

# EVIDENCE-BASED NEBRASKA

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## ANNUAL REPORT FY 15-16

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# Evidence-based Nebraska Project



**In 2001**, the State of Nebraska developed the County Aid fund, which was administered by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Juvenile Services. The fund was rooted in the idea that local communities knew how best to serve “their” kids. Community members knew their communities, understood the local history, had firsthand knowledge of existing and potential issues, and could quickly identify potential collaborators and opportunities. Communities that requested funds were required to submit a community plan, which required the communities to rely on data, come together as a team, and draft a plan demonstrating the resources they needed to better serve youth in their communities.

**In 2005**, the Nebraska Crime Commission took over administration of the fund (Kennedy 2017). By 2013, reform of the juvenile justice system in Nebraska was in full swing; additional state funds were made available to eligible communities and tribes to apply for funding. The fund was renamed the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program (hereinafter CBA).

**By 2015**, Legislative Bill 265 mandated data collection on CBA-funded programs and listed the University of Nebraska at Omaha Juvenile Justice Institute (JJI) as the evaluator of this fund. This increased program accountability and required programs to focus on achieving outcomes for youth. The bill specified that programs should be evaluated on whether the funding helped prevent youth from moving deeper into the juvenile justice system. The report that follows, begins with early prevention programs and moves through to the “deeper end of the system”.

**In 2016**, the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) featured the process used by JJI as an effective and outstanding model for other states to follow, noting that JJI “engages practitioners in discussions and decisions about research and data via roundtables and conference calls serving to both build relationships and to empower stakeholders in the evaluation process” (p. 5). NCJJ further remarked on the importance of the state and researcher collaboration stating that “Nebraska’s commitment to incorporating research and evaluation into its juvenile justice system is firmly rooted in legislation, but its implementation and interpretation is the responsibility of researchers and practitioners on the ground” (p. 3).

## **Building the Juvenile Case Management System in Nebraska**

During this first fiscal year of the evaluation process (FY 2015-2016), the Juvenile Justice Institute (JJI) worked with the University of Nebraska at Omaha College of Information Science and Technology (IS&T) and the Nebraska Crime Commission to develop and build the Juvenile Case Management System (JCMS). The JCMS is a secure data collection system that programs funded by CBA use to complete quarterly reporting requirements, which includes entering data for each youth who participates in the CBA-funded program. Each screen within JCMS was developed to specifically capture outcomes relevant to each program type (e.g., diversion, truancy, mentoring).

Each program type followed the same process for developing the JCMS screens. JJI staff conducted research on outcome measures for the specific program type, then held a conference call (more than one if needed) to introduce the potential variables to the programs and users. Based on the user feedback, JJI created a list of the variables and provided them to IS&T who created a mock-up of the JCMS screens. JJI staff hosted a webinar with the programs to show users the mock-up screens and again gathered feedback. Any changes/suggestions from users were discussed, and then submitted to IS&T, who then built the screens into the JCMS. The screens were tested by IS&T and JJI to work out any errors before being made available to programs. Once the screens were available to the users, JJI staff provided training (i.e., one-on-one and webinar) on the JCMS to the programs and provided user guides with definitions for each field.

As the JCMS was still being developed during the year, a temporary reporting system was established using spreadsheets. JJI created spreadsheets for programs to enter youth data, accompanied by training videos on completing the spreadsheets. Once the users completed the spreadsheets, they were uploaded to a secure site. When a screen became available to users in the JCMS, JJI staff pulled together the spreadsheets for that program type and provided them to IS&T to upload the individual level youth data into the JCMS. If any youth was missing first name, last name, or date of birth, the data from that youth could not be saved in the JCMS because these fields are required to create a new youth case in the JCMS.

We present two figures as examples of these screens. Figure 1 displays an example of the truancy screens that measure attendance as a primary outcome. Figure 2 displays an example of the mentoring screens that measure outcomes related to the mentor-mentee match.

Figure 1. The JCMS Truancy program screens

**Truancy**

**Intake**

Address Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Address Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Youth Employed: \_\_\_\_\_ Family Size: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Income (a): \_\_\_\_\_ School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch: \_\_\_\_\_

Credits required to date (U.S. only): \_\_\_\_\_ Credits earned to date (U.S. only): \_\_\_\_\_ Expected Graduation Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual Graduation Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Custody/Guardianship: \_\_\_\_\_ File Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Grant County: \_\_\_\_\_ Grant Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Reason Referring: \_\_\_\_\_ Referral Source: \_\_\_\_\_

Referral Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Truancy Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Enrolled Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Discharge Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Discharge Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

**Totals**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Pre-Enrollment** **Enrollment** **Score** **History**

Semester: \_\_\_\_\_ Starting Begin Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Training End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Required Days: \_\_\_\_\_ Required Periods: \_\_\_\_\_ Required Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

Tardy - Excused: \_\_\_\_\_ Tardy - Not Excused: \_\_\_\_\_

School Excused: *	Percentage of required attendance	Not Excused: *	Percentage of required attendance
Apprenticeship, school activity	<input type="text"/> 0 %	Tenant	<input type="text"/> 0 %
Suspension, Expulsion, administrative, 100	<input type="text"/> 0 %	Parent Acknowledged	<input type="text"/> 0 %
Religious holiday, funeral, Other	<input type="text"/> 0 %	Medical, illness	<input type="text"/> 0 %
Medical, illness	<input type="text"/> 0 %	Unexcused	<input type="text"/> 0 %
<b>Excused Total:</b> 0 0%		<b>Not Excused Total:</b> 0 0%	
Aggregate Absent: 0	Aggregate Percent Absent: 0 %		

**Create Worksheet**

Figure 2. The JCMS Mentoring program screens

**Mentoring Tools** **Mentoring Community**

**Intake**

Address Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Address Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_ Youth Employed: \_\_\_\_\_ Family Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Family Income: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch: \_\_\_\_\_

Custody/Guardianship: \_\_\_\_\_ File Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Parental Involvement: \_\_\_\_\_ Grant County: \_\_\_\_\_ Grant Number: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Currently placed out of home ☐ Detention/ITC ☐ On Diversion ☐ On Probation

Date Referred: \_\_\_\_\_ Reason Referring: \_\_\_\_\_ Referral Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Enrolled/Intake: \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Legal Violations: \_\_\_\_\_ History of aggressive behavior: \_\_\_\_\_ High risk environment: \_\_\_\_\_

School Attachment: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle School: \_\_\_\_\_ GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

**Discharge**

Discharge Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Discharge Reason: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle School: \_\_\_\_\_ GPA: \_\_\_\_\_ School Attachment: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentoring**

☐ Cultural Specific ☐ Gender Specific

**Mentor**

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor Race/Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Education Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Does Mentor have background in helping roles/profession?

Referral of Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Mentoring Relationship Began: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Mentoring Relationship Ended: \_\_\_\_\_

Time spent from mentor (in days): \_\_\_\_\_ Reason: \_\_\_\_\_ Initiated by: \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity**

Date of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Setting: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of Contact (in min): \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_ **Delete Activity**

## Progress of JCMS during FY 2015-2016

At the end of FY 2015-2016, screens were live for Diversion programs (created in 2012 under a different project), Truancy programs, and four Alternative to Detention (ATD) programs: Electronic Monitoring, Tracker Services, Reporting Centers (day or evening), and Shelter Care. The screens for Mentoring programs were in the testing stage, and JJI had identified outcomes for 100% of registered programs that were funded during the year.

During FY 2015-2016, the mock-up screens were created for the following programs: Assessment, Crisis Response, Promotion/Prevention, Direct Events, Family Support, Mental Health, Incentives, and the remaining five School-based programs (Afterschool, Alternative School, School Resource Officer, School Interventionist, Mediation). At the end of the fiscal year, JJI set a goal to have the remaining program types available in the JCMS by January 2017 and to be working on the outcomes for System Improvement programs, a program registration page, reporting functions, and enhancements to existing screens.

When JJI requested the data extract for the Truancy program evaluation report, we noticed several consistent errors statewide. After gathering program feedback, the Truancy screens were modified to be more user-friendly and additional one-on-one training was provided to each program to improve data quality. With this setback, most screens were completed by June 2017 (excluding Mediation, Incentive, and System Improvement programs).

In addition to the programs built into JCMS in FY 2015-2016 as stated above, at the time of the writing of this report (June, 2017), screens were built into the JCMS for the following program types: Mentoring, Assessment, Promotion/Prevention, One-time Events, School-based, Family Support, Mental Health, and Crisis Response/Respite.

# Annual Year-end Grant Reporting Process

At the end of the FY 2015-2016, programs completed an annual year-end grant closure report, in accordance with Nebraska Revised Statute 43-2404.02. Each program was emailed a link to an online survey. Programs were sent reminder emails until they completed the survey. In some circumstances, a program may have started the survey, but did not provide sufficient data. There was also a small number of programs that did not complete the survey and we were unable to reach a contract person to complete it. The total number of programs that completed the survey was  $N = 151$  which included Direct Intervention, Direct Service, or Direct Event program. An additional 21 “programs” classified as System Improvements also completed the survey; however, the questions they completed differed from the programs that directly served youth, which is explained further below.

The annual reporting survey was divided up into two sections. The first section included questions that every program completed. Once programs completed these general variables, they were directed to the second section, which included questions specific to their program type.

The remainder of this report is divided into two parts. The first half details each program type and reports on the specific variables that programs completed in the second half of their annual report. The second half reports on the general variables that all programs completed in the first half of their annual report, and data on whether youth moved “deeper into the system” following participation in a CBA-funded program.





# Programs Funded by Nebraska's Community-based Aid Fund

In the section that follows, we:

- Define each program type,
- Describe the number of programs that were registered as receiving CBA funds during FY 2015-2016,
- Report the number of youth the program reported as serving, and
- Compare that number to the number of youth entered in to JCMS. In most circumstances, these latter two numbers are different.

The total number of youth served for each program from JCMS is likely an underestimation of the number of youth that were actually served due to a number of reasons:

First, programs may not have accurately submitted individual-level youth data via the spreadsheets or the JCMS. Because gathering individual youth data was in its first year, some programs reported difficulty obtaining all the necessary information because of issues related to parental consent and concerns with entering youth into a “system.” JJI provided ongoing training and information about the security and confidentiality of the data.

Second, any missing data (name, date of birth) in the spreadsheets meant that a case could not be uploaded into JCMS. Although programs were encouraged to go into the JCMS and check for missing youth after spreadsheets were uploaded and to change any errors/add new information, we do not know how many programs completed this task.

Third, for program types not yet built into the JCMS (Crisis Response, Mental Health, Incentives, Mediation, and Reentry), the number of youth served was hand-counted by JJI staff from the spreadsheets because the programs did not yet have a platform for entering data in to JCMS, and the spreadsheets had not yet been uploaded to the secure site. One limitation to hand counting is that the total number of youth served may be an inaccurate representation of the number of youth served.

# Promotion/Prevention Programs

Promotion/Prevention (P/P) programs are those methods or activities that seek to reduce or deter specific problem behaviors, or promote positive behaviors. Some of the programs aim to do this by helping encourage positive interactions among peers by reducing bullying, while others seek to build positive relationships between local law enforcement and the youth in the community. Other programs work on helping youth avoid becoming involved in gangs or using drugs and alcohol.

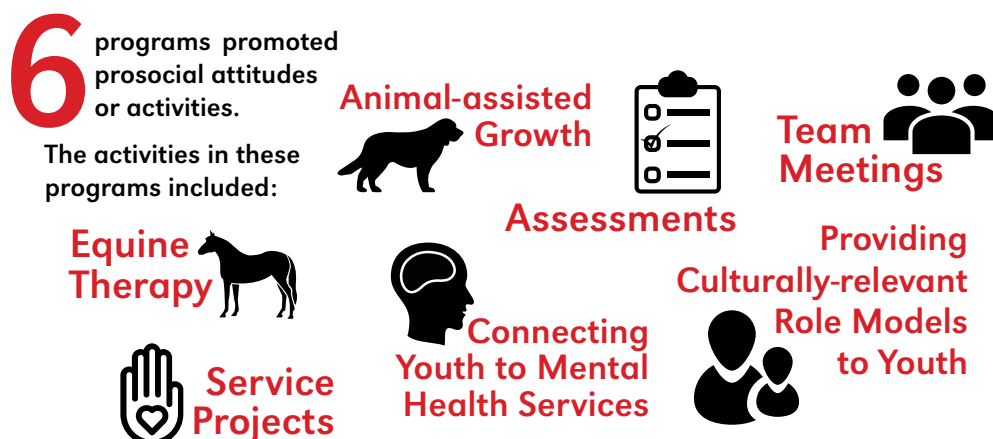
P/P programs can be one-time events or can involve ongoing programming with youth and program staff. In FY 2015-2016, 33 one-time events and ongoing P/P programs were funded through CBA funds, with 28 programs completing the annual survey.

## Ongoing Promotion/Prevention Programs

Of the 33 programs, 25 were ongoing programs (distinct from the one-time events), which provided youth with activities to promote positive behavior and prevent them from becoming involved in the juvenile justice system. Of these, 22 ongoing programs completed the annual survey.<sup>1</sup>

Overall, ongoing P/P programs indicated serving 2,796 youth. In comparison, the total number of youth served by the JCMS count was 1,092 youth.

Ongoing P/P programs were asked three questions: (1) to indicate the primary goal of the program, (2) to indicate the secondary goal of the program, and (3) to specify the activities that were provided for youth in the program. The responses were qualitatively analyzed for themes and common responses.



<sup>1</sup> One of the programs that did not respond was the Lincoln County Juvenile Services Facilitator; the contact person was emailed several times and JJI requested assistance from the program coordinator for Lincoln County, but the person who administered that program could not be reached. The other two programs who did not complete the survey were Latina Leaders and Smart & Strong Girls (both from Lancaster County); it is likely that because these two programs also have programs administered by the same person, the person completing the annual report may have incorporated responses for these programs with their other programs (Joven Noble and Talented Tenth, respectively).

