

# County of Santa Cruz

## JUVENILE JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL SB823 SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

Monday, April 21, 2025  
11:30am – 12:30pm

Community Room  
701 Ocean St., Santa Cruz  
Basement Level

### I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: Meeting called to order at 11:30am

#### Voting Members Present

**Community Member** - Beverly Brook  
**Probation** - Fernando Giraldo  
**Superior Court** - Hon. Jerry Vinluan  
**District Attorney's Office** - Tara George  
**Public Defender's Office** - Heather Rogers  
**Human Services Dept.** - Gloria Carroll  
**Health Services Agency** - Lisa Gutierrez-Wang

**County Office of Education** - Faris Sabbah (arrived 11:50am)  
**Community Member Rep.** – Marisol Lopez  
**Community Member Rep.** – Eric Fuentes Diaz (arrived 11:43am)  
**Community Member Rep.** – Maricruz Velasco-Baldwin

Non-Voting County Employees: Jose Flores, Ruby Marquez, Sara Berman, Valerie Thompson

### II. Public Comment – 2 people addressed the Council

### III. Approval of Minutes from October 31, 2024

Approved via voice – Motion made by **Community Member** Beverly Brook, 2<sup>nd</sup> by **Community Member** Eric Fuentes  
Motion passes: 0 abstains, 0 nay's

### IV. Approve presentation on the Secure Youth Treatment Facility present FY 2025-2026 Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act Plan and Budget

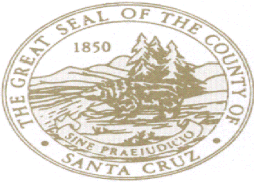
Approved via voice – Motion made by **District Attorney's Office** Tara George, 2<sup>nd</sup> by **Human Services Dept** Gloria Carroll  
Motion passes: 0 abstain, 0 nays

Public Comment – 2 people addressed the Council

### V. Informational Updates

- Presentation on the Secure Youth Treatment Facility by Sara Berman, Division Director of Juvenile Hall.
- Co-Chair Fernando Giraldo announced that there will be an expansion of Juvenile Justice Coordination Council SB823 for new Council members.

### VI. Adjournment at 12:18pm



# County of Santa Cruz

## JUVENILE JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL SB823 SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

Monday, April 21, 2025  
11:30AM – 12:30PM

Community Room  
701 Ocean St, Santa Cruz  
Basement Level

For questions regarding the meeting, please contact Jose Flores at 831-454-3886 or [Jose.Flores@santacruzcountyca.gov](mailto:Jose.Flores@santacruzcountyca.gov)

### I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

II. PUBLIC COMMENT: Any person may address the Council. Speakers must not exceed 2 minutes each. All public comments are to be on items listed on this agenda or within the subject matter jurisdiction of this Council. The Public Comment period is not to exceed 15 minutes. Council members may not take actions or respond immediately to any public communication but may choose to follow up later. If at the end of this period and not all people have had an opportunity to address the Council, then Public Comment may continue to the last item on the agenda. ***If you wish to comment on an Action item, then please wait until that item is heard. If you speak within the Public Comment 15 minutes on an Action item, you will not be able to comment a second time on that item. Please line up to the podium if you wish to speak at this time.***

### ACTION ITEMS

### III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

### IV. PRESENTATION

1. Secure Youth Treatment Facility PowerPoint presentation by Sara Berman, Juvenile Hall Division Director
2. Approval of Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Annual Plan 2024/2025 Chief Fernando Giraldo

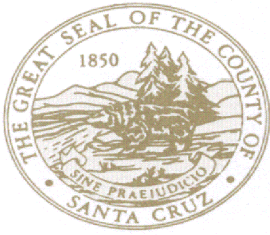
### INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

V. Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council SB 823 Subcommittee Expansion by Fernando Giraldo, Chief Probation Officer

### VI. ADJOURNMENT

*The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability, as no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs, or activities. If you are a person with a disability, including a communication disability, and require special assistance in order to participate in the meeting or need language service assistance, please contact the Santa Cruz County Probation Department at (831) 454-3886 (TDD: call 711) at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting in order to make arrangements. People with disabilities may request a copy of the agenda in an alternate format. Para traducción en español, Por favor haga arreglos anticipadamente por teléfono al número (831) 454-3800.*

# County of Santa Cruz



## JUVENILE JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL SB823 SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, October 31, 2024  
11:30AM – 12:30PM

Luna Y Sol Familia Center  
15 Madison St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Watsonville, CA 95076

I. CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 11:30 a.m.

Present: Fernando Giraldo, Honorable Jerry Vinluan, Tara George (arrived at 11:34 a.m.), Athena Reis\*, Claudia Herrera-Sandoval\*, Lisa Gutierrez-Wang (arrived at 11:34 a.m.), Beverly Brook, Marisol Lopez, Eric Fuentes Diaz, Maricruz Velasco-Baldwin

\* Athena Reis proxy for Heather Rogers

\*Claudia Herrera-Sandoval proxy for Gloria Carroll

Absent: Faris Sabbah

Staff: Gerardo Leon

II. CONSENT AGENDA: Beverly Brook moved to approve the Consent Agenda (Approval of Agenda, and Approval of the April 22, 2024, Minutes); Athena Reis seconded.

**Motion Passed**

Yes: Giraldo, Vinluan Reis, Herrera-Sandoval, Brook, Lopez, Fuentes Diaz, Velasco-Baldwin

No: None

Abstain: None

\*George and Gutierrez-Wang not present at time of vote

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: Members of MILPA introduced themselves and spoke about the importance of youth knowing that they have resources available to them and having access to those resources. They also spoke about the importance of having alternatives to detention.

IV. ORAL REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

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1. Board Of Supervisor Approval of Local Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF): Chief Probation Officer Fernando Giraldo

Chief Giraldo spoke about the Board of Supervisors meeting, the approval of SYTF in Juvenile Hall, and shared that Probation has a target date of January 2025 to have SYTF standing. He also gave an update of the gym construction and renovations to the Juvenile Hall kitchen.

- SB823 Data update: Division Director Jose Flores gave a brief update regarding SYTF youth demographics and length of stay (LOS). (See pgs. 6-8).

2. Local Ranch program in Juvenile facility as stepdown option: Chief Probation Officer Fernando Giraldo spoke about Probation's plan to have a Ranch Camp at Juvenile Hall, absent any local Least Restrictive Programs (LRPs), to serve youth with Ranch Camp commitments. Probation would use current Juvenile Hall beds, no new buildings would be built, and they would look at the possibility of using the Camp as a step down.

Chief Giraldo clarified that Probation currently uses out-of-county Ranch Camps (Camp Singer, Coastal Academy less, James Muriel Ranch in Santa Clara) and will continue to use them since there are no local options available and the Ranch Camp at Juvenile Hall not approved.

Chief Giraldo spoke about the possibility of a local LRP by Community Based Organizations (CBOs)/Community Partners and with input from the community. Probation is open to working with the CBOs and community and invited everyone to participate in Probation's Town Hall on LRPs taking place after this meeting.

3. Discussion/Input of Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Annual Plan for 2025/2026: Division Director Jose Flores gave a brief presentation on the current Grant Annual Plan and asked input from the Subcommittee and public.

Probation is ensuring that youth have internet access, post graduate opportunities, and other opportunities available to youth at Juvenile Hall. Probation hopes to eventually be able to have youth go offsite for educational opportunities but first they are looking to bring more opportunities into the Juvenile Hall.

There will be new programming at the Juvenile Hall in January 2025 and rolling out within six months. There will be a Juvenile Request for Proposals for services Probation must provide and moving to provide services the youth want.

4. Decide if the Subcommittee will establish a Co-Chair position under AB 505. If so, vote for a Co-Chair (Action Item): Chief Probation Officer Fernando Giraldo

Athena Reis moved to establish a Co-Chair position for the JJCC SB823 Subcommittee; Marisol Lopez seconded.

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**Motion Passed**

Yes: Vinluan, Reis, Brook, Lopez, Fuentes Diaz, Velasco-Baldwin

No: Giraldo, Herrera-Sandoval

Abstain: George, Gutierrez-Wang

Marisol Lopez expressed interest in becoming the SB823 Subcommittee Co-Chair.

Eric Fuentes Diaz moved to nominate and elect Marisol Lopez as Co-Chair; Beverly Brook seconded

**Motion Passed**

Yes: Vinluan, George, Reis, Gutierrez-Wang, Brook, Lopez, Fuentes Diaz, Velasco-Baldwin

No: None

Abstain: Giraldo, Herrera-Sandoval

V. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

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# Report to Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC)

## SB823 Subcommittee Meeting

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Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act  
(JJCPA) Authority to convene and  
approve Multi-Agency

Juvenile Justice Plan given by Welfare  
and Institutions Code § 749.22

April 21, 2025

**Santa Cruz County Probation Department**



# 2021 – March 31, 2025

*4 years and 3 months*

## RANCH CAMP PLACEMENT

### ■ Total of 10 youth ordered by Court

2021: 1 youth  
2022: 4 youth  
2023: 4 youth  
2024: 0 youth  
2025: 1 youth

## SECURE YOUTH TREATMENT FACILITY (SYTF)

### ■ Total of 5 youth ordered by Court

2021: 1 youth  
2022: 1 youth  
2023: 1 youth  
2024: 1 youth  
2025: 1 youth

## COURT COMMITMENTS

### ■ Total of 4 youth ordered by Court

2021: 2 youth  
2022: 1 youth  
2023: 0 youth  
2024: 1 youth  
2025: 0 youth



## What's New: Includes Youth Input & Meeting Individual Youths' Needs

SYTF approved  
December 2024,  
1 youth in  
program

Camp Program  
approved by BOS  
working with  
BSCC to land a  
launch date

### YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

- Feedback group with youth and Behavioral Health staff
- One-on-One engagement and feedback from youth
- Designed and painted mural in counseling room
- Incentive Phases: created with youth input

### EDUCATION

#### **Rising Scholars Grant with COE and Cabrillo**

- Added an Accessibility Support Academic Counselor
- College student desks and designated shelving for students' work
- Installed internet for smoother student access & class navigation
- Personal laptops to be provided by Rising Scholars

### VOCATIONAL

#### **Career Exploration (in-person curriculum)**

#### **Your Future Is Our Business**

- Monthly Career Speakers
- Youth chose the careers- fire fighter, tattoo artist, construction, barber

### LIFESKILLS

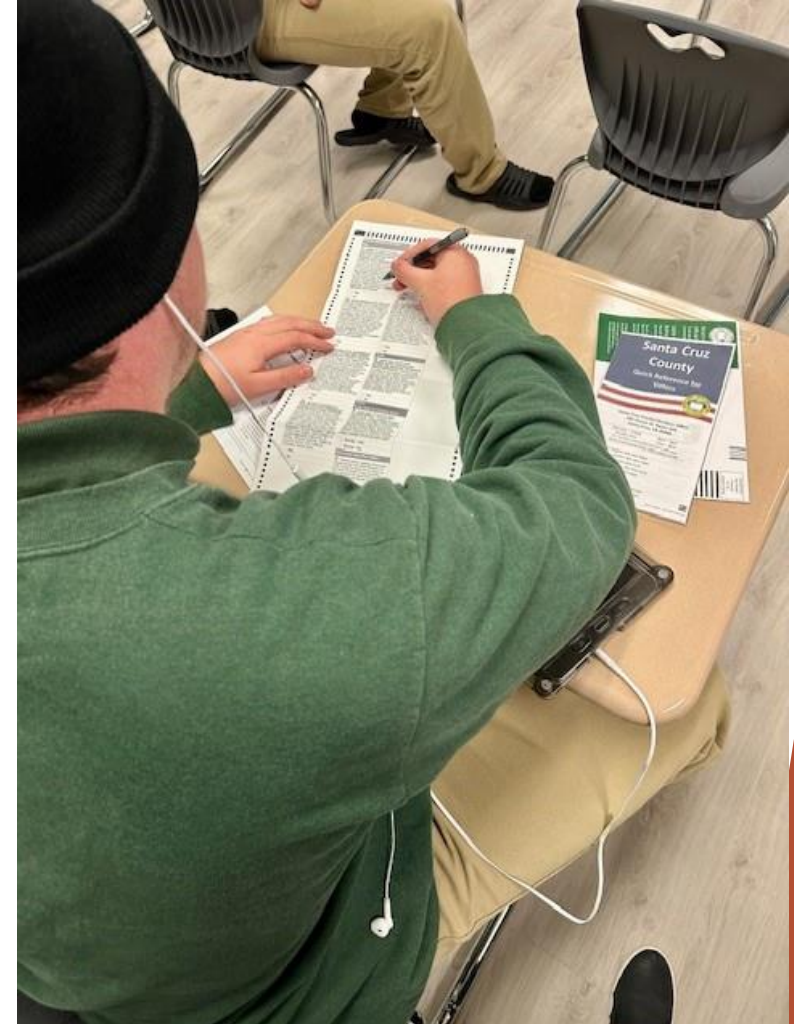
#### **Kitchen Program "Stirring Up Success"**

- Serve Safe Certificates
- Meal preparation
- Budgeting



# Current Santa Cruz County Programming

- Santa Cruz Public Library Services
- Living Unchained Dog Training
- Work Programs
- Tablet Technology
- Culturally Relevant life skills- Barrios Unidos
- Human Trafficking Awareness
- Mural Projects
- Writing Program – The Beat Within
- Dientes
- Gardening
- Chess
- Child Family Team Meeting- Conflict Resolution Center (CRC)
- Positive Parenting- Positive Discipline Community Resources (PDCR)
- Alcoholic/Narcotic Anonymous
- Health Education- Health Services Agency (HSA)
- Graduation Ceremonies
- Birthday Celebrations
- Leadership and Civil Engagement Opportunities



