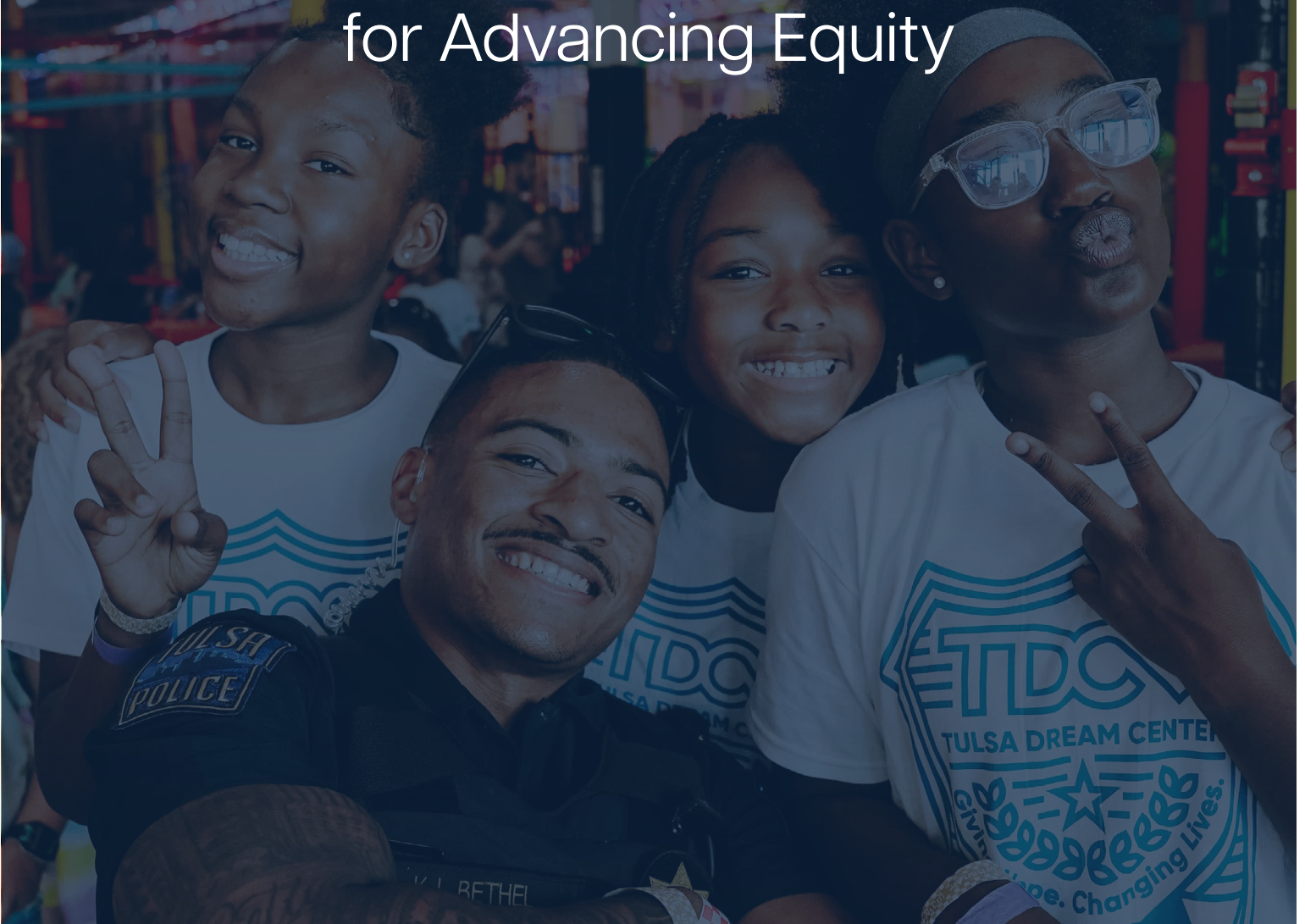


Racial Disparities in Tulsa's Youth Legal System:

Findings and
Recommendations
for Advancing Equity



SEPTEMBER 2022

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Background

Acknowledgments

CJJR would like to thank all partners throughout Oklahoma and the Tulsa community who contributed to this report. This includes all system representatives who spoke with CJJR representing organizations such as the Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs, Tulsa County Family Center for Juvenile Justice, Tulsa Police Department, and others, as well as the youth and community members who graciously participated in our surveys and shared their valuable insight. We would also like to acknowledge and thank our wonderful partners at Youth Services of Tulsa, The Tulsa Dream Center, and The Anne & Henry Zarrow Foundation for their collaboration and partnership on this report.



Background

About the CJJR

Founded in 2007, the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy supports and educates leaders across systems of care to advance a balanced, multi-system approach to improving outcomes for, and promoting the positive development of, youth at risk of juvenile justice involvement. CJJR works to focus the nation's juvenile justice and related systems of care on implementing an evidence-based, multi-system approach.

Through its dynamic training and technical assistance initiatives, CJJR supports system representatives and partners to address racial and ethnic disparities faced by youth of color. Since its inception, CJJR has hosted its Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Juvenile Justice Certificate Program nine times, assisting dozens of jurisdictions to shape more equitable youth-serving systems.



