



Mendocino County 2023 Juvenile Justice Consolidated Plan

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Executive Summary

The Mendocino County Juvenile Justice Consolidated Plan articulates the important issues, strengths, and needs for service related to juvenile delinquency in the region. The report also satisfies the State's mandates associated with both the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) and the Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG) funding streams, as defined in both Government Code Section 30061(b)(4)(A) and Welfare & Institutions Code Section 1961(a).

Mendocino County's juvenile justice system faces a significant challenge in addressing the needs of those youth and families who are referred in a time of minimal resources. Significant issues such as gang involvement, drug and alcohol abuse, and mental illness afflict certain areas of Mendocino County. Although the primary communities where juvenile delinquency is most concentrated are in Ukiah, Fort Bragg and Willits, there are issues throughout the region. While the total number of juvenile offenders has been reduced considerably since this grant funding became available, the complexity, severity, and need for services of many of them have all increased. In recent years, Mendocino County Probation Department has experienced overall funding cuts that has reduced its ability to deliver the types of services many of these communities require.

In order to utilize resources in the most effective and efficient manner possible, the Mendocino County Probation Department has adopted a set of core principles which will be applied to this and all future funding decisions:

- Balance the issues of public safety and the best interests of the children
- Utilize data to drive decision making
- Employ evidence-based programs and practices

The primary issues facing the Mendocino County juvenile justice system are increases in violent crime, disproportionally committed by gang-involved Latino youth, mental health diagnoses and use of drugs and alcohol. In order to address them, the Probation Department has adopted a strategy that emphasizes the following:

- Increase capacity of the juvenile justice system to be able to respond to violation with a range of sanctions
- Provide a range of services available to address gang activity
- Provide a continuum of treatment services, including trauma-informed approaches, to addressing issues such as mental illness and drug and alcohol use, in the community and restrict the referral of children outside of the County for treatment services to the bare minimum possible

The Probation Department will support the following programs and services using YOBG funds:

- Mental Health staff at Juvenile Hall
- “Peaceful Warrior” Aikido program
- PACT risk/needs assessment instrument
- Electronic monitoring program
- The Council for Boys and Young Men
- Interactive Journaling
- Juvenile Programming – Behavioral Change Plans, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Anger Management
- Family Education Program
- Juvenile Hall Garden Project
- Family Finding Tool
- San Luis Obispo County Coastal Valley Academy (CVA)

The Probation Department will support the following programs and services using JJCPA grant funds:

- Continuum of services for youth on supervised probation
- Youth IMPACT
- Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT)
- Community-based drug and alcohol treatment
- Mental Health Clinician

State of California Juvenile Justice Grants

The State of California supports the efforts of its 58 counties to address juvenile delinquency primarily through the funding offered under two non-competitive grants. The history and required process for these two grants, known as the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act and Youthful Offender Block Grant, are explained below.

In 2000, the California Legislature enacted Assembly Bill 1913, also known as the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA). This legislation provided the first source of substantial, non-competitive funding for counties to deliver local services to youth and families either involved in or at risk of involvement, in the juvenile justice system. Eligibility for these funds requires compliance with two important steps. The first is the creation of a “juvenile justice coordinating council,” which has the responsibility to develop, monitor and approve a “comprehensive multi-agency juvenile justice plan” annually. The second is the completion of a report due to the State each year by May 1st. In accordance with 749.22 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the

Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) is comprised of a minimum of individuals representing the following agencies:

- Chief Probation Officer as Chair
- Sheriff
- District Attorney
- Public Defender
- City Police Department
- County Office of Education/School District
- Social Services
- Mental Health
- Community-based Drug and Alcohol Treatment Provide
- Board of Supervisors
- Non-profit agency providing services to youth
- At large community member

The JJCC is responsible for developing a “comprehensive multiagency juvenile justice plan,” which shall include the following components, per Government Code Section 30061(b)(4)(A):¹

(i) An assessment of existing law enforcement, probation, education, mental health, health, social services, drug and alcohol, and youth services resources that specifically target at-risk juveniles, juvenile offenders, and their families.

(ii) An identification and prioritization of the neighborhoods, schools, and other areas in the community that face a significant public safety risk from juvenile crime, such as gang activity, daylight burglary, late-night robbery, vandalism, truancy, controlled substances sales, firearm-related violence, and juvenile substance abuse and alcohol use.

(iii) A local juvenile justice action strategy that provides for a continuum of responses to juvenile crime and delinquency and demonstrates a collaborative and integrated approach for implementing a system of swift, certain, and graduated responses for at-risk youth and juvenile offenders.

(iv) A description of the programs, strategies, or system enhancements that are proposed to be funded pursuant to this subparagraph.

JJCPA funds can be “used for programs and approaches that have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing delinquency and addressing juvenile crime for any elements of response to juvenile crime and delinquency, including prevention, intervention, suppression, and incapacitation.”²

¹https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=GOV&division=3.&title=3.&part=&chapter=6.7.&article=

² http://www.bscc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/JJCPA-YOBBG-FAQs_FINAL.pdf

In 2007, the State enacted Senate Bill 81, also known as Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG). The purpose of this grant was to “realign” services for some youth who had been under the supervision of the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to local probation departments. 1951(b) of the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) states that YOBG funds “...shall be used to enhance the capacity of county probation, mental health, drug and alcohol, and other county departments to provide appropriate rehabilitative and supervision services to youthful offenders...”³ Unlike JJCPA, programs supported through YOBG funds are not subject to review of the JJCC. Per Welfare & Institutions Code Section 1961(a), the State requires the following to be conducted in order to be in compliance with this funding:

(a) On or before May 1 of each year, each county shall prepare and submit to the Board of State and Community Corrections a Juvenile Justice Development Plan on its proposed programs, strategies, and system enhancements for the next fiscal year from the Youthful Offender Block Grant Fund described in Section 1951. The plan shall include all of the following:

- (1) A description of the programs, placements, services, strategies, and system enhancements to be funded by the block grant allocation pursuant to this chapter, including, but not limited to, the programs, tools, and strategies outlined in Section 1960.
- (2) A description of how the plan relates to or supports the county's overall strategy for dealing with youthful offenders who have not committed an offense described in subdivision (b) of Section 707, and who are no longer eligible for commitment to the Division of Juvenile Facilities under Section 733 as of September 1, 2007.
- (3) A description of any regional agreements or arrangements to be supported by the block grant allocation pursuant to this chapter.
- (4) A description of how the programs, placements, services, or strategies identified in the plan coordinate with multi-agency juvenile justice plans and programs under paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 30061 of the Government Code.

In 2016, Assembly Bill 1988 combined the process of submitting these two reports (the “Comprehensive Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan” and the “Juvenile Justice Development Plan”) and allow for a single consolidated plan as long as it meets all of the required components of both grants. This report fulfills the requirements of both of these funding streams.

The 2020 report process involved a review of data associated with Mendocino County juvenile justice and demographics, along with stakeholder interviews. Interview invitations were

³ https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=1951.&lawCode=WIC

extended to people associated with all of the agencies mandated under 749.22 WIC to comprise the JJCC. Individuals from the following agencies participated in these interviews:

- Superior Court
- District Attorney
- Probation Department
- Ukiah Police Department
- Sheriff's Department
- Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission
- Court Appointed Special Advocates
- Mendocino County Youth Project
- County Mental Health
- County Social Services
- Public Defender
- Ukiah Unified School District

Mendocino County Demographics

Mendocino County is a picturesque region of Northern California that is known for its spectacular scenery. Unforgettable coastline, beautiful rivers, and pristine mountain areas abound in the 3,878 square miles that is Mendocino County. According to the 2020 Census Bureau data, the largest industries in the jurisdiction (measured by the 37,400 number of people employed) are health care and social assistance, retail trade, and accommodation and food services.⁴ With a July 1, 2021, population estimate of 91,305⁵ the County is sparsely populated (approximately 24 people per square mile). The ethnic breakdown of the total population in the County is shown below.⁶ Additionally comparison charts of the juvenile ethnicity in Mendocino County as to the state of California are noted based on the most recent data.⁷

