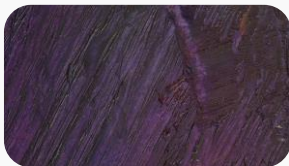
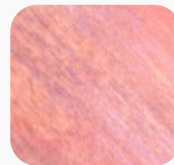


Continuum of Care Community Scan and Assessment



Background

- Confinement can worsen outcomes for youth, compounding trauma, disrupting education, and separating families – often with long-term societal costs (The Annie E. Casey Foundation Juvenile Detention Alternatives; Juvenile Law Center).
- Youth of color are disproportionately impacted by confinement and justice system involvement.
- A strong Care Continuum – spanning prevention, early intervention, diversion, reentry, and aftercare – supports youth in the community and reduces recidivism, truancy, and justice system involvement.
- Community-based alternatives to incarceration are more efficient and cost-efficient, reducing reliance on confinement and demonstrating substantial public savings (e.g., Redeploy Illinois).



Project Purpose

In alignment with the DJS mission and charge from the legislature, we are partnering with the University of Maryland School of Social Work, Institute for Innovation and Implementation under the OJJDP grant to explore:

- What programs have been working
- What hasn't worked
- And how do we fill service gaps

Purpose: To prevent youth incarceration and justice system involvement, address racial/gender inequities with tailored services, advance youth healing and rehabilitation, and support safe and productive community living.

Key Deliverables

1. Statewide, and regional service analysis of programmatic and behavioral health services available to DJS-involved youth and families.
2. Interactive resource map to support access for DJS, government partners, community agencies, and the public
3. Multidisciplinary Advisory Board, including youth and family voices, to support ongoing feedback and sustainability planning
4. Region-specific program and policy recommendations.



COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT



Foundation for a scalable, evidence-informed care continuum for justice-involved youth and families.

Statewide Continuum Scan Methods



•

1

Formal and informal
Listening Sessions
(DJS, LMBs, Court
stakeholders)

•

2

DJS Office-
level Survey

•

3

Provider
Survey

•

4

Youth/Family
Focus Groups

•

5

Resource
Mapping

•

6

Advisory Board &
Sustainability
Planning

Court Stakeholder Results

What's Working



Evidence-based programs

Multisystemic Therapy and Family Functioning Therapy



Mentoring & Pro-social Programs

THRIVE, STAND, ROCA, Better Way, Homes for Hope, Embrace, Heart Smiles, UMBC Choice & Ohana



Diversion

Teen Court, Lead for Life, SLYC, Truancy Court, School restorative practices



Truancy, Learning gaps, low literacy,



Substance use, Trauma, Family instability



Poverty, unstable housing

Systemic Risk Factors

Gaps & Needs



Transportation Barriers

Description, asset types, and so on



Behavioral Health shortages; Need for more trauma-informed culturally responsive care