Approximately 4 programs had the primary goal of promoting skills for the youth, including employment skills (e.g., assistance with job application materials, entrepreneur projects, college preparation, supervised work study, interview skills practice), life skills (e.g., how to manage your house, how to take care of yourself, communication skills), and education skills (e.g., tutors, relationship development, incentives for credit accumulation) while on outdoor suspension.

Three programs specifically focused on building positive relationships with law enforcement—each within different settings including the school (i.e., engaging with students at school activities), community (i.e., having deputies meet with the youth for a meal or mentoring activities), and while playing various sports.

Three Promotion/Prevention programs primarily focused on preventing gang involvement, including goals such as reducing gang recruitment, preventing the cycle of joining cultural gangs, and focusing on educational goals (i.e., getting a high school diploma).

Three programs stated goals related to reducing or preventing drug and alcohol use/abuse. Each program had a different approach. These programs included a youth center that provided a positive place for youth to gather with food and activities, a program that promoted leadership skills for substance abuse prevention, and a program that focused on healthy decision-making in terms of drug and alcohol abuse (and bullying). In two programs, the primary focus was on increasing youth's Forty Developmental Assets, which is a framework for creating building blocks for healthy development (Search Institute, 2007). One program did not complete these questions.

Other than the types of goals just mentioned that were specific to youth, programs also described some additional secondary goals. Some of these goals included educating local businesses on how job coaching can help businesses; improving community trust; teaching youth skills related to community engagement; and increasing parental participation.

# Promotion/Prevention Programs

## One-time Promotion/Prevention Events

Of the 33 programs, 8 were one-time events, which provided prevention messages varying from reducing bullying behaviors to teaching youth the risks of drugs and alcohol. Six of the one-time events responded to the survey.<sup>2</sup>

Of the 6 programs who completed the annual survey, they collectively reported serving 1,324 youth. In comparison, the total number of youth served that was recorded in the JCMS was 143 youth; a discrepancy of 1,181 youth.

In addition to the three questions requested of Promotion/Prevention programs, one-time events were asked to indicate the duration of the event. Five programs completed these questions and three left them blank. The primary goal of each event included: increasing capacity for kindness and respect among students, providing students with a realistic but safe simulation of the dangers of impaired driving, reducing underage drinking, promoting overall prevention messages, and promoting a healthy lifestyle free of substances.

Secondary goals included: preventing bullying behaviors, providing information about services to students and families, mentoring or bonding with adults, influencing members of sports teams, and the youth advisory board.

In general, program staff indicated that these events were led by professional adult facilitators who used interactive activities and presentations, arranged information tables, and provided prosocial activities (e.g., educational games, gaming bus, inflatables, and prizes).

<sup>2</sup> The two programs that did not complete the annual report were Knox County Community Cares and Santee Sioux Tribal Culture Day Camp.

## Incentive Programs

Juvenile incentive programs aim to impact juvenile conduct with rewards to reinforce positive behaviors and activities. Examples include providing financial assistance or reduction of fees to participate in a program with costs and fees, such as diversion. Incentives may also include tangibles or events, such as gift cards or group trips, which aim to motivate youth to engage in prosocial behavior (e.g., attend school, have good grades).

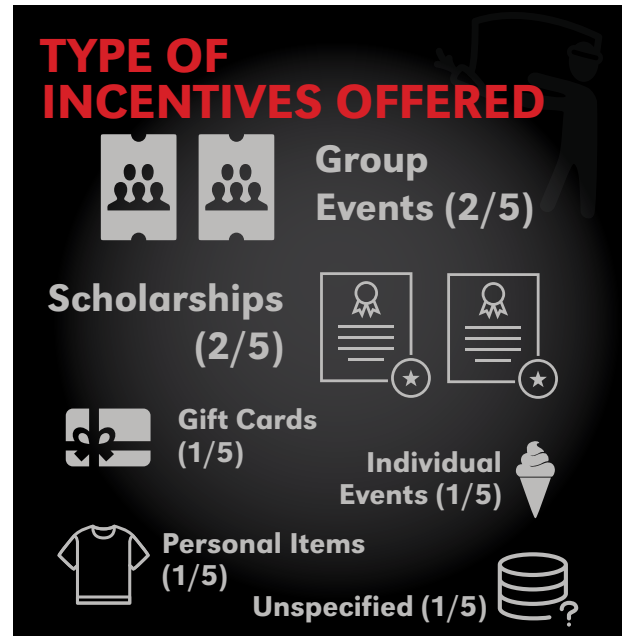
Overall, there were 7 incentive programs (5 agencies that administered them) during FY 2015-2016, and 5 programs completed the annual report.<sup>3</sup>

Of the 5 programs who completed the survey, they reported to have collectively served 1,175 Nebraska youth. A hand-count of incentives spreadsheets reflects that 133 youth were recorded as being served in FY 2015-2016. This is a discrepancy of 1,042 youth.

Incentive programs were asked four questions to better understand the nature of the incentives youth were receiving. The first question asked programs to indicate the type of incentive offered and the average value of the incentive. Programs could select all that applied and the types of incentives listed included: gift cards, cash, group events, individual events, personal items, requirement waivers, fee waivers, scholarships, and points system. The average value of incentive provided ranged from \$4 (i.e., an individual event) to \$250 (i.e., incentive youth trips). None of the programs selected cash, requirement waivers, fee waivers, scholarships, or points system.

Programs were also asked to indicate how incentives were earned. Only two programs specified how incentives were earned. One program that offered incentives such as bowling trips, ice cream trips, and clothing, specified that every youth was eligible to receive each incentive. For the program that offered the youth trip, youth must have good attendance and grades in school, or they must be meeting program goals to attend.

When asked “what do you typically do with youth who did not meet the criteria to attend the group event?”, again only two programs responded. One stated that the youth can attend the event anyway and the other indicated that the youth does not attend programming that day.



<sup>3</sup> The Box Butte County Motivational Reinforcements program and the Sarpy County Incentives program did not respond to the survey, although Sarpy County did complete the survey for a second incentive program and it is likely they included both programs in the answers for one survey.

# Mentoring Programs

Mentoring takes place between young persons (i.e., mentees) and more experienced persons (i.e., mentors) who are acting in a non-professional helping capacity to provide support that benefits one or more areas of the mentee's development. Currently, CBA-funded programs consist of 4 mentoring models:

1. **Community Mentoring:** is a mentoring model where a positive adult is engaged in the youth's life by spending time in the community together.
2. **Juvenile Justice Based Mentoring:** is a mentoring model where youth with some involvement in the juvenile justice system (ranging from diversion to YRTC) are matched with an adult who will demonstrate prosocial attitudes and behaviors while helping the youth navigate the juvenile justice system.
3. **School-based Mentoring:** is a mentoring model where youth meet with their mentor on school premises.
4. **Youth-initiated Mentoring:** is a mentoring model where the youth identifies individuals that he or she already views as a natural support or mentor.

There were 7 counties that funded 8 separate mentoring programs in Nebraska in FY 2015-2016. Seven of these mentoring programs completed the survey. The 7 programs that completed the survey reported that collectively they served 391 youth.

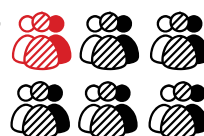
There were 301 youth recorded in the JCMS as having been served by Mentoring programs in FY 2015-2016. This is a discrepancy of 90 youth. With some mentoring programs, there were early challenges in obtaining complete individual youth data; however, the programs, JJI and the NCC worked collaboratively to create an agreement that allowed programs to begin to enter this data during this fiscal year.

For the year-end report, mentoring programs were asked a total of 12 questions. The first set of questions pertained to the mentor and their training. When asked about the primary motivation for mentoring, most programs stated that mentors were motivated by volunteering (6/7), as opposed to volunteering

6

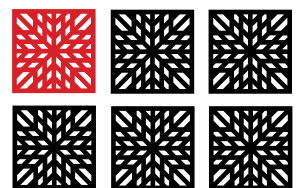
programs match mentors to mentees based on youth or mentor characteristics, including:

Race/  
Ethnicity



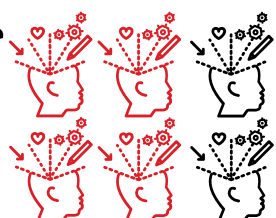
Gender

Culture



Hobbies &  
Interests

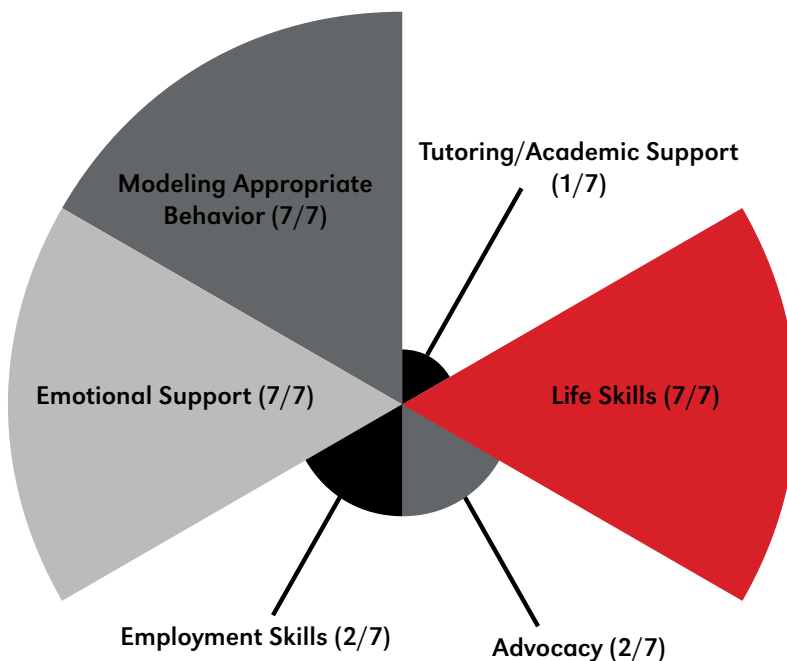
Personality



for work/school credit or required volunteer hours. One program indicated that volunteers were motivated by “other” reasons. All 7 of the programs conducted background checks on their volunteer mentors. With respect to training, 6 programs provided initial and ongoing training for their mentors. The amount of training mentors received prior to the match ranged by program – from 1 to 5 hours.

Each program selected the expected duration of the mentor-mentee match, per the program’s goals or handbook. No programs selected less than 6 months; 3 programs selected 6 to 11 months; and

4 programs selected 12 months or more. Of those that assess personality and interests/hobbies, programs reported that they spend time with the mentor and mentee, conduct interviews with the youth and/or parents, use questionnaires or form, and take recommendations from school counselors.



With respect to program components, all 7 programs are one-on-one mentoring programs (as opposed to group mentoring or online mentoring) and 6 programs provide activities for the mentors and mentees. Programs were provided with 6 program components and were asked to select all the components that

were a part of their program including: modeling appropriate behavior, life skills, employment skills, emotional support, advocacy, and tutoring/academic support.

## School-based Programs

As youth spend much of their time in school, school-based programs provide educational support, training, and/or supervision for youth where academic or behavioral problems originated in the school setting. Specifically, school-based prevention and support services provide young people attendance-related support, activities for after school hours when youth may lack supervision at home, alternative schools so that youth who are not able to attend traditional school do not fall behind academically, learning support services, and more. The over-arching goal with these programs is to help youth successfully complete educational goals and prevent delinquent behavior.

There were 34 programs that provided school-based programming for Nebraska youth through CBA funding in FY 2015-2016. The 34 agencies funded 22 truancy programs, 6 after school programs, 1 alternative school, 1 school interventionist, 1 school-based mediation program, and 3 school resource officers. All 34 programs responded to the survey, and reported that collectively, they served 5,102 youth (1 truancy program did not respond to this question). Truancy programs were the largest group of the school-based programs. As stated above, 22 Truancy programs reported in Nebraska in FY 2015-2016. At least 4 Truancy programs served youth across 2 counties each, and some diversion programs also worked with truant youth, so while there were 22 Truancy programs, truant youth were served in 29 counties and 2 tribes.

Truancy programs alone reported to have served 3,076 Nebraska youth. In comparison, the number of youth served by school-based programs as reflected in the JCMS data shows that a total of 3,231 youth were served by all program types, with 2,184 of those being truancy youth, which also includes youth served by diversion programs for truancy matters.

