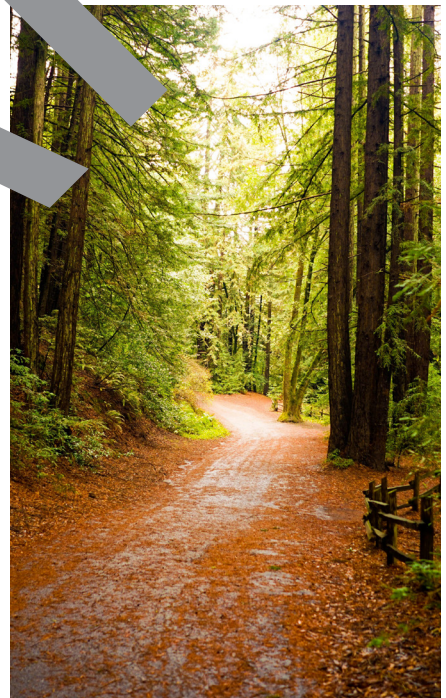




# SB 823 REALIGNMENT PLAN

## ALAMEDA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT



*JANUARY 2022*

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# Background & Processes

The Alameda County SB 823 Subcommittee was convened in early 2021, in accordance with legislation. The Subcommittee accepted the significant amount of work and responsibility to create the plan presented here. The Subcommittee met regularly and publicly as an entire body, and developed workgroups with specific areas of focus. The workgroups made the Subcommittee more efficient by allowing multiple topics to be explored simultaneously. These workgroups convened weekly during the summer and drafted the substance of the plan presented here.

Both the Subcommittee and workgroups were supported by subject matter experts, community member input, and background research. As part of this process, at the request of the Subcommittee, Impact Justice also conducted focus groups and interviews with currently and formerly incarcerated youth, both locally at the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) and virtually with those in state custody at the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). The input of these young people was invaluable, and we sincerely thank them for their willingness to share their experiences and recommendations with us.

## ***Subcommittee Composition & Membership***

Our Subcommittee was approved by the Board of Supervisors, whose members are included in the following table:

Agency	Name & Title	Email	Phone Number
Chief Probation Officer (Chair)	Marcus Dawal, Interim Chief Probation Officer	mdawal@acgov.org	(510) 268-7233
District Attorney's Office	Matthew Golde, Assistant District Attorney or Designee	matthew.golde@acgov.org	(510) 667-4470
Public Defender's Office	Brendon Woods, Public Defender or Designee	Brendon.woods@acgov.org Alphonso.Mance@acgov.org	(510) 272-6624 (510) 667-4496
Department of Social Services	Lori Cox, Agency Director or Michelle Love (Designee) Assistant Agency Director	lori.cox@acgov.org lovemi@acgov.org	(510) 567-8100

Department of Mental Health	Dr. Karyn Tribble, Director or Juan Taizan (Designee), Forensic, Diversion, & Re-Entry Services Director	Karyn.Tribble@acgov.org juan.taizan@acgov.org	(510) 567-8100
Office of Education	Karen Monroe, Superintendent or Monica Vaughan (Designee), Chief of Schools	lkmonroe@acoe.org mvaughan@acoe.org	(510) 670-4144 (510) 670-4590
Court Representative	Honorable Judge Ursula Jones Dickson or Designee	udickson@alameda.courts.ca.gov	(510) 618-1105
Alameda County Bar Association	Andrea Zambrana, Director of Court Appointed Attorneys Program (CAAP) or Megan Low (Designee), Forensic Social Worker	andrea@acbanet.org megan@acbanet.org	(510) 302-2202
Oakland Police Department	LeRonne Armstrong, Police Chief or Designee	larmstrong@oaklandca.gov	(510) 238-3366

**Additional Subcommittee Participants**

Agency	Name & Title	Email	Phone Number
Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission (JJDPCC)	Vamsey Palagummi, Chair or Designee	vamseyp@gmail.com	(510) 462-9723
Delinquency Prevention Network (DPN)	Emily Young, Co-Chair or Lynn Gardner, (Designee) Co-Chair	Emily.Young@hayward-ca.gov	(510) 293-7048
Free Our Kids Coalition	Ericson Amaya Hayden Renato or Designee	EAmaya@afsc.org	
Youth Representative	Xochtil Larios or Designee	510Xochtillarios@gmail.com	
Community Member, District 1 Representative	Caryn Quezada or Designee	carynquezada@gmail.com	(925) 323-2093
Community Member, District 2 Representative	Vacant		
Community Member, District 3 Representative	Erin Palacios or Designee	epalacios@ylc.org	(619) 245-8928
Community Member, District 4 Representative	Trevor Arceneaux or Designee	trevor@flyprogram.org	(510) 813-6691
Community Member, District 5 Representative	Kelly Thompson or Designee	kthompson@cbmcffc.org	(510- 562-3731 x18)

## ***Purpose & Intentions Moving Forward***

This SB 823 Realignment Plan, if approved by the Board of Supervisors, shall be submitted to the Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR) no later than January 1, 2022, and will remain in effect through April 30, 2023.

The SB 823 Subcommittee will convene to review, revise, and update this document prior to the next required submission to the OYCR, which is on or before May 1, 2023.

The Subcommittee will consider and ensure that the first revised plan, due in 2023, includes the following items that were either not discussed or that the Subcommittee was otherwise unable to conclude addressing given the timeframe and volume of considerations in completing the first Realignment Plan:

- Non-custodial step-downs
- Custodial alternatives and step-downs
- A complete array of programs, services, placements, and facilities for girls and gender expansive youth
- Programs, services, placements, and facilities for the target population other than those youth committed to the Secure Youth Treatment Facility
- A comprehensive plan to review and assess data, including data that will assist in determining whether there is an actual and/or percentage increase in the target population or of any sub-group within the target population

Thereafter SB 823 Subcommittee will annually revise the plan in order to update and develop the SB 823 Realignment Plan for submission to the OYCR on or before May 1 of each year. However, the SB 823 Subcommittee will undertake a complete redevelopment of the SB 823 Plan every third year, beginning with the plan due on or before May 1, 2025.

It is the intent of this Subcommittee to remain regularly engaged in the SB 823 planning and to receive regular reports on implementation, convening at least quarterly thereafter.

It is intended that the structure and composition of the Subcommittee remain the same subject to changes in law, regulations or state guidance. Bylaws and procedures related to organization process, operation, and membership will be developed, which is in keeping with best practices for state legislative bodies. Clear procedures regarding membership turnover, will also be articulated. These bylaws will be developed, adopted, and adhered to in accordance with any rules and bylaws set by the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council. The following Charter and Values statements were developed by the Subcommittee to clearly articulate and guide its work.

## ***Charter***

The Alameda County SB 823 Subcommittee is charged with preparing a plan to serve youth realigned under SB 823. This plan shall be comprehensive, addressing not only detention and housing, but treatment, services, reentry preparation, and reentry as well. Ultimately, this will prepare young people for success outside of the system.

We are charged to identify and use evidence-based and promising practices and programs that improve the outcomes of youth and public safety, reduce the transfer of youth into the adult criminal justice system, ensure that dispositions are in the least restrictive appropriate environment, reduce and then eliminate racial and ethnic disparities, and reduce the use of confinement in the juvenile justice system by utilizing community-based responses and interventions.



## **Values**

The Alameda County SB 823 Subcommittee is committed to the success of system-involved youth through the implementation of innovative strategies that promote healing and address their needs, the needs of victims and families, improve public safety, and promote overall community wellbeing.

The Subcommittee recognizes that system-involved youth have overwhelmingly experienced trauma and neglect on both individual and systemic levels, which has often resulted in their system involvement. Thus, the Subcommittee considers that providing youth with healing-centered and trauma-informed services that address these harms is vital in preventing harms from recurring. To this end, we are committed to complying with the mandates of SB 823, ensuring that impacted youth have access to education, programming, treatment, and services that are both developmentally and therapeutically appropriate. We are determined to go above and beyond these requirements whenever possible, with the ultimate goal of best supporting youth success outside of the system. We also recognize that family (defined as broadly as possible) relationships and reunification are often key components of successful treatment and reentry, and will seek every opportunity to promote and strengthen familial connections.

We acknowledge that victims of crime and communities have been harmed, and approach those harms directly. We address the needs of victims, in compliance with the California State Constitution and Marsy's Law, and provide a meaningful opportunity for accountability. The Subcommittee is strongly committed to the values and principles of restorative justice, which centers the needs of the person harmed while providing support and structure to the young person as they seek to make things right.

The work of the Subcommittee is guided by a public health approach and is informed by evidence-based practices that improve outcomes for system-involved youth, reduce recidivism, and increase public safety. The Subcommittee recognizes that the juvenile justice system disproportionately impacts communities, families, and youth of color. To this end, we are committed to reducing and eliminating racial/ethnic disparities and to promoting racial/ethnic equity through culturally affirming practices and programming.



# Defining the Target Population<sup>1</sup>

## Overview

As of October 14, 2021, there were 13 youth from Alameda County committed to the California Division of Juvenile Justice and a total of 55 youth detained in the Juvenile Justice Center (including 41 youth pending resolution of 707(b) offenses). This number represents 75% of the current population.

The section that follows provides an overview of the 13 youth currently committed to DJJ, with the earliest registered in 2019, as well as all youth committed to DJJ between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2020.<sup>2</sup> This population most nearly resembles the population of youth likely to be committed to the SYTF.

The section also contains an overview of the number of youth with a sustained 707(b) offense<sup>3</sup> who received a disposition other than a commitment to DJJ. Since the passage of Proposition 57, in 2016, there have also been three youth transfers from the juvenile to the adult system in Alameda County.<sup>4</sup> Together, these three groups make up the target realignment population. However, given the time constraints and need to immediately prepare to serve youth committed to the Secure Youth Treatment Facility, the primary focus of this initial Plan is to define the Secure Youth Treatment Facility and the associated programs. Thus, services, programs, and facilities for youth those committed to the Secure Track and that population is the focus of the plan.

## Demographics

### DJJ Commitments

#### Currently Committed Youth

For the 13 currently committed youth, their ages at commitment ranged from 15 to 20 years old, with a mean age of 18.2. Male youth comprise most of DJJ's currently committed population (12, or 92%, of all youth), compared to one female youth (8%). Youth of color make up the entire population of youth currently committed to DJJ, and are Black (46%), and Hispanic (54%).

All of the youth committed (100%) to DJJ had WIC-707(b) offenses. The currently committed youths' offenses were robbery (38%), assault with a deadly weapon or firearm (23%), voluntary manslaughter (23%), murder (8%) and lewd act with a minor (8%).

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<sup>1</sup> Based on data provided by Alameda County Probation Department.

<sup>2</sup> Eight youth are included in both groups. Five of the youth who are currently committed to DJJ were committed in 2021.

<sup>3</sup> The target population includes youth with sustained offenses listed in both WIC707(b) and PC290.008. However, for the sake of readability, 707(b) offense will be used to refer to the combination of offenses unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>4</sup> These youth were all (100%) Black males. Two were age 18 at their transfer hearing, and one was 19. Two of their most serious offenses were murder, and one was burglary. At the time of their referrals, two were 17 and one was 16. Commitments between 2016 and 2020

Between 2016 and 2020, 25 youth were committed to DJJ with ages at commitment ranging from 15 to 25 years old and a mean of 18.5. The majority of these youth were male (96%), with one female youth committed in that timeframe (4%). 68% of these youth were Black, 24% Hispanic, 4% Asian and 4% White.

The most common offense between 2016 and 2020 was robbery (36%), followed by murder (24%), and assault with a deadly weapon or firearm (16%). Voluntary manslaughter and lewd act with a minor accounted for 8% of commitments each, and rape and attempted murder accounted for 4% each.

#### ***All Other Dispositions<sup>5</sup>***

Between 2016 and 2020, 368 distinct youth had 459 referrals for sustained 707(b) offenses with dispositions other than commitment to DJJ.<sup>6</sup> Demographics are reported here for the 368 youth. The youths' ages at the time of their referral ranged from 12 to 21, with an average age at referral of 17.5. Youths' ages at the time of their disposition also ranged from 12 to 21, with an average age of 17.9. 90% of these youth were male and 10% were female. Youth of color were disproportionately represented with 72% Black, 20% Hispanic, 4% White, 2% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% Other.

Of the 459 referrals in this timeframe, the most common offense was second degree robbery (49%), followed by first degree robbery (31%), assault with a firearm or deadly weapon (12%), carjacking (4%), and lewd acts with a minor (2%). Attempted first degree robbery, kidnapping, rape, sexual penetration by force, and shooting an inhabited dwelling combined account for the remaining 2%.

#### ***707(b) Adjudications and DJJ Commitments 2016-2020***

	Total	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Sustained 707(b) Referrals</b>	459	108	86	91	106	68
<b>Number of youth w/ a Sustained 707(b)</b>	368	94	58	73	81	62
<b>DJJ Commitments</b>	25	2	8	5	2	8

*\* The first two categories do not include cases that resulted in a DJJ commitment .*

<sup>5</sup> This information is accurate as of October 14, 2021 but note that sustained 707(b) offenses can be reduced and youth records can become sealed.

<sup>6</sup> Based on the initial disposition. For youth with referrals that have multiple offenses, the most serious offense was selected for reporting.

## ***Prior Juvenile Justice System Contact***

### ***DJJ Commitments***

#### ***Currently Committed Youth***

For youth currently committed to DJJ, they had an average of 10 referrals to Probation, and over half (54%) had 6 or more referrals. The average age at first referral was 14.4 years old, with 31% aged 13 or younger and 15% aged 18 or older.

The average span of time between these youths' first referral and DJJ commitment was 3.8 years. Significantly, no currently committed youth went from first referral to DJJ commitment in under one year, and only 1 youth (8%) went from first referral to DJJ commitment in under 2 years. The offense for this youth was lewd act with a minor.

Before the DJJ commitment, the currently committed youth were booked into custody an average of 7.1 times, with 23% of them having 12 or more bookings prior to commitment. On average, before their DJJ commitment, youth had 6 true findings. Almost half (46%) of the youth had 5 or more true findings before the DJJ commitment.

Four of the currently committed youth (31%) had a WIC300 history indicated on their Intake or Dispositional Reports, and 1 youth (8%) had a prior contact with Child Protective Services noted on the Intake Report.

#### ***Commitments between 2016 and 2020***

For youth committed between 2016 and 2020, prior to their DJJ commitment they had an average of 11 referrals to Probation. Fifteen youth (60%) had 6 or more referrals. The average age at youths' first referral was 15.2 years old, with 24% aged 13 or younger and 12% age 18 or older.

The average time span between these youths' first referral and DJJ commitment was 4.4 years. One youth (4%) went from first referral to DJJ commitment in under a year; the offense for this youth was assault with a deadly weapon. Three youth (12%) went from first referral to DJJ commitment between one and two years. One of their offenses was robbery, and the other two offenses were both lewd act with a minor.

For youth committed between 2016 and 2020, they were booked into custody an average of 7.2 times prior to their DJJ commitment, with 24% having 12 or more bookings prior to commitment. On average, these youth had 6 true findings prior to their DJJ commitment.

Ten youth (40%) had a WIC300 history indicated on either their Intake or Dispositional Reports, and one youth (4%) had a prior contact with Child Protective Services noted on their Intake Report.

#### ***All Other Dispositions***

The youth in 2020 with dispositions for sustained 707(b) offenses other than commitment to DJJ had an average of 1.8 sustained 707(b) offenses and 1.4 sustained non-707(b) offenses.<sup>7</sup> In 2019, youth with dispositions for sustained 707(b) offenses other than commitment to DJJ had an average of 1.7 sustained 707(b) offenses and 1.2 non-707(b) offenses. The youth with dispositions for sustained 707(b) offenses other than DJJ

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<sup>7</sup> Youth with multiple referrals within a given year were selected based on their most recent referral. The offense history provided is the average number of offenses across youth within each year prior to and including the youths' most recent referral.

commitment in 2018 had an average of 1.5 707(b) and 1 non-707(b) offenses. In 2017, youth with dispositions for sustained 707(b) offenses other than commitment to DJJ had an average of 1.3 707(b) and .9 non-707(b) offenses. Finally, the youth in 2016 with dispositions for sustained 707(b) offenses other than DJJ commitment had an average of 1.3 707(b) and 1.3 non-707(b) offenses.

#### ***Projected Number of Youth to be Served in the SYTF***

Based on the past five-year average (2016–2020), Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD) has projected the number of youth expected to be served. Alameda County committed an average of 5 youth per year over the last five years and therefore projects the SYTF will serve 5 youth per year. The past three-year average length of stay for Alameda County youth in DJJ is 2.8 years. It is important to note that several factors may impact the number of youth served in the SYTF. Such variables may include the dispositional track and broader sociodemographic, political, and economic factors in Alameda County (e.g., an increase in the crime rate).

In the future, data will be tracked very closely to ensure that youth are being retained in the juvenile justice system and that the County is not seeing an increase in the number of transfer petitions filed or in the number of youth being transferred into the adult system.

Similarly, data will be tracked to ensure that net-widening— which is to say an increase in commitments to the secure track as compared with commitments to DJJ— doesn't occur. Given that Alameda County has utilized less severe options for many 707(b) cases in the past, it is intended that these less severe options continue to be utilized wherever possible.

#### ***Projected Number of Youth Adjudicated of 707(b) Offenses to be Otherwise Served***

In addition to the relatively small number of youth ACPD anticipates serving within the SYTF, the plan outlined will also directly serve youth adjudicated of 707(b) offenses. Based on the past five-year average (2016–2020) of youth meeting these criteria, Alameda County has projected the number of youth to be served. Between 2016 and 2020, an average of 83 youth had sustained 707(b) offenses per year, excluding the youth who were committed to DJJ.

# Retaining the Target Population

ACPD strongly believes that youth are best served close to home— enabling smoother community reintegration as well as more opportunities for family engagement, access to high quality services, programming in the local facility and community. ACPD recognizes the harms caused by any system contact, but also recognizes that youth transferred to the adult criminal court face some of the most harmful outcomes (e.g., increased recidivism rates, increased likelihood of victimization during incarceration, increased rates of suicide, poorer mental health outcomes, etc.). Specifically, transferring youth to adult courts tends to increase their recidivism rates, while processing youth in juvenile courts is related to reduced recidivism rates. Additionally, sentencing youth to adult prisons tends to aggravate mental health issues which, in turn, is associated with prison misconduct (particularly for younger inmates).