Workforce shortages



Youth falling between systems; Lack of reentry/transition support



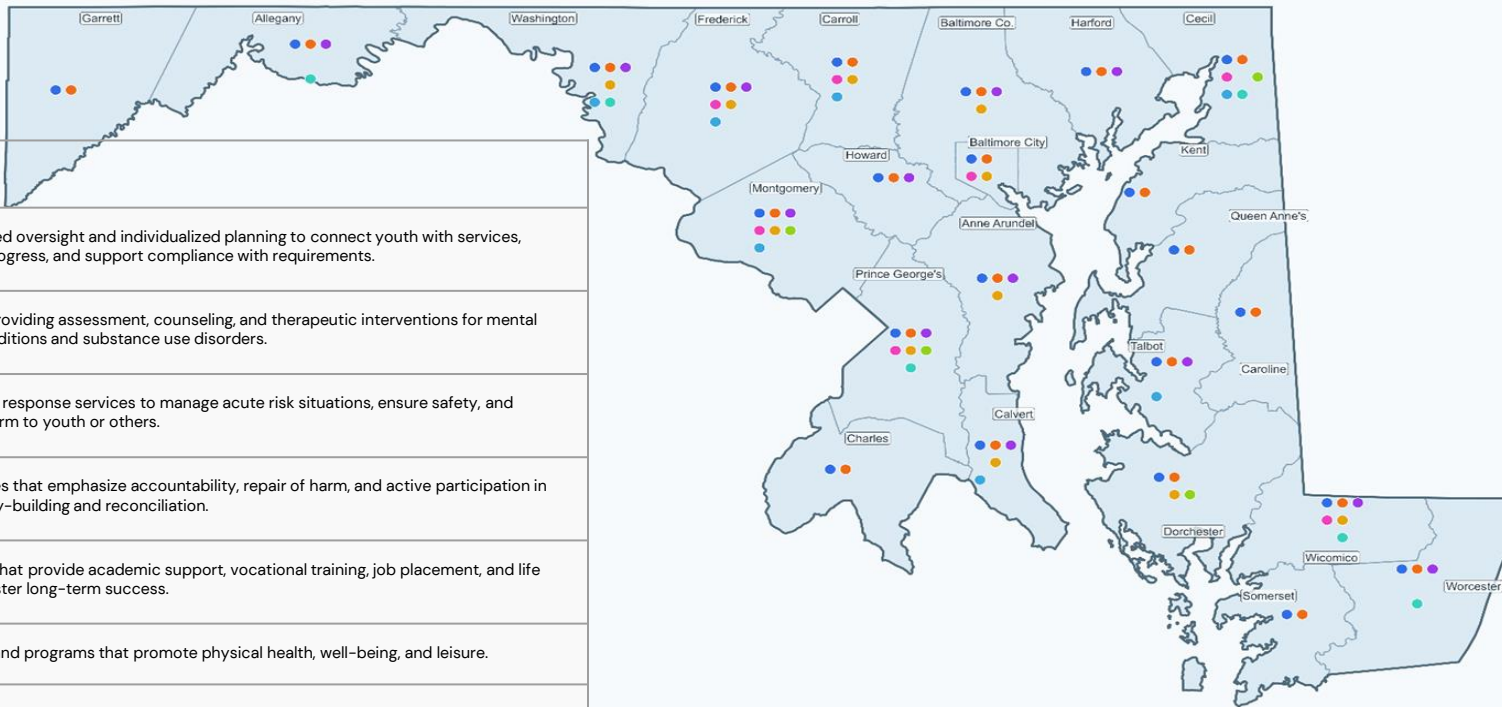
Underutilization/loss of diversion programs



Parent engagement challenges

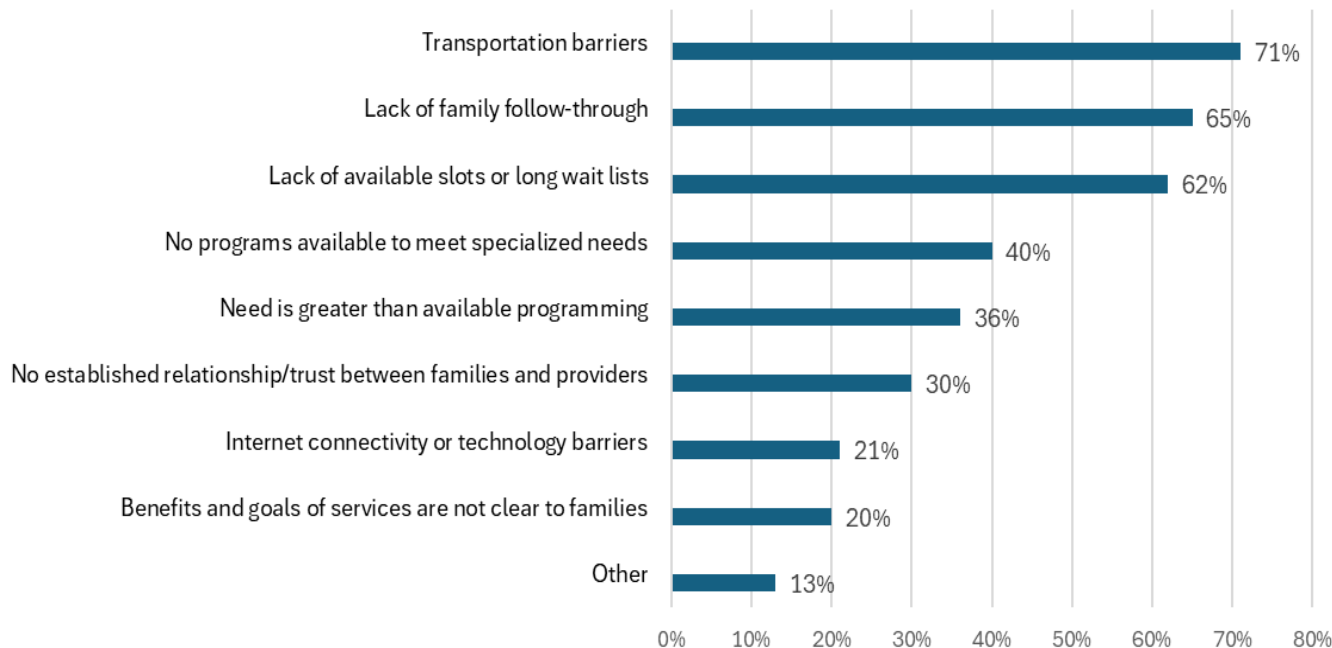
Office-Level Survey: Identified Resources