Executive Summary

This report by the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy, funded by The Anne & Henry Zarrow Foundation, and produced in partnership with Youth Services of Tulsa and the Tulsa Dream Center, examines racial disparities faced by youth of color in the youth legal system in Tulsa County, Oklahoma. The report summarizes available quantitative data pertaining to Tulsa's youth legal system and analyzes qualitative content from surveys and interviews with Tulsa youth, community members, and system representatives. Finding that Black youth and other youth of color experience disparate legal system treatment compared to their White counterparts, the report offers the following strategic recommendations to advance and enhance race equity in Tulsa's youth legal system:

Strategic Goals and Recommendations

GOAL 1

Expand Supportive Services for High-Risk Youth and Their Families

- **RECOMMENDATION 1A:** Establish a Comprehensive Youth Employment Delivery System
- **RECOMMENDATION 1B:** Expand Community-Based and Community-Operated Alternatives to School Suspension/Expulsion and Arrest

GOAL 2

Increase Supportive Services for Legal System-Involved Youth

- **RECOMMENDATION 2A:** Conduct a Service Mapping of All Programs and Services Available to System-Involved Youth in Order to Identify Strengths and Opportunities
- **RECOMMENDATION 2B:** Share Service Mapping Results with Legal System and Community Partners and Work Collaboratively to Fill Identified Service Gaps
- **RECOMMENDATION 2C:** Link Youth to Community-Based Supports to Strengthen their Connections to Pro-Social Services

GOAL 3

Promote Race Equity and Address Unconscious/Implicit Bias throughout the Youth Legal System

- **RECOMMENDATION 3A:** Examine Whether Disparities at the Diversion Decision-point Exist for Youth of Color, and If So, Redouble Efforts to Mitigate Them
- **RECOMMENDATION 3B:** Conduct Race Equity Audits Specific to Tulsa County's Youth Legal System Agencies and Other Organizations that Intersect with the System
- **RECOMMENDATION 3C:** Deepen Unconscious/Implicit Bias Training for Legal System Officials and Partners

GOAL 4

Increase Transparency and Communicate Engagement by Expanding Oversight and Accountability Mechanisms for the Youth Legal System

- **RECOMMENDATION 4A:** Create a County-Wide Public-Facing Data Dashboard
- **RECOMMENDATION 4B:** Support Ongoing Reflective Dialogue Between Law Enforcement and Community Residents

GOAL 5

Sustain Efforts to Reduce Racial Disparities and Inequities

- **RECOMMENDATION 5A:** In Order to Provide a Level of Accountability, Identify a Driver and/or Develop a Task Force of Stakeholders to Champion this Work



Introduction

Despite **significant reductions** in youth crime over the last two decades, research has repeatedly found that in **nearly every jurisdiction** in the United States, **Black youth** and other youth of color experience the youth legal system **differently** than their White counterparts.

Although strides have been made to create a more equitable youth legal system across the country, data indicate that racial disparities continue to exist at every stage of the system, including arrest, detention, adjudication, and disposition. For example, one study found that nationally youth of color were nearly two times more likely to be arrested and more than two times more likely to be placed in residential placement than White children, and that Black children in particular are detained or committed at nearly five times the rate of White children (Children's Defense Fund, 2020).

These racial disparities exist within Oklahoma and Tulsa County as well. Despite the fact that youth crime in Oklahoma has decreased by 64% since 2001, Black youth in the state remain three times as likely to be arrested than White youth, and more than six times as likely to be incarcerated (Oklahoma Policy Institute, 2022). Native youth statewide are also twice as likely to be arrested and 2.5 times as likely to be incarcerated compared to White youth (Oklahoma Policy Institute, 2022). In Tulsa County, Black youth are five times more likely to be arrested than their White counterparts (Community Service Council, 2021). Additionally, while Black youth make up just ten percent of the overall youth population in Tulsa County, they represent 27 percent of referrals to the Office of Juvenile Affairs for facility placement (Oklahoma Policy Institute, 2022).

This report examines racial disparities in Tulsa's youth legal system and provides recommendations to achieve a more equitable system. Informed by the voices of Tulsa's youth, community residents, and youth legal system stakeholders, this report offers a series of strategies that Tulsa system representatives can implement to strengthen relationships with youth and families; directly address and mitigate racial disparities; and realize improved outcomes for all.

Likelihood of System Involvement for Black Youth in Oklahoma and Tulsa

Oklahoma

3x

Black youth in Oklahoma are three times more likely to be arrested than White youth.



Tulsa

5x

Black youth in Tulsa are five times more likely to be arrested than White youth.



Population in Tulsa

10%

Black youth account for approximately 10% of the youth population in Tulsa.

27%

However, Black youth account for approximately 27% of referrals to OJA for facility placement.

01

Background



Background

To guide this report, CJJR analyzed quantitative and qualitative data related to Tulsa's youth legal system. CJJR examined available data provided by the Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA), including data from fiscal years 2019-2021 disaggregated by race and ethnicity at the arrest and referral decision point in the system. CJJR also reviewed previously published reports which contained data on the youth legal system in Tulsa and Oklahoma, including but not limited to the Oklahoma Policy Institute's *Better Tomorrows: A Landscape Analysis of Oklahoma's Youth Justice System & Suggested Reforms*, Human Rights Watch's *Get on the Ground!: Policing, Poverty, and Racial Inequality in Tulsa, Oklahoma*, and numerous other publications.

CJJR also analyzed surveys of 148 youth and 60 community members in Tulsa. Facilitated by The Tulsa Dream Center and Youth Services of Tulsa, the surveys solicited respondents' perspectives on why youth commit crimes and strategies they believe help prevent criminal activity. Additionally, CJJR conducted 20 virtual, semi-structured interviews with various system representatives representing the Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs, Tulsa County Family Center for Juvenile Justice, Tulsa Police Department, and other stakeholders to understand perspectives on racial disparities and efforts to reduce them. The appendix contains the specific questions CJJR and its partners asked youth, community members, and system representatives.

While the survey and interview sample represent a mere fraction of the Tulsa community, the respondents provided extremely important insight that directly informs the recommendations in this report. CJJR used content analysis to identify common themes across the youth and community member surveys and system leader interviews. Based on this input, as well as review of the quantitative data in Tulsa and CJJR's extensive experience supporting jurisdictions to address racial and ethnic disparities in the youth legal system, this report presents recommendations for system improvement in Tulsa.

Limitations

This report primarily analyzed quantitative data from fiscal years 2019-2021. We urge caution in interpreting the overall data trends spotlighted across these fiscal years because of the potential impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic, for example, may have temporarily affected youth arrest or detention rates as systems navigated public health guidelines.