While the decision to transfer youth lies with the Court, ACPD is committed to doing all in its power to ensure that youth remain out of adult criminal courts. Thus, ACPD will prevent an increase in transferred youth by:

- A. Ensuring secure-track placement options are available for consideration by the court. This not only refers to the Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF), but also the array of programs and services that will be utilized to address the needs of the youth committed to the SB 823 program, including investing in successful community-based treatment and step-down options.
- B. Establishing sufficient high-quality programs that are culturally responsive, trauma-informed, evidence-based, age appropriate, centered on youth and family engagement, and based on positive youth development. This will ensure that programming approach youth with specificity and in a way that they are able to relate to and engage with. Culturally affirming staff will also support youth.
- C. Guaranteeing that specialized treatment and programming options meet high-need youth that garner confidence of juvenile court judges.
- D. Certifying that formal recommendations from Probation to the Court, for adult transfers, are approved at the Chief Probation Officer level. This ensures several layers of review and discussion before a recommendation for transfer proceeds. Input from a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) will be considered as part of the overall recommendation. The team will consider any services recommended in (which assessments and reports) or otherwise being recommended as required to the court. The team will also determine whether those services are available within the SYTF, and if not, whether they can be made available. If the services cannot be made available, the team will report the reasons for this conclusion.
- E. Tracking data of youth transfers to adult criminal court and reporting to justice partners, including the youth's defense team, to monitor and review at least bi-annually and at all SB 823 Subcommittee meetings. This will ensure a level of oversight and input, contributing toward the goals of transparency and fairness. all 707(b) offenses so that rates of transfer can be easily calculated and monitored.

- F. Data to be captured will include: demographic data (including age at time of offense, date of birth, self-identified racial/ethnic identity, and SOGIE) ; most serious charge; and reason for transfer, if applicable. This information will be gathered and tracked for all 707(b) offenses so that rates of transfer can be easily calculated and monitored.
- G. Ensuring that youth in juvenile hall pending trial or disposition on 707(b) charges have access to the services and programs available within the secure track, as feasible. This will provide youth with an opportunity to make and show progress prior to the court having to enter judgment on a petition to transfer a child to the adult criminal justice system.

Both the juvenile justice system and adult criminal system aim to protect the safety of the public, but unlike the adult court system, the overarching purpose of the juvenile justice system is to provide children with care, treatment and guidance consistent with their best interest. Indeed, the United States Supreme Court recognized that the juvenile justice system's stated goal is to help young people avoid future delinquency and mature into law-abiding adults.

Building upon years of research and evidence-based progress in juvenile justice, SB 823 aimed to push things a step further stating that "[i]t is the intent of the Legislature and the administration for counties to use evidence-based and promising practices and programs that improve the outcomes of youth and public safety, reduce the transfer of youth into the adult criminal justice system, ensure that dispositions are in the least restrictive appropriate environment, reduce and then eliminate racial and ethnic disparities, and reduce the use of confinement in the juvenile justice system by utilizing community-based responses and interventions;" and ACPD clearly states its commitment to upholding the law's intent.

### ***Data Collection and Reporting***

The Probation Department will commit to publishing timely data related to SB 823 implementation. The data collection and reporting are critical to ensure (1) there are no net-widening impacts in commitments to the local SYTF compared to commitments to DJJ prior to the passage of SB 823 and DJJ intake closure; (2) the Plan sufficiently protects against any increase in adult court prosecutions of youth in Alameda County; (3) there is an ongoing racial and ethnic disparity analysis to monitor the impact of the most restrictive and punitive decisions on youth of color compared to white youth; and (4) "step-downs," or less restrictive programming for eligible youth to serve the remainder of their baseline term or modified baseline term, as permissible under WIC 875(f), is being utilized to the greatest extent possible.

- o To accomplish this, the probation department will publish data disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender on a quarterly basis that includes, but is not limited to:
- o The number of youth eligible for a SYTF under WIC 875(a), including youth ages fourteen (14) years or older whose most recent juvenile court adjudication is a 707(b) offense, including the most serious offense included in the adjudication;
- o The number of youth committed by Alameda County courts to a SYTF, including the most serious offense for which youth are committed;
- o The time youth spend in a SYTF, calculated by the date of release from the SYTF,

either as the result of discharge as described in WIC 875(e) or transfer to a less restrictive program as described in WIC 875(f);

- The number of youth who are transferred to a less restrictive program as described in WIC 875(f)(1), including the type of program the youth are transferred or “stepped down” to;
- The number of youth for whom a motion for transfer to adult criminal court was filed, including the most serious offense considered in the transfer motion; and
- The number of youth transferred to adult criminal court, including the most serious offense for which the youth was transferred.



# Promoting Healthy Adolescent Development

Youth are more susceptible to engaging in risky behaviors due to the development of the brain's prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for complex reasoning and functioning, and will not fully mature until their mid-twenties.<sup>8</sup> Youth are more likely to be impulsive, fail to evaluate the impacts of their decisions, and assess long-term consequences.<sup>9</sup> Transfers to adult court can potentially entrench youth in a life of criminal behavior that they otherwise would have matured away from. Youth afforded the opportunity to remain in the juvenile system will, on the other hand, have access to age-appropriate education and rehabilitative services that are designed for them.

The plasticity in this developmental period makes it possible to ameliorate the effects of past trauma-- and conversely it should be pointed out that harm done to a young person in this critical period can compound and ingrain negative experiences and responses. As one researcher put it: "People certainly do not enter adolescence with a 'blank slate.' Rather, adolescent development is partly a consequence of earlier life experiences. However, these early life experiences are not determinative, and the adaptive plasticity of adolescence marks it as a window of opportunity for change through which mechanisms of resilience, recovery, and development are possible."<sup>10</sup> This hope for and belief in the possibility of change are essential components of any programs aiming to serve system-impacted youth.

One approach that takes this perspective into account is known as positive youth justice, which is built upon the idea that youth can be developed within a caring community of adults who work to help them learn and practice key skills. The goal of this approach is to recognize that many of the youth's behaviors and challenges are developmentally typical (rather than pathological and/or abnormal) responses to unaddressed needs. ACPD recognizes that many of the youth from the target population may not have had the support and experiences necessary to build the core skills to manage emotion and make effective decisions. When programming and services prioritize skill development for all youth, their mental, physical, psychological, and emotional wellness benefit.

## ▶ **Therapeutic Milieu**

ACPD recognizes the need for a new approach to in-custody and in-community programming, designed to better serve the long-term needs of young people and the public. Based partially on its existing transitional-aged youth (TAY) programs and the programming available at Camp Sweeney, ACPD will develop a new program to serve youth committed to the secure youth treatment facility. The County's new program will focus on supporting youth in their development of core competencies (described below). The program will be designed to both meet and flexibly respond to youth's individual needs.

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<sup>8</sup> Cohen, A. O., & Casey, B. J. (2014). *Rewiring juvenile justice: the intersection of developmental neuroscience and legal policy*. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 18(2), 63-65.

<sup>9</sup> Giedd, J. N. (2008). *The teen brain: insights from neuroimaging*. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 42(4), 335-343.

<sup>10</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). *The Promise of Adolescence: Realizing Opportunity for All Youth*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. doi: <https://doi.org/10.17226/25388>

The goal of this program is not to “save” young people, but rather to provide an enriching, nurturing environment that supports their inherent potential to succeed as individuals. Both the program and the environment will be designed to ensure that all youth feel safe, cared for, and valued.

Thus, ACPD shall construct a developmentally appropriate and restorative “milieu,” or social environment. This approach will enable all service providers to contribute to a comprehensive program designed to address the core needs of youth. The coming sections shall provide the framework for this milieu.

Central to the milieu is the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT), referred to throughout this plan. The MDT shall consist of the assigned mental health clinician, Credible Messenger, JIO, DPO, and education representative. The MDT will work closely with the youth and their family to ensure that the Individualized Rehabilitation Plan meets the needs of the youth and supports their healthy development. When the Reentry Case Manager is assigned, they will begin attending MDT meetings as well. The MDT will also regularly include, at the request of the youth, the youth’s defense team including the defense social worker, and other relevant supports from the community.

### ***Focus on Relationships***

Decades of research on therapeutic modalities<sup>11</sup> related to both mental health and delinquency have produced a set of best practices. The quality of the relationship between the helper and the youth is one component of success, and reflects a more general indicator of long-term wellbeing: fostering quality social connections. The attributes identified as most important across the literature include the ability to empathize, demonstrate commitment and belief in the young person, display warmth and authenticity, and “recognize and acknowledge the ‘reality’ of the ‘lived experiences’ of young people.”<sup>12</sup> ACPD shall commit to develop a comprehensive team of staff—through training and instructive supervision—who will collaborate with contracted providers and volunteers to offer an array of services and supports for youth. While a great deal of attention is paid to the staff of the milieu, the youth themselves are also a vital part of the social environment. Thus, opportunities for peer support and empowerment, as well as agency and self-direction, will be actively sought out and encouraged. Given that youth will likely remain in this Program for several years, such relationships and sources of peer support will likely be important components of success.

A secondary component for long-term success is that these trusted relationships have the capacity to transcend the walls of the facility and follow the youth in meaningful ways into their communities of origin or chosen living environments. In focus groups with youth previously served by the DJJ system, Impact Justice facilitators noted that youth identified mentors “that you really connect with one-on-one” as instrumental in helping them successfully transition back into their communities.

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<sup>11</sup> *Therapeutic modalities refers to the “wide array of treatments and interventions that provide a variety of therapeutic benefits” (Bellew, Michlovitz, and Nolan Jr. 2016, 3). Bellew, J. W., Michlovitz, S. L., & Nolan Jr, T. P. (2016). Michlovitz’s modalities for therapeutic intervention. Philadelphia: FA Davis.*

<sup>12</sup> *Prior, D., & Mason, P. (2010). A Different Kind of Evidence? Looking for ‘What Works’ in Engaging Young Offenders. Youth Justice, 10(3), 211–226. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473225410381688>.*

They also stressed that they needed mentors to have regular contact with them on an individual basis, especially in the first few weeks after their transition. Achieving this goal entails building the social environment in such a way to include, from the beginning, mentors who can advocate for and support the youth throughout the process. Research related to services that were most effective in reducing recidivism lists mentoring as one of the most effective interventions in recidivism reduction.<sup>13</sup> Additional evidence for a relationship-based approach to the provision of service and supports comes from the literature on implementation of Positive Youth Justice.<sup>14</sup>

One of the central benefits of juvenile justice realignment is that youth will remain close to their homes and communities. Using the most expansive definition of family, ACPD will engage and support youth in establishing the most connected relationships possible. It will further support youth's relationships through deep partnerships with contracted, community-based providers and volunteers at all phases of a youth's contact with the system.

### **Credible Messengers**

People who have been through the justice system and have been transformed can serve as positive role models for others. Serving as mentors in community programs, Credible Messengers are trusted by justice-involved people looking to get their lives back on track. With their life experience, Credible Messengers can contribute through a meaningful mentoring relationship with a young person.

Incorporating Credible Messengers into a secure youth treatment facility requires much more than adding a program that provides time, space, and opportunity to meet with youth residing there. While that is an important component, Credible Messengers in secure facilities will be given a broad array of responsibilities supported by the facility leadership. These responsibilities require the ability of Credible Messengers to have access to youth throughout their waking hours (and a presence at critical late-night hours, when many youth struggle the most). In order to leverage their knowledge and perspective within the facility milieu, Credible Messengers will be incorporated into staff meetings, trainings, and other processes that inform the way the facility is run.

Incorporation of Credible Messengers and their collaboration with clinical, restorative, and other treatment-oriented personnel requires probation and institutional staff to relinquish some portion of their control in defining and facilitating overall youth engagement. The purpose of incorporating Credible Messengers from the community is to minimize institutionalization and maximize positive ties in the community. In essence, if youth cannot be in the community, then the effort should be to bring the community to them. In order to successfully prepare youth for safe and successful community reintegration, they have to develop trusting, positive ties within the community. The institution will support that process by "making room" for Credible Messengers in the ways outlined above to contribute to such a culture and milieu.

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<sup>13</sup> Howell, J. C., & Lipsey, M. W. (2012). *Research-Based Guidelines for Juvenile Justice Programs*. *Justice Research and Policy*, 14(1), 17–34. <https://doi.org/10.3818/JRP.14.1.2012.17>

<sup>14</sup> Butts, J. A., Bazemore, G., & Meroe, A. S. (2010). *Positive youth justice: Framing justice interventions using the concepts of positive youth development*.

### ***Restorative Justice Practices***

The milieu must also account for inequities, social injustices, and violations of social contracts that are specific to the youth's experiences. Common models for intervention focus on "changing" a young person's way of thinking to reflect a more pro-social perspective. However, the lives of many youth who find themselves involved with the justice system have been impacted by severe inequities, trauma, and violence that contribute to ingrained ways of thinking consistent with their realities. Retraining and re-evaluating one's thinking will occur in the context of a safe restorative environment.

Restorative justice (RJ)/transformative justice principles and practices must guide the SB 823 milieu community structure and all related policies, practices, programs, and procedures. At the core of such a program is a kind of relational, physical, and emotional safety, as well as transparency and empowerment. Different from the inequitable circumstances and social injustices that may have existed within the youth's community of origin, ACPD will ensure that the social environment within this community is firmly steeped in restorative/transformative justice principles and practices. Restoration will not only be a practice for youth, in addressing harm they may have caused but also an opportunity to offer social environment services to help the youth identify and begin to find ways to heal harms that they have endured. This form of healing makes room for the youth to understand and accept responsibility for their actions while learning healthy ways to respond to their own experiences.

The milieu's core values and practices will stand on the pillars of restorative justice: accountability, competency development, and community safety. It will also incorporate common RJ core values: equity, respect, honesty, humility, accountability, empowerment, and hope. ACPD will ensure that this approach is woven through any level or stage system designed to encourage progress, youth code of conduct, incident response, disciplinary practices, staff training, and supervision.

### ***Culturally Responsive Programming***

Equally as important to healthy adolescent development is ACPD's commitment to design a high-quality, culturally responsive program. The term cultural responsiveness generally refers to an approach that considers and responds to individuals' cultural frame of reference, including demographic, sociopolitical, and other contextual characteristics. When applied to youth programming, a culturally responsive approach takes into account the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of youth in the design and implementation of the program. Research suggests that an effective implementation of a culturally responsive program makes youth, particularly those from ethnic and racial minorities, feel safe and valued and better prepared for their futures.<sup>15</sup> To improve youth's successful participation in program activities, ACPD will take on a culturally responsive approach across three main program components: structure, staffing, and program design.

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<sup>15</sup> Simpkins, S. D., Riggs, N. R., Ngo, B., Vest Ettekal, A., & Okamoto, D. (2017). *Designing culturally responsive organized after-school activities*. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 32(1), 11-36. Vest Ettekal, A., & Simpkins, S. D. *Latino families' perspectives on cultural content in after-school programs: How important is ethnic and cultural congruence?* March 2015.

ACPD will adhere to the Risk, Need, Responsivity (RNR) principle which, together, make up one of the eight principles of effective interventions.<sup>16</sup> To ensure adherence to the Responsivity Principle, ACPD will adopt programs, services, and interventions that are relevant to youth of color, given the disproportionate rate at which they are represented in the target population. As previously mentioned, having youth participate in activities that are meaningful to their everyday lives and interests is one way to foster efficacy and is particularly important for fostering engagement of ethnic and racial minority youth.<sup>17</sup> ACPD will implement programs that youth can connect with, understand, and find value in. For instance, youth will be afforded the opportunity to participate in activities that promote their socio-political consciousness, such as designing and participating in social justice projects that can have an impact in their communities. Relatedly, ACPD will ensure youth are offered programs that provide the history of their respective cultures, races, and/or ethnicities, and employ relevant indigenous/ancestral practices and frameworks that support youth development. Youth will also be offered religious and/or spiritual services to assist with providing a holistic array of services that they can choose from as part of their growth and development.

Most evidence-based models have been created by individuals immersed in Western, Eurocentric culture, many of whom developed these models by “studying others,” (i.e., not as a result of actual lived experiences).<sup>18</sup> This means that many evidence-based programs have not been implemented with racial or ethnic minorities, and will not necessarily be the most relevant options for the target population.

Facility staff are also an integral component of a culturally responsive approach since they play an essential role in the implementation of programs. ACPD will thus provide the appropriate training of all facility staff, including on how to engage youth in the design and implementation of program activities. Staff will be prepared and willing to actively seek youth’s input regarding their interests, goals, and community concerns. Introducing youth to the opportunity to co-construct program activities is fundamental to developing culturally responsive programming.<sup>19</sup> Staff will help youth thrive by ensuring that materials are written in a language that is accessible for all literacy levels and remain attentive for when interpretation or translation services are needed.<sup>20</sup> Mentioned previously, since youth’s realities and needs are likely to change over time, staff will remain flexible and prepared to adapt programs in order to remain responsive to the youth.

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<sup>16</sup> Crime and Justice Institute. (2004). *Implementing Evidence-Based Practice in Community Corrections: The Principles of Effective Intervention*. National Institute of Corrections. <https://s3.amazonaws.com/static.nicic.gov/Library/019342.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> García, A., & Gaddes, A. (2012). Weaving language and culture: Latina adolescent writers in an after-school writing project. *Reading & Writing Quarterly: Overcoming Learning Difficulties*, 28, 143–163. doi:10.1080/10573569.2012.651076

<sup>18</sup> Khumalo, M. *Considerations for SB 823 MH and Program Services*. August 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Simpkins, S., Riggs, N., Ngo, B., Vest Ettekal, A., & Okamoto, D. *Designing culturally responsive organized after-school activities*. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. August 2016

<sup>20</sup> Charles, T.A., *Solutions for Social Impact*. Four tips for culturally responsive programming. December 2016.



## **Culturally Responsive Mental Health Services**

ACPD commits to expanding its traditional interpretation of mental health and program services. Based on historical Youth Level of Service (YLS) assessment information, youth committed to the SB 823 program will require programming to target judgment and decision-making, emotional regulation/management, and social engagement. ACPD will ensure that these services are provided via an interwoven mechanism that clearly shows how building these skills helps the youth move from surviving to thriving. Most of the youth currently at DJJ are Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC). Thus, ACPD will adopt theoretically relevant, evidence-informed, and/or promising interventions developed by BIPOC individuals for BIPOC individuals and/or will commit to delivering or contracting for the delivery of Culturally-Adapted Treatments (CATs).<sup>21</sup>

Restorative justice will also serve as one of the frames for this program and, as such, youth shall be provided with curriculum related to restorative justice practices. One model that has been developed for youth in the justice system is the “RJ Ready” curriculum developed by Rashida George at the Institute for Restorative Future.

Interventions that focus on racial socialization and ethnic pride may reduce the reliance on criminogenic knowledge structures.<sup>22</sup> Thus, ACPD will ensure a rich array of programs that provide youth opportunities to explore their history and culture to enhance BIPOC racial/ethnic pride as a way of building resilience and combating criminogenic knowledge structures (CKS). The primary interventions selected for this unit will have a manual or written protocol, facilitators who have been trained in the interventions, and a mechanism to ensure fidelity to the interventions.

