



Youth Justice Oversight Committee

Screening and Assessment Work Group

September 23, 2022

Minutes

The Screening and Assessment Workgroup of the Youth Justice Oversight Committee (YJOC) met on September 23, 2022, from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the Regions Bank Building Event Center. Shannon Chambers chaired the meeting.

1. Members present in-person. The following members of the workgroup were present in-person:

- Shannon Chambers, Johnson County Probation, Chair
- Judge Andrea Trevino, Allen Superior Court, Co-Chair
- Jennifer Sturges, Decatur County Public Defender's Office
- Alison Cox, Porter County Detention Center
- Brittany Simmons, Indiana Office of Court Services/JDAI
- Kevin Elkins, Lake County Probation
- Nichole Phillips, Bartholomew County Probation
- Rob McComb, Allen County Probation
- Marc Kniola, Indiana Department of Correction
- Judge Kim Dowling, Delaware Circuit Court 2
- Senator Jean Breaux, Senate District 34
- Kory George, Wayne County Probation
- Don Travis, Department of Child Services
- Lindsey Grossnickle, Whitley County Prosecuting Attorney's Office

2. Member present electronically. The following members of the workgroup were present electronically:

- Jordan Morris, St. Joseph County Probation
- Rachel Patterson, Clark County Probation

3. Members absent. The following members of the workgroup did not attend the meeting:

- Judge Jill D. Wesch, Vermillion Circuit Court
- Miriah Anderson, Tippecanoe County Probation

4. Staff. Michelle Goodman and Leslie Dunn attended in person as staff from the Office of Judicial Administration.

5. **Welcome and introductions.** Shannon Chambers, Chair, called the meeting to order. She welcomed the workgroup members and members briefly introduced themselves.
6. **Approval of August 2022 minutes.** The workgroup reviewed the minutes from the August 12, 2022 meeting. Lindsey Grossnickle moved to approve the minutes as presented and Don Travis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
7. **Discussion on Screening and Assessment Workgroup deliverables.** Judge Trevino provided an overview of the documents provided to the workgroup. The workgroup reviewed the workgroup deliverables and timeline document and did not propose any amendments to that content.

The workgroup reviewed the format of the proposed action plan, which includes relevant statutory provisions, areas to document current policies and practices relating to the use of the Indiana Youth Assessment System (IYAS) and JDAI, workgroup action items, additional information needed, and coordination with other workgroups. This document will continue to help the workgroup walk through this information to help form workgroup recommendations. Michelle Goodman also provided an overview of the IYAS state policies regarding the tools within the assessment system, the best practices, minimum policy for using the tools, including reassessment and case plan requirements, and the training and certification policies.

The workgroup started discussing the items within the action plan and the following items were raised as considerations as the workgroup conducts its work:

- Understanding the scope and definition of diversion as it relates to the provisions of HEA 1359 and when the oversight of the court is appropriate
- Understanding the definition of validated risk screening tools and assessment tools as well as the information provided by these tools and how to properly use the results in decision-making, including the differences in the various tools in use (e.g., how justice system tools are communicated to service providers and how information from service provider tools can help inform justice system stakeholders); also, how to use multiple assessments in the decision-making process.
- Consider what tools can be used related to prevention efforts to help divert youth from the juvenile justice system
- Understanding how to use IYAS tools along side the JDAI strategies within counties that have undertaken JDAI work and how these components aid in decision-making related to detention and release decisions
- Understanding the referral steps, case processing steps, and the timeliness of completing needed assessments to develop best practices to implement assessments processes at the local level supported with appropriate local level policies
- Consider different impacts on processes for counties with a detention center and those without one
- Address data needs from the assessment process; how to track youth diverted from the juvenile justice system compared to youth who receive a diversion within the juvenile justice system
- Improve education for stakeholders on tools, using assessment information and results, and how information is provided within various reports (preliminary inquiry, pre-dispositional report).

- Understanding that the results of assessments can be impacted by quality and fidelity associated with implementation
- Understanding outcomes for validated tools as it relates to the purpose and scope at that decision point

The workgroup discussed potential amendments to the IYAS policy on the diversion tool policy to align with the diversion provisions in HEA 1359 (e.g., including that the diversion tool shall be provided as a part of the preliminary inquiry) noting the current minimum IYAS policy requires the use of the diversion tool at the time an informal adjustment is being considered while the best practice is to use it at initial contact. The discussion recognized the balance needed between which youth are assessed and ensuring that new processes are not unnecessarily pulling youth deeper into the juvenile justice system. The workgroup also discussed the existing Racial and Ethnic Disparities data and definitions, which may help with this work.

The workgroup identified the need to coordinate with the Diversion Workgroup on the scope of the diversion decision point and any relationship to prevention efforts prior to coming to the juvenile justice system. In addition, there will need to be information sharing with the Data Workgroup.

- 8. Discussion on gathering stakeholder feedback.** Shannon Chambers outlined the considerations for the workgroup to develop a process to garner stakeholder feedback, specifically as it relates to developing a survey. The workgroup discussed the benefits and drawbacks of surveys and agreed to consider other methods for feedback, including calling representatives from different stakeholder groups. The workgroup agreed to have a sub-committee work to develop the list of questions for soliciting feedback from specific stakeholder groups. The following members volunteered to participate in the sub-committee: Brittany Simmons, Alison Cox, Jennifer Sturges, Marc Kniola, Jordan Morris, and Kevin Elkins.
- 9. Future workgroup meetings.** The workgroup scheduled the following meeting dates for 2022:
 - Friday, October 14 from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
 - Wednesday, November 2 from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
 - Wednesday, November 30 from 10:00 a.m. – noon
 - Wednesday, December 7 from 10:00 a.m. – noon (if needed)