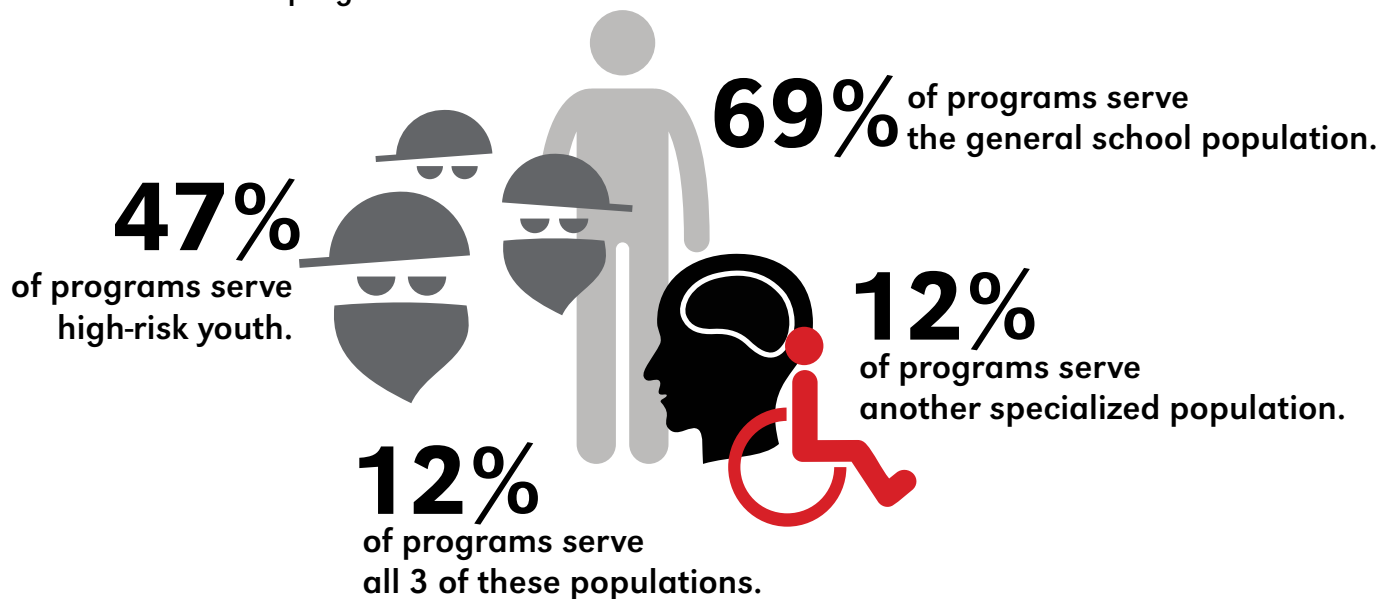
For the year-end report, school-based programs were asked to complete 7 questions. The first question was an open-ended response that asked the primary goal of the program. All truancy programs described goals related to “improve attendance” and “keep youth in the classroom and not the courtroom”. The programs also listed related goals that stem from successful attendance such as improving academic performance, graduation rates, and life success. Some also listed goals related to identifying the underlying reasons a youth may be missing school.

After school programs, on the other hand, often indicated that the goals were to provide a safe and productive place for youth after school hours. In addition to providing supervision, these programs aimed to also equip youth with skills and increase protective factors that reduce risk for delinquency. The school resource officer (SRO) programs indicated a variety of goals of the SRO in the school including, improving relationships with law enforcement, reducing truancy, reducing in school referrals for problematic behavior, and delaying onset of drug or alcohol use. The school-based mediation program indicated the goal was to, “introduce the restorative justice practices to school administration and staff”; the alternative school indicated “academic and behavioral success in school”; and the school interventionist indicated several goals including improving “school engagement, behavior, attendance, and grades”.



Next, programs were asked what type of youth were served within their program and were given three options for which they could select all – general school population, high risk students, and specialized populations (i.e., students with disabilities). If they selected specialized populations, they were asked to specify the population. The afterschool program indicated that they served youth with disabilities and mental health needs. One Truancy program indicated they served youth with attention disorders and other mental health issues. Another Truancy program indicated working with refugee students. And the fourth program, which was an SRO, indicated that all students participated with the SRO.

With respect to program components, programs were asked to provide a list of activities that youth participated in while at the program and to indicate the percent of time youth spent in structured activities while at the program.



Truancy programs described individualized services and activities that must be met to be successfully discharged, including weekly meetings with the truancy officer/family members, tutoring services, mental health services, community service, employment skills, decision-making classes, school extracurricular activities, tracker services and random urinalyses. SROs indicated activities such as lectures on prevention and promotion topics (e.g., driving and traffic, importance of school), while also meeting with students with truancy issues or other behavioral problems. After school programs described many prosocial activities aimed to engage students including learning activities (e.g., archery, cooking, science, art), life skills, games and sports. The afterschool program indicated academic activities, as well as “therapeutic process groups, healthy life styles, independent living, vocational experiences, social and study

skills building.” The percent time spent on structured activities ranged from 0% to 100% – while some indicated it was difficult to calculate because program components vary.

Programs could indicate how the staff interacted with students for which they could select all, one-on-one, with group or classroom settings, small groups, and with family members. This question appeared to have a low response rate – only one program indicated that they did one-on-one interaction with students, and one program indicated interaction with family members. To better understand the dynamic between school administration and programs, programs were asked to indicate the level of involvement administrators had with the program. Answers included very involved, somewhat involved, or not at all involved. Of the programs that responded, 69% (22 programs) indicated that administrators were very involved, 31% (10 programs) said somewhat involved, and no programs indicated that administrators were not involved.

# Family Support Programs

Family support services are community-based services that promote the well-being of children and families as well as increase the strength and stability of families. Family support services are intended to facilitate parent participation in child-directed activities and encourage parent-directed activities in families. These programs help to teach families specific skills to establish a nurturing and secure relationship between parents and children to prevent youth from moving deeper in to the juvenile justice system.

In FY 2015-2016, there were 13 CBA-funded Family Support programs and all programs completed the survey. Family support programs are broken down into 4 sub-categories with the following number of programs serving youth and completing the survey: Family Support (6 programs), parenting (5 programs), advocacy (1 program), and social work (1 program).

Family support programs reported to collectively serve 318 youth in Nebraska (2 programs did not respond to this question). The number of youth served reflected in the JCMS for FY 2015-2016 is 226. This is a discrepancy of 102 youth. During the upload process with IS&T, JJI was notified that approximately 130 youth were not uploaded due to missing name or date of birth.

For the year-end report, Family Support programs were asked 8 questions. The first two questions asked the primary objective of the program and the desired outcome for families. For the primary objective, programs could select any of the options including, family advocacy (5/13), family therapy/counseling (3/13), parenting education (10/13), family social work (3/13), and parenting skills training (6/13). The primary desired outcomes included things such as: improve family dynamics (positive relationships, communication, bonding), improve parent's understanding of child's needs (mental health, school, child development, discipline), to improve parents' ability to prevent delinquency, and to help families successfully complete the requirements for diversion or probation.

Next, programs indicated the types of families who participated in the program and could select all that apply including, families with youth who have mental health issues (3/13), families with youth who engage in delinquency or other anti-social behavior (8/13), youth who are parents (3/13), families involved in the child welfare system (4/13), and other (3/13). If a program responded with "other", then they were also asked to specify the type of family. One program indicated "all families in the community", another program indicated "refugee families", and one program did not respond.

To better understand the programs implemented, programs were asked to list specific interventions, the average duration of the program, and whether the program offered any specific classes. With respect to specific interventions, many programs indicated interventions aimed at educating parents on various parenting skills, providing support for parents, or increasing parent/child engagement. Two programs mentioned interventions aimed at providing support using mentors and peer-to-peer support; two programs appeared to focus on safety planning and

## Family Support Programs

home visits; and one focused on determining the culturally-related needs of court involved families. Most programs indicated that the duration of the Family Support programs was less than 6 months (8/13), followed by 12 months or more (3/13), and one program indicated 6 to 11 months (1/13).

Only 3 of the 13 Family Support programs indicated that they offered specific classes that were considered significant components of the program. One program indicated that they offered 1 class, another indicated they offered 6 classes, and one program that said it offered classes did not complete the specific questions about the classes offered. The program that offered 1 class indicated that it was an evidence-based parenting class. The program that offered 6 classes indicated they were all evidence-based classes, which included classes titled Voices, Responsible Behavior, Parenting Wisely, Individual Change Plan, Handling Difficult Feelings, and Victim Awareness.



## Assessment Programs

Juvenile Assessment programs are direct services that offer a brief process to identify immediate mental health and/or behavioral risks and needs. Often, these are assessment centers that offer screening and assessment services and then refer youth to interventions based on the risk or needs assessed. During FY 2015-2016, 5 Assessment programs received CBA funds, with 3 Assessment programs completing the survey.<sup>5</sup>

Collectively, the Assessment programs reported to have served 1,123 youth. In comparison, the number of youth recorded in the JCMS for having been served in FY 2015-2016 is 1,459. In this instance, the JCMS count is higher by 336 youth – possibly because programs underestimated the number of youth served when they completed the annual year-end report survey and two programs did not complete the annual report.

For the year-end report, Assessment programs were asked a total of 8 questions. Of the 3 programs that completed the report, 2 indicated their location: one indicated the programs was in a stand-alone facility near other justice-related facilities, and the other indicated they shared a space with other non-justice agencies. No programs selected that they were in a shared space with other justice-related agencies, at a school, or a stand-alone facility some distance from justice-related agencies.

Assessment programs indicated what services they provided and could select all that apply including, assessments (3/3), referrals (3/3), case management (3/3), direct services, (1/3), social work (0/3), justice system process activities (e.g., fingerprinting) (0/3), and facilities to detain youth (0/3). Programs also selected the type of youth that were served under the Assessment programs, including: youth in need of care (2/3), youth with urgent medical situations (1/3), youth with mental or behavioral health issues (3/3), youth with a law violation (3/3), youth with status offenses (2/3), and youth with substance abuse issues (3/3).

We asked programs to list the assessment tools used by the assessment programs. One program did not respond. While the other 2 programs both indicated using the YLS, the other assessment tools used were unique to each program (i.e., DPS, EARL, AIM, MAYSI 2, SRAS, Protective Factors Survey, 40 Developmental Asset Survey). One of the 3 programs indicated that a screener/assessor was available 24 hours a day. Staff qualifications varied, but all three indicated that staff were trained in the relevant assessments. Every program indicated they had Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with other agencies.

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<sup>5</sup> One program, the Douglas County Attorney's Office, was exempted from completing the survey because we were not sure how this program should be classified (i.e., what program type), and the other program, Sarpy County mental/behavioral health/substance abuse evaluations likely included responses for this program in the answers to the other survey that the county completed.

## Mental Health Programs

Mental Health programs utilize screening, diagnosis, and treatment to promote the youth's recognition of their abilities and coping skills to assist with promoting mental health well-being. These programs may provide the initial assessment or screening as well as the mental health treatment, or the youth may be referred to the mental health treatment program from another assessment specialist or program.

In FY 2015-2016, 5 Mental Health programs were funded under CBA, and 4 programs completed the survey.<sup>6</sup>

Collectively, the 4 programs who responded reported serving 43 youth. The number of youth recorded in spreadsheets uploaded securely in FY 2015-2016 was hand-counted and showed a total of 53 youth having been served during the year. Again, in this instance, the count in the JCMS was greater by 10 youth, perhaps because programs underestimated the number of youth served during the year-end annual report and one program did not complete the annual report.

### Who delivered the Mental Health service?

<b>Mental Health Professional (4/4)</b>	<b>Educator (0/4)</b>
<b>Health Professional (0/4)</b>	<b>Role Model on a Particular Topic (0/4)</b>

### Where were the Mental Health services set?

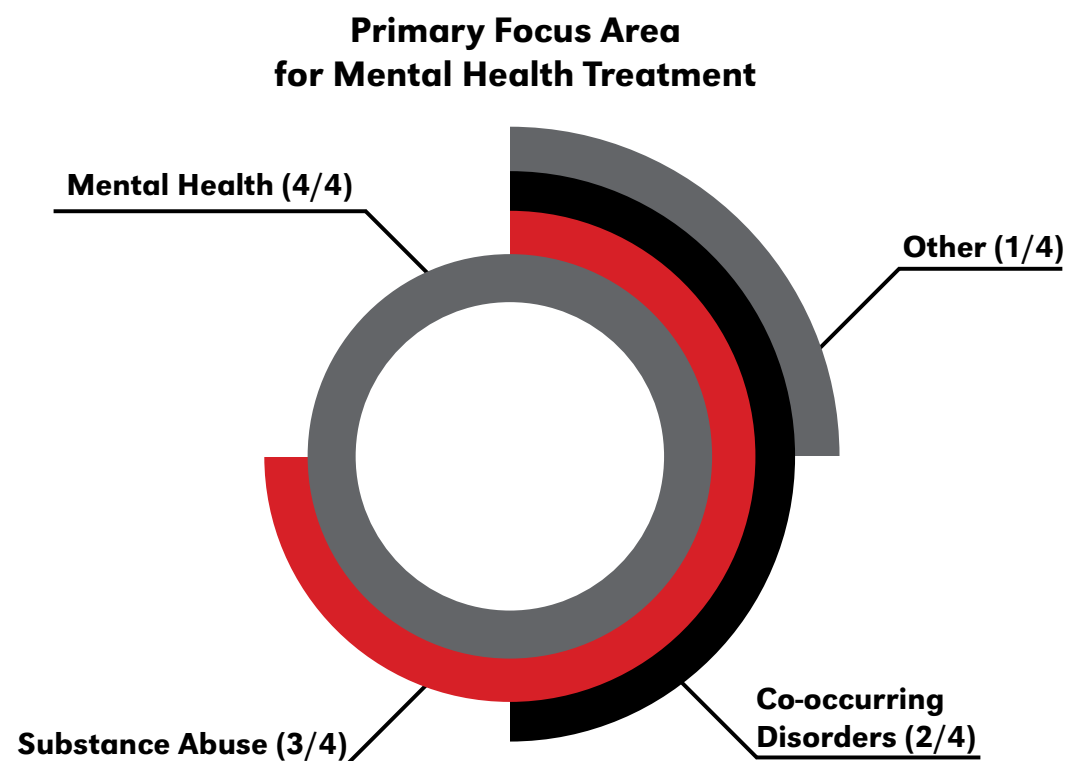
<b>In School (2/4)</b>	<b>In Home (0/4)</b>
<b>In Community (1/4)</b>	<b>In Program's Office (3/4)</b>

<sup>6</sup> The program that did not complete the survey, Douglas County Capstone Behavioral Health Services, likely included their responses for their mental health program in the survey they completed for their other funded program (Family Support).

For the year-end report, Mental Health programs were asked a total of 5 questions. First, we asked who delivered the mental health services.

To better understand the types of mental health services, programs selected the primary focus area for treatment including: substance abuse, mental health, co-occurring disorders, specific mental health (e.g., spectrum disorders), and other.

Programs completed 3 open-ended questions, including questions about the focus of the program and staff certification. One program indicated that youth are referred for services, another indicated child-parent psychotherapy, and another indicated crisis intervention/risk assessment/ and diagnosis of non-major mental health disorders. One program did not respond. All 4 programs indicated that staff who provided treatment and assessments were licensed mental health providers.