# Current Santa Cruz County Programming (cont'd.)

- STAR: Stable Transition After Reentry - CRC, PDCR, Encompass
- CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocate
- Faith Based Services - various church groups
- Financial Literacy - Santa Cruz Community Credit Union
- “Safe Dates”- Walnut Avenue Family & Women’s Center
- Parent Teen Mediation - Conflict Resolution Center
- Career Panels - Your Future Is Our Business
- Rising Scholars Cabrillo College: Dual Enrollment & Post High School
- ServSafe Food Handlers Certificate
- County Office of Education (COE)
- Music Instruction and Music Appreciation – Music In May, COE
- Behavioral Health and Medical Services - HSA
- Community Service Hours - Jacob’s Heart & Various Projects
- Incentive Program: Additional hygiene & entertainment items
- Living In Balance, Drug Education & Awareness - HSA



# Planning for the Future

## YEAR ONE

- Living Unchained level II
- Financial Literacy level II  
one-on-one support for transition planning, certified financial counselor, support to open bank account
- Gym/Dedicated Exercise Space
- Upgraded Technology Access
- Youth and Family Advisory Council, family nights, and circles
- Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports Training for All Facility Staff
- Cabrillo- in person instruction

## POST CONSTRUCTION / YEAR TWO

- CTE Degree and Vocational Certificate Programs
- Ongoing staff training to support programs for SYTF/Ranch
- Gymnasium
- “Seed to Table” Gardening program
- Culinary Program
- Upgrade Living Spaces and Furniture
- Furlough Options
- Murals throughout facility: 2 youths on panel to choose artist



## JUVENILE JUSTICE REALIGNMENT BLOCK GRANT ANNUAL PLAN

### MAIN CONTACT FOR PLAN

**Date:** April 21, 2025

**County Name:** Santa Cruz County

**Contact Name:** Fernando Giraldo

**Telephone Number:** 831-454-3207

**E-mail Address:** [Fernando.Giraldo@santacruzcountyca.gov](mailto:Fernando.Giraldo@santacruzcountyca.gov)

### BACKGROUND AND INSTRUCTIONS:

Welfare & Institutions Code Section(s) 1990-1995 establish the Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant program for the purpose of providing county-based care, custody, and supervision of youth who are realigned from the state Division of Juvenile Justice or who would otherwise be eligible for commitment to the Division of Juvenile Justice prior to its closure. Section 1995 was amended by Assembly Bill 505 (Ting, Chapter 528, Statutes of 2023.) This template has been updated to reflect those amendments which will be in effect on January 1, 2024. All citations are to the law as amended. The statutory language can be found [here](#).

To be eligible for funding allocations associated with this grant program, counties shall create a subcommittee of the multiagency juvenile justice coordinating council to develop a plan describing the facilities, programs, placements, services, supervision, and reentry strategies that are needed to provide appropriate rehabilitative services for realigned youth. (Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995(a).)

County plans are to be submitted to the Office of Youth and Community Restoration in accordance with Welf. & Inst. Code §1995. OYCR may request revisions as necessary or request completion of the required planning process prior to final acceptance of the plan. (Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995 (f).) Plans will be posted to the Office of Youth and Community Restoration website. (Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995(g).)

There are nine sections to the plan:

Part 1: Subcommittee Composition  
Part 2: Target Population  
Part 3: Programs and Services  
Part 4: Juvenile Justice Realignment Block  
Grant Funds  
Part 5: Facility Plan

Part 6: Retaining the Target Population in  
the Juvenile Justice System  
Part 7: Regional Efforts  
Part 8: Data  
Part 9: Other Updates



**PART 1: SUBCOMMITTEE COMPOSITION AND PROCESS (WELF. & INST. CODE §§ 1995 (B) AND (C))**

List the subcommittee members, agency affiliation where applicable, and contact information:

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Name and Title</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Chief Probation Officer (Chair)	Fernando Giraldo, Chief Probation Officer	<a href="mailto:Fernando.Giraldo@santacruzcountyca.gov">Fernando.Giraldo@santacruzcountyca.gov</a>	831-454-3207
Co-Chair (If Applicable)	Marisol Lopez, Children & Youth Senior Case Manager, Monarch Services	<a href="mailto:MarisolL@monarchsc.org">MarisolL@monarchsc.org</a>	831-254-9799
District Attorney's Office Representative	Tara George, Chief Deputy District Attorney	<a href="mailto:Tara.George@santacruzcountyca.gov">Tara.George@santacruzcountyca.gov</a>	831-454-2557
Public Defender's Office Representative	Heather Rogers, Public Defender	<a href="mailto:Heather.Rogers@santacruzcountyca.gov">Heather.Rogers@santacruzcountyca.gov</a>	831-454-5301
Department of Social Services Representative	Gloria Carroll, Division Director, Child Welfare	<a href="mailto:Gloria.Carroll@santacruzcountyca.gov">Gloria.Carroll@santacruzcountyca.gov</a>	831-454-4062
Department of Mental Health	Lisa Gutierrez Wang, Director Children's Behavioral Health	<a href="mailto:Lisa.GutierrezWang@santacruzcountyca.gov">Lisa.GutierrezWang@santacruzcountyca.gov</a>	831-454-4948
Office of Education Representative	Faris Sabbah, Superintendent, County Office of Education	<a href="mailto:fsabbah@santacruzcoe.org">fsabbah@santacruzcoe.org</a>	831-466-5904
Court Representative	Hon. Jerry Vinluan, Superior Court Judge	<a href="mailto:Jerry.Vinluan@santacruzcourt.org">Jerry.Vinluan@santacruzcourt.org</a>	831-420-2350
Three Community Members (defined as "individuals who have experience providing community-based youth services, youth justice advocates with expertise and	Beverly Brook, Community Outreach Minister	<a href="mailto:revbevbrook@gmail.com">revbevbrook@gmail.com</a>	831-588-5373
	Maricruz Velasco-Baldwin, Resource	<a href="mailto:mari@risingworldwide.org">mari@risingworldwide.org</a>	831-429-7473

<i>knowledge of the juvenile justice system, or have been directly involved in the juvenile justice system” (Welf. &amp; Inst. Code § 1995(b).))</i>	Manager, Rising Worldwide		
	Eric Fuentes Diaz, Children, Youth Case Manager, Monarch Services	<a href="mailto:efuentesdiaz@monarchsc.org">efuentesdiaz@monarchsc.org</a>	831-837-7034
	Marisol Lopez, Children & Youth Senior Case Manager, Monarch Services	<a href="mailto:MarisolL@monarchsc.org">MarisolL@monarchsc.org</a>	831-254-9799
<b>Additional Subcommittee Participants</b>			
Santa Cruz County Probation	Valerie Thompson, Assistant Chief	<a href="mailto:Valerie.Thompson@santacruzcountyca.gov">Valerie.Thompson@santacruzcountyca.gov</a>	831-454-3835
Santa Cruz County Probation	Jose Flores, Juvenile Division Director	<a href="mailto:Jose.Flores@santacruzcountyca.gov">Jose.Flores@santacruzcountyca.gov</a>	831-454-3886
Santa Cruz County Probation	Sara Berman, Juvenile Hall Division Director	<a href="mailto:Sara.Berman@santacruzcountyca.gov">Sara.Berman@santacruzcountyca.gov</a>	831-454-3852
Santa Cruz County Probation	Jimmy Cook, Assistant Division Director	<a href="mailto:Jimmy.Cook@santacruzcountyca.gov">Jimmy.Cook@santacruzcountyca.gov</a>	831-454-3808

Describe the process used to determine whether to select a co-chair for your subcommittee (Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995(b)):

On October 31, 2024, the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council SB 823 Subcommittee members voted to elect community member Marisol Lopez as Co-Chair of the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) SB 823 Subcommittee.

Provide the dates of the last two meetings that the subcommittee convened to discuss your county’s JJRBG plan

Meeting Date 1:

Meeting Date 2:

Additional meeting dates of the subcommittee, if applicable:

Date that the subcommittee approved the plan by a majority vote.

TBD

Describe how the plan was developed, including the review and participation of the subcommittee community members as defined in Welf. & Inst. Code § 1995(b):

On October 31, 2024, the SB 823 Subcommittee reconvened in person. During this meeting, the committee was updated on the progress of its vision and advocacy efforts to establish a local Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). This vision is now becoming a reality following the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors' approval of the SYTF development on October 8, 2024. The committee reviewed last year's plan and received a presentation on the current services available locally. Community members provided feedback, emphasizing the importance of expanding educational opportunities and ensuring access to less restrictive placement options.

On February 7, 2025, the community members provided additional feedback for the plan via e-mail. Their input focused on the following themes, which are aligned with those of the department:

- **Behavioral Health-** Expanded services to include group and family/caregiver support
- **Youth Spaces-** Allowing more autonomy, redesigning the setting and housing environment.
- **Family and Community Engagement-** support reentry services, linkage to mentors, utilizing restorative justice approaches, leverage Children Family Teaming for safety and transition planning, and developing community partnerships for internship and services.
- **Programming (skills and personal development)-** Employment readiness skills, fiscal literacy, healthy relationships, culturally responsive programming, and public speaking skill for voice empowerment.
- **Vocational and Certificate Programs-** Partner with agencies for employment exploration, develop various vocational opportunities, apprenticeship, certificated and paid work opportunities.
- **Enrichment Activities-** Develop cultural and engaging activities (sweat lodges, meditation, yoga), arts (tattooing, music, murals, digital art, painting).
- **Reentry Support-** Begin early reentry planning with post release, identify stable housing, paid/internship opportunities, leverage Department of Rehabilitation for housing, social and vocational skill building, and explore 12-month post release universal income.

## PART 2: TARGET POPULATION (WELF. & INST. CODE § 1995(D)(1))

Briefly describe the County's realignment target population supported by the block grant.

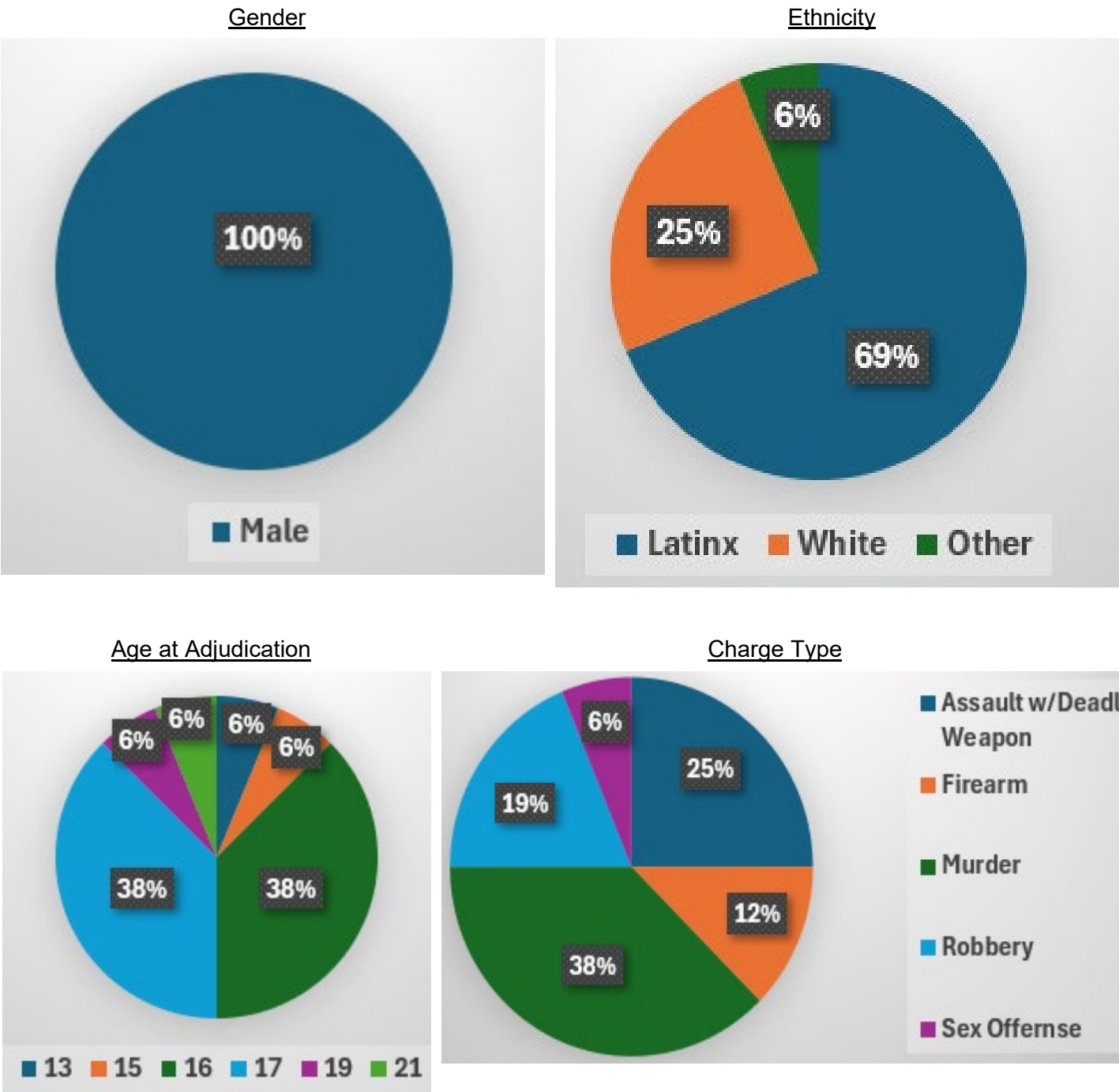
*The "target population" is defined as "youth who were eligible for commitment to the Division of Juvenile Justice prior to its closure and shall further be defined as persons who are adjudicated to be a ward of the juvenile court based on an offense described in subdivision (b) of Section 707 or an offense described in Section 290.008 of the Penal Code." (Welf. & Inst. Code § 1990(b))*