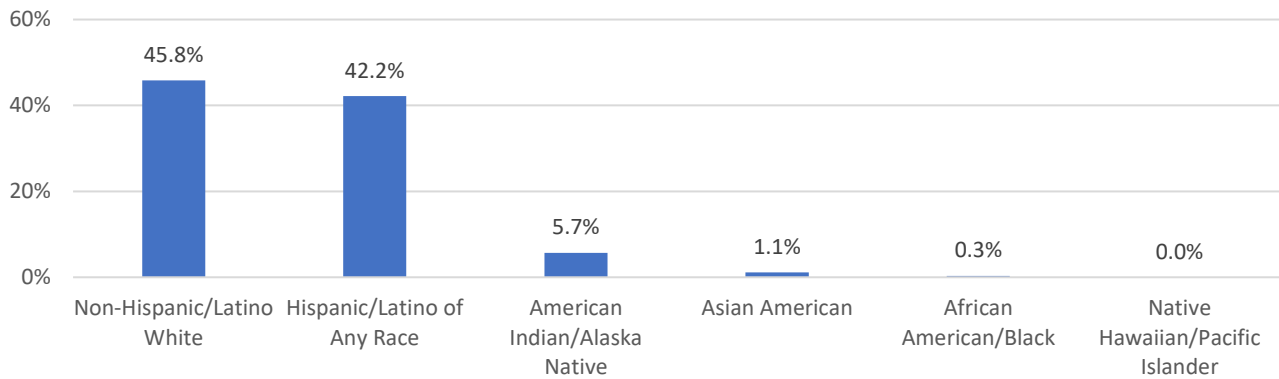
⁴ <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/mendocino-county-ca/#economy>

⁵ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/mendocinocountycalifornia>

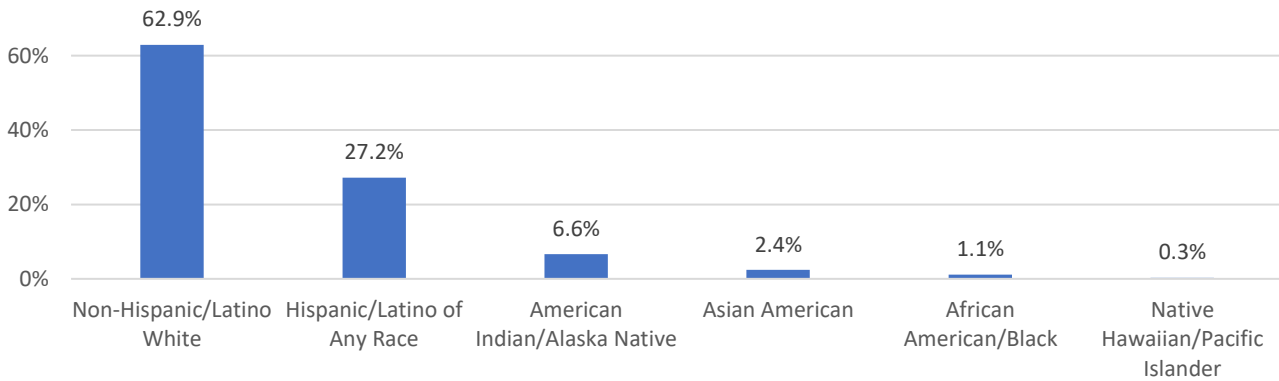
⁶ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/mendocinocountycalifornia>

⁷ <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/2146/child-population-race-10k/table>

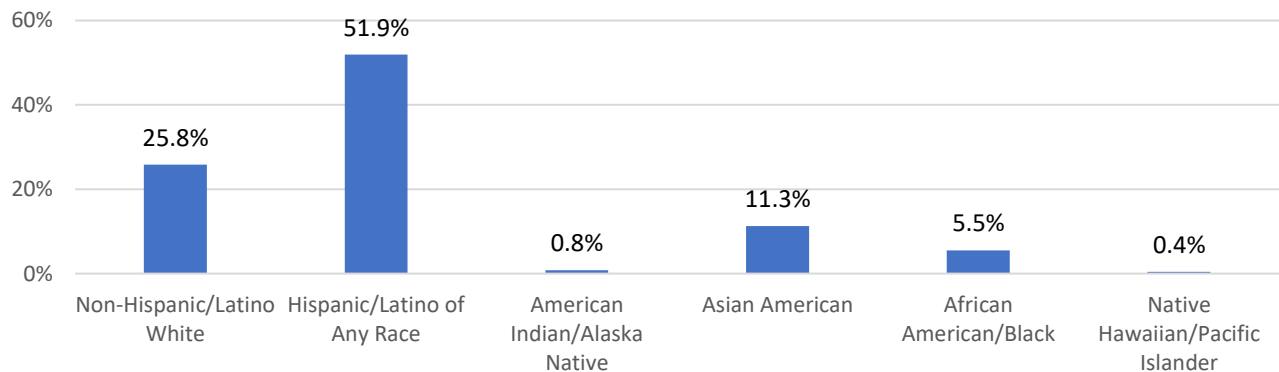
2014-2018 Juvenile Population
Mendocino County Ethnicity



2021 Total Population
Mendocino County Ethnicity



2014-2018 Juvenile Population
California Ethnicity



Although it boasts a natural beauty that attracts visitors from all over the world, Mendocino County presents significant challenges for some of its residents in terms of their standard of living. The median income for Mendocino County in 2021 is \$56,378⁸, which is considerably less than that of the rest of the State of California (\$84,097).⁹ The poverty rate for Mendocino County is 16.1%¹⁰, which is higher than the state of California rate of 12.3%.¹¹ As is true in almost every community, such a high rate of poverty has an impact on the lives of the children who live there. Of the 18,467 minors who live in Mendocino County¹², 19.4% of them live below the federal poverty level,¹³ and nearly 19.1% live in “food insecure” households.¹⁴ The percentage of public-school students who are homeless (7.6%)¹⁵, and rates of child abuse and neglect reports (95.9 per 1,000 inhabitants)¹⁶ and children in foster care (11.3 per 1,000)¹⁷ are all considerably higher than the rest of the state. The rate of truant students (truancy more than once a week) in Mendocino County at Grade 7 is 1.4% which is comparable to the state percentage of 1.1%. However, the same rate of truancy by Grade 11 in Mendocino County significantly increases to 8.4% which is more than double the state comparison of 3.1%.¹⁸ Additionally, the use of drugs and alcohol has a significant impact on some residents of Mendocino County. In the period 2018 - 2020, Mendocino experienced 42 deaths per 100,000 population due to drug use which increased from 30.7 deaths per 100,000 population in the prior 2016 - 2018 period.¹⁹ This compares to 17.8 deaths per 100,000 residents State-wide in the same time period. Finally, the age-adjusted death rate due to suicide for the period of 2018 – 2020 in Mendocino County is 20.8 deaths per 100,000 population which is just under double the state rate of 10.5.²⁰

As described in the preceding paragraph above, Mendocino County presents many of the issues and circumstances commonly associated with youth being determined to be at risk, such as high rates of poverty, truancy, family dysfunction and drug and alcohol dependency.

The term “at-risk youth” has become perhaps overused and certainly often goes without explanation. In some circles, it is perceived as stigmatizing and therefore has taken on a pejorative connotation and fallen out of favor. While there have been some efforts to replace this language with terms such as “at-promise,” that does not accurately capture the idea of a child whose life outcomes are in danger of becoming adverse. Used in this document, an “at-risk” child is one whose potential to achieve a successful transition to adulthood is in jeopardy, and whose likely long-term life outcomes (including life expectancy, mental and physical health, and

⁸ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/mendocinocountycalifornia>

⁹ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/CA>

¹⁰ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/mendocinocountycalifornia>

¹¹ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/CA>

¹² <https://www.kidsdata.org/region/328/mendocino-county/summary#6/demographics>

¹³ <https://www.healthymendocino.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=189&localeId=260>

¹⁴ <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/764/food-insecurity/table>

¹⁵ <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/230/homeless-students/table>

¹⁶ <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/1/reported-abuse/table>

¹⁷ <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/20/foster-in-care/table>

¹⁸ <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/664/truancy-gender/table>

¹⁹ <https://www.healthymendocino.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=102&localeId=260>

²⁰ <https://www.healthymendocino.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=120&localeId=260>

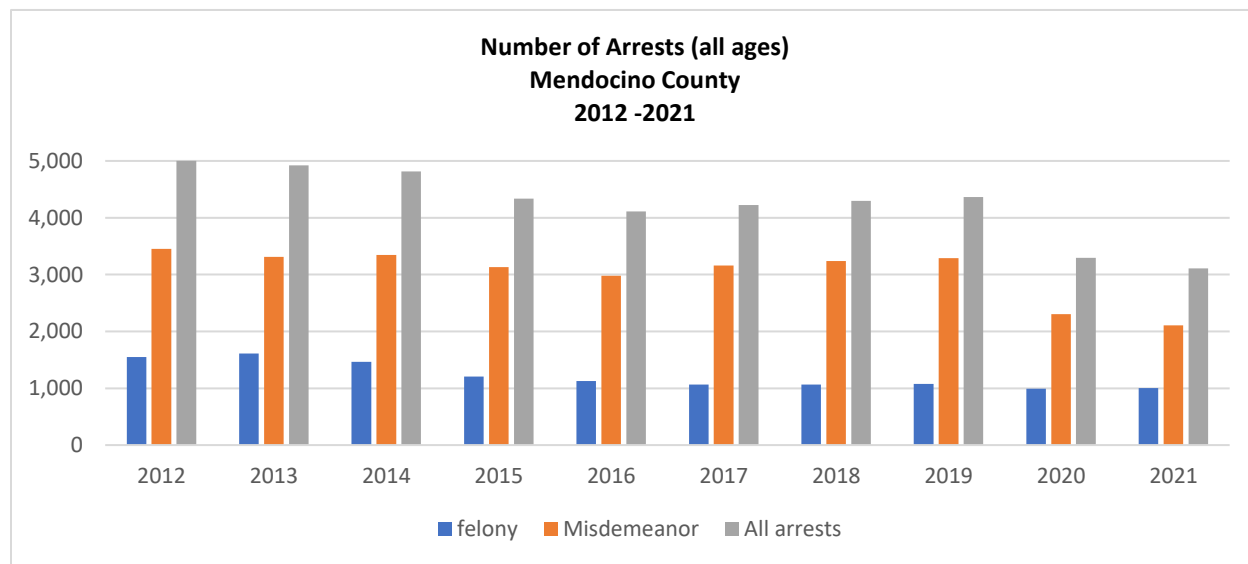
general standard of living) fall below state-wide averages unless successful interventions and protective factors are in place.