# Crisis Response Programs

Crisis Response teams are trained to intervene in cases where a juvenile's health or safety is threatened, resolve serious conflicts between parent/guardian and juvenile regarding conduct/repeated disregard for authority, a pattern of repeated absence from school, or runaway behaviors. These programs work with law enforcement to provide risk assessments with the goal of preventing hospitalization, protective custody, and/or incarceration.

There were 6 Crisis Response programs funded under CBA in FY 2015-2016, and 3 Crisis Response programs reported during the year-end report.<sup>7</sup>

Collectively the 3 programs reported that they served 121 youth. The number of youth recorded in spreadsheets uploaded securely in FY 2015-2016 was hand-counted and showed a total of 138 youth having been served during the year. The JCMS count, therefore, was greater by 17 youth; however, three programs did not complete the annual report.

For the year-end report, Crisis Response programs were asked a total of 13 questions. To get a sense of the size of the jurisdictions the programs served, programs indicated the population of the county(ies) served. Two programs served counties with a population that ranged from 20,000 to 26,000 people. One program served a county with approximately 170,000 people.

All three programs who completed the year-end report indicated receiving referrals or working with law enforcement. The number of law enforcement agencies each program worked with was 3, 5, and 8. Two of the programs indicated that law enforcement was "very supportive", one indicated "somewhat supportive", and no programs indicated that law enforcement was "not at all supportive". All three programs indicated that law enforcement received training in working with Crisis Response programs, which included topics such as basic mental health training, crisis response training, as well as trainings as needed on specific topics (mental health first aid, suicide, procedures and protocols). Two programs could not estimate the number of hours of training law enforcement received and one program indicated 7.5 hours.

Two programs indicated "very good" collaboration with community mental health providers, while one indicated "good" collaboration. All programs indicated that those on the Crisis Response team were licensed mental health professionals, and that the Crisis Response team was available 24 hours a day.

Using an open-ended format, programs were then asked to describe any barriers to getting youth the services they needed. One program cited law enforcement's initiation of calls to the Crisis Response team was a barrier. Another program indicated that the largest barrier was a lack of parent cooperation, a lack of mental health facilities in the area, and a lack of resources.

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<sup>7</sup> The Douglas County KVC Crisis Response program was not active at the time of the survey, and the Red Willow County Crisis Response program had not yet started serving youth at the time the survey was distributed. The third program, Douglas County Capstone In-Home Crisis Response program may have included their responses for their mental health program in the survey they completed for their other funded program (Family Support).



## Diversion Programs

Diversion programs are programs aimed at diverting low-risk youth with minor law violations from the juvenile system who would otherwise have charges filed or be adjudicated. The county attorney grants diversion for youth after considering the youth's age, the nature of the offense, the youth's history and future risk, and the recommendation of the referring agency. When a youth is granted diversion, the diversion officer should tailor a program for the youth based on the youth's specific needs and areas he/she needs to focus on. If diversion is completed successfully, the youth's charges are either dismissed or not filed in court.

There are 8 Diversion programs that serve multiple counties, so while the number of programs funded last year was 39, there were approximately 56 counties that had Diversion programs serving youth. Diversion programs account for the largest number of Community-based Aid funded programs, followed closely by School-based and Promotion/Prevention.

Diversion programs also include Teen Court programs, where youth act as the judge and jury for their peers; Early Assessment programs, where the youth are assessed to see what services would best suit the youth prior to charges being filed; Crossover Youth programs, which address the needs of youth who are involved in both the juvenile justice system and the child welfare system; and Restorative Justice programs, where the youth is responsible to repair the harm done to the victims of their offense, with input given by the victim and others involved in the offense.

In FY 2015-2016 there were a total of 39 Diversion programs funded by Community-based Aid funds. Two of these programs were Restorative Justice programs, 2 were Crossover Youth programs, 2 were Early Assessment programs, 1 was a Teen Court program, and 32 were Diversion programs. Of these 39 programs, 33 programs completed the survey.<sup>8</sup>

Of the 33 programs who responded, 31 reported serving a total of 3,798 youth (3 programs did not respond to the question). In comparison, the number of youth served during FY 2015-2016 as reflected in the JCMS is 4,756. Again, because not all Diversion programs completed the annual survey, this may be the cause of the difference in 958 youth.

For the year-end report, Diversion programs were only asked 1 question. This was because the Nebraska State Diversion Administrator had surveyed the programs separately and we did not want to over survey the programs. Programs indicated the eligibility criteria for the youth served in the Diversion program including: status offense, first time offense,

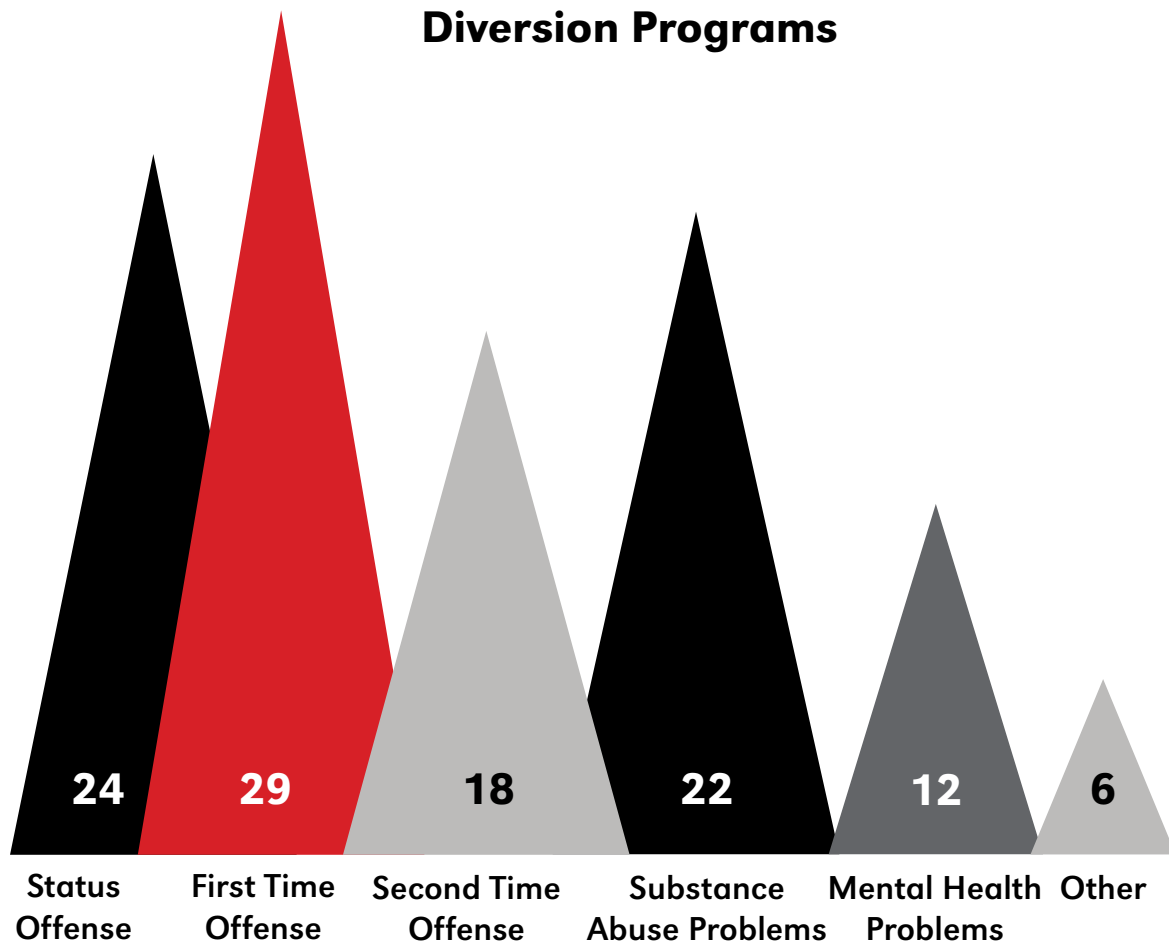
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<sup>8</sup> Garfield County Diversion was not funded by CBA funds at the time of the survey (and thus not required to report for the year-end survey); Hamilton County Diversion did not respond to contact from JJI regarding the survey; Antelope County Diversion was not able to be contacted as JJI did not have a clear contact person to inform about the survey; Stanton County Diversion did not respond to contact from JJI (although Madison County may have included Stanton in their survey); and the Sarpy County Mediation Center (Restorative Justice) and Sarpy County Teen Court did not complete the survey, although the answers may have been included in the Sarpy County Diversion survey that was completed.

second time offense, substance abuse problems, mental health problems, and other.

For programs that selected “other”, they were asked to provide more detail. One program indicated eligibility could include traffic offenses, truancy, youth between the ages of 18 and 20, first time youth offenders within the school setting, and criteria based on level and classification of the offense.

### Eligibility Criteria for Youth Served in Diversion Programs



## ATD Programs

Alternative to Detention (ATD) programs are programs or directives that increase supervision of a youth that would otherwise be securely detained, in an effort to ensure the youth attends court and refrains from committing a new law violation. The alternative shall least restrict the youth's freedom of movement, provided the alternative is compatible with the best interest of the youth and the community.

In FY 2015-2016 there were a total of 17 agencies funded by CBA funds that provided 31 ATD programs (several agencies had multiple ATD programs available to youth). Of these 17 agencies, 15 agencies completed the annual survey for 25 ATD programs. The ATD programs reported to have collectively served 1,562 youth (1 program did not respond to this question). The number of youth served across all ATD program types per the JCMS is 952.

This is a discrepancy of 610 youth, which again could be due to errors already mentioned, but could be because ATDs also serve adjudicated youth through the Office of Probation and although ATD programs are serving these youth, some programs may not have entered these youth into the JCMS.

ATD programs include 4 sub-types of ATDs: Electronic Monitoring, Reporting Centers (day or evening), Tracker Services, and Shelter Care. During the year-end report survey, programs self-selected the program services that they offered; at times, programs self-selected services that did not exactly match what was registered with JJI. As such, the number of services JJI had as a master, does not match the number of programs that programs indicated (see below). Once they selected what ATD services were available at their program, they answered specific questions for each type of ATD their program offered.

### Electronic Monitoring

Electronic Monitoring (EM) services were the most frequently utilized ATD in FY 2015-2016. Almost all of the programs had a curfew for youth on the program (8/9). Of those with a curfew, the requirements for the curfew were based on a level system (4/9), court order (6/9), and other (4/9).

Four out of 9 EM programs indicated that they hosted activities for the staff and youth in the community; and two programs indicated that EM staff have the power to detain youth. If a program indicated the EM program had the power to detain, they were asked to specify the criteria that must be met before the staff could detain a youth. One program indicated that the youth could be detained if there was a "major violation of the rules, or new law contact". The second one indicated that "the youth must present as a danger to themselves or the community, or must have violated the specific terms of the court order." According to this second program, new law violations are referred to probation for detention, and the program always tries to utilize lower level sanctions.



**All 9 programs  
use GPS monitors.**



**6 programs  
use radio frequency.**



**1 program  
uses a phone app.**

## Tracker Services

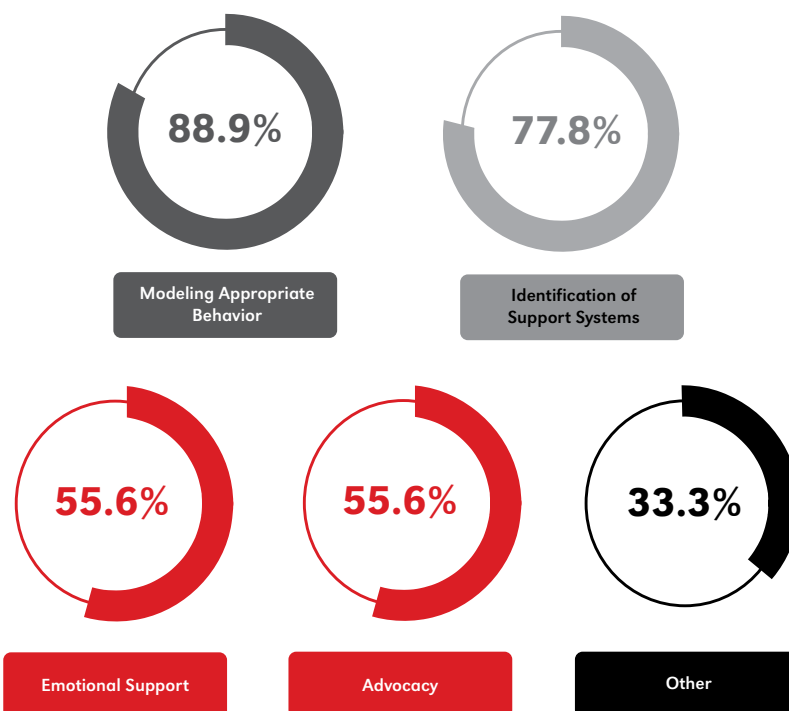
Nine of Nebraska's ATD programs were registered as Tracker programs, which is the number of programs that indicated they offered tracker services in the year-end report. All 9 of the Tracker programs indicated they followed a one-to-one model for Tracker services, and 1 program also indicated trackers (i.e., the staff person who monitors youth behavior and assists with getting to court appointments) also met with youth as a group. To better understand how trackers are matched to youth, programs indicated the criteria they used for the match including staff availability (6/9), hobbies/interests (4/9), gender (5/9), race/ethnicity (3/9), culture (2/9), and other (5/9).

Next, we asked about some of the techniques trackers employed. Three out of 9 Tracker programs indicated that they hosted activities for the staff and youth in the community; and all programs indicated that trackers did not have the power to detain youth.

Four of Nebraska's ATD programs in FY 2015-2016 were registered as reporting centers, however, 5 programs indicated that they offered Reporting Center services on the year-end report.