**Demographics of identified target population, including anticipated numbers of youth served, disaggregated by factors including age, gender, race or ethnicity, and offense/offense history.**



707(b) Adjudications

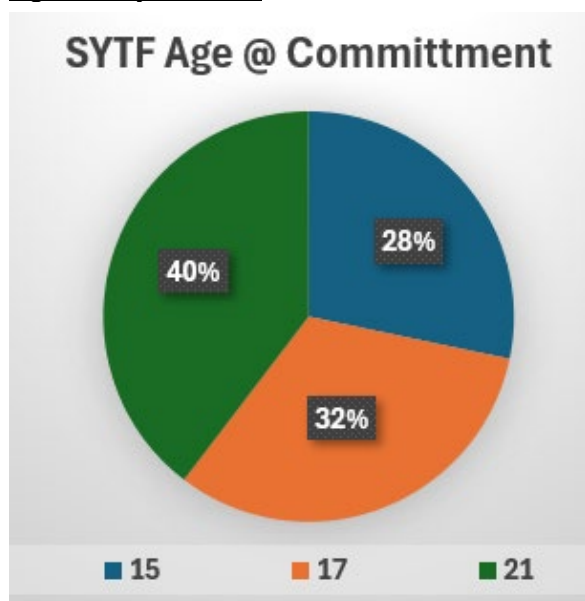
In 2024 there were sixteen youth on probation for an adjudicated 707(b) offense:



Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF)

In 2024 there were three Latino and one Asian male youth in a SYTF program. Three were housed at Sonoma SYTF and one housed in the new Santa Cruz County SYTF program. The charts below outline the disaggregated demographics for this population. As of the writing of this report, we continue to have three Latino and one Asian male youth housed in Sonoma SYTF and one housed local, all adjudicated for murder.

### Age at Adjudication



### Charge Type



**Describe the target population disaggregated by programs, placements and/or facilities to which they have been referred.**

The Juvenile Division administers a comprehensive array of services, including investigation, diversion, pre- and post-adjudication interventions, community supervision, and out-of-home supervision for referred youth. Additionally, the division oversees youth committed to Secure Youth Treatment Facilities (SYTF) under SB 823, following the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Realignment. Through strategic collaboration with community partners, the division ensures the delivery of trauma-informed, culturally responsive support that prioritizes the well-being of youth and families while upholding public safety.

The Juvenile Division is committed to enhancing public safety by reducing recidivism through the development of life skills and competencies in youth and families. This mission is achieved through meaningful engagement and collaboration with families, youth, and community stakeholders. By delivering culturally responsive supervision and services, the division supports community safety and fulfills its vital role as entrusted by the court and juvenile justice partners. We prioritize addressing the root causes and social factors that influence youth behavior. It is essential for all service providers and Probation Officers to understand that our work goes beyond gang awareness, focusing on holistic support and long-term positive outcomes for young people.

While we may not always label our initiatives as gang prevention or intervention, they are intentionally designed to address the underlying factors that can lead youth toward gang involvement. We believe an effective program may not need to carry the 'gang' label to achieve meaningful impact. By framing our efforts around support, guidance, and creating opportunities for personal growth and success, we are able to reach a wider range of youth — including those at risk of gang involvement — in a way that fosters trust and participation.

Many of our most effective programs naturally weave together youth development, community engagement, and social support without explicitly referencing gangs. By fostering inclusive environments where young people feel valued, supported, and empowered, we guide them away from gang

involvement and other risky behaviors, helping them build healthier, more positive futures. We accomplish this through the following strategies:

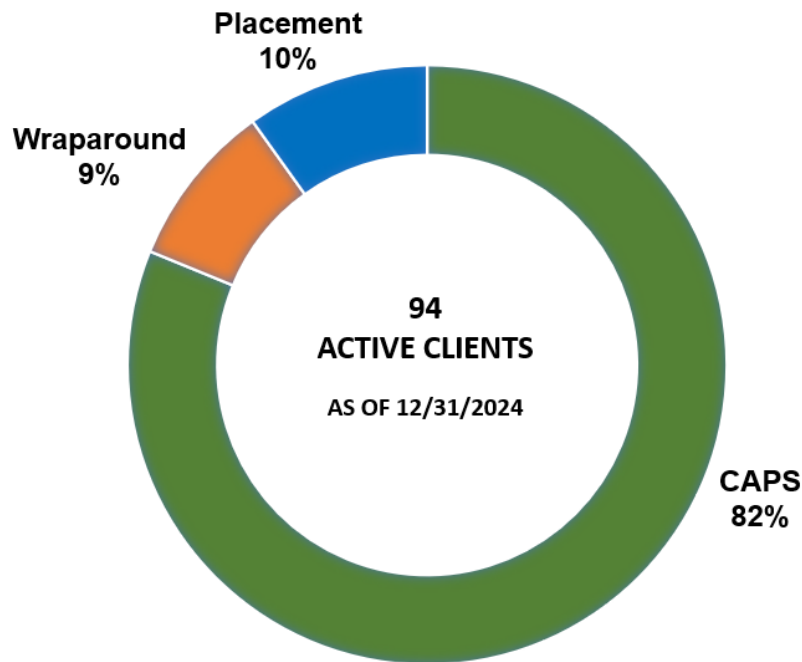
- **Education and Awareness-** Implementing comprehensive educational programs in schools and communities to raise awareness about the dangers of gang involvement and its consequences.
- **Mentorship and Positive Role Models-** Providing access to positive role models through mentorship programs, community organizations, and extracurricular activities.
- **Community Engagement-** Fostering a sense of belonging within communities by providing opportunities for constructive activities and contributions.
- **Family Support and Strengthening-** Offering parenting education, counseling services, and resources to promote healthy family dynamics.
- **Addressing Socioeconomic Factors-** Tackling poverty, unemployment, and lack of educational opportunities through economic development and educational initiatives.
- **Early Intervention and Support Services-** Identifying and intervening early with at-risk youth through tailored counseling and support programs.
- **Promoting Alternatives to Violence-** Offering conflict resolution programs and restorative justice practices to teach constructive conflict resolution.
- **Community Policing and Collaboration-** Fostering partnerships between law enforcement, community organizations, schools, and residents to develop collaborative approaches to gang prevention and intervention.

By implementing these strategies in a coordinated and collaborative way, we can prevent young people from further involvement in the juvenile justice system while fostering safer, more supportive communities for everyone.

The Juvenile Division utilizes the Integrated Core Practice Model (ICPM) to effectively engage youth and families. The ICPM serves as a comprehensive framework that outlines shared values, core components, and practice standards for professionals supporting California's children, youth, and families. Central to this model is Child and Family Teaming (CFT), a collaborative, team-based approach designed to achieve key objectives, including enhancing life skills, fostering family engagement, reducing recidivism, and mitigating victimization.

In 2024, the department provided training on the Integrated Core Practice Model (ICPM) to community partners, emphasizing its ten principles for effective family and youth engagement. These efforts promote alignment, shared values, and meeting families where they are at, which further supports the rehabilitative process. The Juvenile Division continues to collaborate with system partners to identify and strengthen natural support systems early in the process. We recognize the importance family, mentors, and community connections are in supporting a youth and family's success as they navigate the juvenile justice system. Our youth-centered, trauma-informed approach continues to focus on fostering positive change and success for the families we serve.

The following chart outlines caseload types and percentages in the Juvenile Division:

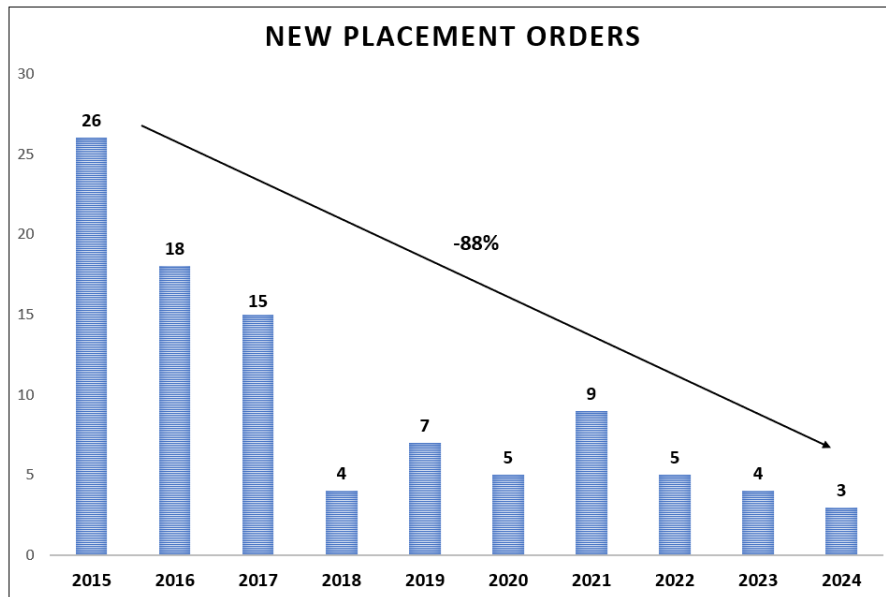


The Connecting and Promoting Success (CAPS) caseload, serving 82% of supervised youth, uses a youth-centered, needs-driven approach to support those on informal and formal probation, fostering connections and promoting success for youth and their families. The Wraparound caseloads specialize in family engagement and behavioral health services for youth at risk of out-of-home placement. These caseloads follow a team-based model involving a transitional specialist, a behavioral health clinician, and a probation officer. Placement caseloads support youth in settings such as Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs, Ranch Camps, or Secure Youth Treatment Facilities, with placement decisions made by Juvenile Probation and ordered by the Juvenile Justice Court. This unit also supports extended foster care youth (ages 18–21) who, despite receiving wraparound services, were removed from their homes due to significant behavioral and therapeutic needs.

Probation staff facilitated 33 Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings in 2024, empowering youth and families along with their natural supports to play a more active role in case planning and probation strategies. These meetings bring together professionals from county agencies and community organizations to collaboratively address the needs of youth and families. The Juvenile Division, in collaboration with court partners, successfully minimized new out-of-home placements, with only five placement orders issued, three of which were new cases. New cases are defined as youth who are ordered into Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (formerly known as group homes).

Supportive programming, such as the Luna Evening Center, established after 1996, and the development of the Luna Y Sol Familia Center, continue to provide critical support to youth and families in addressing their needs. The focus remains on the early identification of natural supports, beginning at the Intake Unit and continuing our continuum of services. Additionally, a strong emphasis on Probation diversion, coupled with active staff engagement with youth and families and strategic collaboration with community partners, remains essential in reducing out-of-home placements.

As a result, overall placements have decreased by 88%, as illustrated in the graph below.



In 2024, the Juvenile Division continued to administer the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS) by initiating use of the JAIS Case Plan. In addition to identifying a youth’s level of risk to reoffend, the JAIS has three goals:

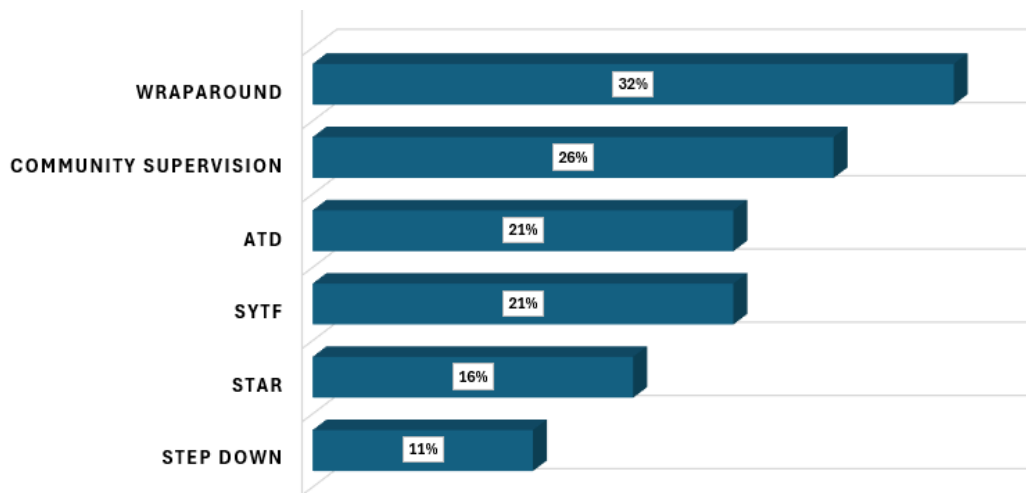
- To help Probation Officers quickly establish appropriate supervision strategies based on youth strengths and needs, anticipated behaviors and attitudes, and the reasons for behaviors and attitudes.
- Providing Probation Officers with effective strategies for addressing unmet needs before they escalate into law violations.
- To reduce recidivism, which is defined as any youth receiving a subsequent adjudication while on active supervision (recidivism was 6% in 2024)

Juvenile Probation Supervisors and Juvenile Division Managers actively monitor the administration of the instrument to ensure inter-rater reliability. As a result, 86% of all cases requiring an initial assessment for moderate to high needs received a full JAIS evaluation. Furthermore, JAIS assessments are now integrated into court reports and case staffing’s to enhance case planning and decision-making.

