5	8	11	5	2	2	2	6	3
Guardianships (All Types)	84	91	118	103	89	120	106	55	57	73
Civil Commitments*	18	4	59	39	31	63	60	38	35	34
Name Changes	102	104	99	129	71	67	72	82	65	81
Minors' Settlements	18	15	30	15	13	11	15	9	12	12
Birth Record Corrections	5	7	6	4	2	10	7	7	9	3
Trusts	3	2	6	13	4	3	1	7	5	8
Conservatorships	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total New Probate Cases	892	943	1,091	1,015	797	918	860	781	820	897
New Marriage Licenses Issued	822	866	828	871	792	824	864	861	834	875

* IThis drastic decline in civil commitment numbers is the result of the Court no longer opening cases for out-of-county billing due to our transition to our new case management system in 2023.

Guardianship Service Board

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Fairfield County Guardianship Service Board (GSB) is the appointed guardian of eligible indigent wards in Fairfield County. Four GSB Case Managers and a program Coordinator address the ongoing needs of wards and work directly with their service providers. The GSB marked its 5-year anniversary in December 2024.

Creation of the GSB is the result of a partnership formed with community partners to fund the Board. HB 59 and ORC 2111.52 (effective 3/22/2019) authorized the development of the Fairfield County GSB. Community partners include Job and Family Services, ADAMH, Fairfield County Board of Development Disabilities, Fairfield Medical Center, and The Senior Hub (formerly Meals on Wheels of Fairfield County.)

Through the GSB, the County's guardianship program transitioned from attorney-based to social services-based. The use of case managers results in increased contact and care coordination for all wards/clients.

Individuals served by the GSB are:

- Age 18 or older,
- Fairfield County residents,
- Indigent,
- Placed under a guardianship in Fairfield County Probate Court, and
- Referred or served by GSB community partner(s).

The GSB serves in four primary ways:

1. Visit: GSB staff visit their clients regularly and coordinate with service providers to ensure appropriate treatment and continuity of care.
2. Prepare: GSB team members prepare care plans and review progress toward individualized goals.
3. Advocate: The staff advocate for and support their clients in making important medical and end-of-life decisions.
4. Engage: They endeavor to engage and educate family members and other supporters to improve the clients' quality of life.



	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Total Cases	166 (85 male, 81 female)	143 (71 male; 72 female)	132 (64 male; 68 female)	122 (65 male; 57 female)	102 (57 male; 45 female)
Number of Contact Hours per Client per Month	4.72	4.64	4.33	6.94	3.00
Age Range of Clients/Wards	18-98	18 to 98	18 to 86	20 to 87	19 to 96
Ages 60 or Older	78 (47%)	61 (43%)	58 (44%)	50 (41%)	45 (44%)
Non-residential (<i>Long-term Care Facility</i>)	70 (42%)	58 (40.6%)	58 (44%)	43 (35%)	44 (43%)
Residential (<i>Living in the Community</i>)	96 (58%)	85 (59%)	74 (56%)	79 (65%)	58 (57%)
Qualifying Conditions (<i>Wards may have more than one condition.</i>)					
Mental Illness	119 (72%)	103 (72%)	104 (79%)	80 (78%)	100 (82%)
Cases with Allegations of Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation	98 (59%)	74 (52%)	71 (54%)	54 (53%)	54 (44%)
Other Physical or Cognitive Impairment That Impacts Decision-Making	65 (39%)	59 (41%)	63 (48%)	46 (44%)	35 (29%)
Developmental Disability	68 (41%)	61 (43%)	53 (40%)	40 (39%)	34 (28%)
Dementia	61 (37%)	50 (35%)	49 (37%)	35 (34%)	60 (49%)
Substance Abuse	39 (23%)	34 (24%)	41 (31%)	29 (28%)	66 (54%)