Of the 5 Reporting Center programs, 3 indicated they had a set daily schedule. Of the 3 with a set daily schedule, one program indicated they had structure activities (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, curriculum-based activities) for 100% of the time and the other two programs indicated they offered approximately 7 hours of services. Three programs indicated that they offered classes at the Reporting Center. Only two of the programs specified the classes that they offered, which included classes the programs stated were evidence-based: World of Difference, Alternatives to Diversion, Anger Management, Substance Abuse, Tobacco Education, and Navigator. The Reporting Centers also offered non-evidence-based classes that focused on needs or skills such as Teen Parent, Wellness, and Independent Living.

### Techniques Employed by Trackers



## Reporting Centers

None of the programs indicated there was a written security protocol for the Reporting Center. Of the 5 Reporting Centers, none of them indicated there was a curfew requirement for the program. Two programs indicated that they hosted activities for the staff and youth in the community; and none of the reporting center programs indicated that they had the power to detain youth.



**4 of 5** reporting centers said that their program encouraged family involvement.

## Shelter Care

Shelter Care programs provide out-of-home residential services for at risk youth. In FY 2015-2016, 3 ATD programs were registered as providing Shelter Care services, however, 5 programs indicated that they offered Shelter Care services.

Of the 5 Shelter Care programs, 4 indicated they had a set daily schedule. Of the 4 with set daily schedules, the percent of time spent doing structured activities (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, curriculum-based activities) was estimated at 60%, 70%, and two programs stated 100%.

Four programs indicated there was a written security protocol for the Shelter Care program that included the following: searches (4/4), pat downs (2/4), security cameras (3/4), egress (3/4), and a locked facility (1/4). We also asked how many youth share a room for sleeping accommodations. Three programs indicated 2 to a room, one stated 3 to a room, and 1 stated 5 to a room.

Four out of 5 Shelter Care programs indicated that they hosted activities for the staff and youth in the community; and two programs indicated that youth had to be accompanied by staff to participate in these activities. Next, we asked about the opportunities youth can have in the community while they are in Shelter Care including school (4/5), employment (4/5), family therapy (4/5), individual therapy (4/5), and other (1/5). All 5 Shelter Care programs stated that they encourage family involvement. Programs were asked to specify how they encouraged family involvement, which included visits and phone calls, where appropriate, and monthly family meetings.



**4 of 5** shelter care programs had a set daily schedule.

None of the Shelter Care programs indicated that they had the power to detain youth.

**≥60%** of these programs' daily time was spent on structured activities like tutoring or mentoring.



## Reentry Programs

Reentry programs intentionally prepare youth and families for return from an out-of-home placement back to their communities. Activities and communications prior to discharge strengthen the connection between the youth in placement with their family, home, and community.

There was one Reentry program funded in FY 2015-2016, and the program did complete the survey, reporting that they served a total of 6 youth. A hand-count of the spreadsheets submitted by the program put the total number of youth served during this time at 11.

The Reentry program was asked 7 questions. First, we asked what population of youth does the program help to reenter including: foster care youth (0/1), detention/Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center (YRTC) youth (0/1), youth placed out of state (0/1), or other (1/1). The program specified that they worked with youth coming from Boys Town and other treatment facilities. This program indicated they did not have a community team to assist with reentry.

The types of services offered included: employment (0/1), therapy (1/1), education (0/1), family services (1/1), substance abuse (1/1), mentoring (0/1), other (0/1).

## System Improvements

Unlike the programs already described, System Improvement programs do not work directly with youth, but rather support programs and agencies that provide the services to the youth. System Improvements can include Training/Quality Improvement programs where staff are either the trainers or the ones being trained; Administration which includes coordinators and grant writers; Backbone Support which is the organization that supports and coordinates all the programs and agencies and handles logistical and administrative details; Evaluators, who evaluate programs and report to stakeholders; and Data, which is the information, tools and resources used to conduct research to help shape policies and practices.

In FY 2015-2016 there were 23 System Improvement agencies funded that reported on 34 different System Improvement programs. Of these, 21 agencies completed the survey.<sup>10</sup>

Because Nebraska's CBA System Improvement programs are founded in principles of Collective Impact (e.g., Kania & Kramer, 2011), System Improvement programs completed a survey designed to measure the strength of Collective Impact in their communities. To do this, community leads listed members on their team who should complete the survey. The survey was then emailed to those identified. The total number of respondents from the CBA distribution was 107.

The full report of this analysis is presented elsewhere (Hobbs & Wylie, 2017). One of the most intriguing findings of this initial research is that all five of the factors (Mutually Reinforcing Activities, Common Agenda, Backbone Support, Continuous Communication, Shared Measurement), were statistically related to each other, but Common Agenda was negatively related to all other factors. The Common Agenda questions measured the desire to share a common understanding of the problem, to bring in diversified voices, and to share a vision or philosophical approach toward solutions. Our results indicated this concept resonates strongly with persons engaged in Collective Impact; however, the reality of implementing or having a Common Agenda may be quite different. The remaining four factors each measured the ways in which individuals actually complete work on the Common Agenda.

Our initial results reveal what many Collective Impact stakeholders may already know: implementing Collective Impact with integrity is much more difficult than the ideal of Collective Impact. Specifically, it is difficult to bear the cost and find energy required to maintain Backbone Support; to have the patience required to engage in Mutually Reinforcing Activities; to practice the humility required to Share Common Measurement and to be held accountable to another's measures; and finally, to diligently sustain Continuous Communication.

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<sup>10</sup> The two programs that did not complete the survey are Richardson County's Four County Coordinator and Lancaster County's Teen Problem Gambling Awareness Training (likely due to not having a clear contact person for the training to contact).

# General Program-level Information

In addition to the questions programs completed specific to program type, each program answered general questions relevant to all program types. The questions included measures drawn from Lipsey and colleagues (2010) meta-analysis of effective juvenile justice programs and the University of Nebraska's Evidence-based Practices White Paper (Wiener, Hobbs, & Spohn, 2014). Specifically, we measured youth risk level and demographic information, and variables measuring the amount of treatment and assessing the quality of the program. Lastly, we tracked whether a youth entered the juvenile justice system or moved deeper in to the system measured by a court filing following discharge from a program funded by CBA funds.

## Youth Risk & Demographic Information

Previous research has found that program effectiveness varies little based on age, gender, and race/ethnicity; however, risk for delinquent behavior does appear to contribute to program outcomes. Specifically, "interventions applied to high-risk delinquents, on average, produced larger recidivism reductions than when those interventions were applied to low-risk youth" (Lipsey et al., 2010, p. 23). In other words, high-risk youth, who are more likely to reoffend than low-risk youth, have the most "room for improvement if they receive an effective intervention" (Lipsey et al., 2010, p.24). Youth who are low-risk, on the other hand, have less likelihood of offending regardless of the intervention and have little room for improvement. As such, the risk-level of the youth is an important factor to consider with respect to juvenile justice-related programming.

A common discussion in the juvenile system is that youth end up deeper in the juvenile justice system because communities simply do not have the capacity, or the right community-based programs available to serve youth. To estimate what the capacity is at the local level, programs were asked a range of questions about their capacity to serve youth, their target population, whether they assess risk, and how they utilize assessment information in programming.

Although many programs ( $n = 30$ ) felt that they had an unlimited capacity and could serve any youth referred to them, others indicated a maximum. In Table 1, the third column indicates whether the program is at capacity (100% indicates a program "at capacity," or that could not take in more youth). Of the programs that indicated a maximum capacity, no programs felt that they were at maximum capacity, but Mental Health programs were quite close – operating at 87% capacity. Most programs reported running at about two thirds of their capacity. Alternative to Detention programs reported as most under-utilized, operating at 30% of their capacity, which is especially salient since those types of programs are critical to off-setting detention over-utilization.



**Table 1. Capacity to Serve Youth and Target Population**

	Number of youth	Number of youth cap.	Unlimited capacity	% capacity	Target population		
	Avg. (range)				All Youth	Cultural	Gender
Prom/Prev (n = 22)	140 (1 to 1200)	221 (20-1500)	14% (3)	67% (3% - 100%)	77% (17)	13% (3)	5% (1)
One-time Events (n = 7)	189 (0 – 500)	255 (0 – 1000)	29 % (2)	62% (29% - 93%)	100% (6)	–	–
Incentive (n = 5)	235 (6 – 1000)	75 (50 – 100)	60% (3)	40% (6% - 74%)	75% (3)	25% (1)	–
Mentoring (n = 7)	56 (0 – 179)	94 (30 – 225)	14% (1)	74% (40% – 100%)	100% (7)	–	–
Truancy (n = 23)	146 (8 – 1239)	143 (15 – 500)	17% (4)	63% (13% - 93%)	96% (21)	–	–
SRO (n = 3)	313 (14 – 625)	375 (200 – 625)	0% (0)	69% (7% - 100%)	100% (3)	–	–
Alternative schools (n = 1)	0	50	0% (0)	0%	100% (1)	–	–
School interven- tionist/Mediation (n = 2)	137	150	0% (0)	91%	100% (2)	–	–
After school (n = 6)	158 (7 – 300)	178 (20 – 300)	17% (1)	65% (35% - 100%)	100% (6)	–	–
Family Support (n = 12)	29 (0-72)	69 (7 – 160)	0% (0)	46% (0% – 100%)	67% (8)	25% (3)	8% (1)
Assessment (n = 3)	374 (20 – 1075)	35	67% (2)	80%	100% (3)	–	–
Mental Health (n = 4)	11 (0 – 25)	16 (10 – 25)	25% (1)	87% (60% - 100%)	75% (3)	25% (1)	–
Crisis Response (n=3)	40 (7-101)	72 (12 – 144)	0% (0)	64% (12% - 100%)	100% (3)	–	–
Diversion (n = 33)	126 (4 - 1023)	170 (15 – 1200)	30% (10)	63% (20% to 100%)	97% (32)	–	–
ATDs (n = 19)	110 (1 – 608)	455 (12 – 4380)	32% (6)	30% (2% - 100%)	95% (18)	–	–
Reentry (n = 1)	6	12	0% (0)	50%	100% (1)	–	–

*Note.* Although the survey asked whether a program targeted LGBTQ youth, no programs indicated targeting this population.

With respect to the target population, School-based programs like Truancy programs, Alternative Schools, and After School programs all reported being available to serve all youth. Other programs that are open to any youth included Crisis Response and One-time Events. Relatively few programs target specialized youth populations. Overall, only 8 CBA-funded programs reported having a cultural focus; only 2 programs statewide offered gender specific programming. Even more notable is that none of the community-based aid funded programs focused on LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, & Queer) youth.

Programs were also asked whether they assess risk for the youth referred. Assessing youth is often the first step in implementing evidence-based programming because programming without understanding the underlying causes can, at best, be a waste of resources and, at worst, may be harmful. Table 2 displays information relevant to assessing youth risk.

Almost half (46%, or 70 programs) of CBA programs reported conducting some type of assessment on the youth they serve. Of the programs that assessed youth, programs indicated utilizing a variety of assessment tools including: Youth Level of Service (34%, 24), the Nebraska Youth Screen (20%, 17), Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (24%, 17), Scholastic Reading Assessment (4%, 3), Risk Assessment Instrument (7%, 5), Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (10%, 7), Early Assessment Risk List (3%, 2), Diagnostic and Predictive Scale (3%, 2), School Refusal Assessment Scale (9%, 6), Arizona Assessment (3%, 2), Developmental Assets or Protective Factors (7%, 5), suicide or safety screen (7%, 5), or “other” tool (11%, 8).

**Table 2. Risk Assessment and Risk Level of Youth Served for FY 2015-2016**

		Estimated/ Actual Risk			When assess?			Admit high risk	Int. Change	Mix Risk
	Assess risk	High	Mod	Low	Intake	During	Closure			
	% Yes (#)	% of youth	% of youth	% of youth	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% No (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)
Prom/Prev (n = 22)	36% (8)	29%	33%	34%	27% (6)	18% (4)	14% (3)	0% (0)	23% (5)	64% (14)
One-time Events (n = 7)	0% (0)	9%	20%	30%	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	–	–	86% (6)
Incentive (n = 5)	0% (0)	8%	9%	23%	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	–	–	60% (3)
Mentoring (n = 7)	29% (2)	10%	44%	25%	29% (2)	14% (1)	14% (1)	14% (1)	14% (1)	71% (5)
Truancy (n = 23)	35% (8)	27%	26%	43%	30% (7)	17% (4)	4% (1)	4% (1)	30% (7)	70% (16)
SRO (n = 3)	0% (0)	10%	15%	42%	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	–	–	33% (1)
Alternative schools (n = 1)	0% (0)	27%	20%	54%	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	–	100% (1)	0% (0)
School inter- ventionist/ Mediation (n = 2)	50% (1)	30%	70%	0%	50% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	50% (1)	50% (1)
After school (n = 6)	0% (0)	27%	20%	54%	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	–	–	83% (5)
Family Support (n = 12)	33% (4)	26%	29%	27%	17% (2)	25% (3)	8% (1)	8% (1)	25% (3)	58% (7)
Assessment (n = 3)	100% (3)	47%	37%	16%	33% (1)	67% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (3)	33% (1)
Mental Health (n = 4)	75% (3)	26%	28%	22%	50% (2)	75% (3)	50% (2)	0% (0)	25% (1)	75% (3)
Crisis Re- sponse (n=3)	67% (2)	2%	5%	27%	0% (0)	67% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	67% (2)	67% (2)
Diversion (n = 33)	85% (28)	6%	27%	54%	70% (23)	21% (7)	6% (2)	9% (3)	79% (26)	33% (11)
ATDs (n = 19)	58% (11)	34%	38%	19%	42% (8)	42% (8)	11% (2)	10% (2)	53% (10)	58% (11)
Reentry (n = 1)	0% (0)	0%	50%	50%	–	–	–	–	–	100% (1)

As Table 2 indicates, Diversion programs are the most likely to assess risk. Many School-based programs such as, SROs, Alternative Schools and After School programs reported that they do not assess risk. Roughly a third of Mentoring programs, Family Support programs, and Promotion/Prevention programs reported assessing the risk of the youth that they serve. Not unexpectedly, a larger proportion of direct service programs reported measuring risk: Crisis Response (67%), Mental Health programs (75%), and 100% of Assessment Centers. Programs that focus on delinquency also had higher rates of assessing risk, with 85% of Diversion programs and 58% of ATD programs reporting that they assessed risk.