## **Gender Responsive Approach**

Although girls constitute the largest growing segment of the juvenile justice population, there are very few programs that have been designed to meet their specific needs of girls and gender expansive youth.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer and trans youth are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system. And yet, few systems have protocols in place to collect sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (SOGIE) data to better understand the pathways and experiences of girls and lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer and trans youth in the system.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> CAT's are “systematic modifications of evidence-based treatment or intervention protocols that consider language, culture and context to increase compatibility with the client's cultural patterns, meanings and values” (Bernal, Chafey, and Rodriguez 2009). Bernal, Guillermo & Chafey, María & Domenech Rodríguez, Melanie. (2009). Cultural Adaptation of Treatments: A Resource for Considering Culture in Evidence-Based Practice. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*. 40. 361-368. 10.1037/a0016401. Also revisit the literature that stresses why such culturally informed approaches matter: Simons, R. L., & Burt, C. H. (2011). Learning to be bad: Adverse social conditions, social schemas, and crime. *Criminology*, 49(2), 553-598.

<sup>22</sup> Burt, C. H., Lei, M. K., & Simons, R. L. (2017). Racial Discrimination, Racial Socialization, and Crime: Understanding Mechanisms of Resilience. *Social Problems*, 64(3), 414-438.

<sup>23</sup> Sherman, F., & Balck, A. (2015). *Gender injustice: System-level juvenile justice reforms for girls*.

<sup>24</sup> Conron, K. J., & Wilson, B. D. (2019). *LGBTQ Youth of Color Impacted by the child welfare and juvenile justice systems: A research agenda*; Center for American Progress. (2016). *Unjust: How the Broken Criminal Justice System Fails LGBT People of Color*.

As a result, girls and gender expansive youth in the system are unlikely to receive appropriate, evidence-based services suitable for their rehabilitative needs.

This is particularly concerning given that the inclusion of gender-specific risk and protective factors in the design and implementation of programs is crucial for accomplishing positive outcomes for all youth.<sup>25</sup> In fact, research has shown that gender-neutral programs are significantly less effective than gender-specific programming for girls.

Although there is no exhaustive list of gender responsive program elements, recent reviews, research, and government-led study groups examining effective gender-responsive programming suggest that the most promising programs for girls are: Relational (e.g. attention to healthy romantic and non-romantic relationships); Restorative (e.g. scaffold skills for navigating the justice system with attention to trauma histories); Socio-culturally anchored (e.g. attention to the intersectional identities of girls); Individualized (e.g. tailored to meet a variety of needs); Multi-level (e.g. girls' individual, peer, family, community, and multiple systems of involvement are targeted.); Community-based (e.g. provided flexibly in youth's natural communities); and Strengths-based (e.g. orientation on positive development, resisting deficit-orientation and promoting skills and assets in the child.)

In a national survey conducted with parole and probation staff, the overwhelming majority (97%) agreed that girls have unique needs and most of them (94%) thought there should be gender-responsive programming.<sup>26</sup> For this reason, ACPD will work to implement the key elements of gender responsive programming described above in the development of SB 823 programs for girls and gender expansive youth.

### **Female Youth**

For the purposes of this section, "girls" shall refer to all young people who identify as such, including those who may be classified as transgender or gender expansive youth. This definition is consistent with both state<sup>27</sup> and federal law,<sup>28</sup> as well as research indicating that policies failing to do so may result in psychological and physical harm.<sup>29</sup>

In terms of placement, consistent with the recommendations of experts, girls will be treated in the least restrictive environment.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Granski, M., Javdani, S., Anderson, V. R., & Caires, R. (2020). A Meta-Analysis of Program Characteristics for Youth with Disruptive Behavior Problems: The Moderating Role of Program Format and Youth Gender. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 65(1-2), 201-222

<sup>26</sup> Parrish, D. E., Thompson, R., Negi, N., & Alquicira, L. (2020). A National Survey of Probation Staff of the Needs, Services and Barriers of Female Youth in Juvenile Justice Settings. *Women & Criminal Justice*, 1-18.

<sup>27</sup> California Penal Code § 422.56(c)

<sup>28</sup> E.g., 28 CFR § 115.42; *Bostock v. Clayton County*, 590 U.S. \_\_\_\_ (2020)

<sup>29</sup> Mallon, G. P. & Perez, J. (2020). The experiences of transgender and gender expansive youth in juvenile justice systems. *Journal of Criminological Research, Policy and Practice*, 6(3).

<sup>30</sup> Ravoira, L., Graziano, J., & Patino Lydia, V. (2012). Urgent work: Developing a gender-responsive approach for girls in the juvenile justice system. *Universitas Psychologica*, 11(4), 1167-1181.



They will be housed in units that are exclusive to young women and are as close to their homes as possible in order to maintain family and other social and community relationships.<sup>31</sup> Relatedly, opportunities should be provided for girls to receive services in their natural communities to allow them to foster healthy family relationships and sustainable community connections. Since adolescence is a profound time of change and growth, programs should be designed to support social contexts that promote healthy development. Specifically, programs will be developed in line with female adolescent development.<sup>32</sup> This includes providing girls with spaces and opportunities to build and maintain healthy romantic and non-romantic relationships.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, programs will stress the role of relationships between staff and girls. Programs and services should also be restorative in nature, helping them navigate the system with attention to their trauma and victimization histories. At the same time, there will be program activities designed to encourage leadership and develop other key strengths. Above all, programs will be individualized and tailored to meet the specific situation of each girl, including having the structures in place to address parenting and pregnant youth and to serve youth and their children in the least restrictive appropriate environment to the greatest extent possible.

Given that it is anticipated that young women will rarely be referred to the SB 823 program, ACPD will engage in discussions with other Bay Area counties to co-develop a program for young women. Prior to housing Alameda County girls in any out-of-county facility, Alameda County shall ensure that the facility provides a therapeutic model that is in line with the County's own program, and that the facility adheres to the same minimums standards of care, treatment, and honoring of children's rights as the County's own program. With that said, ACPD will work closely with community based organizations with expertise in serving girls and gender expansive youth, such as the Young Women's Freedom Center, to create a plan to better support gender-responsive and culturally affirming programming for young women, transgender and intersex youth, and LGBTQ youth.

### ***Transgender and Intersex youth***

ACPD has developed a policy to guide the care and services of transgender and intersex youth. The policy appropriately states that "if a youth requires clinically necessary treatment that is not available at the Juvenile Facilities, as determined by a medical or behavioral health provider, the ACPD must provide transportation for the youth to receive treatment."<sup>34</sup> An alternative mechanism that may be more appropriate for youth in the SB 823 program may be to contract with a provider who has the requisite training and practice to provide onsite services.

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Javdani, S., & Allen, N. E. (2016). *An ecological model for intervention for juvenile justice-involved girls: Development and preliminary prospective evaluation*. *Feminist Criminology*, 11(2), 135-162.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> ACPD Juvenile Hall Facilities Manual. *Classification and Separation Transgender and Intersex Youth*. December 18, 2019.

## **Mental Health Services**

Mental health services are central to the SB 823 program, since youth in the justice system are very likely to have mental health needs.<sup>35</sup> However, mental health needs cannot be disconnected from the totality of needs that must be addressed to help youth thrive in the community. These needs do not exist in a vacuum and are often driven by other social determinants of health and wellbeing such as inadequate educational systems, lack of safe affordable housing, poor social supports, inadequate family income and employment opportunities, and barriers to accessing health care. These identified inadequacies do not happen accidentally but are a result of the forces of structural and institutional racism over generations in BIPOC communities. Therefore, ACPD will be holistic in their approach to achieving broad mental, physical, and spiritual wellness and healing and take the opportunity to address these needs in a restorative and sustainable manner that places the youth in the position to flourish, not just survive. ACPD will create a comprehensive healing community on the SB 823 unit led by Probation staff and supported by the consistent, integrated partnership of a licensed mental health provider that has requisite training and experience working with youth and young adults, educational and/or vocational specialists, and trained juvenile specific Credible Messenger mentors all working collaboratively to identify and meet youth needs via culturally responsive, developmentally appropriate, and innovative services and opportunities. ACPD will also engage an expert consultant (or group of consultants) to develop, implement, and monitor the fidelity of this program and the essential training elements.

### **Mental Health Needs in Context**

An analysis of the Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory (YLS-CMI 2) domains in the current DJJ population (see Table 1) suggest that DJJ youth committed to the SB 823 program are likely to demonstrate challenges in problem solving, judgment, decision making, and behavior and emotion management (especially related to anger and aggression). These specific needs may be defined as “criminogenic” in the juvenile justice vernacular or as originating from an underlying mental health concern, but neither label changes the recommendations related to appropriate services and supports. Services and supports must be rooted in a clear conceptualization of the potential drivers of symptomatology. Understanding the drivers provides insight regarding the methods of intervention.

For many youth in the justice system, the drivers lie in their experiences at home and within the community and society at large. Longitudinal research shows that youth who witnessed and experienced high levels of community violence (i.e., potential trauma exposure) were most likely to develop hostility and paranoid ideation.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Borschmann, R., Janca, E., Carter, A., Willoughby, M., Hughes, N., Snow, K., ... & Kinner, S. A. (2020). *The health of adolescents in detention: a global scoping review*. *The Lancet Public Health*, 5(2), e114-e126.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas A. Loughran and Joan Reid, “A Longitudinal Investigation of Trauma Exposure, Retraumatization, and Post-Traumatic Stress of Justice-Involved Adolescents,” *Final report to the National Institute of Justice, grant number 2016-MU-MU-0070, August 2018, NCJ 252015*.

And African-American youth were consistently more likely to experience high levels of violence over the period studied.<sup>37</sup> A second study determined that youth who were exposed to chronic violence over extended time frames developed traits that predicted higher levels of self-reported offending as young adults.<sup>38</sup> Finally, “interpersonal racial discrimination”—particularly when experienced by youth who live in under-resourced communities with high rates of violence—can develop criminogenic knowledge structures or adaptive cognitions designed for survival.<sup>39</sup> The criminogenic knowledge structures include a desire for immediate gratification, disregard for “conventional” norms, and lack of trust in relationships. ACPD will see the youth through neither pathological nor moral lenses, but rather as youth in need of support to overcome strategies developed to deal with the structural challenges experienced in their everyday lives.

### **Assessments of Needs and Case Planning**

ACPD and its partners will commit to comprehensively identifying the “criminogenic” and mental health needs that must be addressed to support the youth to become thriving community members. Traditionally, ACPD, Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE), and Alameda County Behavioral Health (ACBH) conduct their assessments independently and develop their own Individual Rehabilitation Plan, Mental Health Treatment Plan, and Educational/Vocational Plans based upon their assessments. However, lack of integration, understanding, and coordination of case planning can lead to disjointed services that may fail in supporting youth reach the defined goals. In order for the program to appropriately meet the needs of youth in a comprehensive cohesive fashion, ACPD shall ensure that assessment, from its inception, is a multidisciplinary process. ACPD and other service providers will develop a unified assessment and case planning process in which the Individual Rehabilitation Plan completed is informed by both formal and informal assessments. It is understood that each Department/service provider will also develop their individual plans to detail and document their specific services, but these plans will reflect a shared vision and the role each will play in assisting the youth along the journey to successful return to their community of choice.

### **Summary of Assessments**

#### **Probation Assessment**

At pre-commitment, the Alameda County Probation Department routinely completes a YLS-CMI 2 to assist the Court in making determinations about care and placement. The YLS/CMI is a validated assessment tool developed to estimate the level of risk for recidivism but its most effective use is to identify needs across a broad array of life that can be targeted by services and addressed in the Individual Rehabilitation Plan.

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<sup>37</sup> Thomas A. Loughran and Joan Reid, “A Longitudinal Investigation of Trauma Exposure, Retraumatization, and Post-Traumatic Stress of Justice-Involved Adolescents,” Final report to the National Institute of Justice, grant number 2016-MU-MU-0070, August 2018, NCJ 252015.

<sup>38</sup> Noni Gaylord-Harden, “Violence Exposure, Continuous Trauma, and Repeat Offending in Female and Male Serious Adolescent Offenders,” Final report to the National Institute of Justice, grant number 2016-MU-MU-0067, January 2020, NCJ 254493.

<sup>39</sup> Simons, R. L., & Burt, C. H. (2011). Learning to be bad: Adverse social conditions, social schemas, and crime. *Criminology*, 49(2), 553-598.

One static and seven dynamic risk/need domains are assessed by the YLS. The domains that relate to youth needs include Family Circumstances/Parenting, Peer Relations, Attitudes/Orientation, Education/Employment, Personality/Behavior, Substance Use, and Leisure/Recreation. Appropriately matched interventions that meet the youth's level of need reduces the likelihood of recidivism.<sup>40</sup> This is not the same as thriving but is the minimum standard of care for any juvenile services agency.

### **Current Data**

Nineteen of 21 youth currently served by DJJ (90%) took part in the YLS risk and needs assessment at pre-commitment. Table 1. shows the areas rated highest overall for those who completed the assessment. Leisure Recreation (13), Peer Relations (13), Personality and Behavior (16) and Attitudes and Orientation (12) were the top four need areas in the cohort with the high or moderate range.

Table 1. *Total number of youth within each domain x need level.*

<i>Domain</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Low</i>
<i>Attitudes/Orientation</i>	4	12	3
<i>Education/Employment</i>	7	5	7
<i>Family Circumstances/Parenting</i>	5	10	4
<i>Leisure/Recreation</i>	13	5	1
<i>Prior and Current Offenses/Disposition</i>	11	7	1
<i>Personality/Behavior</i>	1	16	2
<i>Peer Relations</i>	13	6	0
<i>Substance Abuse</i>	6	9	4

Source: Alameda County Probation Department. Alameda Youth in DJJ. March 2021.

Peer Relations, Personality Behavior, and Attitudes and Orientation domains align most closely with externalizing disorders, such as Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Disorder, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)—all of which can be driven by traumatic stress responses.

<sup>40</sup> Baglivio, M. T., Wolff, K. T., Howell, J. C., Jackowski, K., & Greenwald, M. A. (2018). The search for the holy grail: Criminogenic needs matching, intervention dosage, and subsequent recidivism among serious juvenile offenders in residential placement. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 55, 46-57.

As previously noted, however, many of these “needs” are driven by the same social determinants that contribute to the marginalization of BIPOC youth and BIPOC communities. So, while providers may want a youth to focus on the decisions that they make, that cannot be done effectively without acknowledging their valid anger regarding their circumstances and providing “viable alternatives.”

In addition to the primary risk and needs assessed, the YLS will also determine Other Needs and Special Considerations. This factor helps to recognize the family environment and needs, including quality of relationships in the home and the presence of depression, anxiety, trauma, learning disabilities, youth-as-parent challenges, domestic violence, and neglect (to highlight just a few).

ACPD provides this assessment pre-adjudication and thus is not completed by the SB 823 probation officer. Therefore, the SB 823 deputy probation officer will review the YLS and collateral documentation, including reports submitted by the youth’s defense team, for all newly placed youth to ensure that the information entered is comprehensive and consistent with the current understanding of youth need. If the tool was administered greater than 6 months ago or appears to lack the necessary information to appropriately contribute to the development of an Individual Rehabilitation Plan (IRP), the tool will be readministered by the SB 823 deputy probation officer. Given that the normal youth sample for the YLS-CMI ranges between 12 and 18, ACPD will explore the use of this tool for youth above age 18 when re-assessing youth.

### ***Mental Health Assessment***

ACBH proposes to provide a biopsychosocial assessment, which may include the CANS, and to use that information to determine need for services and develop an appropriate mental health treatment plan. The primary areas that ACBH proposes to include as a part of their biopsychosocial assessment shall include:

<b><i>Demographic information</i></b>	<b><i>Identification of mental status</i></b>	<b><i>Identification of specific mental health symptoms and behaviors</i></b>	<b><i>Identification of functional impairments</i></b>
<b><i>Description of mental health history</i></b>	<b><i>Description of history of trauma or exposure to trauma</i></b>	<b><i>Description of clinical risk factors</i></b>	<b><i>Psychosocial history (including family history and cultural considerations)</i></b>
<b><i>An assessment of youth and family strengths</i></b>	<b><i>Education/ vocational history and goals</i></b>	<b><i>Developmental history from pre-birth to 17 years of age</i></b>	<b><i>Medical history</i></b>
<b><i>Medication history</i></b>	<b><i>Prior mental health history/ treatment</i></b>	<b><i>Substance use/exposure screening and assessment</i></b>	<b><i>Diagnosis</i></b>

As a part of this assessment, ACBH will use standardized screening and assessment tools designed specifically to measure the presence of depression, anxiety, substance use, and trauma-related symptoms (including race-related trauma). The information gathered by ACBH will be shared in the coordinated assessment process with ACPD and the other service team members.

### ***Conceptualization of Needs and Approach to Care***

In July 2021, Impact Justice had the opportunity to conduct a series of focus groups with youth who were released from DJJ. One of their chief concerns related to services that were not culturally congruent and did not provide opportunities to gain needed skills. To bolster and potentially clarify information gained from the probation and behavioral health assessments, qualitative assessment of culturally specific needs will be completed by a person with “lived experience” who has the training and experience to assess youth needs. Thus, ACPD will contract with a community-based organization (CBO) to provide Credible Messenger services that include the provision of qualitative assessment of youth needs utilizing culturally relevant assessment modalities.

The SB 823 program will employ a recreational therapist to provide services. The therapist will participate in the assessment process, particularly in terms of determining appropriate leisure and recreation services. The therapist will also ensure these services incorporate a wide variety of activities that include culturally specific activities as well as exposure to activities that can help youth enhance their emotion and behavior regulation skills. Leisure/Recreation is noted as one of the high need areas for youth in the program according to the data of previously administered YLS assessments for youth currently in DJJ.

The youth focus group also yielded other valuable reflections that may suggest improvement for the program. One of the major notes is that youth felt demoralized going before the Parole Board and being denied release. That in and of itself increased frustration and anger. Though it is not possible to know the reason for each youth’s denial, a critical component of a comprehensive case planning process will be transparent and will begin with ensuring a clear and comprehensive assessment to identify needs and develop agreed upon commonly understood goals that relate to preparation for release.

ACPD will work with credible messengers, the Court, Public Defender, District Attorney and others to discuss and develop practices for progress review hearings that aim to avoid the demoralization, frustration, and anger youth reported experiencing at progress review hearings.

### ***Specialized Treatment***

#### ***Individual Services***

In addition to collaborative milieu-based interventions previously recommended, it will be important for ACBH to provide individual services to some youth who present mental health needs that are not addressed by the more general program. This will be determined based upon the initial mental health assessment as well as referrals related to newly identified needs. The level of service needed will be driven by the youth’s functional capacity and/or desire for greater wellness.