The resulting high concentration of at-risk youth in Mendocino County increases the demands on all of the public sectors (law enforcement, social services, education) to support families and offset the circumstances and challenges these young people face.

Mendocino County Juvenile Justice Data Trends

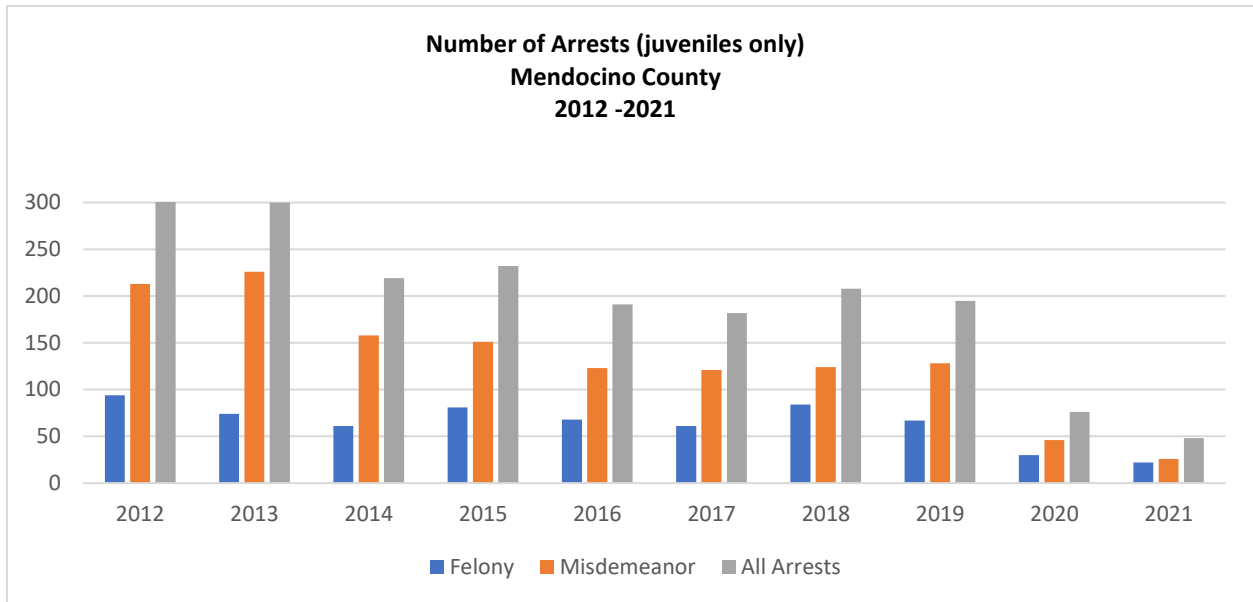
The strong correlation between high rates of poverty and needs for services is clearly evident in Mendocino County. Schools, social services and law enforcement agencies are all “on the front line,” so to speak, as they attempt to deal with the gap between the tremendous need for service and the scant resources available to address them. The juvenile justice system is not exempt from having to face this daunting task.

Before looking at juvenile specific data, it is important to address the context in which the trends are occurring. Since the 1990s, most of the Western world, including the United States, has experienced significant reductions in crime.²¹ This is true in Mendocino County as well, where the total number of arrests (all ages of offenders and levels of offenses) dropped 37.86% between 2012 and 2021.

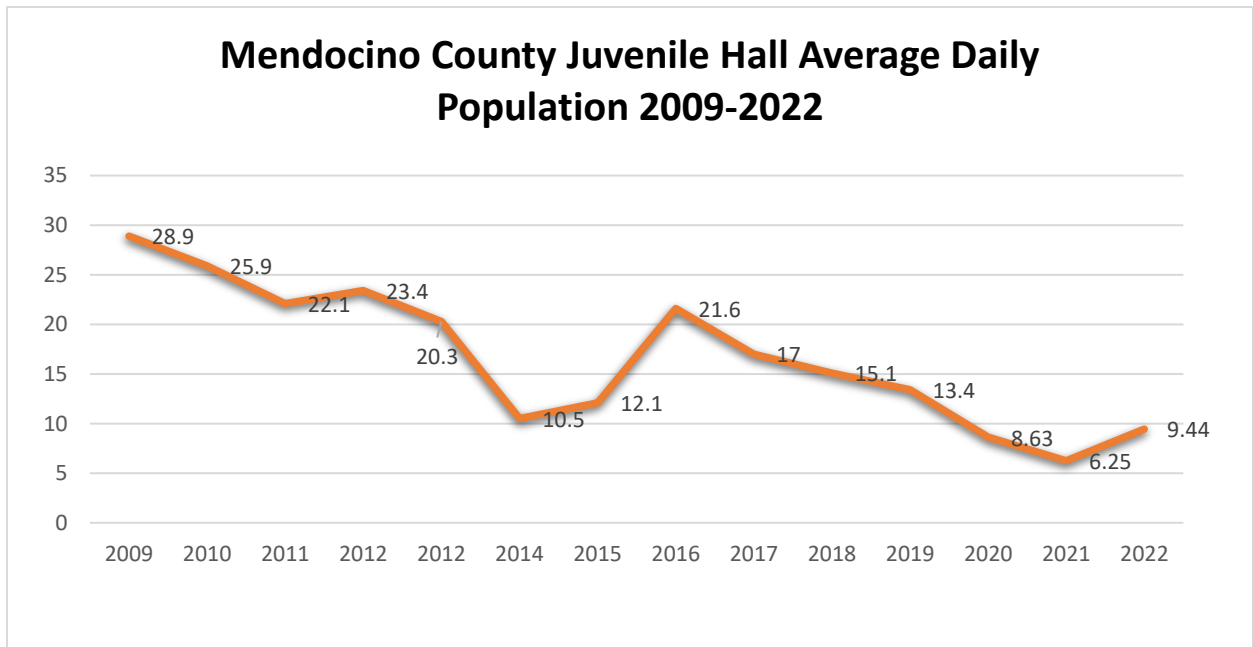


²¹ The use of arrests to reflect prevalence of crime is fraught with issues and potential for debate. One example of this is clearly demonstrated in California’s recent re-classification of some crimes under Proposition 47. However, despite the shortcomings it contains, this measure still reflects one of the best ways to capture crime trends, due to the existence and uniformity of data at the local level. Other possible measures include victimization surveys, however that data is not available at the county level. It should be noted that while property crime rates remain low according to this measure, violent crime rates have recently increased nationally according to the most recent victimization survey. This is a trend that bares continued vigilance (https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv18_sum.pdf)

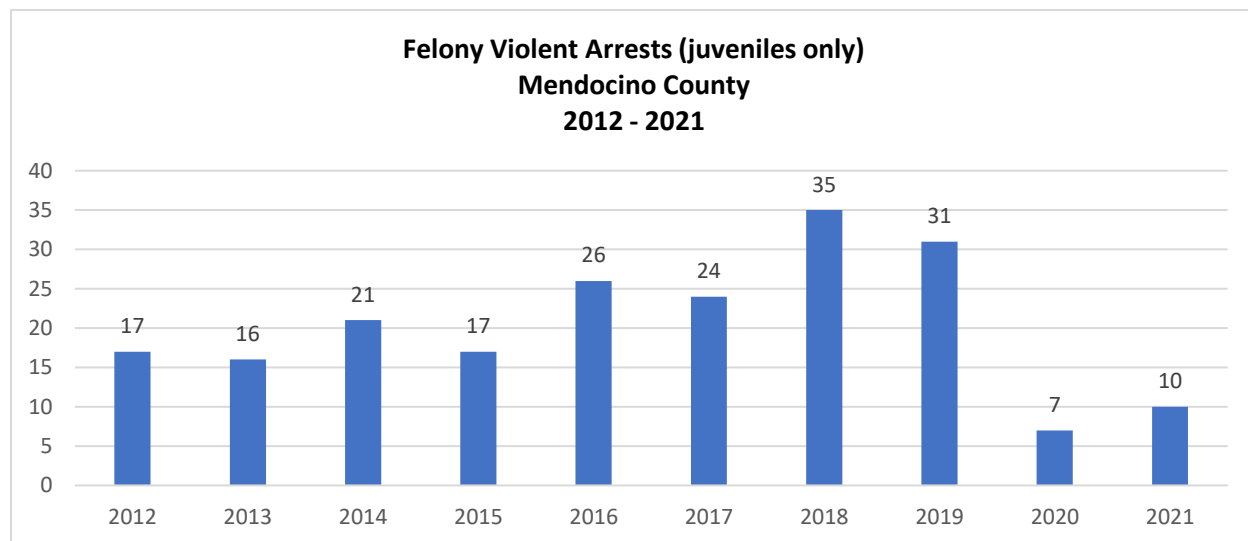
Using arrests as a measure of juvenile crime trends in Mendocino County, the reduction has been even more substantial; the total number of arrests of juveniles dropped 84.36% between 2012 and 2021.