If programs indicated that they do not formally assess risk, they were asked to estimate risk level, and then to indicate how they estimated risk. Some of the factors considered included: personal knowledge, the reasons the youth was referred to the program, discussions with school officials or parents, school performance, discharge information from previous placements, informal screening questions, progress in the program, willingness to participate in the program, status as a refugee, adjudication status, and income level.

In addition, if programs reported assessing risk, they were also asked when they conducted assessments, what level of youth they serve, and whether it changed the interventions provided. Relatively few programs reported that they do not admit high risk youth: one Mentoring program, one Truancy program, and three Diversion programs. Roughly 90% of ATD programs reported serving higher risk youth.

Using an evidence-based philosophy, programs should use the assessment information to shape the services provided. However, programs reported that this was a step that they did not always take. Mental Health programs, Assessment Centers, and Crisis Response programs were most likely to alter the services provided or recommended based on risk level. Most of the Diversion and Truancy Programs also reported revising the programming for youth based upon the risk assessment, by referring to mental health programs, increasing the dosages of services, and tailoring the program to the youth individual needs.

Another important aspect of assessing youth involves whether programs combine different populations. A large number of programs reported combining higher and lower risk youth during programming, especially One-time Events, and After School programs.

## Amount and Quality of Treatment

In addition to youth-related factors, variables that measure how the program is implemented, have shown to significantly affect future offending rates (Lipsey et al., 2010). According to Lipsey and colleagues (2010), “a sufficient amount of the program service must be provided” (p. 27). In a similar vein as medicine, if the dose is too small, it may not have its intended effects; however, if the dose is too large, that may not necessarily improve an outcome or could produce harmful effects. As such, dosage is measured by the total contact from the beginning of the program until the youth is discharged from the program.

### Dosage and duration of treatment

To measure dosage, we asked programs to indicate the average number of days a youth was in their program, the total number of hours the program was available each week, the total number of hours that was required each week, the average weekly contact (in hours), and whether the program tracked attendance. The programs that indicated the highest dosage were Mentoring programs ( $M = 637.5$  days) and After School programs ( $M = 594.3$  days); in these types of programs, it is more common to encourage a youth to maintain connection with the program for as long as possible. Not surprising, the programs with the lowest dosage were One-time Events ( $M = 1.4$  days), which only intend to provide youth with promotion and prevention messages at one instance; and Crisis Response programs ( $M = 1.7$  days), which have the goal of attending to immediate crises and then referring youth to other services. With respect to programs that “touch” the juvenile justice system for which youth are monitored for delinquent behavior (Diversion and ATDs), dosage was lower on average, which may be ideal because monitoring youth over long periods of time may contribute to over-supervising—or creating more opportunity to “catch kids doing bad stuff” while being monitored.

Next, we asked a series of questions about whether program staff were available outside of the program via cell phone, text message, social media, email, other means, or whether they were not available outside of the program (see Table 3). Although research has not specifically examined whether allowing youth to contact staff by these other means is more effective, it may contribute to a stronger relationship between the youth and the program; and/or provide additional support to the youth or family. Across all program types, it appears that programs are most willing to communicate via email (76% of all programs), cell phone (75% of all programs), and text message (61% of all programs). Fewer indicated social media (26% of all programs) or other means (16% of all programs), and a small proportion indicated that youth or families could not contact them via other means (1% of all programs).

**Table 3. Duration and Availability of the Programs by Program Type  
for FY 2015-2016**

	Program attendance					Staff available by other means					
	Dose	Avail a week	Hrs. req. by week	Avg. weekly contact	Track atten.	Cell	Text	Social media	Email	Other	None
	Avg. days (range)	Avg. hrs. (range)	Avg. hrs. (range)	Avg. hrs. (range)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)
Prom/Prev (n = 22)	212.7 (1-1095)	22.0 (1-55)	5.1 (0-30)	7.2 (1-30)	82% (18)	77% (17)	38.2% (15)	50% (11)	77.3% (17)	18.2% (4)	4.5% (1)
One-time Events (n = 7)	1.4 (1-2)	14.28 (0-28)	7.6 (0-26)	7.3 (0-26)	86% (6)	71.4% (5)	71.4% (5)	42.9% (3)	71.4% (5)	–	14.3% (1)
Incentive (n = 5)	303.5 (1-1095)	100.7 (50-168)	1.5 (0-3)	2.7 (1-5)	60% (3)	60% (3)	40% (2)	40% (2)	60% (3)	60% (3)	–
Mentoring (n = 7)	637.5 (365-1095)	49.8 (35-84)	1.0	1.3 (1-2)	71% (5)	57.1% (4)	57.1% (4)	28.6% (2)	57.1% (4)	–	28.6% (2)
Truancy (n = 23)	245.1 (56-540)	46.2 (5-168)	3.5 (0-30)	7.8 (0-40)	96% (22)	82.6% (19)	78.3% (18)	26.1% (6)	87% (20)	21.7% (5)	–
SRO (n = 3)	–	23.7 (10-40)	–	15 (0-35)	66.7% (2)	66.7% (2)	66.7% (2)	33.3% (1)	66.7% (2)	–	33.3% (1)
Alternative schools (n = 1)	–	33.0	–	32.0	100% (1)	100% (1)	100% (1)	–	100% (1)	–	–
School inter- ventionist/ Mediation (n = 2)	90.0	25.0	–	1.0	50% (1)	100% (2)	50% (1)	50% (1)	100% (2)	–	–
After school (n = 6)	594.3 (12-1825)	15.0 (5-28)	–	10.8 (3-28)	100% (6)	66.7% (2)	50% (3)	66.7% (2)	66.7% (4)	16.7% (1)	66.7% (2)
Family Support (n = 12)	111.0 (12-360)	72.9 (0-168)	5.3 (0-25)	3.8 (0-10)	75% (9)	91.7% (11)	58.3% (7)	16.7% (2)	66.7% (8)	–	–
Assessment (n = 3)	135.5 (1-270)	40.5 (25-56)	–	–	100% (3)	66.7% (2)	33.3% (1)	–	33.3% (1)	–	33.3% (1)
Mental Health (n = 4)	194.0 (45-270)	72.7 (10-168)	0.5 (0-1)	4.0 (1-10)	75% (3)	100% (4)	–	–	100% (4)	–	–
Crisis Response (n = 3)	1.7 (1-3)	168.0	–	3.0	66.7% (2)	100% (3)	33.3% (1)	–	–	–	–
Diversion (n = 33)	115.77 (7-270)	50.84 (5-168)	1.29 (0-10)	1.71 (0-7)	82% (27)	60.6% (20)	60.6% (20)	18.2% (6)	81.8% (27)	15.2% (5)	9.1% (3)
ATDs (n = 19)	62.93 (3-180)	114.53 (5-168)	72 (0-168)	41.5 (2-168)	89.5% (17)	84.2% (16)	52.6% (10)	5.3% (1)	73.7% (14)	26.3% (5)	5.3% (1)
Reentry (n = 1)	360.0	40.0	–	2.0	100% (1)	100% (1)	100% (1)	100% (1)	–	100% (1)	–

Each program also indicated what days and times each week the services were available. The survey listed each day of the week (Sunday to Saturday) and three times each day, morning, afternoon, and evening. Programs indicated each of the time frames the services were available. Most programs indicated availability during the weekdays for the morning and afternoon times (ranged from 70% - 80% across days/times), fewer indicated availability during the evening weekday hours (ranged from 47% - 50% across days/times), and even fewer were available on the weekends regardless of the time (26% - 34% across days/times).

## **Assistance to youth/families**

Whether a program offers assistance—either through services to reduce barriers to program attendance or financial assistance – may impact success rates in the program or willingness to attend the program. Each program indicated whether they provided assistance to families through child care, transportation, meals, or other incentives. Table 4 displays information related to assistance to youth and families. Across all program types, the most common assistance was incentives (47% of programs), followed by transportation (35% of all programs), meals (24% of all programs), and then child care (1% of all programs). This differed by program type. For instance, some program types offered each kind of assistance (Promotion/Prevention, One-time events, After School programs, Family Support, Diversion, and ATDs), whereas the remaining only offered transportation, meals and incentives. Some assistance is also more prominent within each program type. For instance, ATDs more commonly have transportation assistance; and Promotion/Prevention, Diversion, and Truancy programs rely more on incentives.

**Table 4. Assistance to Youth/Families by Program Type for FY 2015-2016**

	Services				Cost			
	Child care	Trans.	Meals	Incent.	Cost	Sliding	Youth min	Youth max
	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	Avg. (range)	Avg. (range)
Prom/Prev (n = 22)	4.5% (1)	31.8% (7)	36.4% (8)	59% (13)	9% (2)	4.5% (1)	\$2.50 (\$0-5)	\$12.50 (\$5-20)
One-time Events (n = 7)	14.2% (1)	14.2% (1)	14.2% (1)	42.9% (3)	42.9% (3)	14.2% (1)	\$19.33 (\$0-55)	\$20.33 (\$0-55)
Incentive (n = 5)	–	40% (2)	40% (2)	60% (3)	20% (1)	20% (1)	\$25	\$25
Mentoring (n = 7)	–	28.6% (2)	28.6% (2)	28.6% (2)	–	–	–	–
Truancy (n = 23)	–	34.8% (8)	8.7% (2)	65.2% (15)	4.3% (1)	–	\$0	\$75
SRO (n = 3)	–	33.3% (1)	33.3% (1)	–	–	–	–	–
Alternative schools (n = 1)	–	100% (1)	100% (1)	100% (1)	–	–	–	–
School inter- ventionist/ Mediation (n = 2)	–	–	–	50% (1)	–	–	–	–
After school (n = 6)	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	50% (3)	66.7% (4)	33.3% (2)	16.7% (1)	\$10	\$10
Family Support (n = 12)	16.7% (2)	50% (6)	33.3% (4)	41.7% (5)	–	–	–	–
Assessment (n = 3)	–	66.7% (2)	–	66.7% (2)	–	–	–	–
Mental Health (n = 4)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Crisis Response (n = 3)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Diversion (n = 33)	3% (1)	21.2% (7)	9.1% (3)	36.4% (12)	66.7% (22)	27.3% (9)	\$61.25 (\$0-150)	\$121.66 (\$50-275)
ATDs (n = 19)	5.3% (1)	68.4% (13)	42.1% (8)	36.8% (7)	5.3% (1)	–	\$18	\$28
Reentry (n = 1)	–	100% (1)	–	–	–	–	–	–



The financial cost of a program may be a barrier to youth enrolling in the program or successfully completing the program. Programs indicated whether there was a cost to the program, and if there was a cost, they further indicated: the average minimum cost to youth, the average maximum cost to youth, and whether they offer a sliding scale to pay for the fees. Many programs left these questions blank, therefore, we may not be getting an accurate picture of the cost of programs in Nebraska. Of those who did respond, One-time Events (42.9%) and Diversion (66.7%) programs both had a large proportion of programs that indicated having a cost. For the programs that do have a cost, some also indicated having a sliding scale. For example, all One-time Events and approximately 40% of Diversion programs indicated having a fee. The average cost ranged considerably, especially for diversion programs—the lowest minimum (average) cost was \$0, whereas the highest maximum (average) cost was \$275 (see Table 4).

In addition to the cost to the youth, the survey also asked programs for the minimum and maximum costs to the family. We then averaged those costs. Of the programs that reported a cost to the family, the costs were higher for the family than for the youth. The minimum average cost to families for Promotion/Prevention programs was \$45 (\$40 - \$50) and the maximum was \$45 (\$40-50). One-time Events reported a minimum cost average cost to families as \$20.66 (\$0 - \$60) and a maximum average cost as \$24 (\$2 - \$60). The Incentive program that reported a cost to families reported a flat rate of \$150, and the Truancy program that reported a cost to families reported a flat rate of \$75. The After-school program reported a flat rate of \$10 per family, and the ATD program with a cost to youth did not report any cost to the family. Diversion programs reported a minimum average cost to families at \$201.11 (\$50 - 500) and the maximum cost as \$217.73 (\$100 - \$500).

## Staff Information

Other measures of program quality include staff-related variables including staff turn-over, level of staff experience, and staff training (Lipsey et al., 2010). Programs were asked to complete several questions about their staff including the number of staff, each staff member's experience (in years), the number of staff who left during the fiscal year (i.e., staff turnover), whether staff are subject to background checks, and whether staff received training (Table 5).

Overall, the average number of staff by program type varied. The Alternative School employed the most staff (20), while not surprising, the SRO program included a staff of 1. Crisis Response programs employed 11 staff, on average, likely because licensed mental health workers are on call 24 hours a day to respond to calls from law enforcement. The two program types with the largest staff turnover were After School programs (2.5 staff members) and ATDs (1.7 staff members). Otherwise, many of the programs had less than 1 staff turnover on average.