02

Key Findings and Recommendations



Key Findings and Recommendations

As noted above, data gathered and reviewed for this report clearly indicate that youth of color experience the youth legal system in Tulsa differently than their White counterparts. Data that CJJR obtained from the Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs from fiscal years 2019-2021, for example, indicate that Black male youth in Tulsa were 2.2 times more likely to be referred to the Tulsa Police Department and 2.3 times more likely to be referred to Tulsa Public Schools Campus Police Department than their White counterparts. Black female youth were 1.3 times more likely to be referred to the Tulsa Police Department and 1.7 times more likely to be referred to Tulsa Public Schools Campus Police Department. Various offense types also observed racial disparities. For example, Black males were 5.2 times more likely to be referred for auto burglary, 2.4 times more likely to be referred for concealing stolen property, 3.9 times more likely to be referred for possession of a stolen vehicle (i.e., joyriding), 4 times more likely to be referred for robbery with a dangerous weapon, and 6.6 times more likely to be referred for robbery with a firearm. Similar disparities were observed for Hispanic youth for the aforementioned referral offenses.

This data, coupled with data on the arrest, detention, and commitment rates of youth previously reported by the Community Service Council (2021) and the Oklahoma Policy Institute (2022), establish that youth of color face disparities in the Tulsa youth legal system compared to White youth.



Black Male Youth

2.2x

Black male youth in Tulsa were 2.2 times more likely to be referred to the Tulsa Police Department

2.3x

Black male youth in Tulsa were 2.3 times more likely to be referred to Tulsa Public Schools Campus Police Department

Black Female Youth

1.3x

Black female youth were 1.3 times more likely to be referred to the Tulsa Police Department

1.7x

Black female youth were 1.7 times more likely to be referred to Tulsa Public Schools Campus Police Department

Likelihood of Referrals for Various Offenses for Black Males

Auto Burglary



5.2x

More likely to be referred

Concealing Stolen Property



2.4x

More likely to be referred

Possession of Stolen Property



3.9x

More likely to be referred

Robbery with a Dangerous Weapon



4x

More likely to be referred

Robbery with a Firearm



6.6x

More likely to be referred

In our conversations with, and surveys of Tulsa's system representatives, youth and community residents, CJJR explored the reasons why racial disparities in the youth legal system exist in Tulsa and the various factors leading to youth crime and system involvement. While differing perspectives were shared, the following three overarching themes emerged:

1

Legal System Representatives in Tulsa Acknowledge Disparities Faced by Youth of Color, but Disagree on the Causes of Those Disparities

As noted above, CJJR spoke with a variety of leaders in the Tulsa youth legal system, including representatives from the Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs, Tulsa County Family Center for Juvenile Justice, Tulsa Police Department, and other agencies. Across these interviews, there was universal acknowledgment that youth of color involved in the legal system experience disparities compared to their White counterparts. What differed, however, were perspectives on the root causes of those disparities.

A significant number of interviewees pointed to socioeconomic factors as a central cause for why youth of color are overrepresented in the youth legal system. System representatives shared that youth of color in Tulsa experience poverty at greater rates than White youth and do not have similar access to high quality education and employment opportunities, all of which puts them at greater risk of system involvement. One leader suggested that in examining this issue policymakers must ask: “What is the financial situation of the people involved in the system? Do you have the resources needed to put yourself in a better situation? Is housing reliable or dependable?” Another interviewee shared, “It’s a question of resources...I can’t really point toward race being a major factor [in system disparities] other than in society at large it’s an economic situation. Money is power, and who’s got most of the money? I mean, that’s not a big mystery.”

Indeed, interviewees held varying opinions on whether individual or systemic racism played a role in the racial disparities faced by youth of color. One system representative, for example, shared that colleagues with racist ideologies are “few and far between” in their agency, noting that their counterparts do not look at appearances or skin color when making decisions: “We look at the behavior. If it’s a White kid, Black kid, Hispanic kid, if they’re doing something that has a nefarious behavior to it then that is what we’ll engage with.” In contrast, another leader felt that the disparities “[c]ome from unconscious bias. Looking at a certain demographic and assuming they’re a criminal. And then looking at another kid, and it’s like, ‘Oh, he’s just a good kid from South Tulsa so we’re going to cut him a little break.’” Another interviewee stated that while they believe racism exists and that biases do impact decision making, for many of their colleagues “The recognition that racism does exist? Not so much.”

The divergence in the system representatives’ beliefs on this issue suggests that the Tulsa community would benefit from ongoing conversations about racial disparities faced by youth of color.

As described below, in CJJR's view, the path to reducing these disparities is multi-faceted in nature—one that recognizes the socioeconomic, legal, and historical forces that impact communities of color in Tulsa and acknowledges the central role that biases play in shaping laws, policies and practices that affect youth of color involved in the legal system.

In other words, disparities exist not because youth of color are inherently more criminal (a proposition that has never been backed by research), but rather because they are subject to systemic factors that make their system involvement more likely, such as a history of discrimination and structural racism that contribute to higher rates of poverty and unequal access to high quality education and opportunities to build wealth.

2

Youth in Tulsa Believe that Employment Opportunities and Pro-Social Supports Will Reduce Crime and System Involvement

In conducting the surveys for this report, CJJR and its partners asked youth respondents in Tulsa to identify the top factors that lead youth to commit crimes as well as the events or activities that discourage youth crime. Across the board, youth respondents identified (1) lack of family support (80% of respondents); (2) lack of money (72.3% of respondents); and (3) peer pressure (71.6% of respondents) as the top three factors that lead to youth crime. Similarly, youth respondents identified (1) job opportunities (64.8% of respondents); (2) sporting and music programming (64.1% of respondents); and (3) community service (58.1% of respondents) as the top three activities that keep youth away from criminal activity.

