



Governor Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
San Wong, Director

**JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL
IOWA TASK FORCE FOR YOUNG WOMEN**

One purpose, one passion - transforming systems to empower every girl.

MEETING MINUTES

GOOGLE MEET

August 6, 2021

Present: Jennifer Tibbetts; Tiffany Berkenes; Andrea Dencklau; Mandy Engel-Cartie; Bethany Kohoutek; Julie Martin; Lori Rinehart; Maria Valdez

Staff: Kathy Nesteby; Scott Musel; Jill Padgett; Kayla Powell; Julie Rinker; Tiara Mosley

Others: Nickole Miller; Marissa Schuster; Steffani Simbric; Sara Tawil

Introductions/Announcements

Jennifer Tibbetts welcomed those in attendance at 10:05 a.m. A quorum was present. Introductions were made. Due to COVID-19 and social distancing concerns, the meeting was held virtually via Google Meet.

Julie Martin discussed that approximately seven girls participated in what was termed a "riot" at Forest Ridge. Now, 15 girls are at Central Iowa Detention Center awaiting placement. She noted concerns in managing their behaviors and that some CINA youth may now be in the juvenile justice system as a result of the incident at Forest Ridge. She voiced concerns about the extreme need for services for these girls and asked for suggestions on how to elevate these concerns.

Kathy Nesteby reported that this has been elevated to decision makers. Meetings have been held between local law enforcement, staff from Forest Ridge, and Juvenile Court Services (JCS). CJJP provided data. More broadly, DHS conducted "listening sessions" related to the upcoming six year group care contracts which included CJJP staff and the Chief Juvenile Court Officers. Concerns specifically about the lack of appropriate alternatives for girls, among others, were shared.

Members discussed the following:

- Why were these girls acting out? Is this an opportunity to teach them how to be heard?
- Nesteby suggested that a "Talking Wall" be set up with the girls in detention. She will follow up with Kayla Powell to see if something can be arranged.
- How can the Task Force be utilized as a resource to provide information?
- Members suggested sharing the Iowa Girls Justice Initiative report "[Serious, Violent and Chronic Juvenile Female Offenders: Service and System Recommendations for Iowa](#)" released in 2017 as well as a follow up report "[The Deep End: Serious, Violent, Chronic](#)"

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[Female Offenders](#)” released in 2020. A meeting will be arranged to further discuss a list of individuals/agencies with which to share the information.

- Concerns were also noted regarding system changes two years ago as a result of DHS requirements for residential treatment—that kids be kept close to home. As a result, providers are unable to specialize as much, and instead, must provide a wide-range of services to treat a mixture of child welfare and delinquent youth and their individual needs. Additionally, low wages and staff retention issues are contributing factors.

Nestey also suggested sharing detention data and anecdotal information.

Martin offered to contact JCO supervisory staff for more information on these girls. Nestey asked that the information include whether other detention centers are also experiencing similar issues and if they know where these girls are now.

Tibbetts thanked Martin and suggested the topic be included on the next meeting agenda for further discussion and that discussion include action steps needed and other changes that can be made.

Approval of Minutes

- May 5 – Joint DMC-ITFYW Meeting
- May 7 – ITFYW Meeting

Minutes from the above-referenced meetings were accepted as presented.

JJAC/CJJP/COVID Update

Nestey provided the following update:

- *Budget Analyst*—Jeanne Foster has retired and Angela Leonetti was hired as her replacement.
- *Statistical Research Analyst*—This position was reposted and remains open.
- *Mitigating Gender and Racial Bias Training*—This training was held virtually in June by the One Circle Foundation (formerly Girls’ Circle). Members who attended the training provided information. Most thought the training was insightful and that the breakout rooms were very interactive and informative.
- *Deep-end data reports on boys & girls*—Nestey reported the following regarding the draft reports:
 - Overrepresentation—black girls comprise 40% of the cohort while being only 3% of the general population of 10-17 year olds in Iowa.
 - In 2019, 85 girls were eligible for a state training school setting. In 2018, there were 90 and there were 65 in 2017.
 - Of the girls who had a complaint prior to age 14, 40% were Black. Nestey noted that this is a predictor of future continued involvement in the juvenile justice system.
 - Slightly more than half of the cohort’s first offense was a simple misdemeanor. However, over time, a large number ended up with a felony offense.
 - Nestey noted that most did not have a drug charge. However, of those who did, they were white—this has been consistent over time.
 - While mental health is frequently voiced as a concern for deep end girls, eighty percent had no placement in a PMIC facility.

- Adult Court Waivers—42% of the cohort had charges originating in the adult system; 17.5% were waived to the adult system, the rest remained in juvenile court.