**Table 5. Average Staff Information by Program Type in FY 2015-2016**

	# of staff	# of new staff (<1 year)	# of staff (1-6 years)	# of staff (7+ years)	# of staff who left	Bckgrnd checks	Staff Training
	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)
Prom/Prev (n = 22)	3.3	1.2	1.8	0.3	0.4	91% (20)	59% (13)
Prom/Prev One-Time Event (n = 7)	6.0	0.9	1.6	3.6	0.4	29% (2)	71% (5)
Incentive (n = 5)	3.8	1.2	1.0	1.6	0.4	60% (3)	40% (2)
Mentoring (n = 7)	2.1	0.7	1.0	0.4	0.6	86% (6)	86% (6)
Truancy (n = 23)	2.3	0.7	1.2	0.3	0.3	78% (18)	78% (18)
SRO (n = 3)	1.0	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.3	100% (3)	100% (3)
Alt. school (n = 1)	20.0	0.0	14.0	6.0	0.0	100% (1)	100% (1)
School Interventionist / Mediation (n = 2)	3.5	1.0	1.0	1.5	0.0	100% (2)	100% (2)
After school (n = 6)	7.3	2.7	3.2	1.5	2.5	83% (5)	100% (6)
Family Support (n = 12)	4.7	1.9	2.8	0.2	0.6	100% (12)	83% (10)
Assessment (n = 3)	2.3	1.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	100% (3)	67% (2)
Mental Health (n = 4)	1.5	0.5	0.8	0.3	0.0	100% (3)	100% (3)
Crisis Response (n=3)	11.3	1.3	10.3	0.0	0.7	67% (2)	100% (3)
Diversion (n = 33)	2.9	0.4	1.9	0.7	0.2	81% (25)	94% (30)
ATDs (n = 19)	8.1	2.3	4.2	1.2	1.7	88% (15)	78% (14)
Reentry (n = 1)	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100% (1)	100% (1)

*Note.* Averages are based on the total number of programs, including four programs that did not respond to staff questions including Diversion (n = 2) and ATDs (n = 2).

If staff did receive training during the year, the respondent was asked to further specify the number of staff and the number of hours of each training type (see Table 6). The types of training included were: trauma, Cognitive Behavioral (CB), Motivational Interviewing (Mot. Int.), case processing (Case Process.), Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC), general prevention practices (General), substance abuse (SA), evidence-based practices (EB), program manual (Manual), or other.

Table 6 displays the average number of training hours and average number of staff who attended the training for programs that indicated they had training (80% 120 programs). In other words, within each training type, the average number of hours and staff who attended is based on the number of programs who indicated having that type of training.

Overall, the most common trainings were “other” trainings ( $M = 14.4$  hours), general prevention practices ( $M = 11.5$  hours), training on the program manual ( $M = 10.7$  hours), evidence-based program training ( $M = 7.4$  hours), and substance abuse training ( $M = 6.5$  hours). Other common trainings included trauma ( $M = 6.3$  hours) and motivational interviewing ( $M = 5.4$  hours). Less often utilized trainings were case processing ( $M = 3.0$  hours), Cognitive Behavioral ( $M = 3.1$  hours), JDAI ( $M = 1.0$  hours), and DMC ( $M = 1.0$  hours). Although JDAI is a training that may only apply to programs that are deeper in the system, DMC training applies across all programs and, as such, might be the type of training the state may wish to increase.

**Table 6. Average Number of Training Hours and Average Number of Staff who Attended Training Across All Programs by Program Type in FY 2015-2016**

	Trauma	CB	Mot. Int.	Case Process	JDAI	DMC	General	SA	EB	Manual	Other
	Hrs (staff)	Hrs (staff)	Hrs (staff)	Hrs (staff)	Hrs (staff)	Hrs (staff)	Hrs (staff)	Hrs (staff)	Hrs (staff)	Hrs (staff)	Hrs (staff)
Prom/Prev (n = 22)	5.6 (2.9)	7.0 (2.0)	9.0 (1.0)	6.0 (1.0)	8.0 (1.0)	4.0 (2.0)	17.0 (3.4)	11.8 (2.5)	13.7 (1.7)	17.1 (3.0)	21.1 (2.0)
Prom/Prev One-time Event (n = 7)	4.3 (8.0)	16.0 (22.0)	5.0 (3.0)	–	–	–	6.3 (8.0)	12.0 (1.5)	6.5 (5.0)	1.0 (21.0)	12.0 (22.0)
Incentive (n = 5)	8.0 (12.0)	–	2.0 (12.0)	–	4.0 (12.0)	–	25.0 (13.0)	3.0 (1.0)	–	40.0 (13.0)	8.0 (1.0)
Mentoring (n = 7)	8.0 (1.0)	–	8.0 (1.0)	–	–	–	14.3 (2.0)	11.3 (1.7)	18.8 (1.8)	16.2 (2.0)	10.3 (2.7)
Truancy (n = 23)	6.3 (1.8)	5.5 (2.2)	12.0 (2.2)	3.2 (2.2)	2.3 (2.3)	6.0 (3.5)	9.9 (1.9)	5.3 (1.9)	8.1 (2.4)	10.3 (2.8)	23.3 (1.0)
SRO (n = 3)	3.0 (2.0)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	40.0 (1.0)
Alternative schools (n = 1)	16.0 (3.0)	16.0 (3.0)	52.0 (20.0)	10.0 (5.0)	–	–	8.0 (20.0)	8.0 (5.0)	16.0 (3.0)	–	–
School Interventionist/Mediation (n = 2)	9.0 (3.0)	–	–	5.0 (2.0)	–	–	–	7.0 (4.0)	4.0 (2.0)	3.0 (2.0)	15.0 (5.0)
After school (n = 6)	3.0 (22.0)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3.2 (7.6)	4.3 (8.8)
Family Support (n = 12)	9.0 (27.8)	4.8 (4.8)	3.8 (38.8)	4.0 (6.8)	3.5 (7.0)	4.0 (7.5)	2.3 (8.0)	9.8 (3.8)	7.0 (6.0)	3.6 (6.6)	8.7 (54.0)

Assessment ( <i>n</i> = 3)	15.0 (5.0)	–	20.0 (5.0)	–	–	–	8.0 (1.0)	–	–	16.0 (2.0)	42.0 (3.0)
Mental Health ( <i>n</i> = 4)	6.0 (1.0)	6.0 (1.0)	3.0 (1.0)	–	–	–	8.0 (1.0)	–	12.0 (1.0)	14.3 (1.7)	8.0 (1.0)
Crisis Re- sponse ( <i>n</i> = 3)	–	2.0 (1.0)	–	–	–	–	2.0 (1.0)	–	–	–	0.7 (11.7)
Diver- sion ( <i>n</i> = 33)	12.2 (2.5)	7.1 (1.8)	8.8 (2.7)	11.9 (2.3)	1.0 (1.0)	4.0 (1.4)	13.8 (1.9)	11.1 (2.1)	10.6 (2.1)	13.4 (3.1)	29.1 (2.1)
ATDs ( <i>n</i> = 19)	7.2 (12.4)	3.5 (10.3)	7.9 (3.6)	2.7 (1.7)	6.0 (4.8)	6.0 (1.5)	36.6 (8.6)	7.8 (8.2)	4.3 (13.3)	23.2 (10.7)	17.8 (13.3)
Reentry ( <i>n</i> = 1)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

## Adherence to Program Protocol

One indicator of an effective program is fidelity to the program – the delivery of the program as it was intended to be delivered (Lipsey et al., 2010). To measure this, programs completed questions about whether they had a program manual, how services were adhered to, whether there was a handbook given to youth and families about the expectations of the program, whether the program reviewed this handbook with the youth/family, and whether the program measured program satisfaction from participants (see Table 7). The number of programs by program type that had a program manual varied. While some programs all indicated having a manual (e.g., Crisis Response and the Alternative School), other program types had fewer that indicated having a manual (e.g., One-Time Events, Incentives, School Interventionists/Mediation, Reentry, and SROs). If programs had a written manual or protocol for staff, we then asked them to indicate how often the staff members were evaluated to determine if they were complying with the program manual or protocol. Responses were coded into six categories: annually (25%, 38); twice a year (5%, 7); quarterly (10%, 15); monthly (5%, 8); weekly (3%, 4); daily (3%, 5); never (1%, 1); or as needed (9%, 13).

Programs were asked how they monitored services to make sure they were being delivered as intended. Some of the responses included case meetings following each case and discussing opportunities for improvement, tracking outcomes (i.e., program completion, recidivism), gathering feedback from clients and staff, maintaining contact with other providers, daily or monthly narratives/reports, process evaluations, yearly evaluations conducted by the executive director, and flow charts that display procedures to follow. Similar to above, programs were asked to indicate how often services were monitored, which were coded into six categories: annually (13%, 19); twice a year (1.3%, 2); quarterly (8%, 12); monthly (12%, 18); weekly (19%, 28); daily (7%, 11); never (0%, 0); or as needed (32%, 21).

**Table 7. Program Manual & Handbook Information by Program Type in FY 2015-2016**

	<b>Manual</b>	<b>Handbook youth/ families</b>	<b>Review hand- book</b>	<b>Measure Satisfaction</b>
	<b>% Yes (#)</b>	<b>% Yes (#)</b>	<b>% Yes (#)</b>	<b>% Yes (#)</b>
Prom/Prev ( <i>n</i> = 22)	73% (16)	50% (11)	41% (9)	41% (9)
One-time Events ( <i>n</i> = 7)	29% (2)	14% (1)	14% (1)	57% (4)
Incentive ( <i>n</i> = 5)	20% (1)	100% (5)	–	20% (1)
Mentoring ( <i>n</i> = 7)	86% (6)	57% (4)	57% (4)	71% (5)
Truancy ( <i>n</i> = 23)	91% (21)	44% (10)	39% (9)	30% (7)
SRO ( <i>n</i> = 3)	33% (1)	0% (0)	–	0% (0)
Alternative schools ( <i>n</i> = 1)	100% (1)	0% (0)	–	100% (1)
School intervention- ist/ Mediation ( <i>n</i> = 2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	–	50% (1)
After school ( <i>n</i> = 6)	83% (5)	33% (2)	17% (1)	17% (1)
Family Support ( <i>n</i> = 12)	58% (7)	17% (2)	17% (2)	67% (8)
Assessment ( <i>n</i> = 3)	67% (2)	33% (1)	33% (1)	0% (0)
Mental Health ( <i>n</i> = 4)	75% (3)	25% (1)	25% (1)	75% (3)
Crisis Response ( <i>n</i> = 3)	100% (3)	33% (1)	33% (1)	67% (2)
Diversion ( <i>n</i> = 33)	73% (24)	46% (15)	46% (15)	55% (18)
ATDs ( <i>n</i> = 19)	74% (14)	42% (8)	42% (8)	47% (9)
Reentry ( <i>n</i> = 1)	0% (0)	100% (1)	100% (1)	0% (0)

We also asked whether the program had any policy changes in the last year and if so, what prompted the change. Some programs indicated that they were new programs and had not yet changed any policies. Generally, some programs indicated adjusting their programming as needed or making modifications with a new director/coordinator or staff. Other programs indicated policy changes that came about because of administrative reasons such as accreditation, changes in statute, or a change based on the grant contingencies (e.g., age of the youth served).

Some programs offered more specific policy changes. One Diversion program said it shifted its policies once the Nebraska Crime Commission released the updated Diversion guidelines and materials in 2015-2016. Another Diversion program indicated lowering their fee policy based on statewide discussion of fees.

Fewer programs indicated the use of handbooks for youth/families and reviewing the handbook with youth/families. Some programs indicated measuring participant satisfaction, which varied across program types.

## Evaluation

Another way that counties may invest their CBA dollars is to evaluate the programs in their community. A total of 24 programs reported having their program evaluated in the reporting year, but we can see from the description that they were including accreditation processes as well as the statewide evaluation being conducted by JJI.

**Table 8. Programs Evaluated in FY 2015-2016**

	Evaluated			RCT
	Yes, this year	Previously	Never	% Yes
	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	% Yes (#)	
Prom/Prev ( <i>n</i> = 22)	15% (3)	9% (2)	73% (16)	0% (0)
One-time Events ( <i>n</i> = 7)	14% (1)	0% (0)	86% (6)	0% (0)
Incentive ( <i>n</i> = 5)	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (5)	0% (0)
Mentoring ( <i>n</i> = 7)	57% (4)	0% (0)	43% (3)	0% (0)
Truancy ( <i>n</i> = 23)	17% (4)	4% (1)	78% (18)	4% (1)
SRO ( <i>n</i> = 3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (3)	0% (0)
Alternative schools ( <i>n</i> = 1)	100% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
School interventionist/ Mediation ( <i>n</i> = 2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (2)	0% (0)
After school ( <i>n</i> = 6)	17% (1)	0% (0)	83% (5)	0% (0)
Family Support ( <i>n</i> = 12)	25% (3)	33% (4)	42% (5)	8% (1)
Assessment ( <i>n</i> = 3)	0% (0)	33% (1)	67% (2)	0% (0)
Mental Health ( <i>n</i> = 4)	25% (1)	25% (1)	50% (2)	0% (0)
Crisis Response ( <i>n</i> = 3)	33% (1)	0% (0)	67% (2)	0% (0)
Diversion ( <i>n</i> = 33)	12% (4)	9% (3)	76% (25)	3% (1)
ATDs ( <i>n</i> = 19)	5% (1)	21% (4)	68% (13)	0% (0)
Reentry ( <i>n</i> = 1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)

One hundred eight programs reported never having had an evaluation performed on their programs, while two reported having participated in a randomized control trial (RCT; one diversion program and one truancy program); however, it is not clear from the data whether the specific program underwent a randomized control trial or whether their program was modeled after a model program that had a randomized control trial.

# Future Law Violations by Program Type

## Process for calculating future law violations

One measure of program effectiveness is whether a youth eventually touches the juvenile justice system or moves deeper in to the juvenile justice system (Council for State Governments Justice Center, 2014; Lipsey et al., 2010). To calculate whether youth moved deeper in to the system, we matched the youth served by a CBA funded program who were entered in to JCMS to youth and adults who had a case filed in JUSTICE, Nebraska's State Trial Court case information system. We requested a data extract from JUSTICE to include all juvenile and adult misdemeanor and felony cases between July 1, 2015 and December 31, 2016. This time frame included the time period for which we extracted youth information from JCMS for participation in a CBA funded program, with an additional 6-month follow-up. Adults cases were also included so that we could track youth into the adult system.