As reflected in the recommendations below, these findings suggest that Tulsa's youth crave additional opportunities to help them build life skills, earn money, and foster positive relationships with family members and other caring individuals. By investing in these types of programs and services, Tulsa's leaders can help position young people to avoid criminality, prevent system involvement, and contribute to the Tulsa community.

3

Many Community Residents in Tulsa Distrust the Youth Legal System but a Foundation Exists for Improved Community-System Relationships

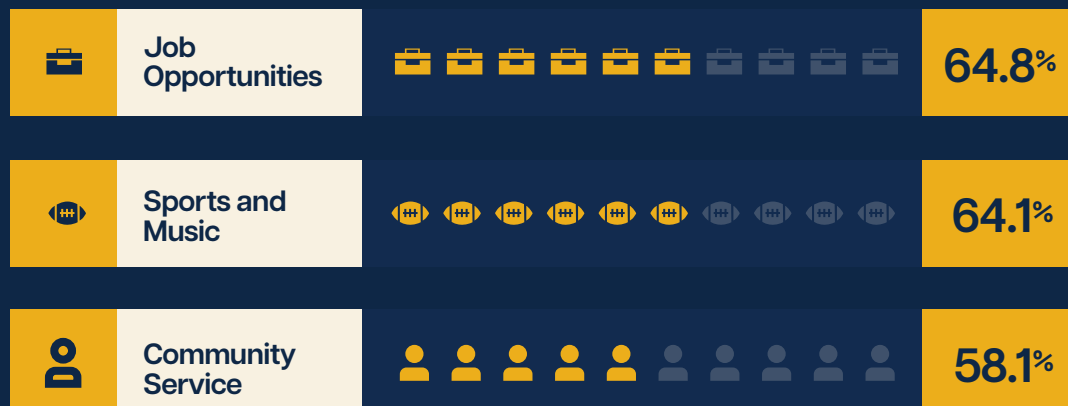
A third theme that arose from CJJR's interviews and surveys was the sentiment that tension between communities of color and legal system officials continues to exist in Tulsa.

Perspectives from Youth in Tulsa on Employment Opportunities and Pro-Social Supports as a Crime Reducing Strategy

Top Three Factors that Lead to Youth Crime



Top Three Factors that Keep Youth Away from Criminal Activity



System representatives and community residents alike shared that while community-system relations have been strained for many years, they have become particularly challenged in the last several years in the wake of the high profile cases involving Terence Crutcher, George Floyd, and other persons of color, and the resulting protests across the United States.

One system leader said, for example, that they have heard “many statements from families over the years that it’s the perception, or maybe the reality in some of their cases, that people are out to get them. At the beginning, usually when we work with clients we’re seen mainly as a barrier. They put a wall up that we’re out to get them, not to help, but to judge them. And I think that’s just from years of living an environment where they’ve seen family or people in their neighborhoods get arrested or have bad experiences with people in the criminal justice world.” Another leader added that “Trust is a really big thing. I mean we have to work hard to build rapport and get [youth and families] to trust us so they’ll open up so we can help them.”

Several community residents CJJR surveyed also agreed that community distrust of the legal system persists. One respondent shared, for example, that “[g]rowing up, I feared the police more than trusting them” while another stated that system officials often “don’t put themselves [in our] shoes.” Another resident felt that the “Black community is treated differently than the White community” in Tulsa and that law enforcement is “more aggressive in the Black community.” Another resident added that “Black people are always getting pull[ed] over. [But there’s a] slow response when a crime happens.”

Despite these challenges, respondents offered hope for a path toward improved relationships between Tulsa’s community residents and legal system officials. System representatives described various efforts to improve community relations, including, for instance, the work of the Tulsa Police Department’s Community Engagement Unit which is striving to build positive relationships with youth and families in Tulsa by hosting community events and connecting with youth in schools and in their neighborhoods. Notably, 85% of Black community members surveyed for this report indicated wanting more police presence in the community, and only 14% of respondents identified police brutality as a crime or safety area of greatest concern. Overall, these findings suggest that some trust between community residents and system officials does exist and can be used as an opportunity to forge new and ongoing positive connections and relationships.

Below are key findings and recommendations stemming from CJJR’s analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data collected for this report. The recommendations are organized across five core goals designed to reduce disparities faced by youth of color in the Tulsa legal system.

GOAL 1

Expand Supportive Services for Youth at High-Risk of System Involvement and Their Families



For young people, the pathways to the legal system are inextricably connected to the socioeconomic and educational climates of the communities in which they reside. Children living in poverty, for example, are at an increased likelihood of legal system involvement as the strain of few resources and related stressors placed on them and their families is correlated with more risk factors and fewer protective factors to offset them (Vidal et al., 2017). Rooted in the Social-Ecological Model, protective factors are best understood in three layers: individual protective factors (e.g., access to concrete support), relational protective factors (e.g., ability to communicate emotions effectively), and community/society protective factors (e.g., community norms of shared responsibility) (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2020).

Investment in protective factors can help youth receive the supports they need to transition successfully into adulthood and to avoid delinquency and legal system involvement altogether. In this light, promoting protective factors is not only beneficial for youth but for families and communities overall. To be clear, however, advancing protective factors alone is not enough to reduce racial disparities and related poor outcomes. As noted throughout this report, legal system policies and practices must be addressed as well, including policing and other practices that may drive many poor community residents to the system (Human Rights Watch, 2019).

Across the United States, rates of poverty are higher among Black families than White families, and in Oklahoma, data indicate that Black and Hispanic children are four times more likely to live in concentrated poverty than White children (Oklahoma Policy Institute, 2022). Specifically in Tulsa, the poverty rate among Black residents is roughly 20% higher than that of White residents (NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, 2021). This divide presents significant implications for how and why youth of color in Tulsa touch the youth legal system at disproportionate rates.

“

“Advancing protective factors alone is **not enough to reduce racial disparities** and related poor outcomes... legal system policies and practices **must be addressed as well**, including policing and other practices that may drive many poor community residents to the system.”

