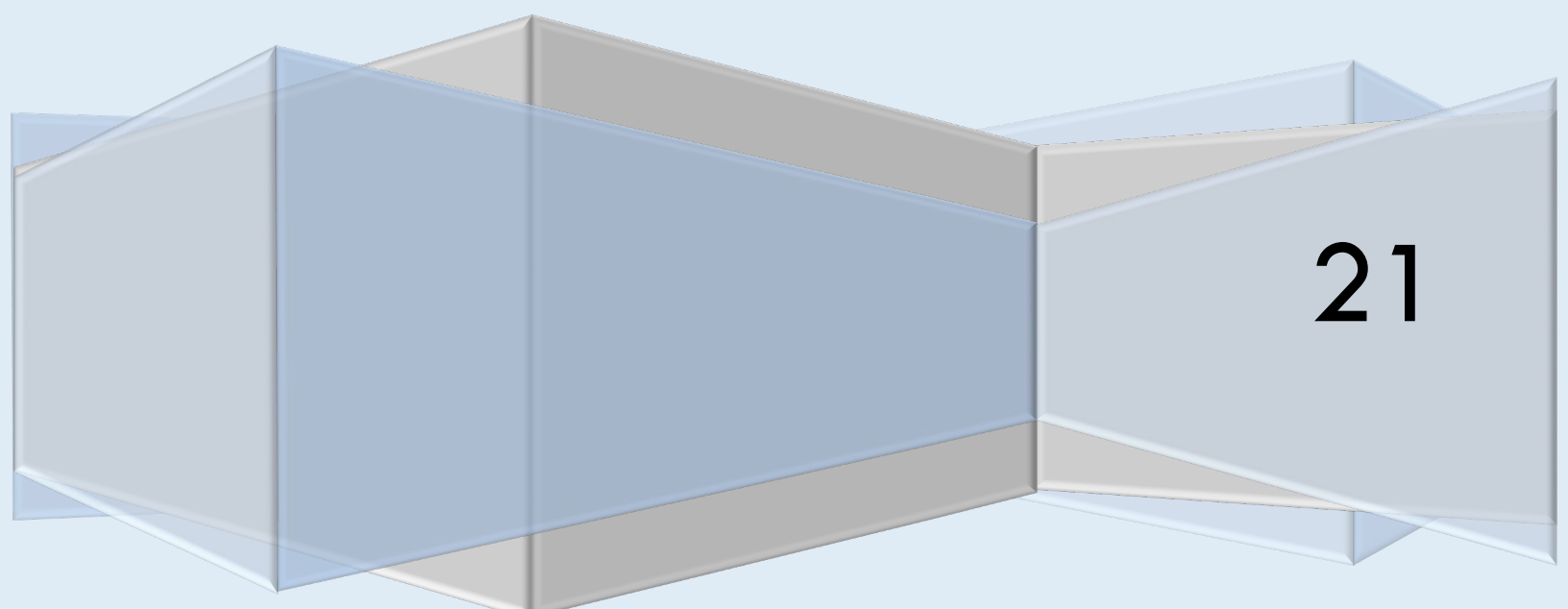


Scott County

Juvenile Diversion Programs

FY 2021 Annual Report

Director: Jeremy Kaiser



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JUVENILE DIVERSION PROGRAMS TEAM

DIRECTOR Jeremy Kaiser

SHIFT LEADER Neika Harms

COMMUNITY-BASED YOUTH COUNSELORS

Gary “DJ” Echols	Shannon Neal	Courtney Arndt
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BACKGROUND

The Scott County Juvenile Detention Center opened on December 1, 1980. Since opening, the center has served as a short term, secure placement for allegedly delinquent youth under the age of eighteen. Over the past few years, the philosophy of how Scott County provides detention and diversion programs to the community has evolved. For thirty-four years, from 1980 to 2014, Scott County provided detention and supervision services merely as a “building.” However, with significant research showing that community based detention alternatives can be extremely effective in supervising and rehabilitating youth, the center needed to innovate and evolve in order to help youth avoid criminal activity.