Next, we merged the JUSTICE cases with the youth from JCMS. If a youth participated in more than one program in JCMS, the JUSTICE case was merged with both cases from JCMS so we could calculate whether a youth had a future law violation following each time in a CBA funded program. For instance, if a youth participated in a Mentoring program and Diversion, the court filing information in JUSTICE was merged to both the Mentoring and Diversion occasion to calculate recidivism following both programs.

Once the two files were merged, cases were removed for two reasons. First, we removed any charges that occurred prior to discharge (and in some instances the enrolled date for programs such as Assessment programs or One-time Events). Second, we removed certain types of charges including traffic offenses (e.g., failure to yield), games and parks offenses (e.g., failure to have a fishing license), and 3(c) "mentally ill and dangerous" filings.

Overall, there were 2,448 JCMS cases with future law violations, which included 1,317 individual youth.

There were several cases, however, that could not be included because there was not a discharge date. A total of 548 cases (22%) could not be included in the law violation analysis. This could either be because a program failed to close the case and enter a discharge date, or because the case was still open at the time of the data extract. Table 9 displays the number of cases with missing discharge dates (or enrollment dates for Assessment and One-time Event programs) by program type as of May 1, 2017 when we requested an extract.



**Table 9. Number of Cases from FY 2015-2016 with Missing Discharge Dates**

<b>Program Type</b>	<b>Number of missing cases</b>
Alternative School	1
Assessment	81
Diversion	54
Diversion – Warning Letters	1
ATD - EM	37
Family Support	30
School Interventionist	18
Mentoring	12
Promotion/Prevention	56
ATD – Reporting Center	114
ATD - Shelter Care	5
SRO	22
ATD - Tracker	29
Truancy	88

In addition to discharge date, cases were removed based on certain discharge reasons. Any cases with discharge reasons that indicated the youth did not participate in the program were removed including youth/parent refused ( $n = 144$  cases), program declined admission ( $n = 95$  cases), and the county attorney withdrew the referral ( $n = 178$  cases). Many of these discharge codes are those utilized by Diversion programs that track both the number of referrals and the number of youth who enroll in the program.

There were many cases that did not have a discharge reason. These cases were kept in the dataset, even though we did not know whether the youth participated in the program ( $n = 1,019$  cases), which means approximately 50% of cases did not have a discharge code. Table 10 displays the number of cases with missing discharge reasons.

**Table 10. Number of Cases from FY 2015-2016 with Missing Discharge Reasons**

<b>Program Type</b>	<b>Number of missing cases</b>
Alternative School	17
Referral Service	7
Assessment	253
One-time Event	1
Diversion	91
Diversion – Warning Letters	1
ATD - EM	108
Family Support	46
School Interventionist	34
Mentoring	12
Promotion/Prevention	113
ATD – Reporting Center	173
ATD - Shelter Care	5
SRO	22
ATD - Tracker	58
Truancy	79

JJI will continue to work with programs and the JCMS programmers to improve data quality in terms of discharge date. One change that has been implemented since the time of this extract was the addition of the discharge field turning red if not completed.

### **Youth in JCMS**

A total of 10,253 youth participated in programs funded by CBA. Overall, 41% of the youth were female and 55% were male (4% did not have a gender indicated). Most of the youth were White (56%), followed by Hispanic (19%), Black (16%), unspecified (4%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (3%), Asian (1%), multiple races (1%), or race was indicated as “other” (1%).

### **Future Law Violations**

Once cases were removed (for the reasons listed above), the remaining 2,031 cases could be utilized for measuring future law violations. Future law violations are examined for “cases” in JCMS because the current analysis focused on individual youth within each program type. In other words, if a youth participated in two programs, his or her future law violations were counted in both programs. This allowed JJJ to examine the percent of youth with law violations by program type, but without considering that youth may have participated in more than one program. In future reports, we will continue to examine law violations for each youth but can further this analysis by examining the combined effects of participating in more than one program funded by CBA funds. One caveat is that examining the multiple effects of programs is complicated. No youth’s trajectory is identical and understanding how his or her movement through CBA-funded programs (and other programs not necessarily funded by CBA) affects recidivism is statistically challenging.

## Addendum

### Correction to Evidence-based Nebraska Annual Report FY 15-16

Pages 50 to 52, which presented the frequency and percent of youth with future law violations by program type for fiscal year 15-16, has been redacted from the Evidence-based Nebraska Annual Report for FY 15-16.

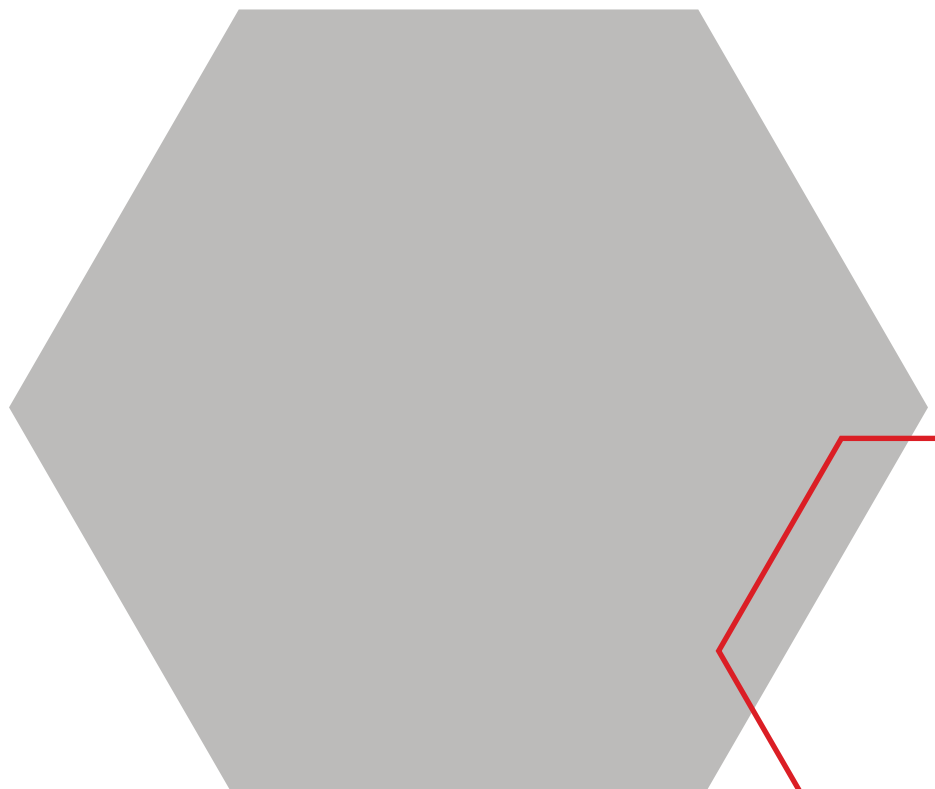
After re-examining the data while preparing the Evidence-based Nebraska Annual Report for FY 16-17, we determined that there was an overestimation in our calculation of future law violations. We have corrected the calculation by program type and report the updated values in the Evidence-based Nebraska Annual Report for FY 16-17 in Appendix C on pages 145-146.

In summary, we overestimated the number of future law violation rates because the calculation factored in youth who had multiple future law violations and counted those multiple charges as separate cases (i.e., individual youth). To illustrate the error with an example, if a juvenile had three charges as part of the case that was used to calculate recidivism (i.e., the first case following discharge from the program), then those three charges were counted as three separate youth in the calculation thus inflating the law violation rates. This overestimation was most prevalent in Alternative to Detention Programs, because youth in these programs more often had multiple charges.

Please note that changes to the definition of Future Law Violation were implemented for the Evidence-based Nebraska Annual Report FY 16-17. The updated definition separates law violations and status offenses; in addition, some offenses were explicitly excluded from the definition. For the updated definition, please see the Evidence-based Nebraska Annual Report FY 16-17 Appendix B, page 143. As such, differences in law violation rates may also be a product of this definition change.

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# Conclusion

According to Nebraska statute, the intent of the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program, “is to aid recipients in prioritizing programs and services that will divert juveniles from the juvenile justice system, and reduce the population of juveniles in juvenile detention and secure confinement.” The fund specifically aims at preventing youth from moving deeper into the juvenile justice system. The University of Nebraska’s Juvenile Justice Institute (JJI) has been instrumental in developing the longitudinal dataset collecting data on youth involved in Community-based Aid funded programs.

This baseline, inaugural report includes a snapshot of the 10,253 youth who participated in a CBA program 6 to 18 months prior to this report. The 10,253 youth were referred to one or more of the 205 funded CBA programs in the State of Nebraska. These programs ranged from very early intervention (One-time Events designed to prevent high risk behavior), to youth in Diversion programs, to deep end youth who are in Reporting Centers. JJI is certain that Nebraska is one of the very few states undertaking this expansive of an evaluation, which is why the process was highlighted by the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ).

At the time of this report, we know that 12.7% of youth have a subsequent contact with the system for a status or legal violation, after involvement with a community-based aid program. This is a very preliminary snapshot, however, as it examines only a six-month time frame post program involvement for some youth. One pattern that seems to be emerging is that higher risk youth, that is youth who are already system involved, have higher rates of new law violations.

JJI continues to train programs on data entry, as missing data impeded accurate analysis of recidivism. For example, over 1,000 cases did not have a discharge reason. Although these cases were kept in the dataset, we do not know whether the youth participated in the program, or was simply referred there. We anticipate that data will improve with each annual report and as program begin to realize the benefit of uniform definitions and dialoging across counties about the results they achieve with the youth the serve.

Future years and additional research will help shed light on programs, or program practices, that correlate with lower offense rates. For example:

- Do programs with higher fees have lower completion rates that subsequently push youth in to court? Do fee waivers mitigate this?
- Are certain types of Promotion/Prevention programs serving low risk youth that are not at risk of entering the juvenile system or are these programs providing a service that is preventing youth from entering the system?

Eventually, JJI hopes to track youth through the juvenile and adult system to determine whether youth that have subsequent law violations end up at the deepest ends of our system, like probation, county-run detention centers, Nebraska Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers, or if they move into the adult system.

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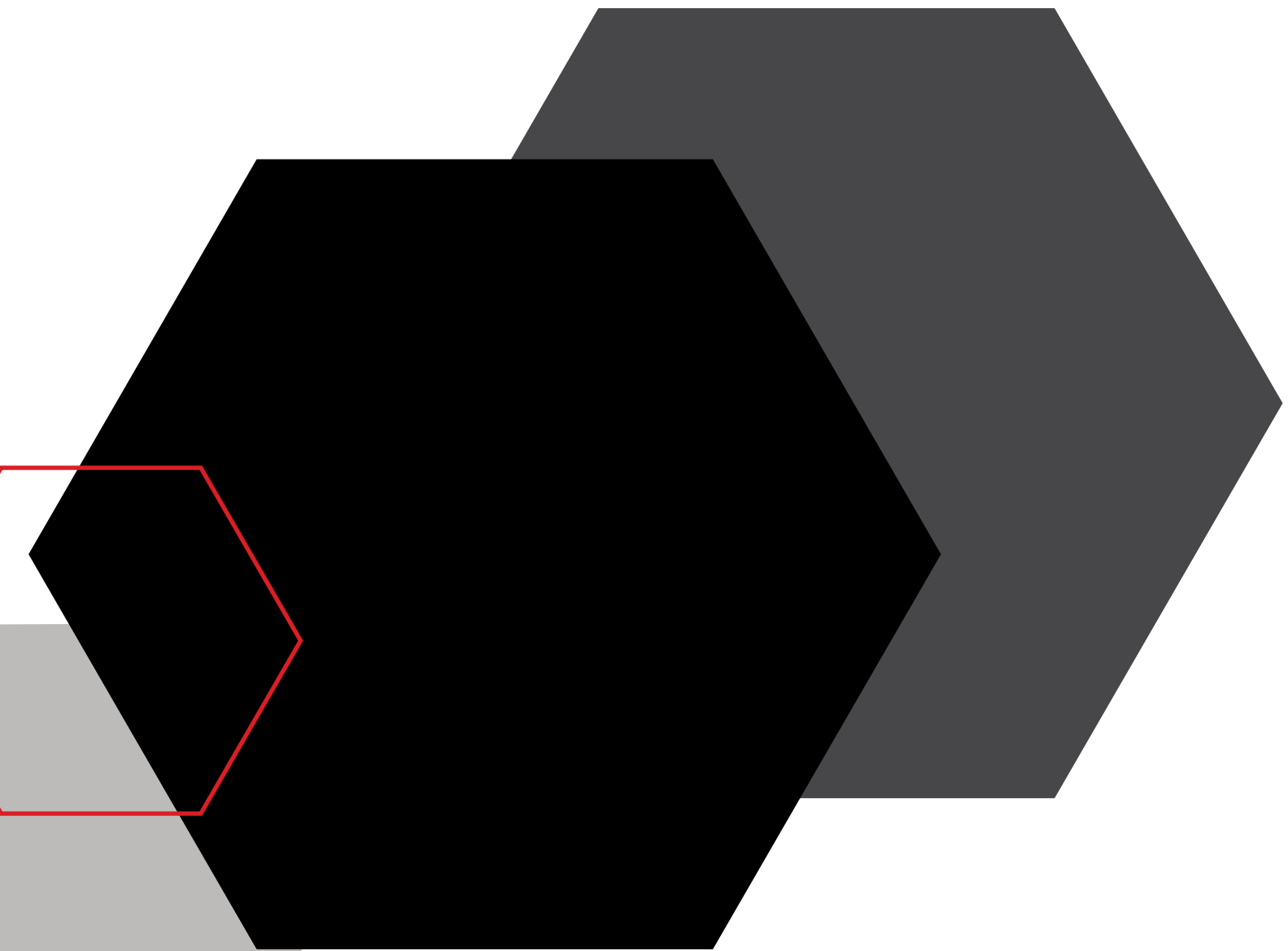
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