As part of this assessment, young people in Tulsa shared their thoughts on why youth may commit crimes and therefore may be involved in the legal system, as well as events or activities that prevent such crime. As noted above, it is striking that youth respondents identified “lack of money” as one of the top reasons for why youth commit crimes, and also identified “job opportunities” as one of the most likely factors that would discourage such crime.

In addition to socioeconomic factors, the education system can also function either as a protective factor against or a risk factor for youth legal system involvement depending on how equitably schools are resourced, operated, and monitored (Robertson & Walker, 2018; Maschi, Hatcher, Schwalbe, et al., 2008). Research indicates that a significant number of youth involved with the legal system nationally display qualities of academic-related disabilities, trauma exposure, and emotional and behavioral regulatory difficulties – all of which affect students’ relationships with school (Cavendish, 2013). The Tulsa Equality Indicators report aptly recognizes that there are “a multitude of neighborhood factors that can have either a positive or a negative impact on student academic outcomes – factors over which children have no control” (Community Service Council, 2020). Some of those factors include child welfare involvement, homelessness, and poverty.

Students experiencing homelessness, for example, are much more likely to be subject to disciplinary action than their housed counterparts – and the risk is exponentially higher for unhoused students of color (SchoolHouse Connection, 2018). Tulsa Public Schools is now the largest urban district in Oklahoma’s public school system, enrolling 33,211 students in 2021, after increasing to 32,569 in 2020 (Oklahoma Watch, 2022). Alarming, according to the U.S Department of Education, during the 2018-2019 school year, more than 23,000 public school students in Oklahoma experienced homelessness (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2022)

More broadly, data suggests that Black students within Tulsa Public Schools face disparities with respect to disciplinary practices. According to the U.S. Department of Education’s Civil Rights Data Collection for the year 2019 (the most recent data available as of this writing), the Tulsa Public School student population can be broken down as follows: 34.1% Hispanic, 24.5% White, 24.1% Black, 5.3% American Indian/Alaska Native, 1.5% Asian, 0.6% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, and 10% identifying as two or more races (note: the database does not distinguish race from ethnicity). Despite constituting nearly a quarter of the student body, White youth represented just over 15% of in-school suspensions. On the other hand, Black students comprised 37% of in-school suspensions. The disparity rate of out-of-school suspensions was even more egregious. Black students received 45% of these disciplinary infractions, while White youth received only 17%.

Black students were also the overwhelming majority – almost 50% – of those referred to law enforcement by school officials (referral defined as “an action by which a student is reported to any law enforcement agency or official, including a school police unit, for an incident that occurs on school grounds, during school-related events, or while taking school transportation”)(Civil Rights Data Collection, 2018). On the contrary, White students were underrepresented, with 16% of law enforcement referrals.

Comparatively, more than 50% of school arrests (i.e., “an arrest of a student for any activity conducted on school grounds, during off-campus school activities including while taking school transportation, or due to a referral by any school official”) were of Black students, while approximately 16% were of White youth (Civil Rights Data Collection, 2018). The suspension and school-based arrest rate for students with disabilities along racial lines roughly mirror the aforementioned despite protections these individuals should be afforded under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

These disparities are troubling. Not only do these forms of discipline disrupt students’ academic progression, but they can lead students to feel emotionally and physically disconnected from school – especially if the punishment is for a subjective offense (e.g., disorderly conduct) for which youth of color are most often the target (Sojoyner, 2014)[3]. Studies have found that every out-of-school suspension a student experiences increases that individual’s chances of dropping out (Jones et al., 2018; Balfanz, Byrnes, & Fox, 2014). Individuals who are suspended, expelled, and drop out of school are also significantly more likely to become involved with the legal system (Mittleman, 2018; Carter, Fine & Russell, 2014).

15%

Despite accounting for 24.5% of the student body, **White students** accounted for only 15% of **in-school suspensions**.

37%

Despite accounting for 24.1% of the student body, **Black students** accounted for more than 37% of **in-school suspensions**.

45%

More egregious, **Black students** accounted for more than 45% of **out-of-school suspensions**.

17%

White students accounted for only 17% of **out-of-school suspensions**.

“

“Comparatively, more than **50% of school arrests** (i.e., “an arrest of a student for any activity conducted on school grounds, during off-campus school activities including while taking school transportation, or due to a referral by any school official”) were of Black students, while **approximately 16%** were of White youth”

Goal 1 Actionable Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1A

Establish a Comprehensive Youth Employment Delivery System

To address the intersection between poverty and legal system involvement, Tulsa system agencies and partners should deepen efforts to connect youth and their families to job skill development and employment opportunities. As noted earlier, youth surveyed for this study indicated that more job opportunities would serve as a strong deterrent to crime, and Tulsa system representatives CJJR spoke with widely recognized the socioeconomic challenges faced by system-involved youth and families.

To this end, Tulsa would benefit from a comprehensive youth employment delivery system that pulls together the resources and funding streams - public and private – in a strategic way and draws on the strength of public systems and community providers to create supported pathways that provide youth with education, skills, and access to good jobs and successful careers. This youth employment delivery system should target youth at higher risk of system involvement, including youth of color, and provide them with appropriate services.

RECOMMENDATION 1B

Expand Community-Based and Community-Operated Alternatives to School Suspension/Expulsion and Arrest

Given the disparities faced by students of color in Tulsa with respect to suspensions, school-based arrests, and referrals to law enforcement, system officials should redouble efforts to keep youth in school and out of the justice system where possible. In recent years, Tulsa Public Schools has reportedly worked to de-emphasize removing children from school for minor infractions, and school officials can build upon these strong efforts by expanding community-based and community-operated alternatives to school suspension/expulsion and arrest in concert with their system partners. For a useful review of examples of school-based diversion programs nationally, and a comprehensive discussion of strategies to stem the school-to-legal system pipeline, leaders should review the Council of State Governments Justice Center's "The School Discipline Consensus Report: Strategies to Keep Youth Engaged in School and Out of the Juvenile Justice System" (available [here](#)).