In 2015, Detention Center management made the decision to utilize staff resources to develop and implement community-based programs as an alternative to secure detainment. The two programs which were developed and implemented in the 2015 fiscal year were the “In-home detention” program, and the “Enhanced In-home detention” program. As Scott County is able to now provide a continuum of detention and diversion services, we provide effective options for the juvenile court system to provide the least intrusive and restrictive service necessary. By doing this, we believe the youth will be more appropriately served and thus, more likely to succeed. In FY18, Scott County Juvenile Diversion Programs continued to expand to include the Youth Transition Decision Making program, which helps youth and families form a transition plan for when they return home after long term placement. In FY19, the program expanded again by implementing a pre-adjudication diversion program focusing on the use of Restorative Community Conferencing. This program targets first time auto-theft offenders and is named: the Auto Theft Accountability Program. After operating a program based in restorative practices and seeing the positive impacts it can have in the community, center management worked with Davenport Public Schools to develop and implement a Restorative Mediation program in FY21. The goal of this program was to reduce suspensions and violence in schools and teach youth to resolve disagreements without the use of violence.

PROGRAM VISION

“Our vision is a community which supports and empowers juveniles by giving them a second chance to succeed.”

PROGRAM MISSION

“Scott County Juvenile Diversion Programs strive to provide a cutting-edge continuum of community-based programs, focused on diverting youth from secure detainment as well as reducing delinquent behavior.”

COMMUNITY-BASED DIVERSION PROGRAMS

IN-HOME DETENTION AND ENHANCED IN-HOME DETENTION (W/GPS)

Two community-based supervision programs are operated by Scott County Juvenile Diversion Programs: the “In-Home Detention” (IHD) program, and the “Enhanced In-Home Detention” (EIHD) program. These types of community-based supervision programs have proven to be effective at reducing recidivism without the use incarceration. By utilizing the same staff to provide all three services, stronger relationships can be built between staff and residents as well as resident’s families. The relationship no longer ends at discharge, but continues as the juveniles’ transition back into the community. The benefit the child receives from these programs is significant. They have minimal disruptions to their daily life as they continue to attend their school, their church, place of employment, and remain close to their families. Meanwhile they are closely supervised to ensure the safety of the community.

The IHD program is the least restrictive and intrusive service option. Typically the program lasts 2-4 weeks. The IHD program consists of juveniles signing a contract to stay within their home residence at all times, with the exceptions of school, work, church, or court appointments. IHD staff members typically perform three unannounced phone checks and one unannounced face-to-face check daily to ensure the juvenile is abiding by the contract. IHD staff then report adherence to the contract as well as violations to Juvenile Court Officers. In the case of a violation, Juvenile Court Officers have the option to detain youth at the juvenile detention center or extend the contract for a longer length of time.

The Enhanced In-home detention program is more intensive than IHD as it utilizes GPS-enabled ankle bracelets to monitor client location and movements. The software utilized with the GPS enabled bracelet allows staff to view a client’s location 24-hours a day as well as track location and movements during any particular time period. EIHD staff members are alerted via text message if a client leaves the home without permission or enters a prohibited area. With the exception of wearing the tracking device, the EIHD program delivery and reporting to Court Officers is the identical to the IHD program.

REFERRALS AND SUCCESSFUL COMPLETIONS

During the 2021 fiscal year, the In-Home Detention (IHD) program and Enhanced In-Home Detention (EIHD) program served a total of 66 juveniles combined. Of the 66 clients who were discharged, 58 juveniles completed the program successfully without a new charge or probation violation. Overall, 88% of clients referred to the Community Based programs completed successfully in FY 21. The program has maintained an 88% or above successful completion percentage over the last few years. This can be attributed to Community Based Youth Counselors working hard to develop rapport with juveniles and families as well as vigilant supervision in the community.

EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES

These programs are designed to be cost-neutral and are funded by the State of Iowa, through referrals from Juvenile Court Services. Scott County Diversion Programs charge \$19.97 per half (1/2) hour of direct client contact for the IHD program and charge \$10.06 per quarter (1/4) hour for the EIHD program. Total revenues received in FY 21 for operating the IHD program were \$14,677. Total revenues received in FY 21 from EIHD service were \$52,641. Total expenses to operate both programs combined in FY21 were \$83,748 and total revenues between both programs combined was \$67,318. The discrepancy between expenses and revenues can be attributed to less referrals and less available funding. In FY22, the programs will work towards balance in these areas.

AVERAGE AGE AND GENDER

The average age of the youth referred for IHD and EIHD services was fifteen (15) years old. Of the sixty-four (64) clients, fifty-seven (57) clients were males (89%), and seven (7) clients were females (11%).