## **Sex Offender Services**

Youth committed on charges related to sexual offenses will receive a comprehensive assessment provided by a clinician who has the requisite skills to assess the needs of sexual offenders. These youth will participate in all other programming and receive sex offender programming individually or in a small group (if there are enough youth) with a licensed and trained therapist whose scope of practice includes youth who have committed sexual offenses.

Importantly, research consistently demonstrates that youth adjudicated for sexual offenses are psychologically and behaviorally distinct from adults convicted for similar charges. Namely, justice-involved youth demonstrating problematic sexual behaviors (PSB) are, on average, remarkably similar to the general population of justice-involved youth (i.e., without PSB) in terms of rehabilitative needs.<sup>41</sup> Thus, they may be appropriately and effectively treated using non-PSB-specific methods.<sup>42</sup> Nonetheless, there remains a limited proportion of this population who may benefit from PSB-specific treatment methods. For this group, the County will explore expanding its local capacity.

In exploring an expansion of local capacity, the County intends to consider partnering with at least one community-based provider to coordinate and synchronize therapeutic methods for the purpose of ensuring consistency and continuity of service across the continuum of care (i.e., from the secure treatment facilities to less restrictive placements and through reentry). Indeed, research finds that community-based care is more effective than facility-based care in reducing recidivism among youth with PSB.<sup>43</sup> While this may not be possible in some cases, the County embraces these findings in principle and will appropriately weigh these facts as it determines its programmatic strategies.

## **Youth with Significant Mental Health Needs**

Youth with significant mental health needs may require both psychiatric and psychological treatment in order to be able to be included in the milieu. At a minimum, it will be necessary to ensure that there is a clinician with the requisite training in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of individuals with significant mental health needs. This person will also have been trained or show significant supervision experience working with adolescents and young adults. Most ACBH clinicians are trained to assess, diagnose, develop treatment plans, and provide individual therapy for clients who meet this level of acuity.

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<sup>41</sup> Chaffin, M. (2008). *Our Minds Are Made Up—Don't Confuse Us With the Facts: Commentary on Policies Concerning Children with Sexual Behavior Problems and Juvenile Sex Offenders*. *Child Maltreatment*, 13(2), 110–121; Ryan, E., & Otonichar, J. (2016). *Juvenile Sex Offenders*. *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 18(7), Article 67.

<sup>42</sup> Letourneau, E., & Miner, M. (2005). *Juvenile Sex Offenders: A Case Against The Legal And Clinical Status Quo*. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 17(3), 293–312; Borduin, C., Munschy, R., Wagner, D., & Taylor, E. (2011). *Multisystemic therapy with juvenile sexual offenders: Development, validation, and dissemination*, in Boer, D., Eher, R., Craig, L., Miner, M., & Pfafflin F. (eds.), *International Perspectives on the Assessment and Treatment of Sexual Offenders: Theory, Practice, and Research*.

<sup>43</sup> Kim, B., Benekos, P., & Merlo, A. (2016). *Sex offender recidivism revisited: Review of recent meta-analyses on the effects of sex offender treatment*. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 17(1), 105–117.



This individual will provide joint services in the milieu, serving as the MH specialist for all youth and monitoring for destabilization.

In cases when youth need to be placed on an involuntary hold, they will be transferred to the crisis stabilization units at Willow Rock (< 18 years old) or John George (18 years+). Youth would return to the unit once stabilized. If youth are not stable enough to be on the unit because of their mental health, then ACBH will work with Probation, the Court partners, and Willow Rock or John George to identify other solutions to meet the youth's level of care (e.g., a hospital setting).

The vast majority of the youth who have been committed to DJJ over the last several years would not be categorized as youth with significant mental health needs who would require hospitalization. The main diagnoses provided by Guidance Clinic clinicians for youth committed to DJJ in Alameda County have been PTSD, depression, and anxiety. Most youth who have significant mental health needs that severely impact their daily functioning have been identified while in detention and have been diverted to short-term residential therapeutic programs, the Regional Center, or to a locked treatment facility. Over the last 5 years, less than 5 youth (< 18 years) have been conserved and transferred to a locked treatment facility.

### **Family Interventions**

Given that the program is built on a restorative frame—and mentioned previously—it is likely that youth committed to the SB 823 program may have interest in healing relationships with their family of origin or partner. ACBH, in collaboration with ACPD, will contract family and couples therapy and parenting services as requested by the young people in the program. The youth's primary therapist will not serve this dual role but will participate in assisting the youth in preparing for family sessions.

### **Family Engagement**

Research in the field of family engagement has demonstrated the important role that family members play in supporting individuals while they are incarcerated. Specifically, having strong family ties during confinement is related to fewer violent incidents, as well as lower levels of stress and anxiety.<sup>44</sup>

Additionally, detained individuals who can stay connected with their family members are more likely to be successful after their release and less likely to be re-incarcerated.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to the engagement strategies described in this section, ACPD will continue to provide robust and diligent family finding services to help connect youth to familial resources. ACPD currently has a contract with a foster family agency to provide extensive family finding services to any youth served by ACPD. Family finding services start upon youth's initial contact with the system at the front end. These services will help youth in the SYTF locate and develop connections, and will assist the remaining target population to locate and develop both relationships and placement resources.

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<sup>44</sup> Shanahan, R., & Agudelo, S. V. (2012). *The family and recidivism. American Jails*, 18(2), 40-55.

<sup>45</sup> Martinez, D. J. & Christian, J. (2009). *The familial relationships of former prisoners: Examining the link between residence and informal support mechanisms. Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 38(2), 201-224.

Family engagement is about relationship building. As youth are learning skills around social engagement, boundaries, and emotion management, such relationships offer them the space to put those skills into use. Programming that focuses on RJ, identifying and restoring harm, and developing boundaries can be voluntarily practiced during family engagement opportunities.

Consistent with this research, ACPD recognizes the importance of strong bonds with family and/or community support person(s) for youth's success. ACPD has already been providing resources and support for families, especially with regards to maintaining regular contact, and will continue to do so. As outlined in the Youth in Custody Practice (YICPM), ACPD will prioritize family engagement and family-focused strategies. ACPD will also use the broadest definition of family, including both biological and extended family members, as well as other important individuals involved in the youth's life such as romantic partners, friends, neighbors, mentors, coaches, and clergy. Following evidence-based practices, ACPD will consider the use of a Relational Inquiry Tool (RIT), which allows individuals who are detained to work with staff in identifying their family resources. The use of a RIT has been shown to be particularly beneficial for building rapport and establishing trust between detained individuals and facility staff.<sup>46</sup> Once the youth's family has been clearly defined and identified in consultation with the MDT, ACPD will provide access through both formal and informal means and will work to remove all physical and economic barriers to ensure that these relationships are preserved.

Youth and their families shall be offered formal and informal opportunities to provide input and plan family activities that occur on a regular basis. These activities may include opportunities for sharing family meals, recreational activities, and participation in community events. ACPD will also provide opportunities to practice engaged parenting for youth who have children. Some potential program options that could be explored include the Baby Elmo program for those with younger children and the Parenting Inside Outside Program.<sup>47</sup>

Given the importance of family engagement, fostering family-oriented environments in confined facilities is crucial for youth's overall success during incarceration and after release. One program that has been successful at accomplishing this is known as Restoring Promise.<sup>48</sup>

Restoring Promise creates prison housing units designed for young adults and focuses on eliminating barriers to family connections. All Restoring Units hold family orientations where families can visit and see the facility and spaces where youth live. In some cases, families are also allowed to bring personal items, such as sheets and comforter sets and even stay to make the beds of their family members who are confined.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Shanahan, R., & Agudelo, S. V. (2012). *The family and recidivism*. *American Jails*, 18(2), 40-55.

<sup>47</sup> Barr, R., Brito, N., Zocca, J., Reina, S., Rodriguez, J., & Shauffer, C. (2011). *The Baby Elmo Program: Improving teen father-child interactions within juvenile justice facilities*. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(9), 1555-1562. [10.1016/j.childyouth.2011.03.020](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2011.03.020); <http://www.parentinginsideout.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/PIO-90-Topics.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> Vera & MILPA Collective, *Restoring Promise*. <https://restoringpromise.vera.org/about>

<sup>49</sup> D'abruzzo & Chapman. *Keeping Incarcerated People from Their Families Is Cruel*. August 2021.

This process is overseen by staff who are trained to facilitate visits and answer any questions families might have. Since ACPD already plans to train facility staff on the importance of family engagement and presenting a strength-based approach, consideration will be given to training for the facilitation of family visits using a similar approach. Relatedly, ACPD will ensure that any spaces identified for family engagement events, to the degree possible, mirror a home-based setting environment to provide a sense of normalcy that is grounded in dignity for youth and their families.

Youth will be provided opportunities for family engagement on a daily basis, with emphasis and preference placed on in-person opportunities, but also utilizing virtual and telephone contact as well. Exceptions to daily family engagement opportunities will be documented and monitored to help identify barriers.

### **Family Therapy**

Family therapy may not be appropriate for all youth and will not be the only mechanism to achieve increased family engagement. In a more comprehensive framework, family engagement and development of supportive relationships should be prioritized for youth. Some families will not desire therapy; Most families won't want therapy; instead, they will seek opportunities to build effective relationships. For this reason, it is critical that family engagement opportunities be co-created by the clinician unit staff, Credible Messengers, restorative justice facilitators, or other team members who can help in healing.<sup>50</sup> Many of the youth in this program will emerge as adults who have choices about where and with whom they live and call family. Some families have been harmed by the youth and vice versa, and thus a restorative justice model toward healing familial bonds is appropriate and necessary. One example that may be considered for reference as an adjunctive service for interested families is Anchored in Strength, which is a family support group built around empowering families of youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Anchored in Strength provides an emotionally safe venue for families to draw on the strength of each other as they share their individual experiences while navigating their family members' involvement in the justice system.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Department of Youth and Rehabilitation Services. Anchored in Strength family support group.*

# Core Programming:

## Building Core Competencies

### ► *Identifying & Defining Core Competencies*

#### *Program Development*

Developing the therapeutic milieu requires a coordinated effort among all partners and shall include the development of a full daily and weekly program schedule that embraces the core concepts of the program. ACPD will partner with an expert consultant(s) to assist in developing, implementing, and ensuring the core program's fidelity over the course of the first two years of implementation, at a minimum. This will include the design of a training program for staff and coaching and mentoring sessions for the milieu team.

Guided by the latest positive youth development research—as well as discussions with community partners (local CBO's, community members, system leaders, and social justice leaders), and formerly and currently incarcerated youth and their families—we have identified 20 core competencies necessary to support “thriving.” As discussed further below, these competencies are success indicators, allowing the program to adequately measure youth progress, determine which types of programming should be offered, create staff training and accountability frameworks, and guide the design of the environment. Additionally, thriving will be the key outcome that the youth's individual success plan and programming ultimately seek to achieve. This will be informed by the various mental health, risk/needs, and social emotional assessments; collateral information from the youth's success team (i.e., the individual youth and their family, worker, and other and relevant CBO partners). Put in another way, every aspect of the Program should intentionally align to build these core competencies.

Due to the broad nature of the core competencies, successful implementation of the Program will require a close partnership between local community-based organizations, the milieu staff (combination of Credible Messengers, clinician, and Probation staff), and youth development experts. This program aims to develop the following core competencies, in partnership with youth, staff, community partners, and their families (in no particular order):

Develop and Understand Self as Individual	Develop and Understand Self within Community	Develop Sense of Agency	See Yourself Into the Future
Demonstrate Mathematical Literacy	Demonstrate Scientific Literacy	Develop Critical Consciousness	Innovate and Design
Professional Skills: Working Collaboratively Working Independently Time Management	Technology and Media: Proficient Use Responsible Use & Online Safety Ability to Analyze	Read to: Learn Analyze Enjoy	Write: Proficiently Effectively Persuasively
Civic Engagement and Activism	Connection to Physical and Natural Environment	Practice Social Justice	Develop Social Connectedness and Healthy Relationships
Goal Setting, Achievement and Pride in Own Contributions	Health: Wellbeing and Agency	Openness to Challenge and Discovery	Emotional Connectedness

***Develop and Understand Self as Individual:*** Adolescence is crucial for many aspects of developing self and identity, including commitments, personal goals, motivations, and psychosocial well-being. When given multiple opportunities to explore themselves, youth are more likely to experience self-confidence, resiliency, and make positive choices. Similar to a typical college experience, self-exploration is best facilitated through exposure to multiple and new experiences, including the arts, music, books, articles, etc. The Program shall provide multiple opportunities for youth to engage in various activities, based on their interests, but also through exposure to new experiences, = that will push them out of their comfort zone, in a safe and structured setting. Examples include Ted Talks and engaging in new experiences (e.g., cooking, coding, etc.).

***Develop and Understand Self within Community:*** Developing an understanding of self within the community requires defining community both as their immediate surroundings as well as relationships with peers, staff, and other trusted adults. Youth will also learn of the larger, broader communities they belong to based on geography, affinity, culture, and relationships. Both of these framings of community are critical for youth to develop a sense of empathy for others and eventually move towards positive social action or change. Therefore, youth will understand how they fit in within their immediate environment, and how their actions affect others. They will also be able to make sense of, and begin to transform, their social world. Youth shall explore their own and others' experiences with oppression and privilege to understand and change the underlying causes of social and historical processes that perpetuate problems that they face daily.

**Develop Sense of Agency:** Youth perceive and have the ability to employ their assets and aspirations to make or influence their own decisions about their lives and set their own goals, as well as to act upon those decisions in order to achieve desired outcomes. A key ingredient to forming agency is first building self-efficacy, or the youth's belief that they are capable of changing their own conditions. Similar to above, agency is built through exposure to new activities, ideas, and social connections and pushing youth to move away from their comfort zones, while celebrating successes along the way.

Agency also includes control over one's thoughts and emotions. As such, mindfulness techniques and practices shall be incorporated throughout critical programming aspects, along with facilitated programming. For example, morning circles will begin with mindfulness techniques, and ACPD will partner with experts to explicitly teach youth and staff about the most effective practices.

**See Yourself into the Future:** One powerful protective factor against engaging in harmful behavior is feeling optimistic about the future. If young people feel helpless or hopeless when thinking about their lives, they are more likely to engage in short-term thinking and decision making. It should be noted that rather than pathologizing youth who feel pessimistic about their futures, we should recognize that this is a common outcome of exposure to violence and serious harm and trauma. Helping youth develop a sense of optimism, an expansive view of their potential and options for the future, and self-efficacy should be reinforced through as many programs and policies as possible.

**Social Connectedness:** Building skills for understanding and appreciating oneself, one's own culture, language, history, and contributions as well as appreciation for others, are essential components of positive youth development. These skills include self-discipline and decision-making; the ability to work and communicate with others; develop financial literacy; technological access and skills; parenting skills; empathy for others; and the ability to solve problems without domination, retribution, or violence.

**Support Others:** It is critical to give youth the opportunity to support others within their immediate environment, larger community, and families. ACPD is committed to paying youth for their work; thus ACPD will explore the mechanisms and processes needed to implement a program in which youth are paid for their work and contributions made to maintain the facility. Youth will be given opportunities to financially contribute to their families or loved ones which will help foster their sense of pride, empathy, and dignity and help mitigate negative feelings such as guilt and shame, which are common occurrences among those who have experienced incarceration. In partnership with ACPD, the JJDPD will immediately explore the mechanisms and processes needed to create a youth income plan, outlining the process in which youth can earn income during and after their incarceration. While the details of the plan are still in progress, youth shall be given the opportunity to earn no less than \$500 per month (this amount is aligned with cutting-edge research, stating that merely \$500 per month can support agency and a reduction of stress and anxiety).

**Health-Wellbeing and Agency:** Good health as well as knowledge, attitude, and behaviors ensure future health. This includes access to trauma-informed physical, emotional, and mental health services and healing; substance use services; and nutrition, sports, and recreation services. Youth will also be given the information and freedom to make healthy choices (health agency) regarding nutrition, participation in mindfulness, yoga, etc.

**Connection to Physical and Natural Environment:** Skills for understanding and appreciating environmental health, justice, and sustainability also includes attention



paid to the built environment, environmental racism, and access to housing. This will require learning about the policies, laws, and regulations that impact one's healthy development as well as access to and knowledge about green jobs, urban farming, and environmentally sustainable agricultural, housing, and urban development.

***Cognitive and Creative Competencies:*** Knowledge and ability to appreciate and participate in areas of healing-centered, creative expression will be fostered. This includes access to quality education, critical thinking pedagogy, analysis, and problem solving; literacy, academic support, and college preparation; self-expression and empowerment through the arts; ability to examine and address systemic oppression and root causes of inequity; and awareness of power, privilege, prejudice and social justice.

***Social Justice & Civic Engagement:*** Youth will be offered opportunities to understand and develop skills related to personal values, moral and ethical decision-making, and participation in efforts contributing to the greater good. This includes the right to speak out, organize to serve and change one's school, community and society (e.g., leadership pipelines, advisory groups, County commissions and board memberships). Youth shall also be given opportunities to register to vote in local, state, and national elections.

### ***JJDPC and Youth Advisory Council Programmatic Advisory***

The purpose of Alameda County's JJDPC's providing programmatic advice is to ensure that ACPD has critical information and perspectives from the Community to help inform current and potential programming. The JJDPC will provide recommendations to support the Programming goals outlined in this document; thereby further expanding ACPD's reach into the Community. In performing this function, the JJDPC will work closely with community-based organizations, systems-impacted youth (current and former) and their families, and relevant justice stakeholder groups (i.e. AC Youth Council), to gather critical information, expertise, and diverse perspectives. It will also work closely with and include the recommendations of the Youth Advisory Council when providing its own recommendations to ACPD to support the Programming goals outlined in this document; thereby further expanding ACPD's reach into the Community.

In consultation with the Chief of Probation, the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court, and the Youth Advisory Council, the JJDPC shall immediately develop a process to review programming and advise ACPD regarding program needs and requirements to advise ACPD as it considers requests for proposals to provide services and the provision of existing services to the target population or in connection with the Realignment Plan; This will include developing a process for the JJDPC to receive and review sufficient information to and advise the ACPD with respect to the items listed and any additional programmatic service items for which ACPD seeks advice or comment. However, the Subcommittee does not intend to create additional access to actual contracts and proposals beyond what the JJDPC may access under existing laws and regulations and what is publicly available.

The JJDPC and the Youth Advisory Council will review programming for the areas listed in this Plan and will advise ACPD and provide community perspective on existing programs and proposed options. The JJDPC and the Youth Advisory Council will use the Core Competencies to make their assessments and recommendations. The JJDPC and the Youth Advisory Council will gather information from the community and directly impacted young people and families in order to develop recommendations.