GOAL 2

Increase Supportive Services for Legal System-Involved Youth



Youth who become involved in the legal system face significant challenges, including educational, behavioral/mental health, emotional, economic, and developmental challenges. For example, it is estimated that approximately 50-70% of legal system-involved youth nationally have a diagnosable mental health challenge (Underwood & Washington, 2018) and approximately 70% have learning disabilities and significant educational deficits (Nellis & Wayman, 2009). Research also suggests that these youth often face barriers in obtaining and maintaining gainful employment (Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2021).

While CJJR did not review data pertaining to the demographic makeup of all youth involved in the legal system in Tulsa, leaders interviewed for this report noted that the youth population often present with significant needs, including issues related to mental health, substance use, education, and family and peer relations. CJJR also heard about promising efforts in Tulsa to meet these needs of youth. Interviewees shared that Tulsa County's Community Intervention Center (CIC), for example, has aimed to provide services to youth and families in order to reduce the collateral consequences and harmful impact of system involvement, and more importantly, to detect and address root causes of these problems. While CJJR did not evaluate the impact of the CIC's efforts, in general, programs and approaches that provide holistic, community-based supports to youth and families can make a significant difference in improving youth and community outcomes and preventing system involvement altogether (Miller & Pilnik, 2021).

Again, young people and community members surveyed for this report clearly highlighted the importance that support services play in preventing crime and system involvement. Youth respondents identified athletic/music programming and community service as two of the top three activities that prevent crime, while more than one-third of community resident respondents indicated that Tulsa would benefit from more community-based extracurricular activities for youth.

“

“It is estimated that approximately 50-70% of legal system-involved youth nationally have a **diagnosable mental health challenge** and approximately 70% have **learning disabilities** and significant educational deficits.”

Goal 2 Actionable Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 2A

Conduct a Service Mapping of All Programs and Services Available to System-Involved Youth in Order to Identify Strengths and Opportunities

In CJJR's interviews with system officials in Tulsa, there appeared to be opportunities for greater understanding of the full array of services available to system-involved youth in the county, including for youth of color. While system representatives were readily able to identify the various programs and services available within their respective agencies, there was not universal understanding of the entire scope of such services county-wide.

To this end, legal system entities in Tulsa (e.g., courts, juvenile justice personnel, service providers) should engage in a collaborative strategic mapping process to identify and document all services and resources available to system-involved youth, both system-operated and community-based. Because research indicates that a variety of external factors impact legal system-involvement (e.g., healthcare, education, social services, child welfare, behavioral/mental health), this collaborative service mapping process should target the various service needs of system-involved youth. The mapping should be a comprehensive process that details all youth-based services and builds a comprehensive profile of youth using these services (e.g., disaggregated by age, race/ethnicity, gender identity). This will help create a visual representation of both internal and external services provided by organizations and services used by youth, including youth of color, in Tulsa. More importantly, it will serve as a building block to connect youth to needed effective services—a strategy for improving equity and other positive outcomes for youth.

Jurisdictional Example:

Service Mapping

After conducting a comprehensive service mapping effort, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice publishes an online “Community Resource Guide Dashboard” ([click here to view PDF](#)). The dashboard allows users to identify available programs in each county in the state by service type (including categories such as mental health, life skills, education, substance abuse treatment, job skills, sports/recreation), youth age, and youth legal status. For more background on how the Florida DJJ conducts its service mapping efforts, see the agency’s “2021 Service Continuum Analysis” available [here](#).

RECOMMENDATION 2B

Share Service Mapping Results with Legal System and Community Partners and Work Collaboratively to Fill Identified Service Gaps

Once the service mapping is complete, system representatives, stakeholders and partners should work to increase understanding of available services across the various legal system agencies, service providers and Tulsa community at large. Leaders should consider sharing the information online similar to the approach taken in Florida (see box insert), via community meetings, and through other communications vehicles. To the extent that service gaps exist based on the needs of youth and families in Tulsa, leaders should also work to fill those gaps by deepening the continuum of community-based and system-operated programs and services.

RECOMMENDATION 2C

Link Youth to Community-Based Supports to Strengthen their Connections to Pro-Social Services

With a more robust understanding of services available throughout Tulsa, legal system agencies will be better positioned to ensure that all system-involved youth are linked to pro-social supports—including the types of opportunities that the youth interviewed for this report indicated would make a difference in preventing crime, such as employment, athletic programming and community service. For system officials, this includes operating a strength-based case planning process that (1) identifies core individualized needs of youth and families across a variety of domains (e.g., education, physical and behavioral health, familial/community supports) and (2) connects them to programs and services that intentionally meet those needs (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2022).

As part of this effort, Tulsa legal system agencies can strengthen youth's linkages to pro-social services by partnering with community-based advocates who can provide youth and families with vital support. By connecting youth to trusted members of the community (such as representatives from community-based organizations, credible messengers, and mentors) as soon as the youth touches the system, legal system officials can ensure that every youth is better equipped to navigate the often complex legal system and that the services they are linked to are culturally competent and responsive to their needs. The box insert below includes examples of community-based advocacy models that Tulsa can consider implementing to supplement the case planning and service delivery approaches led by legal system officials.



Programmatic Examples:

Connections to Pro-Social Opportunities

Jurisdictions across the United States have had success partnering with community-based advocates and supporters to link youth and families to needed services and supports. For example, Youth Advocate Programs (YAP) presents an evidence-based, holistic services model that has been introduced in several states throughout the country and is leading to positive outcomes for youth, families and communities. Through YAP's wraparound approach, youth and families are supported by YAP "advocates" who often come from the community and ensure, in partnership with system staff, that the basic needs of youth and families are met. (see "Evidence Supporting YAP's Model" available [here](#)).

