

2019

Needs Assessment/Strategic Plan



Introduction

Bernalillo County is a National Model Site for Juvenile Justice Reform under the Annie E. Casey foundation model. For the past 20 years, referrals from Law Enforcement to the Bernalillo County Juvenile Justice system have steadily declined. Detention rates and felony filings also continue to decline. In fact, Bernalillo County continues to show some of the most significant drops in referrals to the Juvenile Justice system in the country, over 53% since 1999. It is important to note that system quality improvement strategies and reforms in Bernalillo County have not increased Law Enforcement referrals to the Juvenile Justice systems.

Community Well Being and Public Safety

The Bernalillo County Juvenile Justice Collaborative, which includes the BCJJC, use a public health model to address the needs and challenges of youth in the juvenile justice system and their families. This model is strength based and seeks to build protective factors for youth and families, reducing their needs and challenges and reducing delinquent behavior. By law, the juvenile justice system in New Mexico is a rehabilitative system that must take many factors into account including the following that directly relate to the BCJJC's work:

Provide effective deterrents to acts of juvenile delinquency, including an emphasis on community -based alternatives;

Strengthen families and successfully reintegrate children into homes and community based alternatives;

Foster and encourage collaboration between government agencies and communities with regard to juvenile justice policies and procedures;

Develop community based alternatives to detention;

Eliminate or reduce disparities based upon race or gender.

Needs Assessment

The needs assessment was conducted with several resources for 2019. The data support team used data from the FY18 Annual Detention Report, from the 2019 Deep End status report entitled "Taking Stock", and the CYFD FY18 Juvenile Justice Report Appendix. In addition the BCJJC conducted a services survey, sent out to system stakeholders, community based service providers, and the youth and the families we serve. The survey received 63 responses and was very comprehensive in answering questions about the barriers to service that youth and families experience, not only in the juvenile justice system but also in the public school system.

Data Analysis

Referrals:

There were 1367 delinquency referrals from Law Enforcement to Juvenile Probation in FY18. Youth of color account for the majority of the referrals, 81%, boys account for 70% of the referrals. In FY18 47% of the referrals were handled informally, meaning to provide voluntary sanctions, support or other response in order to divert from the formal court system. The top three offense categories for misdemeanor referrals were Battery, Battery on a Household Member, Shoplifting. **Assessment:** There is a need for community based diversion options, for youth who with misdemeanor offenses. Options should include culturally relevant services.

Youth on Probation: There were 334 dispositions of youth to probation in 2018. Many youth on probation are disconnected from school. The Community Custody Program, which monitors and provides services for pre-adjudicated youth had 162 youth on their program in Fiscal Year 2018. Of those 162 youth 40% (N=65) were not attending and had not completed school or a GED. **Assessment:** Pre-adjudicated youth in the Bernalillo County Juvenile Justice system are often disconnected to school. Protective factors which support youth are not present for these pre-adjudicated youth, and the school to prison pipeline becomes a very real challenge in their life.

School Data: Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) is one of the largest public schools in the United States with 84,000 students over 77% of which are youth of color. In 2018 there were 1216 long term suspensions of high school students in APS. In 2018 there were 834 threat assessments-students identified as wanting to hurt others in the school. Long term suspensions are often considered the first steps in moving youth into the school to prison pipeline because they interrupt a youth's education and disconnect the youth from critical protective factors. **Assessment:** There is a need for school long term suspension alternatives, especially for youth of color.

Detained Youth: In 2018 there were 75 low risk admissions to the Youth Services Center. Any youth with a low risk admission has to be overridden into detention. The top override reasons for youth admitted to detention in 2018 were Parents Refuse Custody and No

Adequate Supervision. **Assessment:** There is a continuing need for an Alternative to Detention for youth who score as low risk for Detention.

Detention: The majority of youth in Alternatives to Detention 70% report having behavioral health or substance abuse problems. Out of 162 youth served in the community custody program, 40% were disconnected from their education. The majority of youth in the Reception and Assessment Center are there because of misdemeanor battery offenses. 60% of the youth are boys, and 80% of those youth are boys of color. Youth in the Day Reporting Centers top needs include connection to education alternatives like the GED, connection to employment and adult mentor and life skills. **Assessment:** Alternatives to Detention serve a critical purposes including: crisis intervention, stabilizing youth for safe re-entry into the community and the reduction of recidivism through the introduction of protective and stabilizing factors for at risk youth.