### *Life Skills Programming*

Life Skills education will also be provided, including programs related to meal planning and preparation that allow youth to cook some meals for themselves and eat family style. Courses will also be offered regarding civic engagement and responsibility. All youth who are old enough will be given the opportunity to pre-register/register to vote, with voting actively supported and encouraged by ACPD. Prior to each election, ACPD will ensure that youth are provided information on ballot issues by a non-partisan group such as the League of Women Voters.

Programs will also be offered that are designed to teach about money management and investing with the opportunity to begin an investment portfolio while in facility, based upon funds earned in the program. Many systems have some form of a “point or token” economy for good behavior or achieving unit goals. This program will move beyond “tokens for Takis,” which reinforces compliance and short-term goals, instead focusing on helping youth invest and plan for the future. This also supports the youth in leaving the program with the necessary financial resources to transition to community, acquire safe affordable housing, and meet their basic needs while seeking employment. Programs will also be offered on housing and home ownership.

### *Currently Available Programming*

Within the framework of positive youth justice, Alameda County Probation is determined to provide services to encourage the continued growth and enrichment of youth committed to our program. In alignment with appropriate practices, the following services will be offered:

- **Write to Read Program:** The Alameda County Library is currently working to build out a robust complement of literacy services at both JJC and Camp Sweeney, which will include a combination of one-on-one literacy tutoring and small group instruction, with referrals from ACOE and facility staff.
- **Library:** The Alameda County Library operates full-service libraries at both JJC and Camp Sweeney. Youth at JJC visit the library once per week during free hours. Full-size collections are maintained with a vast array of reading materials at all reading levels.
  - The Alameda County Library also provides an array of programming for youth at both facilities that includes visits from popular authors throughout the year, book groups, creative writing classes, and STEAM programming during the summer and throughout the year.
  - The Alameda County Library at the Juvenile Justice Center provides a collection of books and reading materials that are culturally relevant, age appropriate, and in keeping with current trends. The collection is refreshed throughout the year to ensure that the collection is consistently reflective of the cultures, languages, and experiences of the young people we serve.
  - The authors and programmings that the Library offers throughout the year are culturally responsive and relevant to the lives of the young people who visit the library at JJC.
- **Supplemental Education (Tutoring):** Supplemental educational services are offered through Sylvan Learning Center and Excel.
- **Reading and Homework Hour:** Volunteers from the community come in and help youth

work on their reading skills with the goal of improving the young people's academic abilities and forging meaningful relationships between the youth at Juvenile Hall and responsible adults.

- ***Mind Body Awareness Program:*** Mindfulness-based techniques are taught through meditation and yoga to the detained youth.
- ***The Beat Within:*** Creative writing workshops are conducted resulting in a magazine that features the work of the participating youth.
- ***Recreational Activities:*** ACPD intends to hire a recreational therapist to develop programming for individual and group activities. They will lead and instruct physical, social, and culturally relevant programs to encourage progress toward rehabilitative goals.

ACPD recognizes the importance of providing a wide array of engaging and high-quality programming to ensure that youth are able to make progress toward their goals and are also provided with multiple opportunities to fill their time with prosocial activities. Given the relatively low anticipated population (<10) in the first year, ACPD will continue existing contracts for programs and services.

For the immediate future, ACPD intends to replicate the TAY programs and Camp Sweeney contractors in the SB 823 program and will continue to seek opportunities to partner with community-based organizations to fill any gaps in programming, as well as to provide additional opportunities for programming to meet any individual needs.

### ***Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations***

Community-based partnerships are essential and key to the success of this program model. ACPD plans to leverage existing and new contracts with a variety of community-based service providers to facilitate in-custody programs and services, as well as to provide services in the community during "inside/outside" (youth being in-custody while also being allowed to go into the community for programs, jobs, school, and services) and reentry phases. Alameda County Probation intends to partner with community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide a vast array of re-entry services including but not limited to case management, housing, mental health, systems navigation, substance use, education/vocation/college, employment, mentoring, and on-going cognitive behavioral treatment, as necessary.

Alameda County will incorporate structured decision-making based on a foundation rooted in Evidence-Based Practices (EBP), but also open to locally developed and other promising practices. While implementing EPBs for program development will be prioritized, it is important to point out that there is no standardized approach for working with all youth. Moreover, ACPD will identify locally developed programs that have offered indicators of success as part of its commitment to support the growth and work of its community partners. This is in line with ACPD's plan to implement a community capacity fund (CCF) grant program in order to build capacity among youth-serving organizations. Implementing locally promising or relevant programming that attends to the specific needs of the target population opens the opportunity for the creation of new EPBs that are more relevant for youth in the juvenile justice system.

ACPD will also pursue the identification of other innovative programs within the community including but not limited to emotional or therapeutically trained animals.

Participation in these types of programs will be based on the individual youth's assessed needs and their expressed interest to participate in such programs. Developing trust with animals helps build empathy, responsibility, and can be incredibly rewarding. Sharing responsibility for the animal (e.g., feeding, walking, grooming, etc.) can help to build a larger sense of community, responsibility, and belonging.

ACPD will also partner with CBOs to plan and "host"—whether at the facility or in the community, as appropriate—community events on a regular, hopefully monthly, basis. This event planning can also involve the youth themselves, not only on the "theme" or focus of the event, but also planning the logistics. Some examples of these events might include BBQs/cookouts; Town Halls for Civic Engagement; Resource Fairs; Cook Offs and other light-hearted "competitions"; Art Exhibits, including youth works and community artists; Musical events; etc. Input from the youth themselves, as well as from the Youth Council, will be taken into consideration when planning the content and scheduling for these events.

### ► **Developmentally Appropriate Scheduling**

It is widely accepted that delayed start times in education and other programming is preferable for adolescents. It is universally accepted that adolescents experience a biologically driven sleep delay.<sup>52</sup> During this phase of development, adolescents experience a sleep-wake phase delay unrelated to social factors or circumstances. This change in sleep pattern does not correspond to a decreased need for sleep though, and early scheduling requirements thus contribute to sleep deprivation in adolescents. In a 2014 report, American Academy of Pediatrics referred to adolescent sleep deprivation as an epidemic and recommended a delay in school start times.<sup>53</sup>

Sleep deprivation is associated with a number of increased risks and poorer outcomes including increased drug use and risk-taking behaviors, depressive symptoms and higher prevalence of mood disorders, and a decrease in academic performance.<sup>54</sup> In fact, given the essential relationship between sleep and human development, it has been postulated that sleep deprivation during the sensitive developmental period of adolescence "may permanently alter the developmental trajectory of the brain and behavior."<sup>55</sup>

Combating sleep deprivation with a delayed start time for daily activities has been shown to improve grades, decrease irritability and depressive symptoms, decrease disciplinary issues, and reduce athletic injuries.<sup>56</sup> Despite widespread agreement that delayed start times are beneficial to adolescents, many schools are unable to accommodate later times because of other considerations such as transportation, childcare, and other scheduling conflicts. Those challenges are largely absent in this programming environment, and thus sleep needs can be accommodated more readily.

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<sup>52</sup> Hagenauer, M. H., & Lee, T. M. (2013). Adolescent sleep patterns in humans and laboratory animals. *Hormones and behavior*, 64(2), 270-279.

<sup>53</sup> Adolescent Sleep Working Group. (2014). School start times for adolescents. *American Academy of Pediatrics*, 134(3), 642-649. doi:10.1542/peds.2014-1697

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Hagenauer, M. H., & Lee, T. M. (2013). Adolescent sleep patterns in humans and laboratory animals. *Hormones and behavior*, 64(2), 270-279.

<sup>56</sup> Suni, E., & Vyas, N. (2021). How Would Later School Start Times Affect Sleep? Sleep Foundation. <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/school-and-sleep/late-school-start-times>

ACPD, in recognition of the importance of sleep and the delay in sleep onset and wakefulness, will develop programming and daily schedules to meet the sleep hygiene needs of youth. This will be routinely reassessed and include increased flexibility on weekends. ACPD will also consider and implement options to accommodate the needs of young people in its facility setup and provisioning— for example, ensuring young people are able to have lights for reading or other nightly activities, are offered sufficient darkness and quiet for sleeping, and meeting other such needs as they arise. The established daily schedule, or a sampling of weekly schedules, and any accommodations or modifications made to meet these needs will be reported to the subcommittee prior to the approval of the Annual Realignment Plan. That is, in the following iterations of annual planning, the subcommittee will review the existing daily schedule prior to approving the plan.

### **Sample Core Programming Schedule**

#### **General Schedule Hours**

<i>7:00–8:00am: Wake up call &amp; breakfast</i>
<i>8:00–9:00am: Personal time/prepare for the day</i>
<i>9:00–12:00pm: Education (individualized to each youth based on their educational levels/goals)</i>
<i>12:00–1:00pm: Lunch</i>
<i>1:00–3:00pm: Education/vocational training (based on needs/goals); fitness; recreational activities</i>
<i>4:00–5:30pm: Core programming</i>
<i>5:30–6:30pm: Dinner</i>
<i>6:30–8:00pm: Electives; visits</i>
<i>8:00–9:00pm: Recreation; downtime</i>

This schedule is not intended to be proscriptive, but rather provides an illustration of the intent to provide a wide variety of tailored programming. Key features of this sample schedule include relatively later shower/personal hygiene time, plenty of personal time, varied weekend schedules, daily outside time, and significant time for family engagement. Weekend schedules should be varied and include more time for family engagement and personal time.

## **High School & Higher Education**

ACPD has a unique opportunity to move beyond providing basic life skills designed to help youth make marginal improvements in life and avoid recommitment. That's just a notch above survival. ACPD acknowledges that racism is entrenched in the laws, policies, and practices of our society that have contributed to many of these youth not receiving the same educational opportunities and resources that they need, and living in severely under-resourced, often violent communities, and commits to contributing to repair these injustices by providing youth with equitable—not just equal—resources, knowledge, and experiences.

### ***Focus on High School Diplomas & Higher Education***

The ACOE and ACPD will continue existing agreements to include the development of educational curriculum as part of the treatment program to assist the youth in work toward earning a high school diploma. Credit recovery courses, in addition to regular course enrollment, will be offered to propel the youth to their proper grade level more quickly than in public school. The ACOE and ACPD will continue existing agreements to include the development of educational curriculum as part of the treatment program to assist the youth in work toward earning a high school diploma. Credit recovery courses, in addition to regular course enrollment, will be offered to propel the youth to their proper grade level more quickly than in public school. Where appropriate and desired by the youth, ACOE will utilize dual enrollment in community college as a credit recovery strategy. This will allow youth to both recoup high school credits while also being exposed to a college learning environment which can both smooth a transition to higher education and also help avoid the feelings of frustration and embarrassment associated with being behind in school.

Youth absent a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) certification will be in school for a large portion of the day. The education program will comply with the State Education Code and County Board of Education policies and provide for annual evaluations of the education program offerings through existing evaluative processes, such as WASC and Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). Attendees are provided quality educational programming that includes instructional strategies designed to respond to the different learning styles and abilities of students. Courses which are offered include, but are not limited to, instruction in English/Language Arts, Social Sciences, Physical Education, Science, Health, Mathematics, Fine Arts/Foreign Language, and Electives (including career education). Older youth who have already completed their GED or high school diploma will spend much of their day in workforce development, continuing and higher education, and other programming areas.

Every student should have an Individualized Learning, and Transition Plan (ILTP). It is recognized that a disproportionate number of students in custody have IEPs, and special attention will be given to special education needs. The needs of English Language Learners will also be addressed in culturally appropriate ways. Assessments for IEPs should be conducted as needed. Needs can be observed or questioned at any time. The request to conduct an assessment or an assessment for an IEP can be made by anyone, although most frequently these are made by teachers or other school personnel, guardians, or other advocates, and only move forward with approval of educational rights holders. Students will have the opportunity to provide feedback regarding education and other services they are receiving while in the SB 823 program. A clear and meaningful protocol for response to feedback will be developed.



The initial cohort of students in the SB 823 program will likely be older than the average youth at JJC. It is important for older and TAY youth to feel empowered and have agency over their education and vocation paths, and not feel infantilized or patronized. Research also demonstrates that integration and programming with other youth—similar to them in age and social-emotional development—is beneficial. Thus, learning environments will be integrated with other youth whenever possible, knowing that some individualization will likely be needed. The youth's input and preferences will also be discussed during the MDT meetings and included in the ILTP. If there are enough older students, regardless of SB 823 status, ACPD will consider the creation of a cohort of older students with separate classes. This determination should be made by age or educational needs, not SB 823 status. While we're anticipating older youth in the first few years of the SB 823 program, it is important to create a program that is flexible and responsive to a range of ages and developmental and learning needs. After a few years, it is likely that the SB 823 program will include students with a wide range of ages.

ACPD is strongly committed to making college available to high school graduates. The ACPD will bring in college-level courses that would be available to students who are not yet in a position to go out of the secure setting into the community, if feasible. Given the wide array of online courses available, the ACPD will provide internet access consistent with Title 15 and the Welfare & Institutions Code, necessary technology and equipment, and the opportunity to take advantage of online higher education options as soon in the SB 823 program as possible. We emphasize that many students may need foundational courses that may not be credit-bearing but are nonetheless essential to their success in college. Thus, ACPD will focus on these courses for those still in the secure setting. This will also enable students to complete necessary foundational courses without incurring significant debt, which will greatly benefit their success. Eligible high school students will also be given the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment in community colleges and vocational training. Dual enrollment is especially beneficial to youth, as those courses are free. ACPD will consider expansively college courses that may also promote wellness and self-care (e.g., yoga, meditative practices, etc). ACPD is also considering programs such as San Mateo's Project Change program, since such a program could be adapted and/or improved for local use.

For both youth still in the secure setting and those in an inside/outside setting, ACPD will develop partnerships with community colleges. These institutions will offer transition support, enrollment services, academic advising, financial aid, etc. ACPD will also pursue partnerships with existing campus-based groups<sup>57</sup> that are supporting formerly incarcerated students and will prioritize relationships with groups that are able to bring in programming and supports into the facility. Post-high school education will be formally managed by an educational third party. Ideally, these services would be provided by Laney Community College's program serving youth with juvenile justice system experience, Restoring our Communities (RoC) or other similar program. This organization would be supported by ACOE and ACPD. ROC currently provides postsecondary services to students at the Alameda County Juvenile Hall through an established MOU with the Alameda County Office of Education.

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<sup>57</sup> Examples of such groups include: Underground Scholars, ROC, Project Rebound, RISE (Chabot Community College).



The intent is to expand this contract to include Alameda County Probation, and to expand the scope of services to serve all youth interested in and eligible for college programming, including DJJ Realignment youth. This expanded MOU between Laney College, Alameda County Probation, and Alameda County Office of Education creates the opportunity for establishing comprehensive college programming inside (the juvenile hall and SYTF) and outside (on the college campus) for both students who have not yet completed their high school diplomas and for those who have.

The MOU process will allow for the key stakeholders: Laney College, ACOE, and ACPD, to create the additional logistics needed to expand their already existing college program model.

The goal of the program partnership with an organization such as ROC is to provide postsecondary pathways that a) prepare youth for a variety of career and technical pathways; b) allow students to build and maintain positive connections to the community; and c) serve as a framework for community re-integration. Alameda County's program model is considered a best practice and provides services that meet several key recommendations for model programs, including:

- It provides postsecondary programming for juvenile justice students with a multidisciplinary, multi stakeholder team as required for success. Every stakeholder has an essential role to play. The key stakeholders include: Identified local community college (Laney College); ACPD; County Office of Education; additional can include public defender's office, a community based organization, social services
- The community college is the lead organization and includes a liaison/program lead to organize the college services and serve as a conduit between the juvenile hall, multi stakeholders, the students, and the college.
- The college course offerings include UC/CSU transferable courses and potentially Career and Technical education courses for credit, as well as foundational courses.
- Dual Enrollment programming can be included in the college course offerings to enable students without a diploma the opportunity to receive both high school and college courses concurrently.
- Students can receive wrap around support services to ensure success: tutoring, support with enrollment, access to and guidance for financial aid, academic advising through college counselors.

Transition plans are developed for re-entry support to the college campus upon release; as an alternative placement; as an option for early release; or as an option for furlough to come to campus to engage in college preparation or take college courses.

Recognizing that higher educational opportunities will be extremely limited for those still in the secure setting, ACPD will provide the supports and resources needed for students to "step-down" and move into an inside/outside setting as quickly as possible. We recognize that this decision is ultimately made by the Court. However, the MDT and assigned DPO will keep this goal in mind and will provide the Court with detailed updates that would be sufficient for the Court to make informed and timely decisions in the best interest of the youth.

### ***Other Academic Supports and Normative Academic Experiences***

An important aspect of any educational program is the opportunity to engage in developmentally appropriate activities that develop a sense of community, leadership and social skills, artistic expression, cultural identity, and self. ACOE and ACPD will work with community partners, students, and families to regularly assess the availability, quality, and accessibility of these activities.

Hence, ACOE and ACPD will work with community partners, students, and families to identify academic supports and extracurricular activities that are responsive to students' interests and will support continued academic and community engagement. Examples of such activities include, but are not limited to, sports and recreation, visual and performing arts, creative writing, tutoring and mentoring, and student government.

ACOE and ACPD will also work with community partners, students, and families to ensure families and supportive adults have opportunities to engage with and support their students in their educational progress. Examples of such activities include, but are not limited to, graduation ceremonies, open houses, college nights, and performance opportunities for extracurriculars.

In planning for the above extracurriculars and community events, ACOE and ACPD will consider both in-person and virtual opportunities for youth and family engagement, depending on the availability, quality, and accessibility of programming and how that interacts with youth and family circumstances, for instance, providing virtual opportunities for family members to attend events if there are family members who live in another state or country and cannot participate otherwise, or allowing a youth in a creative writing program to submit an entry to a poetry slam that is being held online.

### ***Vocational Training***

Vocational Program training will be expanded through community partnerships with local colleges—ideally, coordinated by ROC. The mission of these vocational programs will be to create meaningful, living wage career pathways and provide opportunities for in-person apprenticeships and employment outside of Juvenile Hall. Direct linkage to job and apprenticeship opportunities will better prepare youth for success upon their release as these opportunities will allow SB 823 youth to gain valuable work experience, build references, develop professional networks, and open a savings account. ACPD will explore collaborative opportunities with local unions,<sup>58</sup> which will be able to provide training and apprenticeships for which youth will be eligible. For those youth who are interested in vocational training outside of union trades, efforts will be made to connect them with a vocational mentor working in their desired field. ACPD will pay initial union dues for those youth who successfully complete union-trade related programs. ACPD will also purchase the first set of tools and supplies for graduates. These supports remove potential economic barriers, allow youth to pursue and access careers in their chosen fields, and will help set them up for success in their chosen field. ACPD also recognizes the importance of youth exploring different fields of work and developing a passion for a career of their choice. Therefore, ACPD will actively engage SB 823 youth and provide youth with career aptitude and assessment tests in order to explore their skills and interests.

