



STRATEGIC PLAN

2026-2028

Mission Statement

Our mission is to advance youth justice by bridging data with policy and practice. Through applied research, evaluation, and capacity building we strengthen systems and equip professionals to implement effective practices that better serve youth and families in Nebraska and nationwide.

Pillars

Nebraska First

We prioritize Nebraska's youth justice system – serving rural, urban, and tribal communities statewide – while extending our expertise regionally and nationally to advance the field.

Youth-Focused

Our work is grounded in intentional efforts to support professionals to better meet the needs of and improve outcomes for youth to prevent future or deeper justice system involvement.

Collaboration

We engage stakeholders across systems (e.g., policymakers, youth, families, communities, justice professionals, faculty, and students) to amplify their experiences and expertise in addressing complex issues impacting youth.

Impact-Oriented

Through intentional and rigorous research, evaluation, and hands-on support, we strengthen policies, practices, and systems that empower professionals to help youth thrive.



How would you describe the Juvenile Justice Institute?

Staff, student employees, and UNO partners shared 3–5 words in response to the question above. The image below shows their input, with larger words appearing more often.





JJI's

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

In July 2025, the JJI entered a new chapter of leadership - an ideal moment to reflect, realign, and chart an ambitious path forward. The 2025 strategic planning process focused on strengthening the JJI's foundation, ensuring alignment with its legislative purpose, and envisioning bold new directions to advance the mission and move the field of youth justice forward.

Ahead of the convening, the JJI gathered valuable input from more than 70 stakeholders across the state, including youth justice professionals, UNO faculty and staff, former students and employees, and collaborative partners. This feedback grounded the team's discussion and guided planning efforts.

During the process, the JJI team revisited the institute's origins and purpose, engaged in reflective dialogue on strengths and areas for growth, and reimaged its mission and core pillars to reflect current and future priorities. Through collaborative workshops, the team identified key goals, strategies, and action steps designed to strengthen internal capacity, expand impact, and elevate JJI's leadership in the youth justice space.

The result is a renewed and forward-looking strategic direction - one that honors the JJI's roots while positioning the institute to innovate, lead, and serve Nebraska's youth justice professionals for years to come.

Strategic Plan Priorities

After the strategic convening in the fall of 2025, the JJI team identified three mission-driven priority areas. These include (1) research and evaluation, (2) training and workforce development, and (3) technical assistance. Through these priority areas and the activities encompassed within them, the JJI can fulfill its legislative purpose and mission - helping them to advance knowledge and capacity among youth justice professionals.

Mission-Driven Priorities



Research & Evaluation

We will expand our research and evaluation portfolio to identify the current needs of Nebraska's youth and justice professionals and will share insights in formats tailored to diverse stakeholder needs.



Training & Workforce Development

We will continue to create an innovative continuum of in-person and virtual training and workforce development opportunities to inform, educate, and enhance skills for youth justice professionals.



Technical Assistance

We will continue to provide and expand upon targeted support for cross-system stakeholders - including programs, agencies, and policymakers - to inform, guide, and strengthen the effective implementation of practices that improve outcomes for youth.

Capacity-Driven Priorities

The JJI team also identified three capacity-driven priorities that are critical to elevating the mission-driven priorities outlined above and ensure the sustainability of the institute:

- Fundraising & Sustainability
- Marketing & Visibility
- Student Engagement



INTERESTED IN WORKING WITH THE **Juvenile Justice Institute (JJI)?**

At the Juvenile Justice Institute (JJI), we partner with agencies, organizations, and communities to advance data-driven, evidence-informed approaches that improve outcomes for youth and families.

Our team provides research, evaluation, training, and technical assistance designed to meet the unique needs of each partner. Whether helping a local system understand its data, evaluating program impact, or strengthening statewide coordination, the JJI approaches every project with a focus on strategic collaboration, innovation, and meaningful results.

If your organization is interested in collaborating with the JJI or exploring how we can support your efforts, we'd love to connect:

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OR CLICK HERE:

<https://tinyurl.com/JJI-UNO>



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