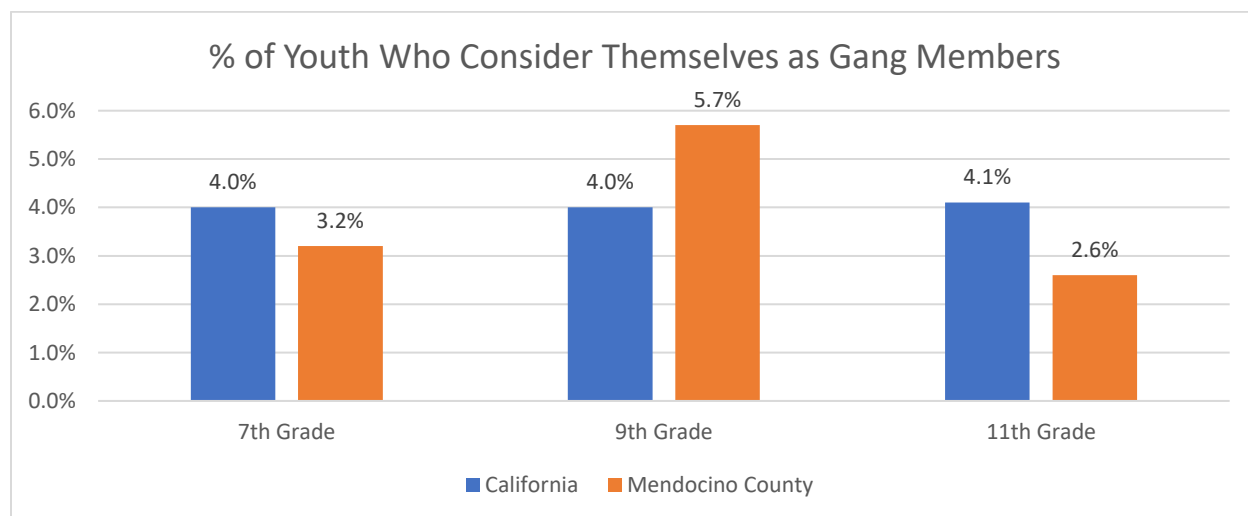
As should be expected with such a significant drop in arrests of juveniles, there has been a corresponding reduction in the average daily population of Mendocino's Juvenile Hall facility. In 2022, Mendocino County experienced its first uptick in Average Daily Population since 2016.



As with most complex issues such as juvenile crime trends, it is dangerous to reach the sweeping conclusion that simply because all arrests for Mendocino County juveniles are lower, the situation is better. A strong argument can be made that while the overall number of cases is lower, the complexity and severity of them are of grave concern. The first data point that reflects that is the surge in felony arrests for violent offenses that are “hidden” inside the numbers in the previous charts. There has been an overall incline since 2012 involving violent offenses only offset by years 2020 and 2021, which are likely attributable to the impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

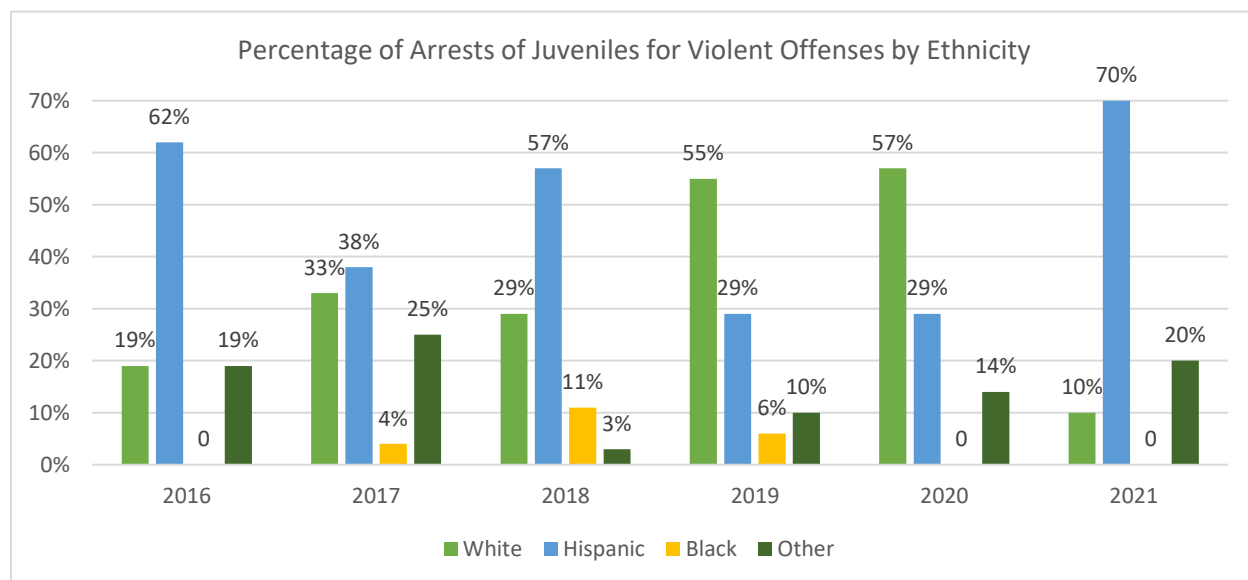


Another area of concern reflecting the complexity and severity of the issues facing juvenile justice in Mendocino County is the prevalence of gang activity. A self-report survey conducted in the period from 2017 to 2019 indicates that a higher percentage of Mendocino County youth consider themselves gang members in the 9th grade than the rest of California.²²

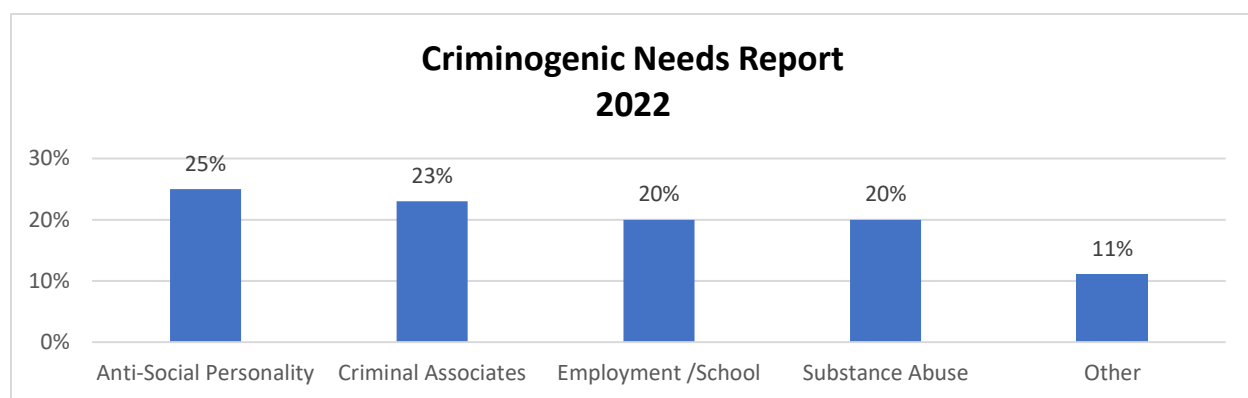


²² <https://www.kidsdata.org/region/2/california/results>

Mendocino County law enforcement agencies have expressed concerns that Latino gangs from Sonoma County may be extending into this jurisdiction. Arrest data indicates that Latino male youth represent a disproportionate percentage of arrests for violent offenses in Mendocino.²³



As part of its investigations of youth referred to the Juvenile Division, Mendocino County Probation Department staff assess a probationer's need for services using the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT). The PACT instrument determines the primary criminogenic needs²⁴ (among the eight that exist) that require attention in order to reduce the likelihood of recidivism. The following chart reflects the fact that for youth on probation in the Juvenile Division the most frequent primary criminogenic need is "criminal associates," a factor often connected to significant gang involvement.