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<sup>58</sup> Such as: SEIU 1021, UA Local 342, Plumbers & Pipefitters Carpenters Local Union 713, and LiUNA Laborers Local 304.

Based on these assessments and discussions, youth will be provided access to a direct linkage to training in that field in the community. Access to facilities that enable hands-on learning (e.g., auto repair shops, commercial kitchens, computer labs, etc.) will also be provided when feasible.

A focus on employment for our youth must elicit and develop their strengths and skills, be meaningful, and assist in the selection of a field that can promote sustainability. Work that is offered will be structured and closely monitored, and will not interfere with other important adolescent development activities. Current workforce development programs at Camp Sweeney create employment and educational pathways for sustainable careers. Access to these on-campus programs, such as Multi-Core Craft Curriculum (MC3) and Google Technology Certification courses, will allow youth to develop the skills and obtain the certifications needed to obtain employment. Other vocational training programs will be explored and pursued as well—including, but not limited to, coding and technology-related certifications, real estate licensing, etc. All of these programs will be available for SB 823 youth at JJC and will work to create a direct connection between training and actual jobs.

Throughout the entire process, ACPD will continue to offer innovative programs with demonstrated success, such as Raising Leaders workshops for SB 823 youth, which are already in progress, and will explore the expansion of the program as well.

ACPD also recognizes that when SB 823 youth obtain jobs, they may face barriers getting to and from work (once they are back in their communities). ACPD will therefore make it a priority to support opportunities for SB 823 youth to obtain their driver's license or California ID while they are in custody.

# Reentry Planning, Coordination, & Services

## Background

Determining how to support youth returning from a period of confinement requires understanding the harm confinement inflicts upon a young person during a crucial period of their development.<sup>59</sup> The disconnection from one's family, friends, and community impairs the potential for successful reentry.<sup>60</sup> For young people, these challenges are complicated by the already trying transition from adolescence to adulthood.<sup>61</sup> Reentry interventions that center adolescent development are effective in reducing recidivism and ensuring long-term success, particularly when they involve the family in treatment and target higher-risk youth.<sup>62</sup> To ensure better reentry outcomes as they transition from confinement to their communities, the County's reentry support system will tap into the strengths, assets, and aspirations of justice-involved youth and their support systems, and combine targeted programs and services to address the immediate needs of youth returning to their communities. Some of these needs include, but are not limited to: housing; employment; education; substance abuse; physical and mental health; social-emotional development; mental, legal, and familial support; and transportation.

## Programming

To improve the odds of success for youth reentering their communities, the County, related agencies, and community will begin to plan for what a youth needs to be successful in their reentry process when they first enter the juvenile justice system. Coordination and collaboration between agencies and across services and supports are necessary at multiple phases of a youth's confinement.<sup>63</sup> The reentry services and supports youth need to succeed will be tailored, high quality, and provided in the least restrictive environment possible.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> De Nike, M., Shelden, R., Macallair, D., & Menart, R. (2019). *Collaborating for Successful Reentry: A Practical Guide to Support Justice-Involved Young People Returning to the Community*. Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice.

<sup>60</sup> Mears, D. P. and J. Travis. (2004). Youth development and reentry. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice* 2: 3–20.

<sup>61</sup> Zimmermann, C. (2005). Always in custody? An agenda for juvenile reentry. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 29(1), 33–51.

<sup>62</sup> James, C., Stams, G. J. J., Asscher, J. J., De Roo, A. K., & Van der Laan, P. H. (2013). Aftercare programs for reducing recidivism among juvenile and young adult offenders: A meta-analytic review. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 33(2), 263–274. Abram, K. M., Teplin, L. A., Charles, D. R., Longworth, S. L., McClelland, G. M., & Dulcan, M. K. (2004). Posttraumatic stress disorder and trauma in youth in juvenile detention. *Archives of general psychiatry*, 61(4), 403–410.

<sup>63</sup> Clark, H. G., Mathur, S., Brock, L., O'Cummings, M., & Milligan, D. (2016). *Transition toolkit 3.0: Meeting the educational needs of youth exposed to the juvenile justice system*. National Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Neglected or Delinquent Children and Youth (NDTAC).

<sup>64</sup> Schaefer, S., & Erickson, G. (2016). *The impact of juvenile correctional confinement on the transition to adulthood*. Report submitted to the US Department of Justice.

Youth in confinement show significantly lower levels of psychosocial maturity (responsibility, perspective, and short-term decline in temperance). As a result, confined youth have lower levels of educational and employment attainment in young adulthood compared to all other youth.<sup>65</sup> As these are critical components to successful reentry, ACPD will ensure programming allows youth to build psychosocial maturity skills through activities that mirror typical adolescent responsibilities, behaviors, and tasks.

Incorporating a reentry perspective in all aspects of facility programming and operations can help minimize the harmful effects of removal and increase the likelihood of sustainable and successful reintegration of youth back into the community.<sup>66</sup>

ACPD will keep the following concepts in mind to help guide their practices. First, in the immediate term, the Juvenile Hall (JJC) is a vital part of the reentry process.<sup>67</sup> Thus, ACPD will purposefully and clearly articulate the goals of preparing youth to become contributing members of their community upon their return. Consistent with that mission, every aspect of confinement programs should be designed and evaluated through the lens of how well they meet that goal. This will require, where needed, changing the focus of institution programs and policies from simply managing youth inside the facility to promoting skills that lead to successful reentry.

### **Phased Approach**

ACPD will employ a phased approach to programming in order to respond to the changing needs of youth throughout the duration of their time in custody. Once ordered into the SB 823 program by the Court, Phase 1 (Orientation) begins. This phase is not intended to last more than 30 days and primarily consists of convening the MDT, orientation to the Secure Treatment Facility, and administering any additional assessments that may be needed to ensure proper programming is available and assigned. Youth will successfully complete an orientation of the housing unit with probation staff. Program staff & Credible Messengers will closely monitor and support youth progress the first 30 days. Youth committed to the SB 823 Program will be given a handbook about SB 823 programming, similar to what youth are given at Camp Sweeney. This handbook will outline the phases and how they can work toward “stepping down.” The handbook will also clearly and transparently outline the disciplinary process used in the SYTF. The disciplinary process will be discussed in greater detail in the corresponding section further below in the plan.

According to Welfare and Institutions Code 875(d), within 30 days of making an order to commit a youth to a secure youth treatment facility (SYTF), the Court shall receive, review, and approve an individual rehabilitation plan (IRP) that meets the requirements. The IRP must be submitted to the Court by ACPD and any other agencies or individuals the Court deems necessary. The MDT will be primarily responsible for the development of the IRP. Prior to submission to the Court, the IRP will undergo a quality control mechanism to ensure it is compliant with WIC 875(d) and is reflective of additional parameters set forth by this Plan. Note that reentry planning should also begin immediately. Note that reentry planning should also begin immediately.

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<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Burrell, J., & Moeser, J. (2014). *Transition planning and reentry. Desktop guide to quality practice for working with youth in confinement*, 651-670.

<sup>67</sup> Dunlap, E. L., & Roush, D. W. (1995). *Juvenile detention as process and place*. *Juv. & Fam. Ct. J.*, 46, 3.



Once Phase 1 Orientation is complete, the youth will move into Phase 2—where the bulk of programming, education, training, and skill and relationship building will take place. Before transitioning to the core programming phase (or Phase 2), program staff will hold an MDT meeting with the youth and their community supports to review progress in their first 30 days. Progress reports should highlight the youth's strengths and areas for opportunity. After the MDT meeting, the youth will be moved to the core programming phase. Phase 2 will also include a reward/sanction system that rewards good behavior, disincentivizes poor behavior, and allows for increases in freedom and privileges over time. As noted above, this reward/sanction system should be less focused on short-term rewards and behavior management and should instead be oriented toward long-term goals. During this Phase, close attention will be paid to ensure that the "least restrictive environment" is used to engage youth and provide services.

Phase 2 will include regular contact with the community, both "inside" (through Credible Messengers and other community-based staff who will provide programming within the facility) and also through utilizing a step-down approach that will incorporate an inside/outside component. This will allow for community integration and "normalizing" the process of undoing institutionalization, early on. As noted above, ACPD recognizes that progression of an inside/outside program will depend on youth success within the program and the Court's decisions. However, ACPD will clearly articulate the goal of "step-down" and will provide the Court with the information it needs to make informed, timely decisions. If a youth is approved to begin community reintegration through step-down approaches an MDT meeting will be scheduled with the youth to explore next steps and update reentry goals. If a youth is not approved by the court to begin community reintegration through a step-down approach, an eligibility assessment for "inside-outside" components should take place every 60-90 days. Youth's reentry plan will be updated to reflect new goal in preparation for community reintegration. Program staff & Credible Messengers will closely monitor and support youth progress throughout Phase 2. Youth will be expected to follow SB 823 program agreements; failure to comply will not revert youth back to Phase 1.

Phase 3 involves Community Reintegration, and ideally will begin between 6 and 9 months before anticipated release. In order to ensure youth have the smoothest transition and greatest access to reentry support, planning will begin during phase 2 and no later than 9 months prior to the initial baseline date set for release, and adjusted to be earlier as soon as it becomes apparent that release will be earlier. To help address some of these challenges, ACPD will ensure that Community Reintegration planning, services, and programming begins well before any anticipated release. Discussed in further detail below, this phase will include evidence-informed reentry case management, access to education, vocational training, and employment outside of the facility. The Reentry Service Coordinator employed by ACPD will serve as a case manager and will be assigned during this time, along with a community-based Credible Messenger who will continue to mentor the youth throughout their reentry journey, including post release. These individuals will also begin attending the MDT meetings. Ideally, these supports will continue throughout the duration of their community supervision. After 180 days post-release, required youth meetings/engagement should decrease. The youth will be expected to engage in face-to-face meetings with the Reentry Case Manager once per month to review progress, reinforce positive behaviors, and provide support on reentry plan goals. The DPO should begin assessment for program completion.



## Reentry Case Management

ACPD will ensure that transitions for youth into and out of reentry programs are as seamless as possible. Efforts to redirect youth are more likely to succeed when youth are offered consistent expectations, services, and support as they move into, through, and out of confinement facilities.<sup>68</sup> In an effort to minimize the possible confusion youth and their families may encounter from dealing with multiple agencies, a Reentry Case Manager will ensure that care is coordinated among all service-providing agencies.<sup>69</sup> This case manager will be assigned several months (ideally, 6–9 months) before anticipated release. Successful case managers are culturally sensitive and come from similar backgrounds and experiences as reentering youth. These attributes help to foster a closer relationship between the reentering individual and their support system,<sup>70</sup> and achieves positive youth development outcomes in the long term.<sup>71</sup>

San Francisco's Juvenile Collaborative Reentry Unit (JCRU) can serve as an example for seamless transition. The Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice (CJCJ) participates in the JCRU, which is comprised of the Probation Department, Court, Public Defender's Office, and CJCJ.

Reentry planning begins upon disposition, incorporating the young person and family members in every decision along the way, and blending together service plans from all participating agencies. When the youth reenters the community, there is a coordinated and comprehensive plan in place. CJCJ delivers most of these supports directly, but also brokers access to outside programs that correspond to the youth's needs, strengths, and interests.<sup>72</sup> ACPD and the Public Defender's office already have an existing collaboration with many of these practices in place (which will be expanded to include the youth's defense counsel) however further coordination with the Court, the Reentry Case Manager, and the Reentry Services Coordinator would be a significant benefit to the youth.

### Addressing Basic Needs Upon Release

Many youth with justice involvement have few, if any, financial resources and may not have family members that they can rely on for food and shelter. These young people cannot afford to volunteer, take unpaid internships, or engage in some of the job-search behaviors that are available to more privileged young people. Involving youth in paid work, service, or other employment related activity as soon as possible is key to success, especially for youth with justice involvement. Examples of successful approaches include wage-subsidized internships, stipends for community service, and transitional jobs, which are time-limited subsidized work experiences that help establish a work history

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<sup>68</sup> McCarthy, P., Schiraldi, V. N., & Shark, M. (2016). *The Future of Youth Justice: A Community Based Alternative to the Youth Prison Model*.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>70</sup> Liang, B., & Rhodes, J. (2007). Guest editorial: Cultivating the vital element of youth mentoring. *Applied Development Science*, 11(2), 104–107. Liang, B., & West, J. (2007). *Youth Mentoring: Do Race and Ethnicity Really Matter? Research in Action*. Issue 9. Mentor.

<sup>71</sup> DuBois, D. L., & Silverthorn, N. (2005). Characteristics of natural mentoring relationships and adolescent adjustment: Evidence from a national study. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, 26(2), 69–92.

<sup>72</sup> See: Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice. *San Francisco Juvenile Collaborative Reentry Team (JCRT)*.

and develop skills to access unsubsidized employment.<sup>73</sup> In partnership with the County, ACPD will expand the use of subsidized employment programs and paid internships to help bridge the unemployment gap that many youth face upon release. ACPD will provide services based on the needs of the population and where they reside throughout the County. ACPD is committed to ensuring equitable access to resources for all youth in Alameda County. If services are not available where a youth lives ACPD is committed to providing transportation and ameliorating any other barriers to access. Ideally, all youth would have access to these opportunities well before their release.

ACPD will utilize the existing innovative Transition Center and expand services to ensure that youth—and the families they are returning to, where applicable—are connected to resources they are eligible for. These resources are not limited to housing, (including, Section 8) and other forms of public assistance (including SNAP, Medi-Cal, etc.). Vital documents are often a hindrance to housing and employment, especially for those who have been incarcerated for long periods of time. Thus, ACPD will offer assistance in preparing vital documents (e.g., Social Security Card, original birth certificate, CA ID and/or Driver's License), SSI (needs to start while in custody), and voter registration (if changing address, etc.). It should be noted that some of these resources can be accessed prior to release, while some (e.g., public assistance) must be accessed after release. The Transition Center and its services will remain available to youth (and their families where appropriate) post-release. Through the Transition Center, ACPD will develop an MOU with the Social Service Agency to ensure that youth and their families are maximizing their social service benefits.

ACPD re-entry staff will be connected to the Transition Center— a collaboration of partners, who stand in alignment with the mission to support and restore communities. ACPD recognizes that engaging in the justice system can be emotionally difficult for those involved. As such, emphasis is placed on a family-focused and trauma-informed process. The Transition Center empowers youth, families, and their caregivers by removing barriers to success and connecting them to supportive resources and healthy alternatives in the community. The Transition Center, with ACPD as the lead agency, works in partnership with Alameda County Office of Education, the Center for Healthy Schools and Communities, Oakland Unified School District, Oakland Unite, Alameda County Behavioral Health, and Alameda County Public Health. The Transition Center is equipped with two confidential conference rooms furnished with computers, telephones, and current community resources and events.

ACPD has committed to addressing all the stabilizing needs of a family and is prepared to provide concrete services such as transportation, food vouchers, relocation supports, clothing, school supplies, and household items. ACPD also recognizes that the stigma of a criminal record may follow the youth during and after re-entry, and may present a significant barrier to successful reentry. Thus, ACPD commits to training re-entry staff in the procedures required to seal records according to Welfare and Institution Code 781. Re-entry staff will relay such information to the youth and their families during and throughout Phase 3 while the youth prepares to transition back to the community.

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<sup>73</sup> O'Sullivan, K., Spangler, D., Showalter, T., & Bennett, R. (2020). *Job Training for Youth with Justice Involvement: A Toolkit*. National Youth Employment Coalition.

### ***Continuity of Care***

The Reentry Service Coordinator will coordinate with various agencies, departments, and community-based organizations to ensure that smooth continuity is ensured without interruption in physical and mental health, as well education, services. They will ensure that warm handoffs and transportation occur—not just passive referrals to services. Any medications currently prescribed will be filled prior to release. The amount of medication provided will be determined by the prescribing physician, who will be informed of the transition to release. Ideally 30 days or more of medication will be provided. In the case that this is not indicated by the prescribing physician due to safety or health considerations, transportation to and from necessary appointments and the appropriate pharmacy will be provided.

### ***Education***

For youth still pursuing their high school diploma, ACOE and ACPD will coordinate to ensure youth are enrolled in a school or program that will meet their goal of a HS diploma. The Reentry Service Coordinator will ensure that this coordination is taking place, as well as involving parents and ensuring that a warm handoff is provided. They will leverage resources needed to foster a successful transition, including transportation support, school supplies, uniforms, etc. ACOE will ensure that all needed transcripts and other student records are provided and given to the school or program, including a fully consolidated transcript reflecting all enrollments and credits from other districts. IEPs will be up to date prior to release. ACOE will collaborate with K-12 schools to develop 30-Day Change of Placement IEPs when enrolling students.

For youth who are pursuing higher education, ACPD will coordinate with the community-based Community College services provider (ROC) in much the same way. ACOE and ACPD will ensure that all transcripts and other student records are given to the student or Educational Rights Holder.

Transcripts and other student records will also be released to schools enrolling students in K-12 programs. The Reentry Service Coordinator will assist in this coordination and make sure that a warm handoff is provided.

For students with IEPs who are graduating High School, ACOE will complete an Exit IEP outlining accommodations needed to continue vital educational and learning supports in higher education. An Exit IEP will outline the supports and/or accommodations that a student will need to succeed in Higher Education. The community-based Community College services provider (ROC) will support with any additional referrals, including with Student Disability Services needed on campus. For youth attending college outside of Alameda County, the Reentry Service Coordinator will support the youth in researching, identifying, enrolling, and connecting students with services at the appropriate institutions.

### ***Family***

Programs need to find ways to engage these support systems as part of an overall case plan in which everyone is working together toward the same goals. To help achieve these goals, ACPD will develop individualized plans and programs and refrain from one-size-fits-all approach to policies, programs, and practices within the JJC. Youth will be regularly consulted regarding who they want included in their “family” group to ensure that positive, trusted adult relationships are encouraged and supported. Family members under the age of 18, especially children of the youth themselves, will be allowed to visit as

well. As previously mentioned, ACPD will use the broadest definition of family, to include biological and extended family, as well as other important individuals involved in the youth's life such as romantic partners, friends, neighbors, mentors, coaches, and clergy.