In 2024, the Juvenile Division remained dedicated to transforming juvenile justice by prioritizing alternatives to detention. Among youth enrolled in alternative programs, 96% successfully appeared at their next court hearing and did not commit new offenses. Data-driven strategies continue to guide reentry planning for placement and Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) youth, support wards, reduce technical violations, and enhance pre-adjudication supervision.

Since 1999, the Juvenile Division has been at the forefront of reducing juvenile detention, serving as a model site for the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s (AECF) Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). This initiative focuses on eliminating unnecessary detention, enhancing data-driven decision-making, streamlining court processes, establishing risk-based detention criteria, expanding community-based alternatives, improving confinement conditions, addressing youth disparities, and meeting the needs of specialized populations including Wards with commitment eligible 707(b) offenses and youth in SYTF.

The graph below depicts the various services, placements and programs 602 Wards and SYTF youth have accessed.



### PART 3: PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (WELF. & INST. CODE §1995(D)(2))

**Provide a description of the facilities, programs, placements, services and service providers, supervision, and other responses that will be provided to the target population. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response (Welf. & Inst. Code §1995(D)(2) and (d)(8)):**

The Santa Cruz County Probation Department's Juvenile Hall works in partnership with the Health Services Agency, County Office of Education, and community providers to ensure youth receive the necessary services while awaiting their court hearings or transfer to the SYTF.

In alignment with SB 823 and SB 92, which emphasize the importance of keeping justice-involved youth connected to their families and communities to support rehabilitation, the department received approval from the Board of Supervisors on October 8, 2024 to establish a local Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) program which launched in December 2024, and we are currently housing our first young person locally. This decision follows collaborative partnerships with Sonoma County, which continues to provide housing support for our youth. The shift to a local SYTF is pivotal in strengthening familial and community connections, ultimately enhancing rehabilitation and re-entry success.

The Santa Cruz County Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) is specifically designed to serve youth who have received a disposition order by the Juvenile Court, indicating the need for such a structured setting. Eligible youth are between the ages of 14 and 25 and have been adjudicated as wards of the juvenile court based on an offense described in subdivision (b) of Section 707 of the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC).

Santa Cruz SYTF provides a safe and secure environment that aligns with the requirements of Senate Bills (SB) 823 and 92, offering youth an opportunity for rehabilitation with the goal of supporting their successful transition back to the community. The facility's rehabilitative treatment and programming focus on principles of trauma-informed, culturally responsive care, aiming to address the individual needs of each youth in areas such as personal development, therapeutic treatment, education, career readiness, and life skills enhancement. This comprehensive and supportive program is committed to reducing

recidivism and fostering the positive growth of youth, helping them to return to their community and build a foundation for long-term success.

Housing of youth varies based on classification, risk level, individual needs, and safety of the youth and other youth within the facility. The classification system is an ongoing process throughout a commitment, and youth may be housed in either unit of the facility. A direct supervision model supports the classification system, and services targeted to address individual needs of the residents, allowing for constant review of an individual's safety, progress, and housing needs.

SB 823 and SB 92 emphasize the importance of keeping justice-involved youth connected to their families and communities to foster better outcomes. Research has shown that youth who remain within their communities have lower recidivism rates and are more prepared for successful re-entry. These laws affirm that youth should be housed closer to their families, allowing for age-appropriate treatment while engaging families in the treatment process as well. This approach significantly enhances rehabilitation by promoting familial and pro-social community ties, which are crucial in reducing re-offending and supporting long-term success. Santa Cruz County aligns with this philosophy by providing family and natural supports engagement opportunities and collaborative treatment planning for each youth.

The Individualized Rehabilitation Plan (IRP) is a personalized plan created for each youth at the Santa Cruz County Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). The IRP is designed to address the unique needs, strengths, and challenges of the youth to guide their rehabilitation and prepare them for successful re-entry into the community.

The IRP is developed through a comprehensive assessment process that evaluates the youth's physical health, mental health, educational needs, behavioral issues, family dynamics, and social development. Based on these assessments, a tailored plan is crafted that includes specific interventions, goals, and services aimed at addressing the youth's individual circumstances.

The IRP is a dynamic, living document that is reviewed and updated regularly to reflect the youth's progress and any emerging needs. The IRP includes measurable objectives to track the youth's advancement, with the goal of reducing recidivism and fostering positive behavioral change. The plan is designed to support the youth's personal growth, emotional healing, and skill development, ultimately preparing them to reintegrate into their communities in a successful and productive manner.

Collaboration with the youth, their families, natural supports, and treatment providers is essential to the success of the IRP. By focusing on individualized care, the IRP aims to empower youth to make lasting changes in their lives and build the foundation for a successful future.

Youth in the local SYTF or our Least Restrictive Camp programming will benefit from the coordination and support of the Re-entry Coordinator who is a Senior Group Supervisor. The Re-entry Coordinator plays a central role in coordinating the case management process, working closely with the Probation Officer assigned to the youth and their family members/Natural Supports. The Re-entry Specialist will ensure that the youth's needs are addressed through a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach. Responsibilities for this role include facilitating access to appropriate programming that aligns with the individual goals and objectives outlined in the Individualized Rehabilitative Plan (IRP). This role also involves managing case activities, tracking the youth's progress, and ensuring that interventions are tailored to the youth's unique circumstances.

Collaboration is key in this process, and the Re-entry Coordinator works with various stakeholders involved in the youth's care and rehabilitation. These include:

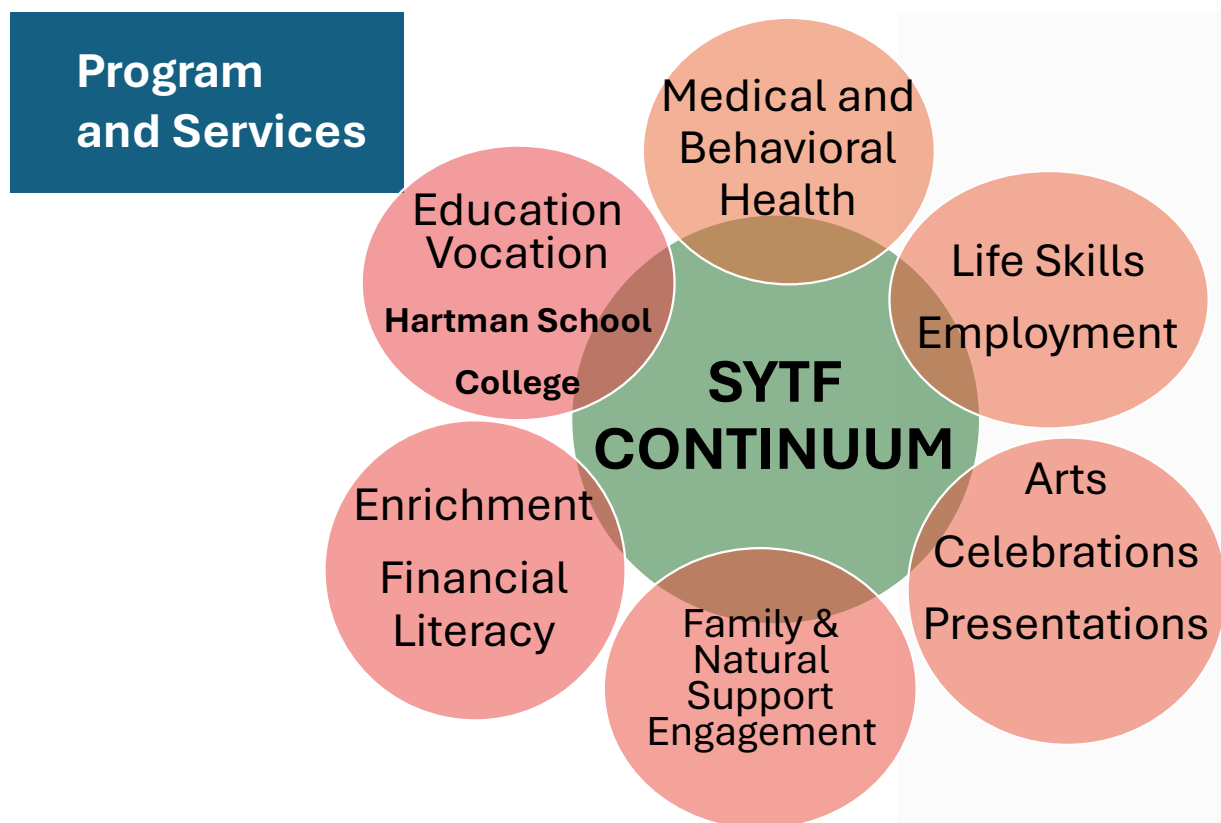
- Family members, who are encouraged to remain involved in the youth's progress.



- Pro-social community connections, which can provide positive influences and support networks.
- Juvenile Hall Institutional Supervisors and Juvenile Hall Administration, who ensure day-to-day supervision and overall facility management.
- Santa Cruz County Office of Education and Cabrillo College, which may provide educational services or vocational training.
- Health Services, including Behavioral Health, which address physical and behavioral health concerns.

Through this collaborative approach, the Re-entry Coordinator ensures that all aspects of the youth's rehabilitation—emotional, educational, social, and medical—are addressed. This holistic model supports not only the youth's immediate needs but also their long-term success in reintegration into the community.

The Santa Cruz County Probation Department SYTF program offers a comprehensive array of services for youth within Juvenile Hall, partnering with local providers to meet both immediate and transitional needs. This continuum of services are designed to support rehabilitation, personal growth, and successful reintegration into the community and will evolve to meet the unique needs of each youth.



To ensure the delivery of services is effective, staff within the facility are trained in several evidence-based practices. These methods focus on helping young people change harmful behaviors, develop positive coping skills, and engage in pro-social behaviors.

The use of appropriate sanctions and incentives is integral to holding youth accountable while promoting positive behavior changes. By using a combination of rewards and consequences, staff can motivate young

people to make improvements and stay on track with their rehabilitation goals. The range of services and structured programming ensures young people receive the support they need to address the underlying causes of their behavior while also preparing them for a successful transition back into society.

Santa Cruz County Probation utilizes the Child and Family Team approach to individualize rehabilitation plans, enhance family visitation opportunities, such as events, educational, vocational, programming, and face-to-face meetings in the facility with program providers and necessary family therapy services. To further strengthen family engagement in order to support the rehabilitation process, the department will offer transportation to all families to remove any transportation barriers.

## **Host County Programs**

To facilitate implementation of SB 823, Santa Cruz County contracted with Sonoma County Probation Department to utilize their SYTF program. The Sonoma County SYTF program offers a safe and secure facility for housing and programming court-committed young people identified as appropriate under SB 823. The facility delivers rehabilitative treatment designed to reduce recidivism and provides opportunities to address personal, social, physical, mental health, educational, vocational, and independent living skills needs, all while preparing young people for successful reentry into their communities.

The Sonoma County Probation Department maintains contracts with local providers to offer both current services within the Juvenile Hall and specialized transitional services. Residents in the facility have access to a range of programs, including drug and alcohol services, mental health support, Aggression Replacement Training, trauma-informed care, gender-responsive programming, culturally competent and bilingual services, spiritual advising, and other essential services. Transitional services encompass referrals to the Intensive Case Management (ICM) Program, vocational and job training programs, County Behavioral Health, as well as case management and supervision services.

The Sonoma County Probation Department provides additional family engagement opportunities and program provider meetings to support its existing programming, including focus on the Child and Family Team approach to individual rehabilitation plans (case plans), enhanced family visitation opportunities such as events, vocational, educational, programming, and workday-pass/furlough opportunities (Court approved), face-to-face meetings in Juvenile Hall with program providers, and strategic family therapy services.

The housing of residents will vary based on classification, risk level, individual needs, and safety of the resident and other residents within the facility. The department is exploring the use of a Camp setting by utilizing the unoccupied Probation Camp facility to assist in housing residents who are transitioning back into the community.

All young people housed in a host facility remain under the supervision of a Santa Cruz County Probation Officer. This ensures coordinated case planning and allows for the most up-to-date information on progress to be included in the six-month review with the Santa Cruz County Juvenile Court. Additionally, when commitment to a period of confinement at a host county facility is ordered, the Santa Cruz County Probation Officer will promptly contact the young person's parents or guardians to provide information about the host facility, including visitation details.

Probation Officers assigned to the Placement Unit must maintain face-to-face contact with young person at the host county at least once every 30 days. The Probation Department supports families in need to ensure transportation for visitation during the confinement period. The department either provides transportation or reimbursement for travel costs. Recognizing the significance of visitations and family bonds for young people's overall well-being at SYTF, Sonoma County has extended visit durations to two hours and offers virtual visitation options for additional contact.