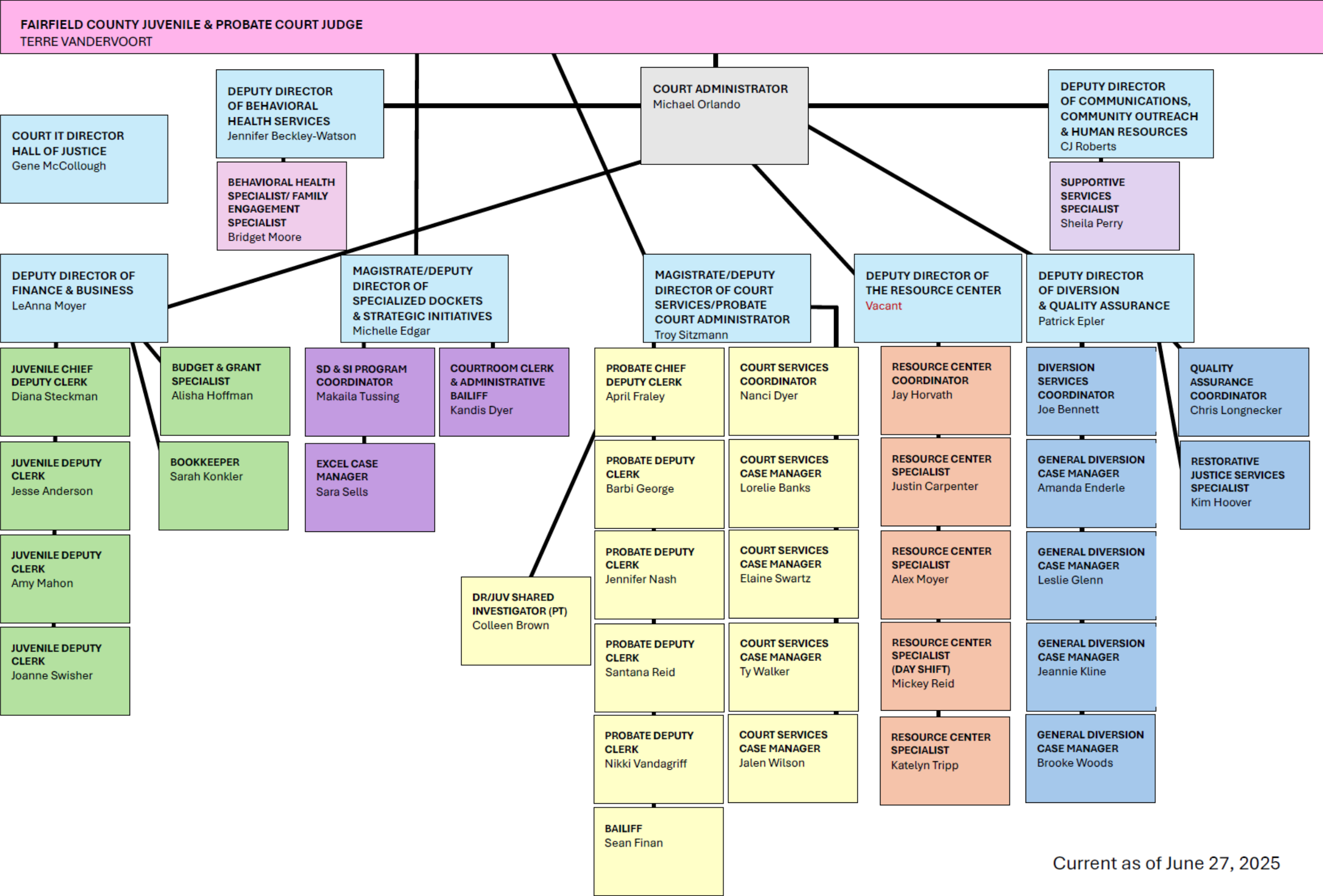
Juvenile and Probate Court

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- **Current Court Table of Organization**
- **Current GSB Table of Organization**
- **2024 Annual Report Distribution and Printing**

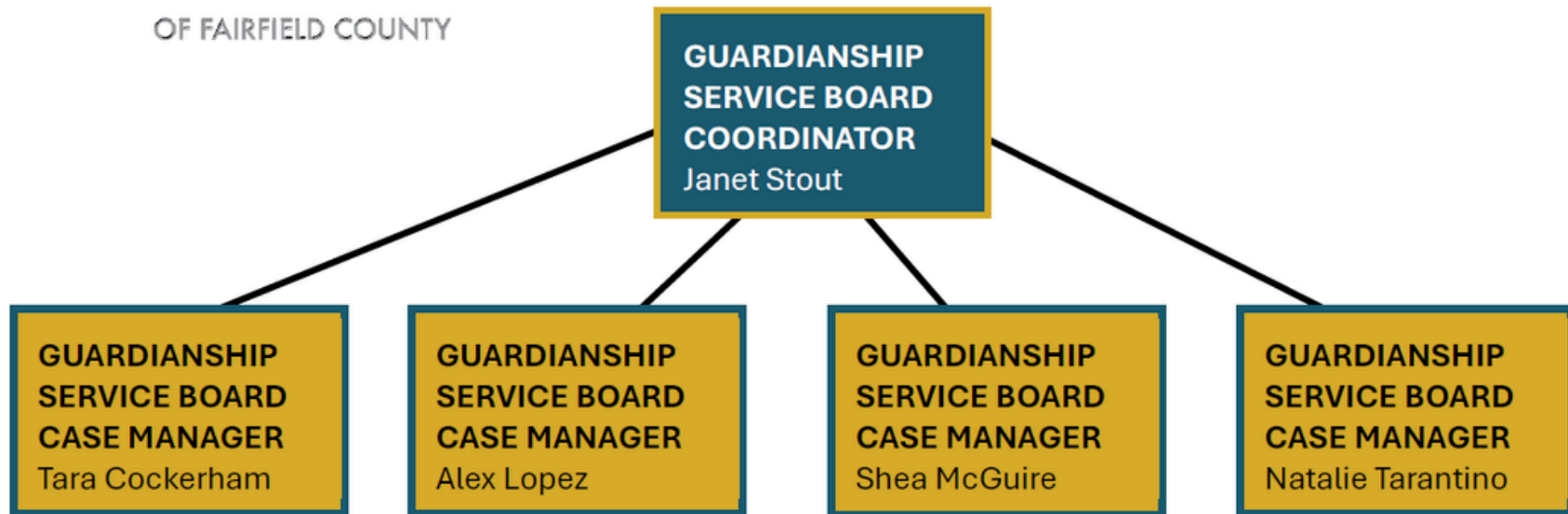


Juvenile and Probate Court Table of Organization



Guardianship Service Board Table of Organization

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Current as of June 27, 2025

Annual Report Distribution

Page 59

- **Distributed via email to:**
 - Fairfield County Commissioner Steve Davis
 - Fairfield County Commissioner Dave Levacy
 - Fairfield County Commissioner Jeff Fix
 - Fairfield County Administrator Aunie Cordle
 - Supreme Court of Ohio
 - Fairfield County District Library
- **Posted online at www.fairfieldcountyprobate.com**
- **Cost of Printing: \$0 (distributed electronically)**