### ***Additional Considerations for Reentering TAY***

The multiple challenges faced by transitional-aged youth can present barriers to meeting normative developmental milestones of this age (e.g., vocational and educational success, development of stable relationships, and maturation into productive adults). Transitional-aged youth (TAY) also have higher levels of mental health needs compared to non-transitional-aged youth in the juvenile justice system, and serious mental illnesses often emerge during these years as well.<sup>74</sup> However, perhaps even more importantly, reentering TAY will most likely be experiencing overlapping and compounding stressors related not only to this often-difficult developmental stage, but also of reentry (after having spent much of their adolescence in custody). While we know this to be true from existing research, this was also clearly reflected in the focus group with young men who were previously held at DJJ. They discussed the shock, anxiety, and stress of release, even though it was something they were eager for. Thus, the County will provide adequate supports for reentering youth, ensuring that planning includes provisions for mental health transitions from juvenile-to-adult systems of care. ACPD will coordinate with Credible Messengers to provide the necessary programming TAY youth need to address these unique barriers.

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<sup>74</sup> Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2012). *Comparing and evaluating youth substance use estimates from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health and other surveys*. HHS Publication No. SMA 12-4727, Methodology Series M-9. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Rockville, MD.

# Data & Evaluation Plans

ACPD commits to providing relevant data regarding the target population to the SB 823 Subcommittee as often as it convenes. The Subcommittee will need data in order to evaluate the efficacy of the SB 823 program. The data provided will include specific numbers of cases where 707(b) offenses were alleged and instances when the youth were transferred to adult court. Probation will also provide the Subcommittee with data showing how many youth were ordered to the SYTF. Probation will also provide historical data for the Subcommittee to use for comparison.

Programmatic administrative data will be collected for each program offered to the SB 823 realigned youth. Each program must capture basic demographic and participation data, as well as outcome measures tied explicitly to the Core Competencies supported by the program. Both quantitative and qualitative data are acceptable. The intention is not to create undue burdens on program staff, but to document progress and the impact of the program—which is essential to program development and improvement. This data will be reviewed regularly by program and ACPD staff to ensure programs are meeting their intended goals. Importantly, ACPD's program evaluations processes will be transparent and accessible to the general public. Program evaluations will be regularly submitted to the JJDP Programmatic Advisory Subcommittee to help inform their recommendations.

ACPD will implement a data-driven accountability framework as part of its program evaluation process. This framework will support the County in its efforts to move toward data-driven strategies that use evidence to evaluate program outcomes, impacts, and/or cost effectiveness. ACPD will also use performance data by working with contractors to monitor progress in its contracted activities. Ultimately, these strategies will produce better outcomes for youth while also supporting cost efficiency efforts.

At the same time, ACPD recognizes that there are limitations in using existing evaluation frameworks. Particularly, these frameworks are mostly quantitative and do not always take an equity lens into account. In response to this, ACPD will include the use of qualitative data that incorporates youth voices as part of its program evaluation process. When youth are not progressing in a program as expected, system leaders may conclude that youth are either not compliant, or not progressing in treatment. However, it is also possible that youth have not received individualized services. ACPD will thus facilitate focus groups, administer feedback surveys, and/or set up suggestion boxes. This process will help inform the development of future programs as well as whether any modifications need to be made as programs are being implemented.

To define youth success in the program, ACPD will move beyond outcomes that are traditionally analyzed in correctional settings (e.g., recidivism) and will instead examine other indicators of youth success. Some proposed outcomes to evaluate include youth mental and physical well-being, self-efficacy, optimism for the future, critical consciousness, and socio-emotional development.

ACPD will seek to conduct thorough process and outcome evaluations of the SB 823 program on a regular basis. These types of larger evaluations typically take several years to complete and often occur every 3–5 years. Such evaluations will be timed to be able to inform large-scale decision making. Evaluation results will also be made transparent and available to the public through reports to the JJDP and the Youth Advisory Council.

# Facilities:

## Immediate, Intermediate, & Long-Term Plans

### ► Overview & Background

Research indicates that youth's perceptions of an institutional environment have important implications for their future success. Specifically, positive perceptions within and across dimensions of the juvenile setting reduce the likelihood of future antisocial activity, rearrest, or a return to a facility.<sup>75</sup> The facility environment and public safety are inherently connected. In line with this research, ACPD is committed to providing as homelike an environment as possible, designed to allow developmentally appropriate normative behavior and daily life. As mentioned above, ACPD recognizes the key role that family, friends, and community play in positive youth development and will seek to allow outside community and family involvement to the greatest extent possible. Thus, both the physical facility—as well as the policies implemented within—will promote positive development and dignity, physical, and psychological safety. ACPD recognizes that the current facility (discussed in more detail below) places some limitations on these goals, but remains committed to pursuing them as future secure and step-down placement facilities are explored and developed. ACPD will commit to consulting with a facilities expert when exploring all current and future facilities for the SB 823 population.

The SB 823 program will serve older adolescents and young adults (based on anticipated average age). These youth may be living in SB 823 program for several years and shall require both indoor and outdoor space to program, eat, and engage in leisure activities. The staff and providers leave each day and return, but the youth do not have such privileges. ACPD will explore all environmental options to ensure that youth have access to:

- Rooms for sleeping and relaxing that provide some level of privacy and autonomy.
- Leisure recreation both indoor and outdoor that is not solely adjacent to their sleeping environment.
- Kitchen space for youth meal preparation and family-style eating. (College campuses have purposely designed these elements into their student living environments.)
- Appropriately designed space for family engagement. This needs to include child appropriate spaces with related developmentally appropriate activities.

### **Eradication of Inhumane and Re-Traumatizing Practices**

Restoration cannot exist alongside harm or fear of harm. This milieu shall serve as a nurturing social environment and thus cannot include the tools of degradation and control that create physically and psychologically unsafe environments and have proven to contribute to increased mental health symptomatology and trauma.

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<sup>75</sup> Schubert, C. A., Mulvey, E. P., Loughran, T. A., & Losoya, S. H. (2012). *Perceptions of institutional experience and community outcomes for serious adolescent offenders. Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 39(1), 71-93.



ACPD shall commit to eliminate these practices in this milieu. Camp Sweeney ACPD has already eliminated the use of pepper spray and has included that in the policy. ACPD shall utilize the same policy to eliminate the use of pepper spray on the SB 823 program. Isolation and room confinement is non-existent at Camp Sweeney, and all available alternatives to these practices shall be explored for the SB 823 program. Several programs throughout the country may serve as models for the elimination of such practices.<sup>76</sup>

Clothing, and personal items of comfort will not be used as rewards or sanctions. ACPD, in partnership with the youth advisory council and relevant stakeholders, will explore, and to the extent possible implement a clothing policy that maximizes access to “civilian” clothes. The intent is to allow youth as much personal expression and freedom as possible, and to promote both agency and personal dignity among youth.

Given that SB 823 realigned youth will most likely be incarcerated for longer periods of time than other youth at the JJC, personal items are especially important in order to promote a homelike environment. Allowable personal items—both in the individual rooms and within the unit—will be examined with the goal of expanding the policy as broadly as possible. Culturally relevant personal items such as toiletries and hygiene products will be provided to all youth, regardless of Phase or level of privilege. These items will not be restricted by sanction in any way. In addition to toiletries, youth will also be allowed a photo album in which to keep photos beyond those immediately displayed. A small bookcase or other storage option will be provided in each individual room to store books and other personal items. Art supplies and writing supplies will be made available. A cabinet, closet, or locker that youth can lock will be provided for each youth somewhere in the unit. Staff may have keys or access codes, but youth will utilize locks to promote a sense of independence and agency.

Food is not only a matter of proper nutrition, quantity, and quality but represents an important connection to human self-worth and dignity. Food is central to cultural expressions and offers a sense of familiarity, comfort, and home. Meal planning and preparation provide important opportunities to connect with other traditions and people. ACPD will review current policies to maximize the ability of families to bring “outside” food to family engagement activities (whether brought from a restaurant or vendor or prepared at home).

Finally, sleep is particularly important (and is easily disrupted) for adolescents and young adults, as noted earlier. The ability to feel safe and relaxed while sleeping is essential for healing and rest both physically and emotionally. While some lighting is necessary for safety of both youth and staff, proper darkness is needed for proper sleep. Thus, sleeping masks will be provided for all youth upon request. Similarly, access to lighting for evening reading and other activities will be provided upon request.

### ***Compliance with Federal and State Laws that Protect People with Disabilities***

Alameda County Probation will maintain full compliance with the various federal and state laws that protect people with disabilities (e.g., Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and 2008, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), etc.) to ensure protection for youth with disabilities. Our compliance will achieve the following:

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<sup>76</sup> Resources related to this may be found at: <https://www.stopsolitaryforkids.org/>.

- Ensure youth with disabilities receive and are able to use the same services and types of care, as all other youth within the facility.
- Ensure youth with disabilities are not harassed and/or discriminated against.
- Ensure youth with disabilities are provided with accommodations needed for equal access to programs and services.
- Ensure supporting aids and services are available for youth with disabilities.
- Ensure all structural barriers are removed.

As part of the standard admittance process and in accordance with Title 15 regulations, youth will be screened by the appropriate staff (i.e., medical, mental health, dental, educational, etc.) to determine if they have a physical, mental, or intellectual disability. Alameda County staff have and will continue to receive training to assist youth with disabilities and will make available a mechanism for referrals and evaluations.

### **Immediate Plan for Facilities**

In the immediate future, ACPD intends to utilize Unit 3 at the existing Juvenile Justice Center (JJC), while exploring other options for long-term commitments. ACPD recognizes that it is not in the youth's best interest to remain in this type of secure setting for a long period of time and acknowledges that the JJC was not built with long-term commitments in mind. However, it is also true that the process to design and build any new facility or campus will likely take many years. Thus, ACPD will consider and outline all other existing possible options that could serve as a temporary Secure Youth Treatment Facility while longer-term solutions are being developed.

In the meantime, ACPD is committed to transforming the space where youth will be housed to ensure the most therapeutic environment possible is immediately available. ACPD will make basic improvements to the unit, including but not limited to installing new furniture, painting the unit, and ensuring quality food services. The space will also be filled with images and signs that have positive affirmations and messages, culturally relevant images, artwork, historical figures, etc. Wi-fi is already installed, which allows the youth to have access to wireless tablets with both educational and age-appropriate entertainment content. All rooms have chalkboards and chalk to allow for personalization and self-expression within the youth's personal spaces. ACPD will also review policies to ensure they are truly supporting as homelike an environment as possible and are responsive to the needs of youth who will be in custody for several years. As part of the Youth In Custody Practice Model, ACPD has reviewed and updated several policies to align with best practices and positive youth development. ACPD will continue to review and explore opportunities to allow for more autonomy and independence in the SB 823 program, prioritizing reviews of policies directly impacting the youths' daily lives. ACPD will ensure there is a space within the unit intended for private, personal "cool-down" or self-regulation time. These spaces are often furnished with dimmable lighting, bean bag chairs and other soft furniture, writing and drawing supplies, aromatherapy, squeezable stress balls, etc. Spaces such as these have shown success in school environments and have shown promise in juvenile correctional settings (e.g., Sacramento County's successful de-escalation room).<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Udesky, L. (2021, March 31). Youth detention facility finds culture of kindness more effective than punishment. *ACEs Too High*. Retrieved September 20, 2021, from <https://acestoohigh.com/2021/03/30/youth-detention-facility-finds-culture-of-kindness-more-effective-than-punishment/>.

As part of this immediate and ongoing process, ACPD has also hired Dr. Monique Khumalo as a consultant to help flesh out the immediate plans to further soften Unit 3 and offer additional input and recommendations for renovations that might be made in a short period of time. Dr. Khumalo brings experience in providing technical assistance as it relates to the impact of trauma to child-serving systems, including juvenile justice, child welfare, education, and behavioral health. In order to meet the immediate day-to-day needs of young people during this process, ACPD will adapt the current juvenile hall facility to create the most homelike environment possible in the facility. ACPD shall make alterations and adjustments to allow for, create, and implement the following:

- Kitchen Access, or micro kitchen access
- New, more homelike furniture
- Mini basketball hoop
- Mood lighting throughout (e.g., ceiling panels that mimic the starry night)
- Gym enhancement
- Carpeting and rugs in the interim
- Outdoor space (increased space) space to eat, hangout, and exercise outside, as well as regular access to a garden space
- Removal of all possible caging, bars, locks, and barriers that are not required for licensing or mandated by regulations
- Open as much of the space as possible to create less confinement and more free flow
- Multiple sitting areas for down time
  - multiple TVs for group viewing
  - projector for outdoor space (e.g., for movie nights, programming use)
  - String lights for outdoor space (especially any space where bars or cage not removed)
  - Comfortable outdoor furniture (with cushions and an umbrella)
  - Plants for outdoor space attached to unit
  - De-escalation or “cool-down” space
- Purchase additional equipment needed to make daily life comfortable and functional
  - Wireless headphones
  - Tablets
  - Mini fridges, microwaves, toaster ovens, coffee pot
  - Desk lamps/ reading light

ACPD shall provide updates regarding these items to the Realignment Subcommittee. To the extent that any of the items are not able to be delivered due to existing legal or regulatory restrictions—or due to the physical constraints of the existing facility— ACPD will report to the SB 823 Subcommittee and provide an explanation. Relevant updates and progress will be reported to the Subcommittee as often as it convenes.

### *Intermediate Plan for Facilities*

As part of the effort to explore existing potential alternatives to the JJC, ACPD will review the possibility of preparing Camp Sweeney as a Secure Youth Treatment Facility while long-term planning is taking place. Similarly, ACPD will explore and outline the possibility of preparing Camp Sweeney to be used as a possible “step-down” facility. Guiding this process is ACPD’s belief that youth should only be housed in a secure facility for the shortest time needed.

ACPD will also begin a concurrent process of planning for the long-term needs of the Department, including, but not limited to, the needs of the SB 823 realigned youth. ACPD prioritizes beginning this work immediately. The Subcommittee believes that the current facility is unsatisfactory and that an alternative must be developed as soon as possible. As a part of this process, ACPD will explore how to meet the legal and regulatory requirements of a Secure Youth Treatment Facility while holding to the principles, values, and research underlying the ideal of a homelike, therapeutic environment.

In exploring the feasibility of preparing Camp Sweeney for potential use by the Court, the following issues will be addressed throughout this process:

- Examine the feasibility of adding a secure perimeter.
- Determining whether SB 823 secure living/programming spaces need to be at all separated from the existing camp population.
- Determine whether existing Camp facilities can be utilized or repurposed or whether it is needed to build additional separate facilities.
- Costs/ projected costs of necessary changes.

Updates on information gathered, findings, and analyses will be reported to the SB 823 Subcommittee. It is expected that ACPD will aim to complete a full assessment of the possibility of preparing using Camp Sweeney to be utilized as a Secure Treatment Facility and as a potential option for a step-down facility during the first year of implementation of this plan.

ACPD will also continue to explore other existing facilities and options that may be possible for Secure Track use, including any regional or out-of-County facilities that may be considered. Updates on these efforts will also be provided to the SB 823 Subcommittee as often as it convenes.

### *Long-Term Planning for Facilities*

Alameda County is committed to reimagining the possibilities for children and young adults in the County and to developing a new approach to responding to young people (even those who have committed the most serious offenses). This includes the commitment to move away from the current juvenile hall and ultimately close or repurpose that facility, and to instead establish a complete continuum of services and housing options to meet the needs of young people. The County will develop a full array of juvenile justice housing models to accommodate security, treatment, developmental, and emotional needs.

This Subcommittee has determined that even our most secure environments should be small, homelike, and designed to allow for normative development, emotional healing, and connectedness. The prison-like facilities that so many believed we required have

been proven unnecessary and harmful. The scores of youth offenders that were predicted to fill them did not emerge. Instead, our community, like most around the country, has witnessed unprecedented declines in juvenile crime. This does not guarantee that crime rates will decrease forever as that is highly dependent on a host of societal factors. However, the fact that the population is vastly smaller than predicted does offer a moment of great opportunity, and this Subcommittee has determined to capitalize on that opportunity to build a better approach for youth in Alameda County.

There is no way to fully develop and implement this new approach in the time provided—nor should a plan to develop a new model that takes the County well into the future be created without a collaborative, community-based planning process, which will include (but not be limited to) impacted youth and families, community members and individuals with lived experience, youth justice advocates, victims, community and faith-based organizations, and representatives from relevant county agencies. For that reason, the Subcommittee believes that Alameda County must take immediate steps to begin a planning and reimagination process. This must, as soon as possible, lead to the design, creation, and implementation of the services and facilities required to serve the Realigned population.

While the development of such a process is beyond the scope of this Subcommittee, it is the Subcommittee's recommendation that the County immediately begin a redevelopment process. To do this Alameda County must partner with directly-impacted youth and youth advocates to design and deliver a fiscally efficient and equitable plan that transitions the County away from a law enforcement response to children and that (1) builds the capacity of community based organizations to serve young people outside the current justice system; (2) results in a significant reduction in the number of young people who are in contact with the justice system; (3) explores a rehabilitative, health-focused, and care-first model of youth justice that is meaningfully different in operations and outcomes from the current system; and (4) prevents the prosecution and incarceration of children in the adult system

The Subcommittee recommends that the County review the working group proposal presented by Free Our Kids (FOK) and undertake that or a similar process for planning. This Subcommittee is committed to working with that process to develop subsequent Realignment Plans and to develop the resources identified as needed to serve the population.

There is no way to meet the many lofty goals of juvenile justice realignment without also addressing other aspects of the system and our overall response to children. None of our services and responses can work or be developed in a vacuum. It is therefore the Subcommittee's intent to remain involved as the SB 823 realigned youth are particularly vulnerable to harsh system responses and the impacts of long-term confinement. The County should include a broad range of stakeholders, including significant and meaningful participation of system-impacted youth and their families. The planning process should be transparent and equitable, and the resulting plan should be fiscally efficient and grounded in equity.

### ***Other Options for Step-Down, Transitional, & Post-Release Facilities***

One significant task remaining for the SB 823 Subcommittee is the consideration of other facility options for step-down, transitional, and post-release facilities.



The current housing crisis in the Bay Area makes the consideration and development of these options simultaneously both more challenging and more urgent. In accordance with the research and intentions included in this Plan, a focus on homelike environments will be maintained. For example, we know that converted hotels and single-room-occupancies do not work well for TAY, since these spaces do not typically have shared common spaces to socialize, etc.

While in a transitional or step-down program, youth will be immersed in a therapeutic community that prepares them for their reentry. Treatment exercises in the step-down program should mimic as much as possible the challenges that youth will face in the outside world. The program exercises become a dress rehearsal for reentering youth so that they can role-play new skills before reintegrating into their community.