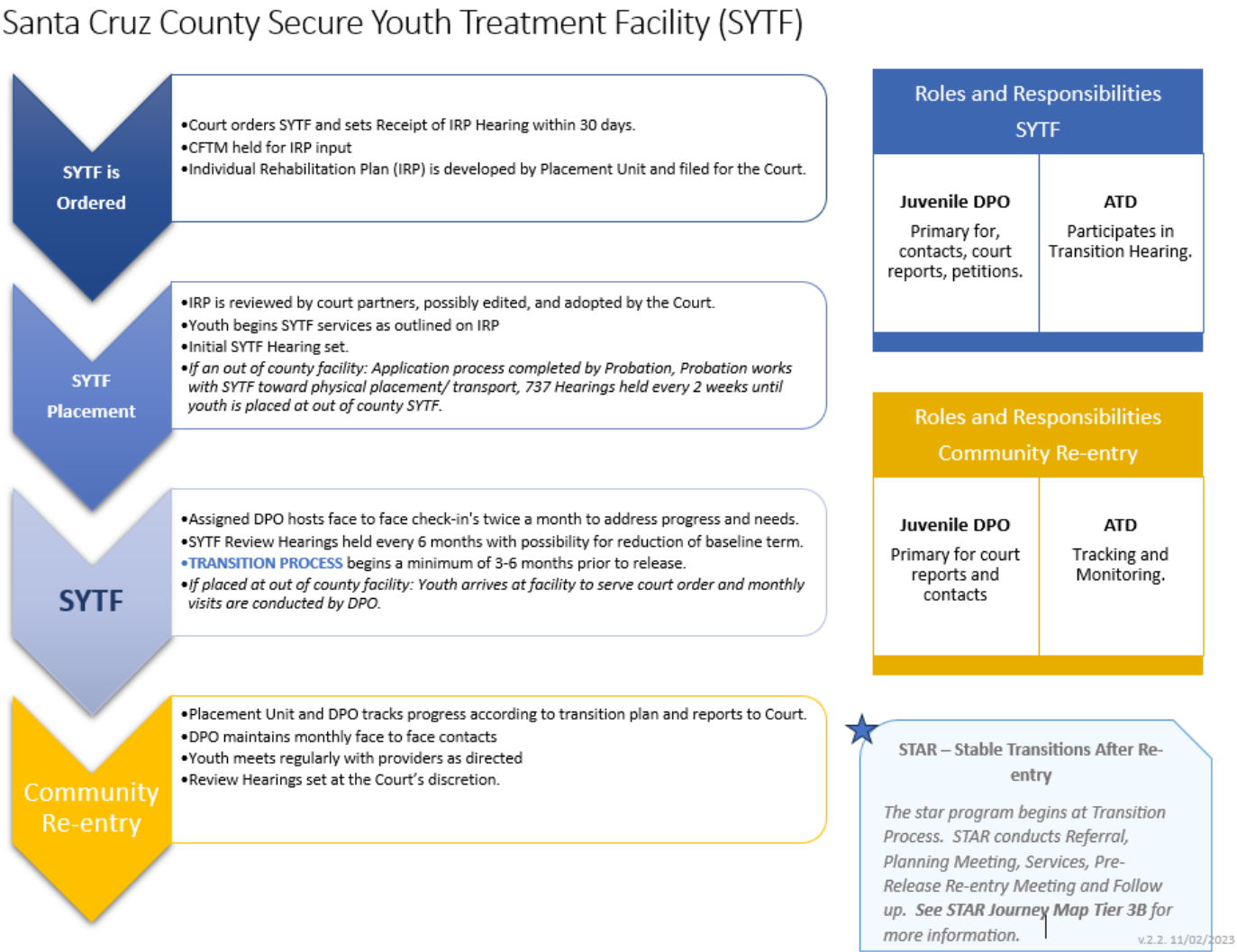
The Merced County Iris Garrett Juvenile Justice Correctional Complex has two (2) separate buildings for housing our target populations. They are identified as Building one (1) and Building two (2). Each building

has two separate housing units, consisting of two wings in each housing unit. Although the facility design allows the ability to house up to 120 young people, the probation department is budgeted to hold up to a maximum of 90 young people. They utilize their housing units to serve the target population, as the need arises. Utilization of housing consists of separation based on age/criminal sophistication while also keeping in mind the need for those young people who may have special needs or behavioral issues. Merced County continues to develop their SYTF housing units moving towards full implementation.

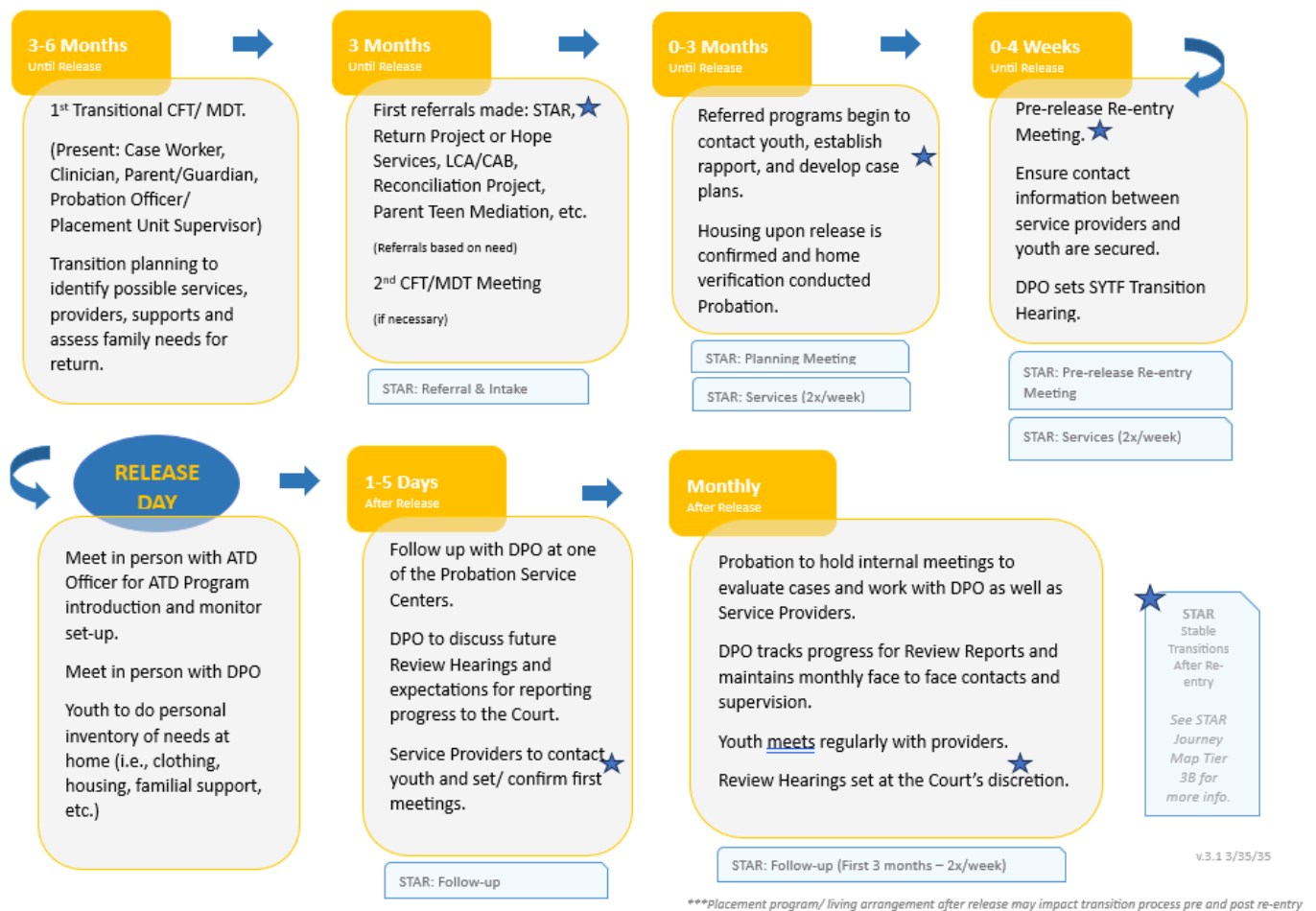
Merced County has adopted an integrated treatment model to reintegrate justice system-involved young people to their families and communities with the knowledge and skills necessary to live successful, crime-free lives. Four primary focus areas of their program logic modes include, Family Stability, Behavioral Health (Well-being), Education and Vocational Training and employment.

### Planning and Coordination Services

The following illustrates the SYTF workflow that was developed collaboratively with probation and court partners in 2023 and was recently updated. The workflow defines collaboration efforts that begin at the time SYTF is ordered and facilitates SYTF program planning and reentry planning.



## Timeline for Transition Back to the Community



Santa Cruz County Probation Department applied for funding through SB 823's Youth Programs and Facilities Grant Program and secured a 12-passenger van to support in-person visitation and family connectedness. In the past year, the department has provided 14 visitation trips to families in need of transportation to Sonoma, however more opportunities were offered than were accepted and some trips engaged multiple families. The van was equipped with side steps to accommodate family members with disabilities and Wi-Fi capabilities to provide internet access for both youth and families. With the opening of the local SYTF in Santa Cruz County, transportation support will also be available for local families in need of transportation to our local program.

Santa Cruz County also allocated grant funding for construction improvements to a conference room at the Juvenile Hall. This space was upgraded to ensure security and is used for visitation between youth and families prior to their transfer to the Secure Treatment Youth Facility (STYF). Additionally, the department purchased six tablets and six MiFi devices. MiFi devices use mobile phone networks to create mini wireless hotspots that can be shared among internet-enabled devices, such as smartphones and tablets. These digital devices are available for loan or can be accessed from one of our three county sites, ensuring accessibility and responsiveness for parents, family members, caregivers, and other approved contacts.

In addition to the conference room renovation, grant funds were used to renovate rooms within the unit, converting them into soft counseling spaces. Previously, youth had to leave their living units and go to the main building to access behavioral health services. With these renovations, behavioral health services can now be delivered directly on the units, ensuring that therapeutic support is more readily available and accessible to the youth.

Since May 1, 2024, Santa Cruz County Probation Department has placed young people in various out-of-county programs, including group homes (now known as STRTP programs), Ranch Camps, and Secure Youth Treatment Facilities (SYTF). To support family connections for youth removed from their homes, the department continued to assist families with travel arrangements and/or reimbursements for visits, with approval from the County Administrator's Office (CAO). All travel reimbursements comply with the Travel Rules and Regulations set forth in the County Policies and Procedures Manual.

While the Santa Cruz juvenile hall facility is smaller and older compared to many juvenile halls across the state, it will undergo long-awaited upgrades beginning in Spring 2025. These improvements will enhance various areas within the facility, further supporting the youth we serve. Additionally, our department will break ground on a new gymnasium in Spring 2025. This project, which was initially grant-funded several years ago, faced delays due to environmental factors and state regulations beyond the department's control.

Since May 2023, Santa Cruz County has had a contract with Merced County Probation to support the housing needs should Sonoma not be an option. With Santa Cruz County opening a local SYTF, the department will prioritize serving our youth locally and will only utilize contracting with Sonoma on an as-needed basis, tailored to individual circumstances. The department will not renew the Merced contract.

#### **PART 4: JUVENILE JUSTICE REALIGNMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS (WELF. & INST. CODE §1995(D)(3))**

**Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address the mental health, sex offender treatment, or related behavioral or trauma-based needs of the target population. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response: (Welf. & Inst. Code §1995(d)(3)(A) and (d)(8))**

Effective October 8, 2024, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors approved a local Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) program with the first youth placed in December 2024.

Santa Cruz County Probation contracts with the County's Children's Behavioral Health Division to provide comprehensive behavioral health services in the Juvenile Hall. Children's Behavioral Health offers daily on-site behavioral health support and provides two and a half hours of psychiatric services each week. Services include crisis intervention and assessment, behavioral health evaluations, individual therapy, rehabilitation counseling, case management, advocacy, referrals, and linkage to additional services for consenting youth housed in Juvenile Hall. When necessary, staff also facilitate referrals and linkage to substance use disorder treatment services. In preparation for a youth's transition out of the facility, Children's Behavioral Health provides safety planning and offers court support as resources allow. The department has contracted with HOPE services to provide Sex Offender treatment if needed.

Santa Cruz County applies grant funds to contract with Sonoma County and Merced County for SYTF services for young people currently housed in their facilities.

The Sonoma County Probation Department provides comprehensive treatment related to mental health needs and sex offender specific treatment. The Probation Department currently provides youth with individual and group sex offender treatment within their Juvenile Hall. Sonoma County has historically served most sex offenders within the community and through home removal via placement/out of home care; commitments to Juvenile Hall or SYTF for sex offenses are infrequent. On average, residential juvenile sex offender treatment is between 18-24 months in length.

Behavioral health and trauma services will remain available to all residents housed in Juvenile Hall

regardless of commitment status and in compliance with statute and Title 15 regulations. The Sonoma County Probation Department will expand the current service array and introduce evidence-based services targeting these areas of need, to help build youth resilience, stability, and rehabilitation.

One of the Merced County Probation Department's top priorities is the provision of mental health services to the target population. As part of a larger institutional and community mental health strategy, the Probation Department and Merced County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) have identified treatment needs that are not only required to be addressed by Title 15 Minimum Standards for Juvenile Facilities but are also in the best interest of the target population. In preparation for DJJ realignment, the Merced County Probation Department and BHRS developed a collaborative clinical team servicing the behavioral health needs of youth in the juvenile facility. BHRS has made the commitment to assign a full-time licensed mental health clinician, a full-time unlicensed mental health clinician and a full-time mental health worker to provide direct services to the youth in custody. The Probation Department has committed to funding a full-time peer support specialist as a member of this treatment team. This integrated team is the first of its' kind to be placed at the Merced County Juvenile Facility. They provide a culturally competent and trauma-based service approach when delivering services to youth.

