

**NEW JERSEY COUNCIL ON  
JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT  
DESCRIPTION OF SUBCOMMITTEES**

**Risk Screening Tool (RST) Subcommittee**

Having completed the development and initial testing of a statewide detention Risk Screening Tool for use by court intake services, the RST Subcommittee will continue to oversee and monitor the implementation of the RST. The Subcommittee will review Site-Readiness Plans developed by JDAI sites as they prepare to join the cohort of sites currently implementing the RST, conduct training for new RST sites, provide technical assistance to RST sites, review data regarding RST outcomes, and as appropriate, make recommendations to the Court regarding the use of the RST.

**Chairs**

Harry Cassidy	Assistant Director, Family Practice Division, AOC
Jennifer LeBaron	Research & Evaluation Manager/JDAI State Coordinator, JJC

**Subcommittee on Racial Disparities & DMC in the JJS**

This group will oversee the collaboration formed with the W. Haywood Burns Institute (“Burns”), involving three volunteer pilot counties (Atlantic, Camden, Monmouth). The goals and objectives, for the NJ/Burns collaboration, and therefore for this subcommittee, follow.

Goal

- Reduce racial and ethnic disparities in New Jersey’s juvenile justice system and the resulting overrepresentation of youth of color in secure detention facilities.

Objectives

- Ensure local and state Steering Committee membership includes community stakeholders and reflects the youth, families, and neighborhoods affected by/involved with the juvenile justice system.
- Ensure all stakeholders have a shared understanding of disparity within the juvenile detention system, recognizing that minority overrepresentation is not solely the result of external factors beyond the immediate control of the professionals charged with operating the system, and that change is therefore attainable.
- Using data, fully define the nature and scope of the problem; identify any data gaps; establish mechanisms for producing any missing data on an ongoing basis.
- Identify any barriers and challenges that may hinder the ability to effectively engage in a focused disparity-reduction initiative; identify and implement strategies for overcoming these barriers.
- Engage in a data-driven examination of juvenile justice system policies and practices to determine how they contribute to minority overrepresentation in secure detention; identify and make necessary changes to ensure policies/practices are equitable; evaluate outcomes.

**Chairs**

Florine Alexander	Family Division Mgr., Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage (Atlantic Chair)
Liz Domingo	Trial Court Administrator, Union (Union Chair)

## **Subcommittee on Access to Treatment in the JJS**

This group will rely on data to examine and describe: a) the various ways that treatment is currently accessed in and through the juvenile justice system (JJS), b) the prevalence of “low risk/high need” youth in the system, c) how and why these youth enter and remain in the juvenile justice system, and d) the unintended consequences of current policy and practice regarding accessing treatment through the JJS.

The subcommittee will maintain an initial focus on the *detention system*, and will consider questions such as: 1) What happens when court-involved youth “fail” treatment and how does this differ from the response to other (non-court involved) youth who struggle with treatment? 2) To what extent are low risk/high need youth admitted to detention and why? Is detention relied on as a means “to protect” kids, as a response to family issues, as a means for obtaining treatment services? 3) How long do kids remain in detention awaiting residential and non-residential treatment services/placements? 4) To what extent do these practices differentially impact on youth of color? 5) What can we do differently to improve the system with regard to any of the above?

This subcommittee will develop a set of recommendations and corresponding implementation strategies regarding policy and practice changes designed to help ensure that, where appropriate, child welfare, behavioral health, and other treatment needs can be addressed separate and apart from the juvenile justice system.

### **Chairs**

Brian Hancock	Deputy Director, DCBHS, DCF
Hon. Charles Dortch	Camden County Superior Court

## **Innovations Funding Review Subcommittee**

This ad hoc subcommittee will review all applications for innovations funding and projects. Members from an applying county or involved in a proposed project should not participate in this group.

## **NJ JDAI Conference Planning Subcommittee**

This ad hoc subcommittee will temporarily convene to guide the development of the agenda for the New Jersey JDAI All-Sites Conference as well as address logistical planning needs.