ETHNIC BREAKDOWN

Race	Number	Percentage
Caucasian	9	14%
African American	51	80%
Multi- racial	3	5%
Hispanic	1	2%

YOUTH TRANSITION DECISION MAKING (YTDM) PROGRAM

In Fiscal Year 2018, Scott County Juvenile Diversion Programs expanded their services to include the YTDM Program. This program is a “youth-centered,” evidence-based model that assists juveniles in transitioning back to their home community after long term residential placement.

Youth are required to have 3 meetings – one meeting within 30 days of initial placement, one meeting 30-45 days prior to discharge from placement and one meeting 30-45 days post-discharge. The goal of the meetings is to gather all “stake-holders” to the child’s success and develop a transition plan. The transition plans will address educational needs, medical/psychiatric/mental health needs, housing, employment, relationship supports, self-sufficiency, social engagement, and behavioral needs.

This model creates a shared responsibility for planning, decision-making and task accomplishment. YTDM’s work because youth are given the opportunity to voice what their goals and dreams are for the future. They are not only giving a say in the planning process, they are leading that process. The empowerment youth experience in the YTDM process results in higher levels of youth engagement, buy-in and ownership. Youth feel empowered and as a result are more motivated to achieve their goals. Our ultimate goal will be to improve outcomes and lower juvenile crime.

REFERRALS AND SUCCESSFUL COMPLETIONS

There were eight (8) cases referred to the YTDM Program in FY21. Of those eight (8) referrals, seven (7) juveniles received the initial “prep” meeting. Seven (7) juveniles participated in the placement meeting. Four (4) juveniles participated in a second “prep” meeting, and five (5) juveniles participated in a discharge meeting, and two (2) juveniles participated in a community meeting. One (1) juvenile was sent home during the pandemic and his case was closed and five (5) juveniles have not been discharged from placement.

EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES

On-going operating expenses for this program are off-set by an inter-governmental contract with the Decategorization Board. Scott County Juvenile Diversion Programs charges \$375 for the initial YTDM meeting and \$300 each for subsequent meetings. Food, transportation, and training costs are reimbursed as well under this contract. In FY21, the program had \$5,898 in expenses and \$8,957 in revenues.

AVERAGE AGE AND GENDER

The average age of the youth referred for YTDM services was seventeen (17) years old. All eight (8) of the admissions were males, which is 100% of those referred. No females were referred in FY21.

ETHNIC BREAKDOWN

RACE	Youth	Percentage
Caucasian:	4	50%
African American:	4	50%

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMS

Currently there are two components to the Restorative Justice Programs operated by Scott County: The Auto Theft Accountability Program and the School Based Restorative Mediation Program

AUTO THEFT ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM

Over the last few years, the Scott County area has experienced a dramatic increase in auto theft. This has had a direct impact on the Scott County Juvenile Detention as average daily population has effectively doubled, causing costs to rise significantly as well. The Auto Theft Accountability Program is a new program designed to target first time auto theft offenders and provide accountability for the harm they have brought upon their victim, their families, and the community.

Established in April 2019, the Auto Theft Accountability program is a victim-offender mediation program which is based upon highly effective programs provided in New Zealand (Family Group Conferencing) and Oakland, California (Restorative Community Conferencing). This model is evidence based, as the National Council on Crime and Delinquency studied the outcomes of the RCC program in Oakland. They found that youth who completed the program were 44% less likely to get a new sustained charge, than youth who were processed through the juvenile legal system.

This program is a restorative justice concept in which victims and offenders are brought face to face in a neutral setting. Staff then facilitate a meeting to discuss the harm that has been done and create a strength-based plan for how the offender is to repair the harm. The youth offender will have three months to complete the plan. If the offender completes the plan, they will have their charge dismissed. However, if at any point they fail to progress, they will revert back to court proceedings.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY

There are several reasons this program is in the best interest of the community. In other communities where it has been implemented they have experienced lower recidivism, higher victim satisfaction, and it has promoted a sense of responsibility in offenders. The ultimate goal will be to lower juvenile crime (particularly auto theft), less court hearings, improved court times, and decrease detention usage.

REFERRALS AND SUCCESSFUL COMPLETIONS

In FY21, the Auto Theft Accountability program had a total of seventeen (17) youth referred to the program. Of the seventeen (17) youth, fifteen (15) participated in a restorative Community Conference. Eight-eight (88%) of those referred completed a pre-conference and the Restorative Community Conference (RCC) with the person harmed. That is a significant increase in participation rate from FY20 in which fifty-six (56%) of those referred completed an RCC.