Bethany Kohoutek noted that during the last legislative session, there was an increase in reimbursement rates for PMIC. She suggested meeting to discuss issues that should be brought forth to legislators. Nesteby concurred.

DMC Update

Jill Padgett reported on DMC activities. During the May meeting, the 1st Judicial District Juvenile Court Services presented information on their pre-charge diversion program. The August meeting includes a presentation by Terrance Campbell on a project entitled “Tomorrow’s Leaders”. Task Force members were invited to attend.

In January, a workgroup was seated to focus on issues of Black girls in the juvenile justice system. They are currently in the process of developing priorities.

CJJP and the DMC Subcommittee continue working to expand Pre-charge Diversion (PCD). A grant application was submitted. If awarded, it would facilitate statewide expansion. Separately, another grant application focuses on reducing risk for girls in the juvenile justice system by expanding services.

Presentation

- Lived experiences of mothers whose children are involved in the juvenile justice system

Sara Tawil, a therapist from Cedar Rapids, reported on her work to understand the experiences of mothers whose children are involved in the juvenile court system. Her research focus encompassed child protective services and juvenile court, understanding the roles of workers and experiences of families.

Several families from different cultural backgrounds were invited to present to caseworkers. The study included how to approach family members and enter homes, the impact on families, feedback/suggestions from families, strategies for mothers, the impact on social well-being, employment, community, and other family members.

Joint Meeting Project

- Staff recommendations (handout)

Nesteby reviewed a handout that listed possible joint DMC/ITFYW projects as recommended by CJJP staff. She asked members to prioritize the following potential projects. The information will be shared with the DMC Subcommittee who will also prioritize these projects:

Tier I Project Recommendations

Healing-centered engagement

Disrupting the school-to-prison/court pipeline using authentic youth engagement and data

Best practices for LGBTQ+ youth in juvenile justice

Parent partners for juvenile justice involved youth/CASA

Tier II Project Recommendations

Standardized training for cultural and gender responsive approaches

Environmental scan of gender/culturally-responsive classes and groups
“How Diverse is our Juvenile Justice System Workforce in Iowa?”
Model practices for accountability in organizations

The following highlights discussion:

- Iowa ACES 360 will send 20 people to training. The focus will be delinquent youth, developing champions and building capacity.
- Invite Iowa Safe Schools or One Iowa to a future meeting to understand what Iowa youth are experiencing.
- Parent Partners--would help with system navigation, as opposed to mentoring.
- Need to make sure group members understand the topics prior to making recommendations. Understand our roles and what impact we can make.
- Could send members to training and utilize them to train JJAC members and other subcommittee members.
- Need to make sure the two groups (DMC/ITFYW) work together.

There was consensus to focus on healing-centered engagement and disrupting the school-to-court pipeline. This information will be shared with the DMC Subcommittee.

Mission Discussion

- *New option: The ITFYW exists to advise, make recommendations and take action to address juvenile justice issues, particularly as they pertain to gender. The ITFYW is made up of passionate volunteer subject matter experts who are invested in comprehensive system improvement that reflects valuing and empowering every girl no matter her circumstances.*

Due to time constraints, this item will be further discussed at the next meeting. Nesteby asked members to add comments to the online document that was previously shared via email.

Find Our Sisters

- Nickole Miller, Middleton Center for Children’s Rights
- Volunteer for next meeting

Nickole Miller, Director, provided information on the Middleton Center for Children’s Rights at Drake University Law School and their work in juvenile justice. Their mission involves training future attorneys to work with children in the juvenile justice system and training in best practices in child advocacy, interviewing skills, implicit bias, preventing systemic racism, and public policy. Attorneys represent children in juvenile delinquency proceedings, guardianship, special education, school disciplinary proceedings, and name/gender changes for transgendered youth.

The clinic encourages future attorneys to work outside of the legal system on legislative advocacy, community education projects, and partnering with agencies on research, educational presentations, and workshops.

Tibbetts asked about work with youth immigrants and refugees. Miller reported that in meeting with community members, there is a gap between immigration and juvenile justice systems. However, by involvement in the juvenile justice system, there are

pathways for young people to obtain visas and other resources. She offered to provide training on immigration benefits, resources, and agencies that provide assistance.

Tibbetts asked if assistance is provided to LGBTQ youth with regard to rights, especially with school starting. Miller suggested that perhaps a resource guide could be developed by the clinic. She also recommended contacting Iowa Safe Schools who work with discrimination, harassment, and bullying in the LGBTQ community.

Detention Trend Data
Goals and Objectives
New Membership
Old Business

Due to time constraints, the above items were not discussed.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Rinker
Administrative Secretary
Div. of Criminal & Juvenile Justice Planning