The Santa Cruz County Probation Department continues to collaborate closely with the host county to ensure that essential services are tailored to meet the unique needs of each youth. These services are incorporated into the youth's case plan and delivered through a trauma-informed approach. As youth prepare to transition back into the community, the Probation Department will assess the most appropriate supervision strategy. For younger youth, this may include coordination with the Wraparound Program, while with older youth the department will leverage available resources from the adult and juvenile division to support a successful reentry.

Listed below is a description of the Wraparound (WP) Program which provides a team approach for youth experiencing behavioral health issues. The team includes a Probation Officer, a Transitional Specialist, and a Clinician and generally lasts between 6-12 months in duration.

- Eligibility: Youth must have behavioral health symptoms consistent with at least one DSM-V diagnosis and exhibit functional impairment in at least a couple major life domains ("medical necessity", required by Medi-Cal).
- Referral process: If Probation, in conjunction with the host county determines a youth on probation would benefit/be a fit for wraparound, they will schedule a Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) to include one member of the existing Wraparound program from the Community Based Organization. This meeting is to introduce the program to the youth and family and conduct a brief screening to determine eligibility and interest. Following the CFTM, the Wraparound team will decide whether to accept or not accept the youth into the program at which time the Probation Officer would advise the Court via a memo about the outcome of the CFTM.
- Funding: contracted with Probation (cost reimbursement) and CBH (fee for service, EPSDT Medi-Cal billing for specialty mental health services).
- Direct service providers: Four; two dyads of one Clinician and one Transitional Specialist (TS) that work as a team sharing a caseload.
- Caseload size: 10 clients per dyad (20 total)
- Services include: Frequent CFT meetings with Wraparound staff, PO, parent/caregiver, and natural support the youth identify as their "team" or wants to attend, case management, individual therapy, family therapy, collateral support (for family and non-family), crisis intervention and de-escalation, 24-hour crisis phone line.
- Models used: EBP Wraparound, CFT meetings, targeted case management, Intensive Care Coordination (ICC), and therapeutic modalities such as: CBT, TF-CBT, MI, DBT, and more.
- Clinical tools used: DSM-V, CANS, MSE, PPQ, PSC, Psychosocial Assessment, co-created Treatment Plan, and more.
- Timeline: Typically, 6-12 months, sometimes longer as needed.

The Probation Success Centers (PSC), located in North County (Santa Cruz) and South County (Watsonville), offer integrated services designed to reduce barriers and support successful community reintegration for individuals under probation supervision or returning from jail, prison, or the Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). The PSC model streamlines access to vital resources while fostering collaboration and communication among service providers. Available services include workforce development and job readiness, educational support and computer literacy, behavioral health counseling, substance use disorder assessment and treatment referrals, parenting and family engagement programs, social services navigation, domestic violence and anger management classes, social skills development, and connections to shelter and housing support.

In addition to the Board of Supervisors' approval of a local Short-Term Youth Facility (STYF), the department has taken significant steps to enhance its continuum of care for youth by contracting specialized Sex Offender Treatment Services aimed at addressing the unique needs of this population. Furthermore, the department maintains a strong and ongoing partnership with Children's Behavioral Health to collaboratively identify and implement additional trauma-informed services. These efforts are focused on ensuring that youth in the juvenile justice system receive comprehensive, evidence-based support that promotes rehabilitation, healing, and long-term success.

**Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address support programs or services that promote healthy adolescent development for the target population. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response: (Welf. & Inst. Code §1995(d)(3)(B) and (d)(8))**

Effective October 8, 2024, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors approved a local Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) program. Santa Cruz County Probation currently partners with various community-based organizations to provide services that support and promote healthy adolescent development. These services focus on health, life skills, the arts, enrichment activities, education, vocational training, and engagement with family and natural supports.

In the fall of 2025, the Probation Department will begin developing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to secure services for both community supervision and in-custody programming within Juvenile Hall. With the expansion of programming inside the facility, services will continue to be scaled and tailored based on the individual needs of each young person, ensuring continued support for their rehabilitation and success.

The department utilizes grant funds to appropriate SYTF placements in host counties that utilize programs that leverage evidence-based practices (EBPs) and culturally responsive practices that support adolescent development.

The Sonoma County Probation Department has used grant funds to secure and facilitate evidence based and innovative practices and programs. The department currently has a variety of services and interventions available to residents, administered by trained staff, and using local community-based organizations. The department has compiled a list of services that are either evidence-based or promising practices which would benefit this population. Grant funding has assisted in the procurement of these services and allows the department to provide additional services and training for staff. In addition, grant funds have been used for facility upgrades and/or procurement of equipment and resources for the integration of vocational/job training services.

Merced County has focused on having numerous programs and services provided that will promote healthy adolescent development to include behavioral health evaluations, individual/group/family therapy, psychotropic medication evaluations, anger management counseling, drug and alcohol treatment and education programming and cognitive behavior therapy interventions.



### **Local Program or Services**

Like our host counties, Santa Cruz County utilizes EBPs, promising practices and culturally responsive services focused on adolescent development. Below are services which our target population can access.

- Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance (PVPSA) Todos program- Provides Functional Family Case Management behavioral health services.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)- Youth employment services skills and support.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)- Educational tutoring services and culturally relevant family groups.
- Family Transportation to SYTF for visitations.
- Psychiatric and Psychological Evaluations
- Luna Evening Center- Alternative to detention services focused on skill building and behavioral health support.
- Conflict Resolution Center (CRC)- Restorative Justice education and mediation services.
- Encompass- Wraparound trauma-focused services.
- Community Action Board Family Night- Family engagement focused on strengthening family connections through art and educational services; behavioral health assessments
- Health Services Agency- Children's Behavioral Health – Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

In addition to the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors approving a local SYTF, Sonoma County has expanded its services. Over the past year, they have introduced *Free Voices*, a music program that encourages self-expression through music, fostering healthy adolescent development. Additionally, Sonoma County has launched a culinary arts program, equipping youth with essential cooking skills that support their personal growth and independence.

**Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address family engagement in programs for the target population. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response: Welf. & Inst. Code §1995(d)(3)(C) and (d)(8))**

As part of its commitment to increasing family engagement, the Probation Department makes ongoing efforts to reduce barriers to visitation whenever possible. One example includes the purchase of a 12-passenger van, funded through SB 823 grant resources, to assist families with transportation needs for local or out-of-county placements. This vehicle will be used specifically to support local families requiring transportation for visits, helping ensure meaningful connections are maintained.

Santa Cruz County contracts with Sonoma County and Merced County for SYTF services.

The Sonoma Probation Department is dedicated to securing services for youth and families that promote well-being and assist in our goal of rehabilitation. The Sonoma County Juvenile Hall works closely with Juvenile Probation Officers to provide residents and their families with supportive and necessary transition services. Family engagement is a key part of this transition process, and the department intends to engage with families while the youth is housed within the facility and throughout their transition onto aftercare; and ultimately, successful completion of probation supervision. Grant funding would also be applied toward procuring necessary community-based and media services which could be used within the facility via virtual programming and in-person visitation. In addition, a portion of funding could be maintained to allow flexible spending for youth and families when various funding needs arise. Such spending is commonly referred to in Sonoma County as Flex-Funding or Flex-Funds which would be used to ensure opportunities and support to youth and families by providing linkage to community-based pro-social activities.

Virtual/in-person visitation and programming will assist the department's goal of facilitating family engagement and breaking down barriers to regular communication with family and pro-social connections that the youth may have outside the facility. This also allows for Child and Family Team Meetings to easily be part of our case planning and case management process. These meetings place families in the center of the planning process and encourage formal and informal supports to unite around shared hopes and goals. Plans resulting from Child and Family Team Meetings build on individual and family strengths to address unmet needs and involve the use of community resources.

There are many factors in probation cases which pose a challenge to family engagement. Those factors may include youth who have fractured or estranged familial ties or pro-social connections within the community, youth with increased behavioral health needs, and youth involved in sex offenses with a victim within the family or home. The Probation Department is well suited to address these challenges and is dedicated to improved outcomes for justice involved youth.

Ultimately, grant funds applied toward family engagement would improve the array of services and supports available to youth while they are housed in the facility, engage families through a more individualized approach that emphasis family involvement, and improve child and family well-being.

Merced County SYTF values family engagement as critical for a youth's overall success not only when they are in custody but also when they are out of custody. "Family" can include biological family members, extended and/or fictive kin (including godparents and foster siblings). Equally important are other identified life-long connections such as coaches, mentors, and teachers. Research has shown that individuals who have diverse support systems have better outcomes. Involving families and other supportive individuals in crucial decision-making activities facilitates the identification of the services and resources an individual might need to succeed upon their release.

The Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) and Child and Family Team (CFT) are decision-making bodies for youth and their families. Consistent with Systems of Care principles in the Child and Family Team Meetings, the MDT Meetings are also family driven, inclusive, family centered, strength-based and solution focused. An MDT Meeting will occur within the first 30 days of the youth's entry to the SYTF. The Individual Rehabilitation Plan (IRP) will include objectives and time frames for resolution of targeted needs for intervention. Periodic evaluations of progress toward meeting individual rehabilitation goals will occur at least every 30 days, or as needed. If there is a need to modify the (IRP), an MDT Meeting will be scheduled to involve the entire team.

Within 30 days prior to the youth's release from custody, a CFT Meeting will be scheduled to discuss transitional planning. Development of the transitional plan will include input from the youth, youth's family and/or supportive adults, such as applicable school staff, the assigned supervision Deputy Probation Officer, Behavioral Health, and Recovery Services staff, when applicable. The Deputy Probation Officer assigned to the facility will moderate the CFTM/transitional planning meeting.

Families are also encouraged to participate in monthly Parent Cafés. Parent Cafés are a series of guided conversations to increase community wisdom, build family and social support, and facilitate action to increase the chances of success for incarcerated youth.

The Santa Cruz County Probation Department recognizes that family engagement is essential to a young person's success, both during their time in custody and after their release. "Family" may include biological relatives, extended family members, godparents, or foster siblings. Equally vital are other lifelong connections—such as coaches, mentors, and teachers—collectively known as "natural supports." The department has developed a comprehensive process to identify and engage these key individuals to better support youth throughout their involvement in the juvenile justice system. Research shows that individuals with diverse and consistent support systems experience better long-term outcomes. Actively involving families and natural supports in critical decision-making helps ensure that youth are connected to the services and resources they need to thrive upon reentry.

Youth who are ordered to a period of confinement in a Secure Youth Treatment Facilities (SYTF) shall have an (IRP) developed within 30 days by a (MDT) to include participation and input from the youth and family. This meeting may also include representatives from both the Juvenile Hall and Juvenile Division of Probation, Santa Cruz County Office of Education, Children's Behavioral Health, and other identified providers. Areas of focus within this plan shall:

- a. Identify the youth's needs in relation to treatment, education, and development, including any special needs they may have in relation to health, mental, emotional health, disabilities, or gender-related or other special needs.
- b. Describe the programming, treatment, and education to be provided to the youth in relation to the identified needs during the commitment period.
- c. Reflect, and be consistent with, the principles of trauma-informed, evidenced-based, and culturally responsive care.

Within 90 days of a youth's scheduled release from custody, a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting will be held to develop a comprehensive transition plan. This plan will be created with input from the youth's family and/or supportive adults, including school staff (as appropriate), the assigned Probation Officer, the Stable Transition and Re-Entry (STAR) team, and Behavioral Health staff when applicable. The Probation Officer will facilitate the MDT meeting and lead the transitional planning process.

The transition plan will address key areas of support, including identifying available community-based resources, coordinating medical and behavioral health referrals, and ensuring access to psychotropic medication if needed. It will also outline the youth's educational needs and connect them to vocational or employment resources. Additionally, the assigned Probation Officer will review the re-entry terms and conditions of supervision with the youth and their family to ensure clarity and understanding.

The Sonoma County Probation Department currently utilizes several approaches consistent with Santa Cruz County Probation Department to connect youth to families while they are confined. As noted above, Sonoma County is currently using virtual technology in addition to in-person visitation to provide contact between confined youth and their families. This is the same practice we have been using in Santa Cruz County. The assigned Santa Cruz County Probation Officer will immediately work with families of committed youth to determine the ability to connect virtually, and efforts will be made to ensure that families have access to technology that will support contact with the youth who may be housed by the host county, when in-person visitation are unavailable.

Santa Cruz County facilitates family engagement as pivotal in the rehabilitative process. In addition to regular visitation, youth have access to phone and virtual access to their family. The department allows for flexibility for visitation with youth on non-visitation day when a youth's family or natural support is unable to make the scheduled visitation time on a case-by-case basis. The department works in collaboration with families when a need arises to support them in removing barriers to visit their loved one. Additionally, our department further supports transportation when needed for visitation. For youth housed with a host county transportation continues to be provided through the use of our 12-passenger van. In this past year the department provided 14 visitation transports to Sonoma County. Families and Natural Supports are also engaged in transition and case planning to provide optimal support and continuity throughout the youths stay in SYTF.

**Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address reentry, including planning and linkages to support employment, housing, and continuing education for the target population. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response: (Welf. & Inst. Code §1995(d)(3)(D) and (d)(8))**

The Santa Cruz County STAR Program, funded by a Title II grant through the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) and supported by the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), plays a key role in supporting the target population. The program is designed to strengthen the reentry process for youth and reduce disparities within the juvenile justice system. Led by two community-based Re-entry Specialists and a Program Coordinator, STAR focuses on improving system coordination and services for youth who have been removed from their homes.