In addition to a continuum-of-care process, transitional or step-down programming in a secure setting will also play a critical role in the reentry process.<sup>78</sup> The decision as to when to transfer youth to a less restrictive facility will depend less on benchmarks or milestones achieved by a given young person, and will instead be dependent on where an individual is more likely to receive the services most tailored to their needs.<sup>79</sup> In fact, and as previously mentioned, youth are most likely to succeed when they receive high-quality, tailored services in the least restrictive environments possible.<sup>80</sup> We recognize that the decision to allow a step-down relies on the Court, which must also consider public safety. ACPD will strive to ensure step-down programs are individualized and involve a number of options that are geographically spaced throughout the County.

One option for consideration is the development of Credible Messenger Healing Homes. This concept grows out of the larger idea of Credible Messengers filling the role of the primary level of engagement with young justice involved youth. That role includes forming trusting relationships, providing crisis intervention and stabilization support, advancing healing through restorative practices, supporting the development of individualized life plans, and co-navigation of progress towards achieving short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals. Given this core role and set of responsibilities, Credible Messengers can have transformative impacts in various settings, including the community, secure facilities, and transitional housing settings.

Conceptually, Healing Homes are small home-like residences with 4-8 beds that are staffed by a team of caregivers. One or two Credible Messengers actually live in the home and serve as on-site leaders. Other staff involved in the home may include social workers, clinicians, educational specialists, and other relevant providers. The home should serve as a safe space where youth can engage in various processes, including healing circles, restorative justice activities, and entrepreneurial projects while they prepare to be reconnected to their homes, schools, and full community in a safe way.

Healing homes can be a viable option at various points in the continuum of the justice process, provided they meet Community Care Licensing requirements. They can serve as viable alternatives to secure detention on the front end of the system for pre-adjudicated youth, as well as “step down” options for youth transitioning out of facilities.

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<sup>78</sup> Fretz, R. (2005). *Step Down programs: The missing link in successful inmate reentry*. *Corrections Today*, 67(2), 102-107.

<sup>79</sup> Lowenkamp, C. T., & Latessa, E. J. (2005). *Developing successful reentry programs: Lessons learned from the what works research*. *Corrections Today*, 67(2).

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*.



All step-down, transitional, and post-release housing options should be community-rooted assets that are resourced to connect youth and families in a healthy way, and do not involve private, for-profit entities with limited investment back in the communities they serve.

Special consideration in programmatic development and solutions should be paid for girls and gender expansive young people. Agencies and community partners already existing in Alameda County and the bay area that practice a credible messenger model and that have been extremely successful in working with girls and gender expansive youth that are more deeply system involved and should be advisors and core partners in building out the Gender responsive model. Clearly the Subcommittee has more work to do in this area, as reflected in the list of priorities above. The Subcommittee will begin this work by reviewing previously proposed language from members.

### **Safety & Protection**

#### **Discipline & Behavior Management**

Correctional policies that are not developmentally appropriate threaten the wellbeing of youth and fail to reduce recidivism.<sup>81</sup> Hindering protective factors for desistance – including utilizing institutional confinement instead of less restrictive measures – may backfire, leading to slower progress or even a reversal in progress. As discussed above, ACPD will eliminate the harshest behavioral controls: pepper (OC) spray and, prone restraint. Restraints and room confinement will only be used in the case of extreme, immediate safety risk to youth or staff, and the use of prone restraints will be eliminated.

Physical restraints have likewise been shown to cause harm and lack utility, indicating that “high risk safety procedures that can result in severe injury or death,”<sup>82</sup> and that “can be counter-productive to treatment, disrupt essential adult-child relationships, and impede children’s social and emotional learning, especially among vulnerable children with severe trauma histories.”<sup>83</sup> In particular, there has been significant evidence regarding the dangers of prone restraint and reports highlighting the high likelihood of restraints being misused or incorrectly applied. All restraints on children may lead to numerous and serious physical injuries, deaths, and emotional trauma.

In light of the dangers of physical intervention, many have arrived at the conclusion that room confinement or seclusion present a safer or more appropriate options – this is simply not the case. The research and empirical evidence of room confinement and isolation practices in juvenile facilities has shown that it has a harmful impact on youth’s brain development, emotional health and growth, frustrates other programming efforts, hinders effective youth-staff relationships, and contributes to a less safe environment. Isolation of adolescents can also contribute to depression, anxiety, psychosis, and other psychological as well as developmental harm.

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<sup>81</sup> *Adolescent and Teenage Offenders: Confronting the Challenges and Opportunities of Reentry.*

<sup>82</sup> Nunno, M.A., McCabe, L.A., Izzo, C.V. et al. *A 26-Year Study of Restraint Fatalities Among Children and Adolescents in the United States: A Failure of Organizational Structures and Processes.* *Child Youth Care Forum* (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-021-09646-w>.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

Research has demonstrated that “overly harsh correctional policies and ones that are not age-specific or developmentally appropriate may hinder the reintegration of adolescent and teenage offenders”.<sup>84</sup> Hindering protective factors for desistance, including utilizing institutional confinement instead of less restrictive measures, may backfire, leading to slower progress or even a reversal in progress.<sup>85</sup> While Title 15 sets the minimum standards for compliance, Alameda County is committed to exceeding all minimum standards in the treatment and care of its youth. To that end, ACPD will develop and implement a plan to end the use of pepper (OC) spray and prone restraint no later than April 1, 2022 room confinement. As long as room confinement, pepper spray, and prone physical restraints are used, reviews of each instance will be conducted to determine appropriate use and compliance with policy. Incident data will be provided to the appropriate body, which would also include community representation.

### ***Positive Behavior Model***

Consistent with the Eight EPBs of Effective Interventions, ACPD currently utilizes a point-based positive reinforcement behavior model to encourage and incentivize positive behavior and achievement of daily and weekly goals. This model relies heavily on incentives and utilizes sanctions only as a last resort and for the duration of time necessary to correct or change behavior. In line with best practices, incentives and sanctions will not be based around basic items or items of basic comfort. Moreover, rewards and incentives will be individually determined and go beyond the usual items. MDTs could help inform appropriate incentives based on the individual youth’s plan.

ACPD intends to continue utilizing this model, while remaining open to exploring other models that are intended for use in long-term stays, and that are developmentally appropriate for older youth. If and when a model is identified, which will support the target population, staff will be extensively trained in the application of the model, emphasizing the importance of incentives in encouraging positive behavior. Refresher training in the model will be conducted regularly, in accordance with model recommendations.

Discipline and Management shall not be tied to or alter any of the following:

- Participation in programming
- Change to the food and meal policy
- Change to the clothing policy
- Participation in extracurricular activities related to school
- Family visitation and communication
- Time and/ or supplies related to the basics of daily living such as toiletries and hygiene products, clean clothing and access to laundry

### ***Program Refusal***

Lack of progress from initial assessment to reassessment may indicate the need to revise treatment/case plans and adjust how the program is working with the youth.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> (Altschuler & Brash, 2004)

<sup>85</sup> (Baglivio et al., 2018)

<sup>86</sup> Baglivio, M. T., Wolff, K. T., Piquero, A. R., Howell, J. C., & Greenwald, M. A. (2017). Risk assessment trajectories of youth during juvenile justice residential placement: Examining risk, promotive, and “buffer” scores. *Criminal justice and behavior*, 44(3), 360-394.

If a youth refuses to participate in programming or other structured parts of the day, punishments or sanctions will be avoided. A trusted adult from among the therapeutic milieu will instead “check in” with the youth to see what might be hindering their participation. If an issue persists, it will be discussed among the MDT with the goal of identifying the internal, intrinsic motivations of the youth that might be leveraged to encourage a positive change in behavior. Formal sanctions in these situations will be avoided and only used as a last resort. The operating assumption should be that youth behavior is often the result of their environments; thus, a sincere discussion of what changes could be made to their environments to encourage a more positive reaction or behavior is warranted. In the case that this refusal may cause harm to peers, a restorative process, outlined below, will be relied upon.

### ***Conflict Resolution***

ACPD is committed to using non-punitive approaches to address conflict resolution. A restorative justice framework will be used in cases of interpersonal conflict between youth. Restorative responses should include all members of the unit and members of the therapeutic milieu.

Credible Messengers will be relied upon for conflict resolution. Such an incorporation of Credible Messenger insight, experience, and expertise can have a direct impact on conflict resolution, mediation, restorative practices, and graduated approaches to disciplinary issues. For example, one jurisdiction incorporated Credible Messenger contributions to their policy formation process and was able to successfully incorporate restorative approaches, while preventing/eliminating isolation, use of mechanical restraints, use of pepper spray, and other practices found to be harmful and ineffective in promoting safe spaces.

### ***Oversite & Appeals Process of All Disciplinary/Sanction Decisions***

SB 823 created a new local commitment option and a new category of County facilities for justice involved youth: the Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). Pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 875, the Board of State and Community Corrections is charged with developing “standards for the establishment, design, security, programming and education, and staffing” of a secure youth treatment facility by July 1, 2023. Until those standards are finalized, SYTF must “comply with applicable minimum standards for juvenile facilities in Title 15 and Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.”

In part because this is a new category of facilities, the State has yet to establish a youth bill of rights for young people committed to a SYTF. A bill of rights exists for foster youth, including those placed in STRTPs, and for youth committed to DJJ. Until the State establishes a specific youth bill of rights applicable to SYTFs, Alameda County will consider the adoption of the following Youth Bill of Rights for children committed to County juvenile facilities:

- A. To live in a safe, healthy, and clean environment conducive to treatment and rehabilitation, and where they are treated with dignity and respect.
- B. To be free from physical, sexual, emotional, or other abuses and corporal punishment.

- C. To receive adequate and healthy food and water, sufficient personal hygiene items, and clothing that is adequate and clean. Clothing and grooming/hygiene products shall respect the child's culture, ethnicity, and gender identity and expression.
- D. To receive adequate and appropriate medical, dental, vision, and mental health services.
- E. To refuse the administration of psychotropic and other medications consistent with applicable law or unless immediately necessary for the preservation of life or the prevention of serious bodily harm.
- F. To not be searched for the purpose of harassment or humiliation or as a form of discipline or punishment.
- G. To maintain frequent and continuing contact with parents, guardians, siblings, children, and extended family members, through visits, telephone calls, and mail.
- H. To make and receive confidential telephone calls, send and receive confidential mail, and have confidential visits with attorneys and their authorized representatives, ombudspersons, and other advocates, holders of public office, state and federal court personnel, and legal service organizations.
- I. To have fair and equal access to all available services, placement, care, treatment, and benefits, and to not be subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of actual or perceived racial/ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, or HIV status.
- J. To have regular opportunities for age-appropriate physical exercise and recreation, including time spent outdoors.
- K. To contact attorneys, ombudspersons and other advocates, and representatives of state or local agencies, regarding conditions of confinement or violations of rights, and to be free from retaliation for making these contacts or complaints.
- L. To participate in religious services and activities of their choice.
- M. To not be deprived of any of the following as a disciplinary measure: food, contact with parents, guardians, or attorneys, sleep, exercise, education, bedding, access to religious services, a daily shower, a drinking fountain, a toilet, medical services, reading material, or the right to send and receive mail.
- N. To receive a quality education that complies with state law, to attend age-appropriate school classes and vocational training, to have access to postsecondary academic and career technical education courses and programs, and to continue to receive educational services while on disciplinary or medical status.
- O. To attend all court hearings pertaining to them.
- P. To have counsel and a prompt probable cause hearing when detained on probation or parole violations.
- Q. To maintain all applicable rights afforded under the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and all applicable state and federal laws.

- R. To have caregivers, probation personnel, and other staff or providers who have received instruction on cultural competency and sensitivity relating to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and best practices for providing adequate care to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender children in out-of-home care.
- S. To request additional child and family team, or MDT meetings to address concerns, including, but not limited to, change in service needs, addressing barriers to sibling or family visits, and addressing difficulties in coordinating services.
- T. To have both informal and formal support people participate in team meetings, consistent with state law.
- U. To be informed of these rights in an age and developmentally appropriate manner by Probation Officer or Credible Messenger and to be provided a copy of the rights in this section at the time of intake and at least once every six months.
- V. The rights listed are broad expressions of the rights of the rights of youth in SYTFs and are not exhaustive of all rights set forth in the United States Constitution and the California Constitution, federal and California statutes, and case law.

The Bill of Rights outlined in this plan will also include all the same rights as those outlined in the Camp Sweeney Handbook. These additional rights include:

- Freedom of speech/expression,
- Right to money,
- Right to be informed,
- Right to accuracy and fairness around discipline,
- Right to confidentiality, right to file grievances, and
- Right to be seen by the guidance clinic and medical.

### ***Grievance and review process***

Youth are entitled to appeal all disciplinary (sanction) decisions. With any appeal, the original penalty may remain unchanged, there may be a decrease in the severity of the sanction, or the sanction may be completely removed.

Youth will have the right to file a grievance if there are concerns related to the conditions of their confinement and may file a grievance if it is believed that they have received unfair treatment related, but not limited to the following:

- Health care services (medical or mental health)
- Program participation
- Telephone usage
- Mail
- Visiting
- Food
- Clothing or bedding
- Participant safety and/or well-being is at risk

- Mishandling/mismanagement of personal property
- Program rules or procedures that adversely affect participant
- Mistreatment, harassment, or violations of the nondiscrimination policy by staff

### ***Incident data***

Incident data will be provided to the JJDP. The presentation and discussion of incident data may occur in closed session if the identity of the youth may be revealed, even inadvertently.

### ***Staff***

With regards to staff-to-youth ratios, ACPD will adhere to national PREA standards. Under PREA standards, in secure juvenile facilities, the Department of Justice (DOJ) defined minimum staffing as “1:8 during resident waking hours and 1:16 during resident sleeping hours. Agencies may depart from these minimum ratios during limited and discrete exigent circumstances, which are fully documented for audit purposes.”

### ***Key Staff Roles & Responsibilities:***

- Agency/facility leadership: Set vision and tone for infusing Credible Messengers into the culture and framework of the facility. Ensure appropriate staffing levels, space and resources are available.
- Safety, security and operations staff: Support Credible Messenger work by facilitating access, Movement and coverage of relevant facility spaces.
- Behavioral Health Staff: Spearhead the facilitation of the development of an overall youth engagement (programmatic and treatment) framework for youth in the facility; assist with incorporating Credible Messengers into the framework; and co-facilitate various interactions with youth.
- Restorative justice staff: Co-facilitate development of youth engagement framework and various interactions with youth.

### ***Milieu Providers***

The therapeutic milieu/community relies on structure and predictability to include dedicated staff with clear roles and responsibilities for each community team member. The SB 823 programming unit will be supported by a core group of ACPD staff, ACBH clinicians, and professional Credible Messengers. ACPD will operate a unit management structure with clear lines of supervision and roles and responsibilities to support the milieu. All milieu providers will participate in regular/weekly meetings to determine the best operational strategies week to week.

The unit team shall consist of the following members (ideally full-time positions) in addition to ACPD staff:

**1-2 Dedicated Licensed Mental Health Clinicians (1-2 FTE's)** with expertise in working with BIPOC youth in the justice system and who have the capacity to engage with a team of individuals to support a milieu approach to core services. Clinicians(s) should possess the requisite education, training, and experience to provide culturally congruent individual mental health services to youth who need this level of care and participate in



the designed milieu programming for the unit which should include a core program focused on the development of interpersonal skills, social problem solving, and emotion management. The clinician should co-lead groups/circles with the DPO and Credible Messengers and/or JIO. The clinician(s) shall also provide adjunctive services such as suicide and self-injury assessments, and assistance in developing and implementing trauma-focused safety plans and Behavior Management Plans when necessary. The clinicians, like other team members, shall work a schedule congruent with supporting the milieu which will require mid-day to evening schedules and a rotating weekend. It is expected that only one clinician will be needed at least until the unit reaches 50% capacity. At that point a second clinician may be introduced, and the schedules modified to ensure appropriate coverage. The ACBH clinician shall also assess and identify youth who may during their stay require a more intensive level of care. In those instances, ACBH shall provide placement and service recommendation to ACPD. ACBH shall also collaborate with ACBH to ensure specialized services such as substance use, sex offender services, and individual therapy for transgender and intersex youth as necessary.

**1-2 Credible Messengers (1-2 FTE equivalents)** -will be contracted and trained, and will serve as mentors. They will act as advocates and provide program services and case planning. The Credible Messengers will assist youth in developing skills necessary to thrive in community. The same or alternative Credible Messengers may be contracted to run culturally relevant (individualized or group) programs in collaboration with other unit team members. The Credible Messenger team will collaborate with the other milieu providers in planning, administering, and facilitating its youth engagement functions, and will participate in relevant staff meetings to support the overall goals of youth healing, restoration, development, and preparation for reintegration into the community. Specifically, Credible Messengers will:

- Form trusting relationships and lines of communication with youth.
- Provide individual transformative mentoring sessions.
- Facilitate restorative-focused group activities (independently and in conjunction with designated staff).
- Accompany Youth as they matriculate through their Day/Evening.
- Credible Messenger program implementation.
- Document interactions with youth in designated database and/or case management system.
- Participate in relevant staff meetings.

**JIO** will provide engaged supervision. Engaged supervision means that they shall participate in activities with youth, provide advice and consultation, and assist with homework assignments or other tasks to support the youth. They will also assist with developing and practicing skills and motivating youth to succeed. Once trained, JIOs shall be integrated into more of the core programmatic services as co-facilitators. JIOs will also be responsible for providing input to the weekly meetings to determine youth progress via a formalized feedback process with the Institutional supervisor.

### ***Training of Milieu Providers***

An effective milieu program will require that all staff and service providers collaborating to provide services engage in joint training on the key elements of the milieu. ACPD shall assemble a comprehensive interdisciplinary training for ACPD, ACBH and contracted providers to include the Credible Messengers. ACPD and all partner organizations and departments recognize that a trauma-informed approach also applies to working with staff themselves. This work may expose them to secondary and vicarious trauma, and staff may also find themselves triggered in different circumstances. Ensuring staff are trained in recognizing and responding to their own trauma(s) will help them better respond to triggers and traumas among the youth they are serving. This training shall at a minimum include:

- Credible Messenger theory and practice
- Effective strategies for youth and family engagement
- Group facilitation
- Conflict resolution
- Behavior management principles
- Effective case planning and case management
- The level system
- Specific interventions that will be jointly provided
- Secondary and vicarious trauma
- Mindfulness and self-regulation

Credible Messengers will go through their own training. Specifically, their training will consist of the following topics:

- Positive youth justice framework<sup>87</sup>
- Adolescent brain development and the impact of trauma
- Healing centered engagement
- The art and science of hope
- Restorative justice practices
- Individual transformative mentoring
- Crisis intervention and conflict resolution
- Life path planning and fundamentals of care coordination

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<sup>87</sup> Pickens, I., Marrow, M., & Benamati, J. (2020). *Think trauma: A training for working with justice involved youth*. Los Angeles, CA, and Durham, NC: National Center for Child Traumatic Stress.