As another example, an increasing number of youth legal systems are partnering with "credible messengers" to enhance advocacy and service delivery on behalf of youth and families. Through the credible messenger approach, which has been introduced in New York City, Washington DC and other locations, trained adults with lived experience (often previously incarcerated or justice system involved) provide youth and families with mentoring and life coaching, and work to link them to needed community-based services and supports. Research has indicated that the approach is leading to reduction in recidivism for young adults who are involved in the justice system (Lynch M., et al. (2018), "Arches Transformative Mentoring Program: An Implementation and Impact Evaluation in New York City." Urban Institute. Available [here](#).)

GOAL 3

Promote Race Equity and Address Unconscious/Implicit Bias throughout the Youth Legal System

As noted above, youth of color face disparate treatment in the youth legal system in Tulsa compared to their White counterparts, and system representatives in Tulsa maintain differing views on the causes of those disparities. While multiple factors contribute to racial disparities faced by youth of color, ultimately it must be acknowledged that decisions impacting youth's system involvement are made by people (e.g., law enforcement, judges, prosecutors, youth legal system personnel), and all people have biases. Scholars have demonstrated the link between unconscious/implicit racial bias and disparities within the youth legal system and across various intersecting systems, such as education and health care (see, e.g., Devine, 2012). Accordingly, in recent years addressing the role of unconscious/implicit bias has gained broader acceptance in the youth legal system as well as the need for evaluating policies and practices with a race equity framework.



Goal 3 Actionable Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 3A

Examine Whether Disparities at the Diversion Decision-point Exist for Youth of Color, and If So, Redouble Efforts to Mitigate Them

As part of this assessment, CJJR spoke with system stakeholders who reported various efforts in Tulsa to divert youth from the youth legal system, including youth arrested or referred for the first time for misdemeanors or low-level offenses. While interviewees universally believed that disparities exist across the various stages of the legal system, for this report CJJR did not review data pertaining to disparities faced by youth of color in Tulsa specifically at the diversion decision-point—that is, the decision to refer youth for formal processing through the court versus other alternatives such as referral to diversion programs. If diversion data exists, legal system entities (e.g., Tulsa Police Department, the courts, juvenile justice personnel, diversion providers) should examine it to determine the rates at which youth of color are being diverted from system involvement compared to their White counterparts. To the extent that disparities exist, these entities should then identify root causes of the differential treatment and implement new policies and practices to ensure that youth of color have ample opportunities to access and benefit from diversion. For a useful review of how to use data to assess disparities at the diversion decision-point, as well as examples of youth diversion programs from across the country, leaders should review the Center for Children’s Law and Policy’s Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities Reduction Practice Manual (available [here](#)).

RECOMMENDATION 3B

Conduct Race Equity Audits Specific to Tulsa’s Youth Legal System Agencies and Other Organizations that Intersect with the System

Race equity audits can serve as an effective tool for helping youth legal system officials identify agency policies, practices, services, and efforts to combat racially disproportionate outcomes and discrimination within their respective organizations. By conducting these audits in partnership with independent, external consultants, agency leaders and staff can increase their understanding of the root causes driving disparate outcomes and assist them to identify strategies for mitigating disparities and promoting race equity—charting which efforts are practical, which are not driving change, and which focus areas require priority.

This process can help agency leaders create sustainable race equity plans for the organization and develop processes and tools to regularly assess the racial impact of proposed policies and procedures, as described in the box below.

In addition to Tulsa’s youth legal system agencies, CJJR recommends that organizations in the Tulsa area that intersect with the youth legal system, including but not limited to community-based providers and partnering agencies (e.g., child welfare, behavioral health, education) that serve legal system-involved youth conduct independent race equity audits as well.

Jurisdictional Example:

Racial Impact Assessments

The Maryland Department of Juvenile Services developed the Racial Impact Assessment Lens (RIAL) to help agency staff analyze the impact of proposed policies and procedures on youth of color, including potential racial and ethnic disparities. The RIAL requires staff to consider four dimensions of “Equitable Impact” including the ways in which the proposed policy or procedure might (1) disrupt inequities, (2) advance benefits for youth of color, (3) mitigate systemic harm, and (4) dismantle barriers to youth of color accessing needed resources. The tool also analyzes whether the insight of key groups were gathered and considered in developing the proposed policy or procedure, including youth, families, agency staff and external partners. The RIAL can be found in the appendix of the DJS Data Resource Guide for Fiscal Year 2021.



RECOMMENDATION 3C**Deepen Unconscious/Implicit Bias Training for Youth Legal System Officials and Partners**

Several leaders CJJR interviewed for this report indicated that legal system agencies in Tulsa have offered staff with occasional training on unconscious or implicit bias and its impact on decision-making. However, interviewees suggested that there are opportunities for deeper and more sustained focus on this issue, including more frequent training and conversations about strategies for recognizing and mitigating existing biases that may contribute to racial disparities faced by youth of color in Tulsa.

To this end, youth legal system agencies and other organizations that intersect with the legal system should prioritize taking the Race Implicit Association Test (IAT) quarterly to consistently build awareness about potential race-based biases (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/user/agg/blindspot/indexrk.htm>). This effort will help officials and partners better understand bias in a standardized and consistent manner across legal system entities. Information gleaned from the process will also enable leaders to align policy and practice efforts and better review and analyze racially biased assumptions and decision-making that disproportionately impact outcomes for youth of color. In this light, use of the Race IAT can inform collaborative efforts to identify bias at key system decision-points. To maximize effectiveness, system entities should transparently share their test results (internally) to improve accountability.