Services Survey

Themes:

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that Mental Health and Substance Abuse Counseling are still the most needed services for youth in Bernalillo County. BCJCB Funding cannot pay for these services.

Case Management/Advocacy/System Navigation was the second most identified need throughout the survey for youth and families, in the system and in school.

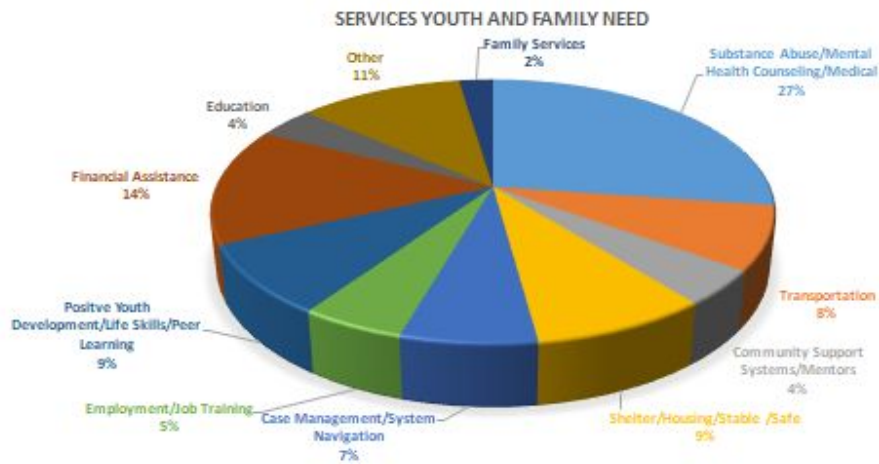
The Categories below were also very strong:

Services which provide protective factors for youth like transportation, stable housing, food, clothing were identified as significantly lacking for at risk youth and youth in the juvenile justice system.

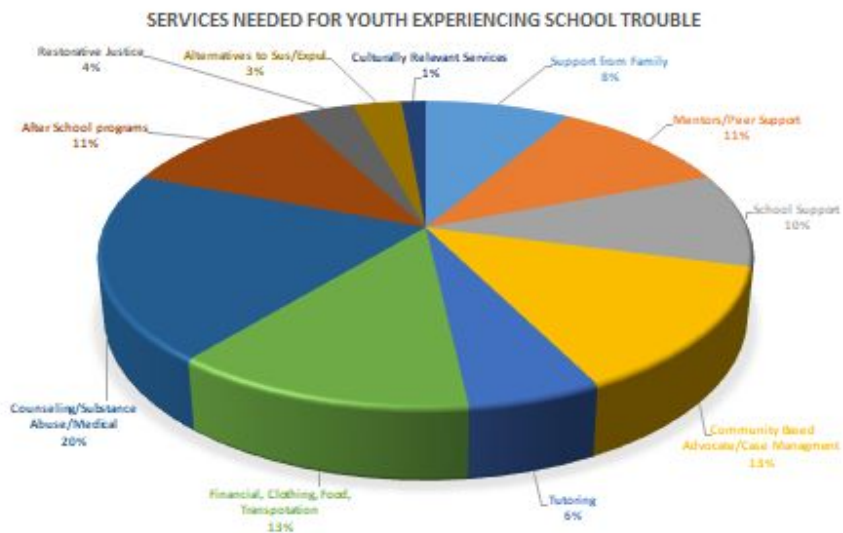
The need for life skills, education and employment were identified as top needs for youth in our community.

It was clear most respondents felt that all services should strive to be culturally responsive, have peer to peer components, provide multiple services and life skills components to be most effective.