Youth are referred to STAR by Probation Officers up to 90 days prior to their return to the community, ensuring a timely and supportive transition. Priority is given to youth housed locally to help expedite their reintegration. Probation Officers collaborate closely with the STAR team, participating in weekly case review meetings where information about each youth and their family is shared. These meetings typically include the Juvenile Hall Division Director, Assistant Division Director, Re-entry Specialists, and the Program Coordinator to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to reentry planning.

Re-entry Specialists utilize the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment tool to develop individualized re-entry plans for each youth. The assigned Re-entry Specialist works closely with staff at the host county facility to ensure a smooth and coordinated transition back to Santa Cruz County. This process includes making referrals to local community partners and assessing the need for additional support services, such as the Wraparound Program or the Probation Success Center. These determinations are typically made during the Child and Family Team (CFT) Meeting, held approximately 90 days prior to the youth's anticipated release.

Grant Funds directly support staff supervision (Deputy Probation Officer positions) in conjunction with alternatives to detention. Services supported by the grant:

- Conflict Resolution Center (CRC)- Restorative Justice education and mediation services.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)- Youth employment services skills, rental assistance, and educational advocacy.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)- Educational tutoring services and culturally relevant family groups.
- Behavioral Health and psychiatric evaluation services.
- Luna Evening Center- Alternative to detention services focused on skill building and behavioral health support.
- Family visitation to SYTF.
- Travel cost for all commitment and placement visits.

Effective October 8, 2024, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors approved the establishment of a local Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) program. Once a young person is eligible to transition into the community, our department will implement our local reentry process which will largely mirror Sonoma's process but with an individualized approach. Additionally, the Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors further approved our department to develop a local Camp Program, which will serve as a less restrictive placement or stepdown to further support the reentry process. The department plans to launch our Camp program in May 2025.

In this past year, the department has partnered with Cabrillo College and Santa Cruz County Office of Education (SCCOE) to expand access to higher education through the Rising Scholar Program and University of California Santa Cruz Underground Scholar program. The partnership has allowed for an in-person career exploration class to be provided on site at the juvenile hall. Currently almost 50% of the youth housed are connected to the Rising Scholars program.

**Describe how the County plans to apply grant funds to address evidence-based, promising, trauma-informed and culturally responsive programs or services for the target population. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response: (Welf. & Inst. Code §1995(d)(3)(E) and (d)(8))**

Santa Cruz County collaborates with Children's Behavioral Health (CBH) to provide evidence-based, promising, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive services. These services are tailored to each young person through various individualized therapeutic approaches. CBH offers a comprehensive range of Specialty Mental Health Services, including assessments, treatment planning, therapy, case management, and, when necessary, Intensive Care Coordination (ICC), Intensive Home-Based Services (IHBS), and Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS). Their current evidence-based practices include Motivational Interviewing (MI), Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Internal Family Systems (IFS), and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT).

In addition to the above therapeutic approaches from our county partners, the below services are also provided to support young people with their underlining needs.

#### Safe Dates

The dating abuse prevention program targets both male and female youth, with the following goals: 1) to raise awareness of healthy versus abusive relationships; 2) to educate about dating abuse, its causes, and consequences; 3) to provide skills and resources for helping themselves or friends in abusive relationships; and 4) to teach skills for developing healthy relationships, including positive communication, anger management, and conflict resolution.

#### Parenting Education

Positive Parenting offers young fathers and mothers support and education surrounding their role as healthy parental figures. Young people learn parenting skills and techniques and solutions to solve current and future parenting problems with an emphasis on the building of strong families.

#### Parent Teen Mediation (PTM)

The aim of Parent Teen Mediation is to give teens and their parents/guardians the chance to discuss their issues constructively in a safe and facilitated meeting. Trained mediators teach them positive communication skills, facilitate mutual understanding, work to strengthen relationships, and help parents and teens to develop mutually acceptable agreements that promote healthy interaction and home life.

The Sonoma County Probation Department provides the following programs as evidence-based or promising, trauma-informed and culturally responsive services for the target population (not all services will be provided):

#### Positive Youth Justice

The organizing framework for the program is rooted in youth development research. The focus on key assets: skills (learning & doing) and connections (attaching & belonging). Behavior change and development are pursued through six practice areas: Work, Relationships, Health, Education, Community, and Creativity.

#### CBT for anger-related problems in children and adolescents

\*Does not refer to a specific program\*

This variant of CBT focuses specifically on residents who have anger-related problems, including aggression, self-control, problem-solving, social competencies, and anger experience. For residents with anger problems, CBT is designed to 1) change how anger is experienced (e.g., how quickly a youth becomes angry, the intensity of the anger, and the amount of time spent feeling angry), 2) reduce aggressive behavior, and 3) improve social functioning.

#### Aggression Replacement Training (ART)

A multidimensional psychoeducational intervention designed to promote prosocial behavior in chronically aggressive and violent adolescents using techniques to develop social skills, emotional control, and moral reasoning. Program techniques are designed to teach youths how to control their angry impulses and take perspectives other than their own. The main goal is to reduce aggression and violence among youth by providing them with opportunities to learn prosocial skills in place of aggressive behavior.

#### Girls Moving On

Girls Moving On is a gender-informed cognitive-behavioral program for at-risk girls between the ages of 12 to 21 years. Girls Moving On is a comprehensive program that uses several complementary approaches, such as relational theory, motivational interviewing, and cognitive-behavioral intervention. The program is designed to provide girls and young women with alternatives to criminal activity by assisting them to identify and mobilize personal and community resources. Girls Moving On consists of seven modules: two are delivered on an individual basis and five are delivered in a group-based setting.

#### Cognitive Behavioral Interventions - Core Youth (CBI - CY)

This curriculum is designed to provide a thorough intervention that broadly targets all criminogenic needs for juvenile populations. Relies on a cognitive-behavioral approach to teaching individuals strategies to manage risk factors in a way that is developmentally appropriate for youth. The program places heavy emphasis on skill building activities to assist with cognitive, social, emotional, and coping skill development. Additionally, it provides modifications so that youth with mental illness can participate, though it is not dedicated exclusively to this population.

#### Triple P Parenting

Provides 17 core parenting strategies/skills that promote children's development by creating positive relationships and teaching new skills and behaviors.

#### Just Beginning

A structured visitation program designed specifically for young noncustodial fathers, particularly those in juvenile or criminal justice facilities with the goals of building and strengthening the relationship between father and child.

#### Supportive Virtual Family Time Program

Designed to create structure, guidance, and training for those supervising virtual parent-child visits, with the goal of helping them facilitate positive remote supervised visits between parents and their children in out-of-home care. Geared toward both private agency supervised visitation providers as well as case

workers who will be supervising these virtual visits.

#### Prolonged Exposure Therapy for Adolescents (PE-A)

PE-A is a therapeutic treatment where clients are encouraged to repeatedly approach situations or activities they are avoiding because they remind them of their trauma (in vivo exposure) as well as to revisit the traumatic memory several times through retelling it (imaginal exposure).

Psychoeducation about common reactions to trauma as well as breathing retraining exercises are also included in the treatment. The aim of in vivo and imaginal exposure is to help clients emotionally process their traumatic memories through imaginal and in vivo exposure. Through these procedures, they learn that they can safely remember the trauma and experience trauma reminders, that the distress that initially results from confrontations with these reminders decreases over time, and that they can tolerate this distress.

#### Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

EMDR is guided by the Adaptive Information Processing (AIP) model, which is based on the theory that symptoms arise from maladaptive stored memories that include the thoughts, beliefs, emotions, body sensations, and behavioral responses that were experienced at the time of the traumatic event. This 8-phase psychotherapy treatment was originally designed to alleviate the symptoms of trauma. During the EMDR trauma processing phases, guided by standardized procedures, the client attends to emotionally disturbing material in brief sequential doses that include the client's beliefs, emotions, and body sensations associated with the traumatic event while simultaneously focusing on an external stimulus. Therapist directed bilateral eye movements are commonly used external stimulus, but a variety of other stimuli including hand-tapping and audio bilateral stimulation are often used.

Merced County Probation Department has a full clinical team to address the social and emotional needs of all youth who are in their care. In addition, they employ peer support specialist who have previously been impacted in some way by the "system." All of these providers, in addition, their institutional officers will provide services and intervention that are evidence-based, trauma-informed and culturally responsive. Relative services and interventions will include but will not be limited to:

1. Relationships- They will work with youth to cultivate positive and healthy relationships. Family Therapy will be encouraged and through therapy, will offer safe spaces for healing of damaged relationships. Caring adults, which include staff, family and service providers will play an important role in guiding youth's healing from trauma and equipping them with the protective factors that will help them succeed.
2. Wellness (Self-regulation skills and social-emotional learning)- Cognitive-behavioral treatment strategies will be implemented to discourage anti-social behavior, reinforce positive behavior, and enhance intrinsic motivation to change.
3. Behavioral health and medical support- All youth will be evaluated to determine the need for immediate mental health services. Youth will be screened for acute needs that require further intervention.
4. Behavior Management Systems (BMS) will encourage and reinforce positive behaviors while discouraging and reducing negative behaviors. BMS will teach more adaptive replacement behaviors through positive behavior interventions. Behavioral health assessments will be utilized to identify and address the needs of youth exposed to traumatic events. Incentives will be provided to youth for reaching certain milestones in their program.

Locally the Probation Department utilizes various services from community partners which are evidence-



based or promising practices and are culturally responsive for our Wards and SYTF youth to ensure the best possible outcome for success.

- Conflict Resolution Center (CRC)- Restorative Justice education and mediation services.
- Funding of Supervising Deputy Probation Officers who utilize EBPs (MI, EPICS, Assessments, Coaching Model, and CFTs).
- Behavioral Health and psychiatric evaluation services.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)- Educational tutoring services and culturally relevant family groups.
- Luna Evening Center- Alternative to detention services focused on skill building and behavioral health support.
- Family visitation to SYTF.
- Travel costs for all commitment and placement visits.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)- Workforce employment services for youth.

Data indicators for 2024 reflect decreasing numbers of youth entering the juvenile justice system, low recidivism rates and increasing diversions. The collective impact of the above noted services and programs have contributed to reducing system impacts on young people in concert with the department's efforts to prioritize diversion and prevention services. The department consistently assesses the efficacy of the programs and services and the outcomes to inform future programming. In the fall of 2025, the Probation Department will begin developing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to enhance and expand in-custody services, further addressing the needs of the youth we serve.

**Describe whether and how the County plans to apply grant funds to include services or programs for the target population that are provided by non-governmental or community-based providers. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response: (Welf. & Inst. Code §1995(d)(3)(F) and (d)(8))**

Santa Cruz County Probation partners and contracts with various community-based organizations to provide services that serve 707 Wards and youth formerly in SYTF. Because the majority of youth served by probation and community service providers are located in South County, services are concentrated in that area to reach youth who are most burdened by transportation and financial barriers. Below are some of the services providers:

- Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance (PVPSA) TODOS program- Provides Functional Family Case Management behavioral health services.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)- Workforce employment services for youth and Student

## Success Project.

- FOOD, WHAT?!(FW)- A youth empowerment and food justice organization that uses organic farming as a vehicle for growing stronger healthy, and resilient youth.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)- Educational tutoring services and culturally relevant family groups.
- Conflict Resolution Center (CRC)- Restorative Justice education and mediation services.
- Encompass- Wraparound trauma-focused services.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board Family Night- Family engagement focused on strengthening family connections through Art and educational services.
- Walnut Avenue Family and Women's Center- School based programming focused on reducing dating violence.

Over the past year, our partners have remained essential in delivering impactful services to the youth and families we serve. Their collaboration and dedication, combined with our collective efforts, have contributed significantly to the continued reduction in the number of youth on active supervision.

A testament to this success is the decrease from 129 youth on active supervision at the end of 2023 to 94 by the end of 2024. Additionally, the number of new youth placed in out-of-home care (STRTP) was reduced from four in 2023 to three in 2024. These positive trends reflect the strength of our partnerships and the effectiveness of our shared commitment to supporting youth in our community.

## PART 5: FACILITY PLAN (WELF & INST. CODE § 1995(D)(4))

Provide a detailed facility plan indicating which facilities will be used to house or confine the target population at varying levels of offense severity and treatment need, and improvements to accommodate long-term commitments. Facility information shall also include information on how the facilities will ensure the safety and protection of youth having different ages, genders, special needs, and other relevant characteristics. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response: (Welf. & Inst. Code (d)(8))

The Santa Cruz SYTF program housing is determined based on classification, risk level, individual needs, and overall safety. Upon intake, all youth complete a gender identity form. Each youth is provided a private room equipped with a sink and toilet, with individual showers available as needed. The classification system is continuously assessed throughout a youth's commitment, allowing for flexible housing in either unit of the facility. A direct supervision model reinforces this system, ensuring services are tailored to individual needs while continuously monitoring safety, progress, and housing arrangements.

A Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT), consisting of Juvenile Hall management, medical staff, behavioral health clinicians, supervisors, a psychiatrist, Senior Group Supervisor staff, teachers, intake and placement probation supervisors, meets weekly to review each youth's progress, successes, and challenges. The facility's rehabilitative treatment and programming are rooted in trauma-informed and culturally responsive care, addressing the unique needs of every youth.

Santa Cruz County further contracts with Sonoma County and Merced County for SYTF services.