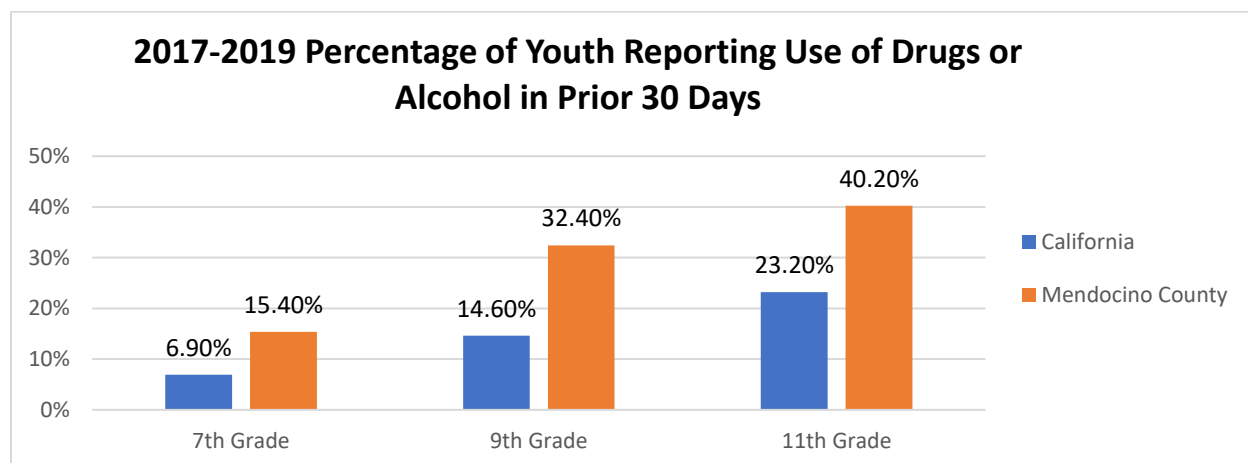
²³ <https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/data> While not all violent offenses are gang related, a significant percentage of them in Mendocino County are.

²⁴ Criminogenic needs are issues, risk factors, characteristics and/or problems that relate to a person's likelihood of reoffending or recidivism. See <https://csgjusticecenter.org/jr/in-brief-understanding-risk-and-needs-assessment/> for a further explanation of how instruments such as PACT are utilized in justice systems. See <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R44087.pdf> for an explanation of the theories on how to address criminogenic needs

In addition to concerns about serious delinquency, some youth in the Mendocino juvenile justice system have a significant need for mental health services. In a 2016 report compiled by the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, Mendocino County had the highest “percent of the local juvenile justice population (confined + alternative supervision) that are designated as open mental health cases” in California.²⁵ According to the report, “this demonstrates the prevalence of mental health needs within the youth offender population.” In 2020, Del Norte, Humboldt, and Mendocino Counties had a combined rate of 6.2 per 1,000 hospitalizations for mental health issues for ages 5-19, in comparison to the state rate of 4.8.²⁶ In addition, the Mendocino County Probation Department screens for adverse childhood experiences (also known as ACE scores) and found a disproportionately high score for many of the youth on supervised caseloads. In 2022, the average ACE score for 50 such youth was 3.7, and those determined to be at high risk for recidivism had an average ACE score of 5.47. ACE scores of 4 or higher are associated with a host of negative life outcomes:

“... people with an ACE score of 4 are twice as likely to be smokers and seven times more likely to be alcoholic. Having an ACE score of 4 increases the risk of emphysema or chronic bronchitis by nearly 400 percent, and attempted suicide by 1200 percent. People with high ACE scores are more likely to be violent, to have more marriages, more broken bones, more drug prescriptions, more depression, and more autoimmune diseases. People with an ACE score of 6 or higher are at risk of their lifespan being shortened by 20 years.”²⁷

Still another issue within the youth community of Mendocino County is the higher than usual levels of drug and alcohol consumption. The following chart indicates the results of a self-report of students when asked what percentage of them had consumed drugs and/or alcohol in the 30 days prior to the date of the survey.²⁸



²⁵ <http://casi.cjci.org/Juvenile/2016>

²⁶ <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/715/mental-health-hospitalizations-age/table>

²⁷ <https://www.acesconnection.com/blog/aces-101-faqs>

²⁸ <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/587/alcohol-drug-grade/table>

In summary, while the Mendocino County juvenile justice system is dealing with fewer numbers of youth than it did ten years ago, the severity of both the behaviors and the needs for service are significant. The combination of gang activity, mental health diagnoses and a higher than usual consumption of drugs and alcohol should be alarming and of great concern to all system stakeholders interested in reducing the impact of juvenile delinquency. While there are societal factors, such as poverty, homelessness, and lack of employment opportunities, which lie outside the system's ability to influence, there are others that can be addressed. Mental health issues, reflected both by the high average ACE scores and number of open mental health cases, are a significant factor affecting many of the young people caught up in juvenile justice. Responding to gang involvement, through both prevention and suppression activities, will be necessary to reduce juvenile crime. Finally, providing support for youth and families dealing with substance abuse is clearly necessary for achieving the goal of mitigating juvenile crime in the region.

Assessment of Services and Needs

While assessing a jurisdiction's juvenile justice system through data is a necessary step in understanding what is occurring in the region, it is not sufficient without also getting viewpoints from stakeholders as well. The following section of this report captures the 2023 input of those individuals who work on these issues daily and provides a short description of their agency's capacity to address some of the issues raised above.

Mendocino County Probation Department

The Mendocino County Probation Department has three full-time Deputy Probation Officers and a Supervisor assigned to the Juvenile Division. Chief Probation Officer Izen Locatelli has been in his position for the past five years which has created much needed stability in the organization as prior to his appointment, there had been eight different Chief Probation Officers in a span of thirteen years. At present the Juvenile Division Manager position is vacant (functions of that position are being performed by the Adult Division Manager in addition to his regular duties). The Mendocino County Juvenile Hall has a rated capacity of 42 beds but has been operating with a cap of 20 for the past five years due to budget limitations.

The Probation Department provides both individual and family counseling, cognitive behavioral therapy and substance abuse services for youth detained at Juvenile Hall and for continuum of services upon release for youth supervised by the department. Probation utilizes the Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (DRAI) to determine the most appropriate placement for youth after booking at Juvenile Hall. The DRAI determines whether a youth should be detained in a secure detention facility prior to their detention hearing, placed on supervised release (electronic monitoring), or released without any additional supervision. The department also uses the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) to conduct actuarial risk/needs assessments of youth

and to develop case plans designed to reduce recidivism, which includes identifying the youth's Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) score as well.

The department recognizes the county's limited resources as a concern for providing appropriate and consistent treatment services to youth and families. With so few programs and options to select from, historically the Mendocino County juvenile justice system is only able to respond to delinquency after it occurs, rather than being able to be in a position to prevent it before it happens. As result, Probation continues to work on developing new programs and partnerships with community stakeholders to strengthen prevention and intervention efforts.

Mendocino County Superior Court

Judge Ann Moorman is the Presiding Judge of Mendocino County's Juvenile Court. Through her leadership, the Court has identified some of the significant challenges Mendocino County faces in addressing the needs of juveniles in the dependency system who are at risk of or who have committed acts that bring them into the juvenile justice system as well.

To create a more coherent and coordinated approach to adjudicating these cases with the goal of identifying and meeting the needs of these youth to assist their successful transition to adulthood, Mendocino County is creating a Dual Jurisdiction protocol. This comprehensive plan is intended to improve communication between the Court, Probation, Family and Children's Services, and community service providers. It is also intended to provide guidance on which county department will assume the role of lead agency, with primary responsibility for monitoring and tracking the progress of individual minors. This multi-disciplinary approach to case management is expected to ensure that timely, evidence-based services and clinically effective strategies are provided with a more seamless system of service delivery among providers. This plan was adopted and executed by the Court, Family and Children's Services and the Probation Department and is now in early implementation.

Mendocino is a large, rural county. Public transportation is inadequate. At certain times of the year, it is a challenge to traverse the northern regions of the county, even by private vehicle. Many small communities not located directly along the Highway 101 corridor have scant access to public transportation. As a result, complying with requirements such as treatment or court obligations can be hard for families. Poverty, a paucity of living wage jobs and a residential housing shortage are also barriers for many families. The prevalence of an underground economy based on marijuana cultivation attracts crime (often violent crime) and poses a risk to youth of becoming involved and/or exploited. In addition, extensive use of marijuana and other substances reduces the motivation by parents and/or youth to make necessary life changes. In addition to generational influences that often lead to inertia, post-secondary education is limited, even for distance-learning, due to inadequate broadband in outlying communities. These factors often exacerbate the challenges facing families.

The effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on the public workforce cannot be overstated. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Mendocino's local workforce has been in flux. Many public employees decided to separate from employment earlier than originally intended as a direct result of the pandemic. Relatively low wages in the County have made recruiting to fill many positions, most critically in public safety and social services, extremely challenging. The adjacent county to the south, Sonoma County, pays its workforce significantly more than Mendocino for the exact same positions. As a result, employee retention is also an issue. Without enough trained deputies in law enforcement and probation and clinically trained staff in social services, mental health services and public health, early assessment of and intervention with families and juveniles rarely occurs. Law enforcement, probation and social services all too often respond to crisis-driven emergencies which may be too late to provide services to avoid trauma, and/or support and maintain the existing family structure. This frequently results in the initiation of dependency proceedings, removing children from the home and failing to address the trauma that can so often lead to minors failing to attend school and subsequently committing law violations.

Mendocino County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Kendall is a Mendocino County native whose family has lived in the area since the 19th century, so he has strong ties to the community he serves. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office has approximately 90 deputies on the force (47 serving in custody assignments and 43 on patrol). While they do not have deputies assigned to schools, the Sheriff's Office makes it a regular practice to make visits to local schools, and they create positive relationships with both youth and staff. Sheriff Kendall also has a good relationship with the Probation Department Chief and his Department. In terms of things that are working well in Mendocino County, the Sheriff's Office noted the schools have a wide variety of clubs, teams, and activities that can act as a diversion from gangs, drugs, and delinquency. The Alex Rorabaugh Recreation Center was also identified as an example of the positive programs available for youth in the area.

The Sheriff's Office would like to see more prevention type programs, both for youth and their parents so they have the information they need to stay out of the juvenile justice system. Law enforcement has concerns about how many young people are unsupervised and without much parental guidance leaving these youth vulnerable to gangs who can act as surrogate families. The Sheriff's Office would like to see programming that reaches students in the 4th, 5th and 6th grades to talk about drugs as drug use is a contributor to the increased incidence of mental illness among youth. Further, drug programming efforts are needed to address the attitude that marijuana is harmless and to education on the fact drugs are stronger than they have been in the past, both more lethal and more addictive. Finally, the Sheriff's Office would like to see that any investments in juvenile justice programming be assessed to be sure they are effective in actually reducing juvenile crime.

Ukiah Police Department

The Ukiah Police Department has a police force of approximately 30 sworn officers, one of which is assigned as a School Resource Officer (SRO). The SRO assists with juvenile issues at over eight (8) local schools in the immediate area. There is gang activity within our jurisdiction as well as in other parts of the County. The SRO assists Mendocino County Probation with the teaching of the GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training). Our department also supports MAGSU (Multi-Agency Gang Suppression Unit). The Ukiah Police Department has seen an increase in illegal firearms being recovered, some being “ghost guns” in possession of juveniles. The major issues for our jurisdiction related to delinquency are truancy, vandalism, use of drugs and alcohol, and marijuana related crimes. Our department would like to see more options available to curtail truancy, which often leads to a path of negative behavior. The Ukiah Police Department sees value in having access to both a local and secure facility to ensure public safety in incidents such as these.

The Ukiah Police Department would like to see more efforts to combat juvenile on-line bullying as well as continued efforts to help those who are experiencing mental health concerns. We desire preventative methods to assist juveniles and their families with mental health treatment and substance abuse prevention. It should be noted that there continues to be an increased use of fentanyl and other narcotics within the County. The combination of gang activity, mental health diagnoses and a higher than usual consumption of drugs and alcohol is of great concern to all system stakeholders interested in reducing the impact of juvenile delinquency.

Mendocino County Public Defender

Deputy Public Defender Jan Cole-Wilson is the sole attorney from our office in Juvenile Court. She has been working juvenile cases since 1991. The county’s strong sense of collaboration is a recognized strength for their juvenile justice system. The Public Defender’s office feels the team of Deputy Probation Officers are very dedicated and that Chief Locatelli is an excellent collaborator and problem solver who is open to discussing anything. Judge Moorman is also excellent and the Public Defender’s Office feels that the Probation, Public Defender and District Attorney staff all work well together.

In term of supports necessary to help youth in their system, the Public Defender’s Office would like to see a continuum of services that helps to connect young people from their time in custody back into the community. There is a need for a position that would act as a social worker for youth in the community, eliminating barriers to receiving services such as transportation and lack of follow-through. There has been an increase in violence connected to gangs, which is believed to be in part due to youth not having pro-social activities as alternatives. Programs like athletics, martial arts, or ones that connect youth to working with animals, or classes at a community college; anything that might give youth a different perspective would be beneficial. However, staff from those programs need to have local connections and they must be people who youth

can connect with in order to be effective. Additionally, there is a need for counseling services to be trauma-informed. The Public Defender's Office would like to see more local intermediate services, i.e., when the juveniles are released from custody and are either pending cases or have been sentenced, for mental health, drug and alcohol programs, and the like. As it currently stands, the county has no options but to send the juveniles out of county when they cannot be safely returned home and they need such services. Other counties have ranches and camps and ours has nothing similar.

Mendocino County District Attorney

The District Attorney's Office has one Deputy District Attorney assigned to Juvenile Court. The District Attorney's Office believes their Juvenile Court has the right focus towards the rehabilitation of the youth who come before it and that all of the parties involved work well together. There is plenty of communication between Probation, Public Defender, the Court, and their office and this helps to facilitate positive outcomes. The Court is consistent in that they do not often see vastly different dispositions for youth with similar circumstances. Finally, the District Attorney's Office commended the Court for being diligent in following the necessary rules and procedures under juvenile law.

The District Attorney's Office sees the lack of available and accessible services as being a challenge for their juvenile justice system. Even when a necessary treatment service is available, it can be difficult to access for a family that lives far away from where it is offered. For example, Fort Bragg is a remote location that does not have access to all of the services that a child living in the inland section of Mendocino County would have. There is also a need for more services being available for youth who are testing positive for serious drugs such as methamphetamine.

Mendocino County Behavioral Health

Dr. Jenine Miller oversees the mental health and substance use services in Mendocino County. BHRS Substance Use Disorder Treatment unit (SUDT) provides counseling services to youth in Juvenile Hall related to drug and alcohol use, while the Mendocino County Youth Project provides mental health clinical services. SUDT is available to provide prevention, early intervention, and treatment services to youth related to both drug and alcohol use.

BHRS provides support and services for the people of Mendocino County whose lives are affected by serious mental illness and substance use. BHRS strives to:

- Deliver services in a respectful, responsive, and efficient manner with sensitivity to cultural diversity;
- Educate ourselves, individuals, families and the community about mental health, substance use, and the hopeful possibilities of treatment and recovery;

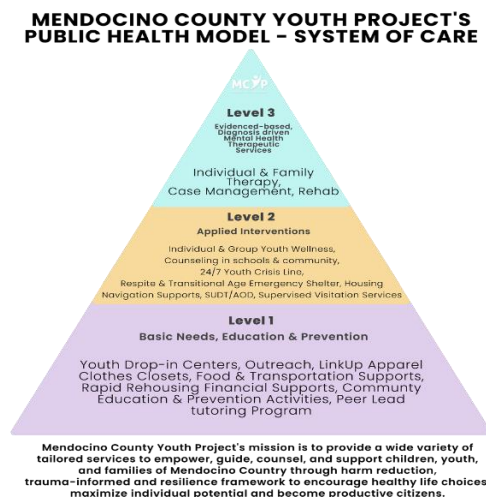
- Offer a culturally competent, gender responsive, trauma informed system of care for adults and adolescents while striving to meet linguistic challenges; and
- Utilize holistic, person-centered recovery; promote healthy behaviors through prevention and treatment strategies.

BHRS SUDT programs assist participants who have substance use disorders to create and maintain a healthy, balanced lifestyle, free of alcohol and other drug abuse. SUDT also focuses on co-occurring diagnoses. Services are also available to all youth needing or wanting services within Mendocino County. In order to assist participants to make positive changes in their lives, staff utilize evidence-based curricula.

BHRS is also focused on community outreach and education on suicidal ideation, fentanyl, methamphetamine, bullying, overdose prevention, Narcan distribution, substance use awareness, mental health awareness, and reduction of stigma and discrimination.