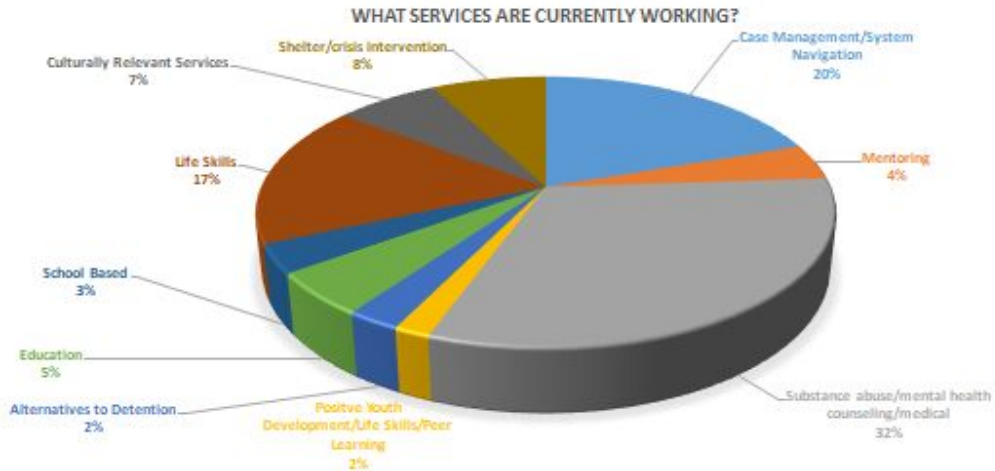
Services Youth and Families Need



At Risk Youth at School



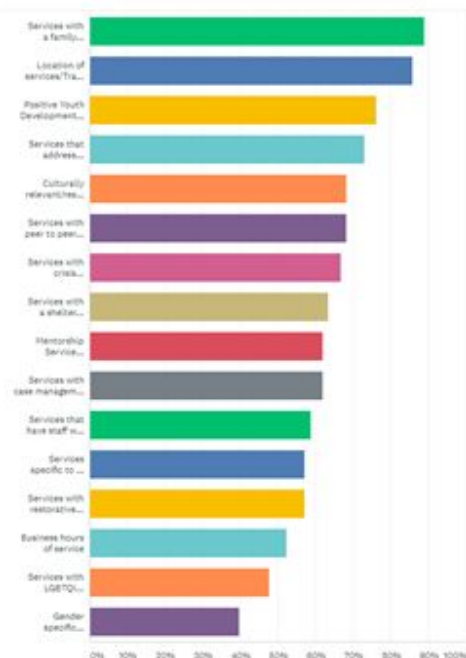
Services that Work!



Services Important to Youth

Tops Services Important to Youth:

- ✓ Services with Family Components 88%
- ✓ Location of Services/Transportation to Services 85%
- ✓ Positive Youth Development Services 76%
- ✓ Services that address Multiple Needs 73%
- ✓ Culturally Relevant. Responsive Services 68%
- ✓ Services with Crisis Intervention Components 66%
- ✓ Services with Case management Components 62%



Strategic Plan

September 11th, 2019 - Strategic Planning session

After the needs assessment and the services survey were conducted a strategic planning session was held by the BCJJC.

The strategic planning consisted of several parts:

- I. Existing programs talked about their data, their success and their challenges and answered board member's questions.
- II. The services survey and other data was presented to the board and discussed.
- III. Board feedback was recorded and a set of strategies developed as a framework for the grant application, RFP's, contracts and all other activities by the board.

The chart below summarizes the boards identified strategies for the next two years of work:

Existing Needs	Addressing Existing Needs
Funding for programs not sufficient to fund all staff working with the youth in the community based programs.	Increase funding amounts requested in Continuum Grant Application to CYFD. Explore other funding avenues.
Collaboration with and support from the Community is lacking.	Create outreach strategies to engage community with BCJJC and with the programs we fund. Recruit Silent Sponsors – Provide spaces and networking opportunities to community groups such as advocacy and Church groups. Give the power and ownership to the community to participate in the well being of their youth and families.
Youth should drive program design and goals.	Include youth in the development of RFP's and the RFP review team. Credible messengers should be included in programs. Programs should reach youth through multiple media venues including but not limited to Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Apps. Youth should have access to higher education through our programs.
Partner with Schools	Open up referrals to schools. Partner with School Counselor and SRO's.