## **Sonoma County**

Sonoma County uses a classification system, direct supervision model, and services targeted to address the individual needs of the residents. Male and female commitments will be housed separately; however, residents may be housed in various units throughout the facility given the resident's needs or any need due to overall safety and security of the facility. Residents will be assessed using the Positive Achievement and Change Tool (PACT), in addition to other risk assessment tools as appropriate, and Sonoma County Juvenile Hall will follow accepted juvenile justice best practices. Case management and supervision for these residents begins at the process of commitment with a review or completion of a risk and needs assessment; the development, implementation and monitoring of an individualized case plan; use of motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioral interventions; application of structured evidence based practices such as "CCP" (Core Correctional Practices); and imposition of appropriate sanctions and the use of incentives for positive behavior and change, as a means of holding residents accountable and improving outcomes. Case planning and supervision practices for committed residents address key issues such as risk, responsivity, competency development, reparation of harm, community protection, family dynamics, adolescent development, and services to address criminogenic needs. These goals will be attained by adhering to the following objectives:

Adhering to case planning and commitment/supervision practices that address risk, need and responsivity; providing youth with appropriate treatment services based on identified criminogenic needs; and facilitating community safety through containment of youth committed for violations of the crimes specified in 707(b) of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

Housing of residents will vary based on classification, risk level, individual needs to ensure safety of the residents within the facility. The classification system is an ongoing process throughout a commitment, and residents may be housed in different units throughout the facility. A direct supervision model supports the classification system, and services targeted to address individual needs of the residents, allowing for constant review of an individual's safety, progress, and housing needs.

## **Merced County**

It is Merced County Probation's commitment to creating spaces that foster rehabilitation and encourages positive interactions between youth and staff. As they look at long-term planning, they envision a building (campus) that supports learning and training programs. This campus will offer several certification training programs through their partnerships with local education departments and colleges. As secure youth can transition into a step-down or reentry program, they will have the opportunity to access additional programming in the community to assist in the continuum of care process. Designing a supportive and secure campus requires a great deal of forethought, resources, and careful planning. Unfortunately, many counties, including Merced County, have not had the funding to create state-of-the art buildings that exist in larger counties. Creating this type of facility design will require additional funding that SB 823 is providing to counties. Most of SB 823 funds have been utilized to create and expand evidence-based programs that will help youth acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to live successful, crime-free lives. Nevertheless, Merced County Probation recognizes that effective planning and service delivery will need to bridge different stakeholders, agencies, services, and supports.

Upon admission, all youth take a series of assessments, used to determine the youth's level of need and housing assignments.

The following assessments will be completed upon admission into the facility:

- MAYSI (Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument)

- Victim vulnerability
- Custody classification
- PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act)

Youth will be housed in accordance to their criminal charges, age, and vulnerability to ensure safety. Assessments will determine the least restrictive housing unit for youth being booked into detention.

Over the past year, Juvenile Hall has made significant structural improvements to better support youth behavioral health and rehabilitation. Two soft counseling rooms have been added within the unit, allowing youth to receive counseling services without leaving their living area.

Additional enhancements include the development of a new library, and remodeled classrooms designed to foster a positive learning environment. The updated classrooms are equipped with media capabilities for distance learning and upgraded technology to enhance educational opportunities.

To support the implementation of the local SYTF and Camp program, the facility has also hired two new Group Supervisors. These improvements collectively enhance long-term commitments, safety, and the overall rehabilitation process for youth.

## **PART 6: RETAINING THE TARGET POPULATION IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM (WELF & INST. CODE § 1995(D)(5))**

**Describe how the plan will incentivize or facilitate the retention of the target population within the jurisdiction and rehabilitative foundation of the juvenile justice system, in lieu of transfer to the adult criminal justice system. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response: (Welf. & Inst. Code (d)(8))**

The Santa Cruz County Probation Department currently implements evidence-based, culturally responsive and promising practices designed to improve outcomes for youth while promoting public safety. These efforts are a critical step toward reducing the transfer of youth into the adult criminal justice system and minimizing commitments to the Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF).

By providing tailored, proactive services and prioritizing disposition recommendations in the least restrictive, appropriate settings, we aim to reduce recidivism and strengthen support for youth within the Juvenile Justice System. Utilizing commitment programs offered by the host county, we expect to further lower recidivism rates and prevent transfers to the adult criminal justice system. Collaborative partners—including the Santa Cruz County Juvenile Court, District Attorney's Office, and Public Defender's Office—work closely together to ensure every youth receives fair, consistent, and individualized treatment throughout the process.

We are committed to maintaining low Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) commitments by leveraging our continuum of services. Each case is thoroughly evaluated before Court recommendations are made to ensure the most effective, individualized interventions are applied. Probation utilizes the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS) risk and needs assessment tool to assess the likelihood of reoffending, identify criminogenic needs, and guide service delivery accordingly. This approach allows for the integration of court-ordered goals into each youth's program, supporting their progress toward becoming law-abiding, self-sufficient members of the community.

Probation remains dedicated to advancing rehabilitative efforts and connecting youth to appropriate community-based services with the goal of reducing recidivism and minimizing the need for transfers to the adult criminal justice system or SYTF commitments. A case will only be transferred to the adult system or SYTF if the Juvenile Court determines that juvenile justice services are insufficient for rehabilitation. The overarching goal is to provide comprehensive support that reduces the need for adult system involvement, reserving such measures for the most serious cases.

Our philosophy and approach are supported by our continuum of services and supervision:

- Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance (PVPSA) Todos program- Provides Functional Family Case Management behavioral health services.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)- Workforce employment services for youth.
- FOOD, WHAT?!(FW)- A youth empowerment and food justice organization that uses organic farming as a vehicle for growing stronger healthy, and resilient youth.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)- Educational tutoring services and culturally relevant family groups.
- Conflict Resolution Center (CRC)- Restorative Justice education and mediation services.
- Encompass - Wraparound trauma-focused services.
- Luna Y Sol Community Action Board (CAB)Family Night- Family engagement focused on strengthening family connections through Art and educational services.
- Encompass Stable Transition and Reentry (STAR)- Supports strengthening reentry services for youth and linkage to services to address identified needs.
- Walnut Avenue Family and Women's Center- School based programming focused on reducing dating violence.
- Student Success Project- Provides supportive services for youth identified at-risk to prevent justice involvement.
- Aztecas Soccer Academy- Provides soccer as a pro-social activity along with education support services to divert youth from systemic involvement.
- Success Centers- Centralized locations with multiple services such as employment, education, recovery support/assessment and basic needs such as clothing and food access.

The above partnerships have had a significant collective impact, not only reducing our overall caseloads, but more importantly, ensuring that over 80% of the youth we serve remain on general supervision caseloads—without the need for escalation to higher levels of supervision or out-of-home placement. In 2024, we provided all our service providers with training in the Integrated Core Practice Model (ICPM), which guides how we engage and support youth and their families. These training opportunities have fostered alignment across partners, strengthening our collective ability to support youth success and prevent further system involvement.

## **PART 7: REGIONAL EFFORT (WELF & INST. CODE § 1995(D)(6))**

**Describe any regional agreements or arrangements supported by the County's block grant**

**allocation. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response: (Welf. & Inst. Code (d)(8))**

While the county has launched its own SYTF, it remains committed to contracting with other counties for youth already placed elsewhere to ensure continuity in their rehabilitative progress. Additionally, Santa Cruz County will continue to maintain regional agreements with Sonoma and Merced to host local youth when needed on a case-by-case basis when it is in the best interest of the young person to receive services outside the local SYTF.

The Santa Cruz County Probation Department continues to allocate annual funding received under Section 1991 to cover the costs associated with housing youth in Sonoma. Since May 1, 2024 three youth were served in Sonoma. No youth were placed in Merced. Currently, the daily housing rate for each youth placed in Sonoma County is \$375. Any remaining funds at the end of the fiscal year will be reinvested to strengthen and enhance our continuum of care for youth who may require placement in a host county. If placement in Merced County becomes necessary, these funds will also be used to cover housing costs at a daily rate of \$367 per youth.

**PART 8: DATA (WELF & INST. CODE § 1995(D)(7))**

**Describe how data will be collected on youth served by the block grant. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response:**

The Santa Cruz County Probation Department utilizes a web-based application with a SQL server backend that enables the department to coordinate, communicate, record, and track each step of a youth's supervision process. Built-in features allow for streamlined case management, while multiple layers of security provide system protection at a centralized data center, application and user levels that is Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) compliant.

The system allows for full case monitoring and reporting capabilities for both adult and juvenile clients and includes an institution module. The system is scalable and flexible and allows for tracking, recording, and reporting seamlessly. Moreover, it allows for:

- Integrated forms generation
- Document management
- The ability to create custom events to track outcomes
- Integration with third party assessment provider (JAIS)
- Reports generation

Different tools and data sources will be utilized to measure desired outcomes. Data is maintained in our case management system to retrieve client characteristics reports and information from case management records. The Probation Department routinely reports information in the Juvenile Court and Probation Statistical System (CPSS), annually through the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) annual report and produce monthly data blasts. This information is used to direct resources and help guide decision making for the department's management team.

The data tracked:

- Race/Ethnicity

- Age
- Gender
- Residence
- Length of Stay
- Services
- Charges/Offenses
- JAIS
- Education
- SYTF Placement
- Stepdown Placement
- Visitation/Transportation
- Recidivism
- Transfers to Adult Court

**Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response:**

Our department recognizes the vital role of data in measuring the collective impact of our work alongside our partners in serving youth and families. Internally, we distribute a monthly *Data Blast* to keep our staff informed on progress and key trends. Additionally, we produce division reports that highlight our collaborative efforts with the community in supporting youth and families. These reports are shared with various stakeholders and commissions to showcase the meaningful outcomes driven by our partnerships.

In November 2025, our Juvenile Division hosted a groundbreaking justice convening, *Transformation in Juvenile Justice: Reflecting on the Past and Shaping the Future*. The event featured esteemed leaders from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Office of Youth and Community Restoration, former probation leadership, and local system and community representatives. It served as a powerful platform to reflect on 30 years of juvenile justice reform in Santa Cruz County while setting a vision for the future.

**Describe outcome measures that will be utilized to measure or determine the results of programs and interventions supported by block grant funds. Describe any progress on this element since May 1, 2024, at the end of your response:**

**Goal:** The Santa Cruz County Probation Department has a strong commitment to program monitoring and quality improvement. Programs and services will be monitored to determine if they are productive and should continue to be a part of our continuum of services with the host county and locally. Individual, family, and community indicators will be examined to determine whether the host county service model and local supervision is meeting the needs of our youth and families.

Planning	ACTIVITIES		OUTCOMES		
Identification of needs	Services Provided	Who we reach	Outcome Indicator	Outcome	Measurement Tool

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth receive the physical and behavioral health support to progress toward a healthy life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual youth and family counseling, case management and family events/activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual youth and families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of youth who obtained behavioral health services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build youth knowledge and skills.</li> <li>Re-engage youth with families and communities.</li> <li>Reduce recidivism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance of counseling sessions at host county and locally.</li> <li>Information entered in Caseload Explorer.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family will receive support to be able to meet with confined youth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referrals for transportation, housing, food, and other support such as childcare, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/guardians and other family members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of families who obtained referrals to transportation, housing, food &amp; other services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families have the opportunity to engage with youth in confinement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitation/Contact date information obtained from youth and families and host county.</li> <li>Information entered in Caseload Explorer.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth receive education and employment readiness support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of GED or diploma. Employability skills training and post-secondary education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual youth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of youth who obtained skills, received certificate or diploma, obtained.</li> <li>Access to post-secondary education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build youth knowledge and skills and reduce recidivism.</li> <li>Educational/Vocational enrollments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information obtained from host county or local education placement.</li> <li>Academic outcomes.</li> <li>Attendance</li> <li>Information entered in Caseload Explorer.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth obtain and maintain employment upon their release.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist youth obtain employment upon release. Refer to Probation Service Center (PSC) for employment or vocational training programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual youth, families, and communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of youth who obtained employment</li> <li># of youth maintained for at least 180 days.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build youth knowledge and engagement skills.</li> <li>Re-engage youth with families and communities.</li> <li>Reduce recidivism.</li> <li>Obtaining living wages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information obtained from youth and PSC – Information entered in Caseload Explorer.</li> </ul>



The comprehensive multi-agency plan developed by the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council leverages identified resources and strategies to establish a continuum of interventions focused on delinquency prevention, early intervention, supervision, treatment, and, when necessary, incarceration of youth. These efforts are assessed using objective, standardized metrics, with results shared publicly to promote transparency and guide future decision-making. Key performance indicators will include program engagement, completion rates, and reductions in recidivism. By prioritizing positive outcomes for both youth and the community, we consistently assess meaningful results while maximizing the impact of block grant funding.

#### **PART 9: OTHER UPDATES: DESCRIBE ANY PROGRESS ON ELEMENTS SINCE MAY 1, 2024: (WELF. & INST. CODE (D)(8))**

Provide a description of progress made regarding any plan elements and any objectives and outcomes in the prior year's plan, to the extent that they have not already been described above.

In 2024, three out of four youth who successfully returned to the community also had their probation supervision successfully closed. All of them secured gainful employment, and two had their records sealed. Notably, one individual not only found stable employment but also pursued further educational opportunities. These remarkable achievements were made possible through the unwavering support of our dedicated community-based partners, whose collaboration played a crucial role in ensuring a smooth and successful reentry. Their collective efforts continue to empower youth on their path to long-term success and stability.