Mendocino County Youth Project (MCYP)

MCYP has been serving the community since 1974, originally as a program to address the needs of youth in the juvenile probation system. Today, it operates as a Joint Powers Agency comprised of Mendocino County School Districts, city government and Mendocino County Probation and Juvenile Hall. MCYP is a Certified Trauma Informed Agency, providing a range of services using a Public Health Model of titrated care, based on individuals' unique needs and goals with the mission to empower, guide, and counsel children, youth, and families. The agency is funded through local contracts, Medi-Cal, and grant funding at the local, state, and federal levels. Among the services they provide are the following:



In addition to the already high level of trauma and risk factors as evidenced by the higher than normal ACE scores experienced by residents of Mendocino County, the ramifications of COVID-

19 include the loss of people close to youth due to complications of COVID-19 and increased incidences of suicide and substance use/overdose; particularly due to the crisis level use of opioids, fentanyl and benzodiazepines. The inability to access supportive services (Social Services, Community Based organizations, etc.) and the closure of schools increased social isolation and has prevented the ability to identify children and families experiencing or at risk of child abuse, neglect and other victimization types. The remote areas of the county experience some of the highest rates of isolation. Loss of income in combination with an already housing crisis has led to higher rates of homelessness, couch surfing, and doubling up. As we have moved to re-opening, we are seeing increased rates of academic challenges, substance use, violence, and high acuity mental health challenges as well as extreme dysfunction and emotional overwhelm within family systems including those who previously functioned at higher levels with more protective factors. In addition to higher level needs than ever, the county is experiencing extreme shortages of Mental health providers, and human service professionals, impacting the education system, juvenile justice, and the community.

MCYP would like to see an increased county-wide effort of creative solutions to attract mental health providers to the community as well as efficient use of available human services through the public health model; to ensure that the level of support is adequate and in alignment with the level of support needed for the individual to improve their well-being and to ensure that our counties capacity to provide high-level services is utilized as efficiently as possible, despite the crisis level shortage of Mental Health Professionals. MCYP supports an increase in focus on prevention and early intervention services to decrease instances of juvenile offenses and a robust continuum of care, especially in this time of Therapeutic Service provider scarcity, in which both Mental health and para-professional support within the Juvenile Justice System of Care, is available to youth in Juvenile Hall while detained, and that as youth exit the system of care, para-professional services such as case management and success coaching is provided to support their reintegration into the community including navigation of the probation requirements, and support to address family system challenges. Through this tiered system of support, access to supportive services is based on individuals' needs to ensure services needed are available with the goal to decrease instances of repeat offenses and increase functioning and well-being.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

CASA is a nation-wide, volunteer-led effort to provide support to youth in both the dependency and delinquency system. Volunteers undergo extensive training, take oath in the Juvenile Courts, assigned to a youth through the Courts and work with their assigned youth as an advocate and often also appointed as the Educational Rights Holder/Developmental Holder for that youth. Mendocino County's CASA agency has a long history of collaborating with the Probation Department. CASA advocates recall when the Juvenile Hall facility was able to provide a full continuum of services for youth who were detained there. They would like to see a return to that

level of support for youth. CASA also feels the lack of willingness to seriously respond to the delinquent behavior of youth from the dependency system as a major issue for their community. They believe that the lack of accountability sends a poor message to especially the offending youth. CASA is also concerned about the lack of experience of some Probation Department staff who work with youth. When asked about the strengths of the system, they both referenced how the community responded to calls to close Mendocino County's Juvenile Hall facility. The County had seriously considered this option until community members appeared at meetings to object. This is just one example of the level of community concern and support for or Juvenile Justice system.

Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission (JJDP)

The JJDP is state-mandated by legislation in California's Welfare and Institutions Code, and a JJDP exists in every county of California. The role of the JJDP includes the following:

- Oversee juvenile justice facilities in the county to ensure that juveniles residing at any county institution or publicly operated juvenile institution are treated fairly and are living in conditions that are safe and clean, and provide healthy food, support, and encouragement (this function of the Commission requires yearly inspections of such facilities)
- Support and encourage individuals, organizations, and institutions that further the work of providing effective, evidence-based practices to help youth stay out of the juvenile justice system
- Encourage coordination and integration of services where possible
- Enhance opportunities for youth success at school and in the community

The JJDP continues to be interested in finding means and ways to encourage our community to understand the outcomes and effects of trauma on children and youth, and to implement programming that is pro-social and brings together the human service community families, schools and youth. Such efforts may be developing then mounting a public campaign to raise awareness about the needs of youth in our community prior to involvement as well as those in the juvenile justice system in the hopes of having more community members pitch in to provide support.

The JJDP is working with CASA and other organizations to bring about an online resource tool, 24/7Help, which will put the youth and family resources in this County on-line for quick self-help and referrals. This resource is being tested with the intent to have it up and running later this Spring. Commissioners have met with law enforcement representatives to share this concept and gain what first responders could use when they are out in the field.

Mendocino County Social Services

Director of Social Services Bekkie Emery oversees the County's Social Services Department which includes child welfare, employment and family assistance, and adult and aging services. Social Services appreciates Chief Locatelli's willingness to partner with their department and believes the cohesive way their departments work together will benefit youth and families. Social Services acknowledged the Probation Department for its efforts to provide rehabilitative services and support to youth and families. The Department's efforts in education were also commended, citing their efforts in the school which allows students to earn credits quickly and with the School Attendance Review Board (SARB). The Juvenile Hall facility is an excellent resource for a rural county; families living in other jurisdictions that do not have their own juvenile hall face barriers to visiting their children once they are detained and Social Services appreciates Chief Locatelli's efforts to maintain family connections with youth.

In terms of gaps, Social Services would like to see more resources allocated to both prevention and treatment services. Early interventions are key to shifting the way we structure resources to meet the needs of families and youth in our community. Additionally, more collaboration between all partners is needed to address the complex needs of youth and an expansion of response options including our tribal partners.

Ukiah Unified School District

Mr. Iversen expressed his appreciation for the efforts of both the Ukiah Police and Mendocino County Probation Departments to hire compassionate staff, some of whom have local ties. He said their ability to create relationships with young people has been critical in reducing delinquency. He reflected on one serious incident of violent crime that local law enforcement solved due to a young person's trusting relationship with an officer. Mr. Iversen also feels optimistic about the new cadre of agency leaders who are bright and committed.

Regarding the needs of Mendocino County's juvenile justice system, Ukiah Unified School District (UUSD) would like to see efforts made to deal with gangs, truancy, and drug use. Although gang activity is not as intense as it had been some 20 years ago, it is still concerning and UUSD believes intervening to stop young people from being involved is important. They credit the many youth enrichment and activity programs in the community and at UUSD and the "Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.)" program for the progress. UUSD is extremely thankful for the support that Ukiah Police Department and Juvenile Probation provide with the GREAT Program. Juvenile Probation has become the major sponsor of the program and Ukiah Unified is truly grateful for their help.

UUSD also feels that truancy significantly contributes to young people's delinquency, and they would like to see more efforts made to combat truancy. Once a child stops going to school, getting them back on track is very difficult.

UUSD believes addressing drug use in Mendocino County is also important. This problem is particularly challenging in a rural county where the harvesting of marijuana is so common. The belief espoused by some that marijuana use is not a significant problem for young people is also concerning. One by-product of the marijuana culture that exists in their community is that the use of methamphetamine increases during the trimming season to boost a worker's capacity to harvest the plants. This is just one example of how pernicious the marijuana issue can be for Mendocino County youth.

Finally, the prevalence of fentanyl in our community and the accessibility of drugs and alcohol through the internet and social media platforms are also pressing concerns that warrant further discussion. Mendocino County students are already struggling to meet their basic needs, including access to food, housing, and stable social support. However, by addressing issues such as gang activity, truancy, and drug use, UUSD believes we can provide our children with the necessary resources to thrive.

Mendocino County Juvenile Justice Principles and Strategies

The challenge facing the Mendocino County juvenile justice system is considerable. The significant needs of the youth and families who enter the system far exceed the scant resources available to address them. The most rational manner for the County's Probation Department to allocate resources is to first develop, and then apply, a set of principles and strategies in order to prioritize both how cases that appear are addressed and how funding shall be distributed. The core principles discussed below will ideally be applied every year, while the strategies and funding allocations will need to be revisited annually, depending on data trends and developments.

Principles

Balance community safety with addressing the best interests of children

Section 202(a) of California's Welfare and Institutions Code describes the mandate of probation departments to ensure both the "protection and safety of the public" and the best interests of the children under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court. While this delicate balancing act can be daunting, particularly when resources are scarce, it needs to be a critical aspect of any deliberations or discussion of the disposition for a given case, and for funding programs and services.

Utilize data to drive decision making

Data-driven decision making is a second core principle that will be employed in the allocation of resources in the juvenile justice system. Opinions, beliefs, and biases, when unsupported by facts, statistics or data, cannot be the basis for determining how decisions are made.

Employ evidence-based practices whenever possible

Research on the effectiveness of interventions in juvenile justice is plentiful and irrefutable. The application of actuarial risk assessment instruments, reserving scarce resources to only high-risk youth, and employing targeted interventions with scientific evidence to demonstrate effectiveness are only a few of the most obvious examples. Failing to utilize this core principle would amount to a form of malpractice in the profession of juvenile justice.