Of the total seventeen (17) youth referred, eleven (11) youth completed the entire program successfully and six (6) youth were reverted back to the court system for either committing a new offense, refusing service, or failing to complete all aspects of the program. The program completion rate was 65% in FY21, which is a significant increase from FY20, in which only 39% of the youth referred completed the entire program. Both the increase in RCC participation and program completion rates can be attributed to the addition of a Youth Advocate position in FY21. The Youth Advocate position was added at the beginning of FY21 and met regularly with all youth, developed relationships with youth and families, removed barriers to service, and at times participated in the RCC as a support person for the youth. The youth advocate position will continue into FY22, due to showing great improvement in participation from youth.

AVERAGE AGE AND GENDER

The average age of the youth referred to the auto theft accountability program this fiscal year was fourteen (14) years old. Thirteen (13) of the referrals were males, which is 76% of the total. Four (4) of the admissions were females, which make up the remaining 24%.

ETHNIC BREAKDOWN

RACE	Admits	Percentage
Caucasian	3	18%
African American	10	59%
Multi- racial	4	24%

OUTCOMES

Eleven (11) juveniles completed the Restorative Community Conference as well as completed all aspects of their Conference Agreements successfully in FY21. 100% of those juveniles (9 out of 9) did not have a new charge 6 months post discharge and 100% (2 out of 2) of those juveniles did not have a new charge 1 year post discharge.

Since program inception, those youth who have completed all aspects of the program have rarely received a new charge post program completion. Since program inception, eighteen (18) youth have completed all aspects of the program successfully. 94% of those youth (17 out of 18) did not have a new charge within 6 months after program completion. 90% of those youth (9 out of 10) have not had a new offense one year after program completion.

SCHOOL-BASED RESTORATIVE MEDIATION PROGRAM

Research shows that suspension and exclusion from school can have a detrimental effect on students. Studies show that students suspended at least once are twice as likely to be arrested as their peers. School based restorative justice practices are potential protective factor and are proven to be an effective alternative to exclusionary discipline policies in secondary school settings. In fact, Restorative justice efforts in New York City and Denver public schools showed a decrease in school suspensions by approximately 50%. Rather than assigning blame and punishment, restorative justice focuses on non-punitive, relationship-centered approaches to addressing behavioral issues while youth continue to participate in school activities. School-based restorative justice has been shown to be a promising practice for preventing youth incarceration (i.e., school-to-prison pipeline) and reducing racial inequities, thereby protecting youth from current and future negative outcomes.

The Scott County School-based Restorative Mediation Program is a suspension diversion program implemented in the secondary schools of the Davenport Community School district. Certain incidents that would typically result in out-of-school suspension, can now be referred to the program in which students participate in a Restorative Mediation circle as an alternative to suspension.

In the circle, the two (or more) youth are brought together to learn about why the event happened and then develop a plan to repair the harm that has been done and ensure it does not happen again. Through this process, students will learn the impact their behavior has on others and a resolution will be formed prior to entering regular classes to ensure violence does not occur in the future. Also, through this process, students are kept in school and sent back to regular classes as soon as a resolution has been found.

REFERRALS AND SUCCESSFUL COMPLETIONS

In FY21, the School-Based Restorative mediation program had a total of one hundred ten (110) unduplicated youth referred from seven (7) different secondary schools in the Davenport School District. Some youth were referred more than once for having verbal or physical altercations with other students. Of the one-hundred-and-ten (110) youth, ninety-one (91) completed a successful mediation. Overall 83% of youth participated in a successful mediation and created a plan to ensure cooperation between the parties in the future. The remaining nineteen (19) youth did not complete a successful mediation due to having one or both youth refuse to participate, or one youth did not return to school. The program is completely voluntary and requires both youth participate in order to be successful.

AVERAGE AGE AND GENDER

The average age of the youth referred to the school based restorative mediation program this fiscal year was fourteen (14) years old. Thirty-six (36) of the referrals were males, which is 33% of the total. Seventy-four (74) of the admissions were females, which make up the remaining 67%.

ETHNIC BREAKDOWN

RACE	Admits	Percentage
Caucasian	27	25%
African American	58	53%
Multi- racial	17	15%
Hispanic	8	7%

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMS - EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES

On-going operating expenses for both components of the Restorative Justice programs are reimbursed by an inter-governmental contract with the Decategorization Board. Food, supplies, staff salaries and benefits, transportation, and training costs are reimbursed under this contract. In FY21, the program had \$85,816 in revenues and \$86,068 in expenses.