Category	Focus
Case Management & Supervision	Coordinated oversight and individualized planning to connect youth with services, monitor progress, and support compliance with requirements.
Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment	Services providing assessment, counseling, and therapeutic interventions for mental health conditions and substance use disorders.
Crisis and Safety Interventions	Immediate response services to manage acute risk situations, ensure safety, and prevent harm to youth or others.
Restorative Justice & Community Engagement	Approaches that emphasize accountability, repair of harm, and active participation in community-building and reconciliation.
Education, Employment, & Skill Development	Programs that provide academic support, vocational training, job placement, and life skills to foster long-term success.
Recreation & Wellness	Activities and programs that promote physical health, well-being, and leisure.
Advocacy & Legal Support	Assistance with navigating legal processes, protecting rights, and promoting equitable treatment within justice and social systems.
Basic Needs & Stabilization	Address essential needs such as housing, food, clothing, and emergency assistance to ensure safety and stability.



Barriers to Service Connection

What are the biggest challenges/barriers to ensuring that all youth and families are connected with community-based services? (Select all that apply)



Themes in "Other" Responses:

- System and funding constraints
- Program capacity and quality
- Engagement and navigation challenges
- Eligibility and access gaps

Perceived Service Gaps: Office-Level Survey Responses



Before and after
school programs

Opportunities to
learn trades and
skills

Mentoring
programs

Anger
management

Activities that are
free and accessible
for youth

Alternative
substance abuse
programs

Diagnostic
evaluation centers

Alternative school
placements

Trauma
therapy

Drug treatment
programs

Comprehensive
wraparound
services

Opportunities to
earn community
service hours

In-home
family/parenting
services

Housing
resources

Summer
camps

Access to
transportation

Sex offender
treatment

Individual
counseling

Access to
Evidence-Based
Parenting Skills
training

Provider Survey

Approach:

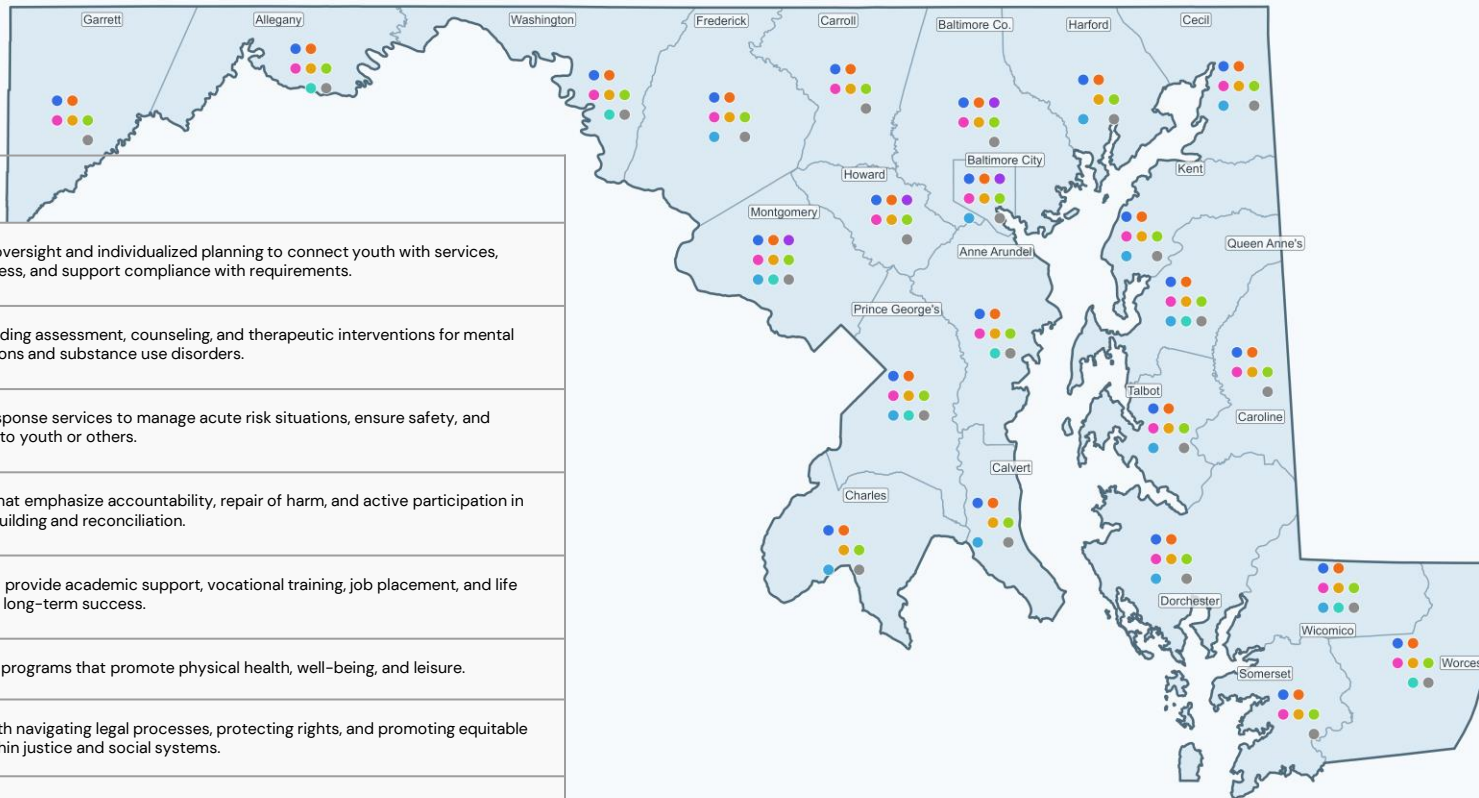
- Initial list of 224 identified providers expanded to nearly 400 providers statewide
- Survey administered with extensive follow-up efforts; AI used to fill in gaps

Areas of Inquiry:

- Program type and core components
- Evidence-based or promising practices utilized as part of program
- Youth and family engagement activities
- Capacity, eligibility, funding, licensure
- Accessibility

Purpose: Create a statewide service inventory, develop resource maps, and identify gaps

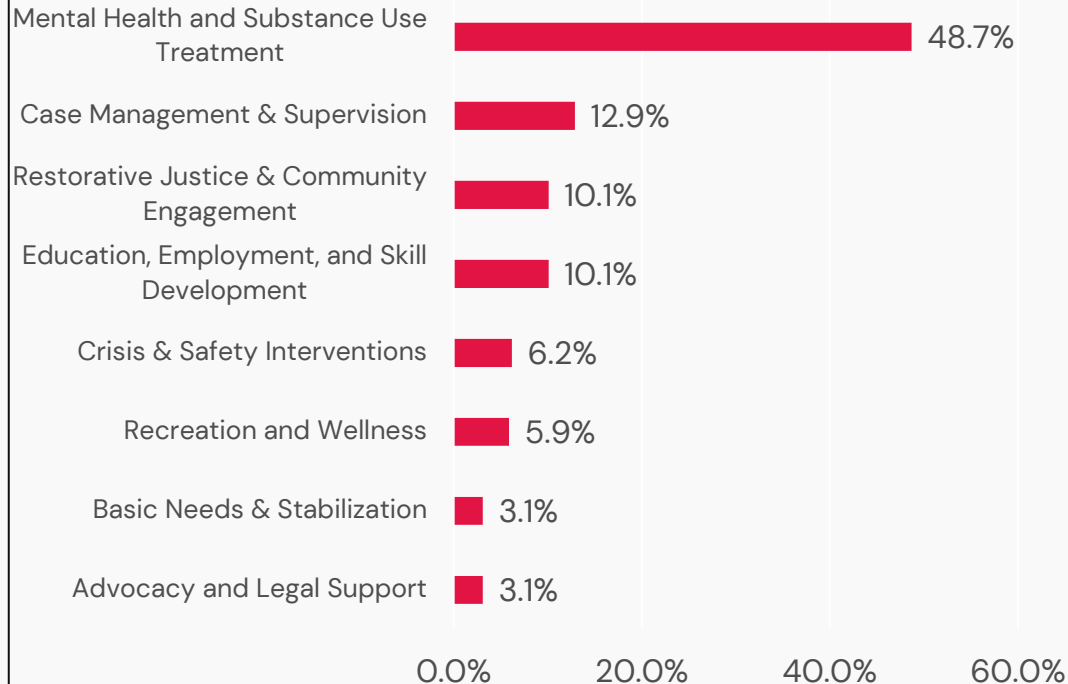
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What Types of Programs are Most Common?