Strategies

Increase options for a range of sanctions

The use of graduated sanctions is a best practice in juvenile corrections and it assumes a continuum of options is available to respond to incidents of delinquency. It holds that, for example, secure detention is not always the best recourse, particularly for first-time offenders at low risk of re-offending and whose behavior does not represent a threat to public safety. Indeed, detaining such youth in a secure facility with more sophisticated, higher-risk peers, can actually increase the likelihood of recidivism. In addition, not all sanctions must be a form of punishment; it may make sense to use a referral for treatment services as a response to a violation of some kind in lieu of detention. Consequences are necessary for a given violation, but that consequence does not necessarily have to be a punishment. Mendocino County shall ensure that alternatives are available when responding to a child's delinquency and that the response is proportional and appropriate for a given behavior.

Provide a range of services available to address gang activity

Gang activity in Mendocino County is sufficiently concerning that it requires the coordination of a variety of agencies and disciplines to address. The underlying causes for a child to consider participating in a gang are complex and variable; a system's response has to be multi-disciplinary in order to be successful. Activities must be performed at both the prevention and suppression ends of the spectrum. Mendocino County has a "Multi-Agency Gang Suppression Unit (MAGSU)" which is a collaborative effort of law enforcement agencies that respond to criminal behavior deemed to be gang-related. The County shall also provide prevention services to reduce the number of youth who are interested in becoming gang involved.

Provide a continuum of treatment services, including trauma-informed approaches, to addressing issues such as mental illness and drug and alcohol use, in the community and restrict the referral of children outside of the County for treatment services to the bare minimum possible

This report has clearly demonstrated the significant need for services that exists in Mendocino County. The juvenile justice system needs to have treatment services available for youth and families in order to address the root causes of delinquent behavior. These treatment services need to be coordinated, accessible, and effective. Given the higher than normal levels of trauma that youth in Mendocino County experience, it is important that such services be trauma-informed, and that the practitioners have a firm understanding and capacity for addressing

behaviors that are the product of adverse childhood experiences. Given the limited options for out of home care, and the difficult transition that often comes with reunification of these youth, it is also critical that these services be made available near where the family resides whenever feasible.

Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG) Funding

The Mendocino County Probation Department is allocating its YOBG funds to the following programs:

Intervention/Service	Notes
Juvenile Hall Mental Health staff	This funding supports a .50 FTE Mental Health Counselor for residents of Juvenile Hall. The counselor provides crisis intervention assessments, counseling and case management to help change negative behaviors, and in turn, to not re-offend. These services are provided via a contract with a community-based organization (CBO), Mendocino County Youth Project (MCYP). This funding also supports a .70 FTE Mental Health Clinician for residents of Juvenile Hall. The mental health treatment services are provided by Mendocino County Behavioral Health Recovery Services. The Mental Health Clinician and MCYP staff collaborate on the development of youth treatment plans
Martial Arts	The Peaceful Warrior Aikido program will work with youth referred from the juvenile justice system who are in need of a pro-social activity. This program has experience working with youth who have experienced trauma and will provide them with coping skills to navigate challenges.
Electronic Monitoring (EM)	The Probation Department will use Electronic Monitoring as an evidence-based graduated sanction and/or detention alternative for a carefully selected group of youth identified by our evidence-based assessment tool as either: (1) high-risk-to-re-offend; (b) moderate-risk-to-re-offend; and (c) placement risk. The program will allow for the youth's placement in their home, if appropriate, or placement with a family member or foster home within their community. Thus, placement disruption will be minimal and continuity of care can be maintained. It will also be used as a court-ordered release condition.

Intervention/Service	Notes
Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT)	The Probation Department implemented the PACT assessment in 2009-10. An assessment is completed at disposition for all probationers. During the first year of using the PACT, it became apparent that data collection and data entry related to the assessment is very time consuming and the Probation Officers were spending many hours on these tasks that would otherwise have been spent delivering direct services to juvenile probationers. This funding will be used to fund one .25 FTE Legal Secretary to assist with data collection, data entry, case plans, and other clerical assistance related to the assessment process, cost of Deputy Probation Officers to perform risk assessments, our annual license fee, support and training costs for the PACT assessment tool.
The Council for Boys and Young Men	DPO staff will be trained and then deliver The Council, which is a strength-based group approach to promote healthy masculinity development for boys and young men ages 9-18 years old.
Interactive Journaling	This is an evidence-based practice that assists young people in the process of making lasting and positive changes in their lives. The Change Companies' program utilizes motivational interviewing, structured expressive writing and cognitive behavioral therapy in its approach.
Juvenile Programming	GEO Reentry Services provide Assessments, Behavioral Change Plans, Individual Cognitive Behavioral Therapy®, Group Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (MRT)®, Self-Directed Journaling, Anger Management, and Aftercare Services.
Family Education Program	Redwood Valley Rancheria will facilitate the Family Education Program. Workshops will serve as an opportunity for parents of incarcerated youth to receive support and education. These workshops will cover topics including: Parents as Partners, Structure, Healthy Relationships, Understanding Trauma, and Community Resources.

Intervention/Service	Notes
Juvenile Hall Garden Project	The project aims to introduce youth to sustainable and organic gardening practices that can be used to grow food in backyards. The produce growth in the garden is donated to local Senior Centers and Food Banks increasing the availability of fresh vegetables and fruits to these populations. Some produce is used to provide nutritional workshops to youth increasing their understanding of nutrition, how it affects the body and making health food choices. The garden will be a welcoming space that encourages youth to not just sow the seeds of herbs and vegetables, but to sow the seeds of community and giving. The project helps youth to develop pro-social skills, self-esteem, and give them a feeling of community spirit.
LexisNexis Risk Solutions	Probation utilizes Accurint® for Law Enforcement through LexisNexis a comprehensive database of public records that expedites the identification of family members. The instant access reduces the time to locate relatives and allows for quicker placement of youth.
San Luis Obispo Coastal Valley Academy (VCA)	Coastal Valley Academy (CVA) is a custody commitment camp program located at San Luis Obispo Juvenile Hall for 14–17-year-old male and female youth who are moderate to high risk and in need of residential treatment. The camp program is completely separated in programming from the juvenile hall detained youth. Youth receive intensive case management, treatment and educational services through collaboration with a local treatment provider, Family Care Network, and the County Office of Education. CVA staff are trained in Comprehensive and Substance Abuse curriculums designed by the University of Cincinnati and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Groups are facilitated by both treatment staff and CVA Probation Officers. Youth participate in pro social activities, including off-site activities, community service projects, and home passes.

Youth detained in Mendocino County Juvenile Hall continue to receive substance abuse programming from the County's Substance Abuse Disorder Treatment (SUDT); however, those services are now funded through Children's System of Care (CSOC) funds.

Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) Funding

The Mendocino County Probation Department, with support from the JJCC, shall utilize the allocation of JJCPA funds in the following manner:

Intervention/Service	Notes
Supervised Probation Continuum of Services	Youth placed on intensive supervision will be able to access a continuum of services which will include the following: • Assessment • Behavioral Change Plan • Individual Cognitive Behavioral Therapy • Moral Reconnection Therapy (MRT)²⁹ • Journaling • Anger Management • Aftercare Services
Prevention & Intervention Services	MCYP provides early intervention, prevention and counseling services referred by local schools and Probation.
Youth Impact	Youth Impact is a diversion program managed by the Probation Department that seeks to provide youth with an opportunity to consider their behavior and choices, to learn to set and achieve goals and to promote positive development. In addition to those components, there is a physical conditioning element of the program. In addition, Youth Impact participants will also take part in the MRT curriculum as part of their completing the program.
Mental Health Clinician	This funding supports a .30 FTE Mental Health Clinician for youth supervised by Probation. The mental health treatment services are provided by Mendocino County Behavioral Health Recovery Services.

²⁹ MRT is a cognitive-behavioral group process that is based on the theory that thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes are the primary determinants of behaviors. MRT is designed to “facilitate a change in the client’s process of conscious decision-making” and “enhance appropriate behavior through the development of higher moral reasoning.” Cognitive-behavioral approaches such as MRT have been determined through research to be one of the most effective interventions for youth who engage in delinquency.

Intervention/Service	Notes
Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT)	Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) is an evidence-based and effective gang and violence prevention program built around school-based, law enforcement officer-instructed classroom curricula. The Program is intended as an immunization against delinquency, youth violence, and gang membership for children in the years immediately before the prime ages for introduction into gangs and delinquent behavior.

This allocation of YOBG and JJCPA funds articulates the County’s overall principles and strategies as described in this report. It supports both the best interests of youth on probation by providing treatment services and public safety by ensuring adequate supervision of detained youth. It provides a range of consequences of possible responses to violations in which detention is a consideration (rather than simply the binary choice of detaining in a secure facility or not). It utilizes evidence-based practices by giving the Probation Department the capacity to conduct actuarial assessments of a child’s likelihood to re-offend (and thus the level of service and supervision they require). This combination of services and programs supported by the JJCPA and YOBG funding will complete the Mendocino County Probation Department’s vision of a robust, balanced, effective and compassionate juvenile justice system.