Distribution of Programs by Type (n=388)



Funding

- **About 90%** of community-based programs serving justice-involved youth **do not have contracts with DJS.**
- Most (91%) of the identified mental health and substance use treatment programs in our study are also non-contractual.
- This reliance on non-contracted providers underscores the need for **strong referral pathways, cross agency coordination, and service navigation.**

Focus Groups

Purpose: To hear directly from youth and their families about their impressions of community-based services, including:

- Coordination between DJS, local provider agencies, and families;
- Knowledge and ability of staff to make appropriate referrals for individual services;
- Level of input solicited from families and youth;
- Barriers to utilization of services; and
- Strengths that can be better leveraged to improve service delivery.

Focus groups are scheduled to end by March 30, 2026



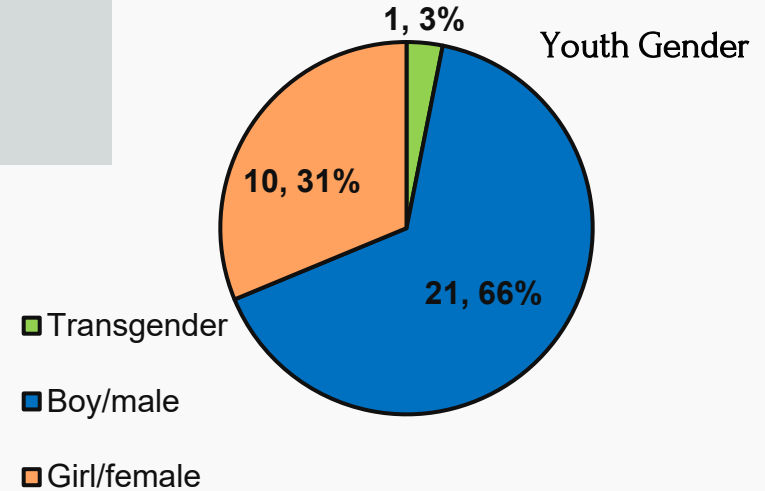
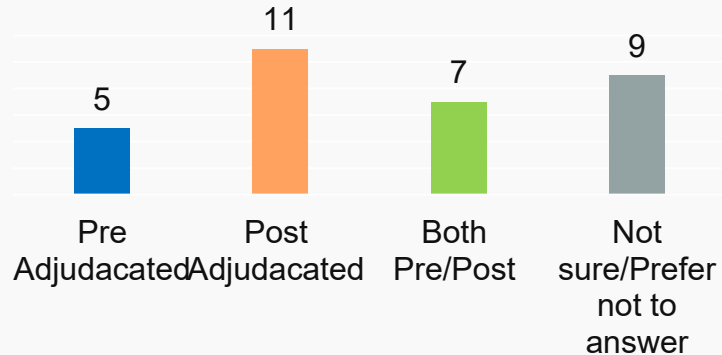
Focus Group Partners:

- University of Maryland Baltimore
- Bowie State University
- Coppin State University
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Focus Groups Demographics

- 11 focus groups (2 in person/9 virtual)
- 168 Total Prospective Youth
- 61 Total participants (32 youth/29 caregivers)
- 36% participation rate

System Involvement



Youth Race



Preliminary Themes: Youth and Caregiver Identified System Strengths & Gaps



	Youth Perspectives	Caregivers Perspectives
Strengths	Supportive Relationships with Probation Officers	
Needs	Fewer logistical barriers and more transportation support	
	Aftercare programming	
	Individualized, meaningful programming	Consistent mental health supports
	Motivation– building supports and reduce peer influence	Relief, guidance, and whole family support
	Clearer understanding of future DJS impact	Preventative services for youth
	Safe alternatives to detention	Dependable accountability processes

Youth & Caregiver Strategies for Strengthening Engagement



Supports

Stipends

Transportation Assistance

Programs

Youth groups, teen hangouts, and peer support spaces

Individualized Services and Supports

(i.e., Driving School, Gym Memberships, Creative resources, Skill-based certification)

Access to activities and skill building opportunities

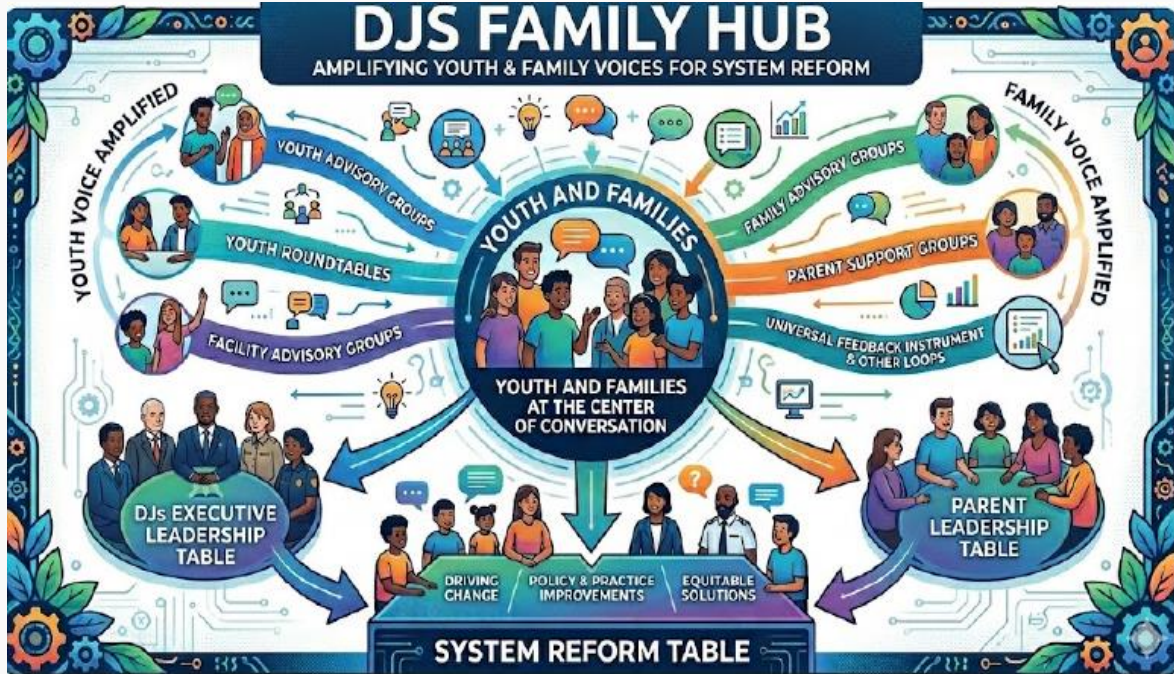
(i.e., Job readiness and employment support)

Structured Aftercare Support and Programming

- Continuous engagement and feedback loop with youth and families
- Youth and families to serve in leadership and inform DJS practices and policies to support the continuum
- Compensation provided



Please complete our interest form:
<https://forms.gle/D3LAC7WvLcgzZxE69>
or scan QR Code above



Advisory Board and Family Leadership
info@unburdenedheart.org or call 410-205-6700

Next Steps



Wrapping up focus groups this week



Leveraging advisory board to inform continuum of care strategies



Refine interactive resource map



Capacity building internally and with rural partners

THANK
YOU!

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