Jurisdictional Example:**Implicit Bias Training**

The Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts provides regular training to judges and court personnel focused on addressing racial and ethnic disparities. This includes training on implicit bias and “cultural collisions”—that is, how to navigate cultural conflicts that may contribute to disparate outcomes for youth and families of color. The trainings are part of a larger effort led by Kentucky AOC to reduce racial and ethnic disparities, which is more fully captured in the publication entitled “Kentucky Court of Justice Response: A Guide for Identifying, Addressing, and Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities” ([view PDF](#))

GOAL 4

Increase Transparency and Community Engagement by Expanding Accountability Mechanisms for the Youth Legal System



To ensure that racial disparities are effectively addressed and the needs of youth, families and community residents are met, Tulsa would benefit from additional mechanisms to hold legal system agencies and partners accountable for addressing racial disparities, promoting race equity, and improving outcomes for all. In CJJR's view, the Tulsa community and Oklahoma overall has a strong foundation from which to work, seeing significant progress in related areas in the past few decades.

Since 1975, for example, there have been widespread decreases in Oklahoma's rate of criminal arrest and rate of violence among its youth population. This significant decline in arrest and violence rates, and the system's reduced reliance on incarceration of youth has yielded considerable cost savings between \$40-\$50 million annually (Oklahoma Policy Institute, 2019). Further, the Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs now only operates two levels of youth detention, institutions (most restrictive) and Level E group homes (structured environments with regular contact with professional staff). This effort represents a shift towards more community-based approaches, recognizing the positive impact that results from keeping youth connected to their families, schools and communities.

Based on CJJR's interviews, it appears that system representatives in Tulsa would support expanding current accountability mechanisms to help agencies remain focused on achieving positive outcomes and promote race equity, and more effectively communicate to the Tulsa community the extent of their efforts. Interviewees reported various examples of promising strategies designed to better serve Tulsa's youth, families and community residents, such as using more youth-centered positive development models in juvenile justice, mental health and social services; recruiting more law enforcement officers reflective of the communities they serve; operationalizing alternatives to suspension and restorative educational practices in Tulsa's schools; and offering a variety of diversion opportunities designed to keep youth out of the legal system in the first place.

In CJJR's view, what is needed, however, are additional mechanisms to share this information, as well as data related to racial disparities, with the Tulsa community at large. Doing so, will help increase system transparency and foster greater trust between Tulsa's community members and legal system officials.

Goal 4 Actionable Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 4A

Create a County-Wide Public-Facing Data Dashboard

Youth legal system officials and partners in Tulsa should create a county-wide public-facing data dashboard to ensure that key data related to racial disparities in the youth legal system, including racial and ethnic demographic data of the population of youth and families served, is appropriately tracked, analyzed and shared with the Tulsa community. While CJJR reviewed a limited set of data for this report (i.e., fiscal year 2019-2021 data), the data revealed some inconsistencies and gaps with respect to demographic variables. For example, data for female youth in the system was inconsistent, missing, or varied from source to source. While this may not reflect system-wide deficiencies in data collection and analysis, it suggests that Tulsa's youth legal system representatives should at a minimum explore the current completeness and accuracy of available data related to racial disparities, and examine overall efforts to make such data available to the Tulsa community at large. To this end, creating a public-facing data dashboard that allows regular uploading and review of data by various youth-serving agencies would greatly increase system transparency.

Jurisdictional Example 1:

Data Dashboards

- The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice regularly publishes data on disproportionality and disparities faced by youth of color. The Department's interactive DMC Benchmark Dashboard allows staff, stakeholders, and the public to examine racial and ethnic disparities at various stages of the legal system, including at arrest, petition, adjudication, detention, diversion, probation, commitment, and transfer to adult court. Data available on the Dashboard is searchable statewide and by county. [View PDF](#)

Jurisdictional Example 2:

Data Dashboards

- The Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) publishes data on racial and ethnic disparities as well, examining the Relative Rate Index (RRI) of youth involvement at six decision points of the system in each county in the state. In essence, the RRI is a way to compare experiences of different groups of youth, and in the context of OYA's analysis, it is broken down by race or ethnicity, including White, African American, Asian American, Native American, and Hispanic youth. The RRI is calculated at the following decision points: referral, pre-adjudication detention, petition (including those cases that are dismissed or not handled), post-adjudication confinement, and transfer to adult court. OYA's RRI reports can be found [here](#).

RECOMMENDATION 4B

Expand Ongoing Reflective Dialogue Between Law Enforcement and Community Residents

Given the strained system-community relationships widely reported to CJJR by interviewees and survey respondents, the Tulsa Police Department, with support from fellow legal system officials, should engage in externally facilitated and ongoing reflective dialogues with the Tulsa community on issues related to the treatment and legal system experiences of youth and families of color. These dialogues should focus on identifying existing strengths, challenges, lessons learned, and strategies that promote moving forward as a collective community. Through these regular conversations (e.g., quarterly), participants can increase education and awareness of racial bias in structural and organizational design and how law enforcement is responding to these challenges via training, youth mentorship and programming opportunities, and other efforts designed to advance mutually beneficial relations between law enforcement and residents. For a comprehensive review of examples of law enforcement-community conversations focused on race relations and justice across the U.S., Tulsa leaders should examine the United States Conference of Mayors' 2016 report entitled "Community Conversations and Other Efforts to Strengthen Policy-Community Relations in 49 States" ([View PDF](#)).

GOAL 5

Sustain Efforts to Reduce Racial Disparities and Inequities



Goal 5 Actionable Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 5A

In Order to Provide a Level of Accountability, Identify a Driver and/or Develop a Task Force of Stakeholders to Champion this Work

In order to sustain focus and momentum on addressing racial disparities in the youth legal system, the Tulsa community should identify a driver and/or develop a task force of stakeholders to operationalize the proposed recommendations presented in this report. The goal of this task force should be directed specifically towards eliminating racial disparities and inequities, and more directly, systemic racism, in Tulsa's youth-serving organizations. The task force should comprise representation from the various entities that serve system-involved youth and families as well as the community at large, and should be divided into sub-committees that address specific issues that are driving differential treatment and outcomes for youth and families by race (e.g., employment and pro-social opportunities for youth and families; bias in decision-making). The task force and its sub-committees should be action-based, with clearly defined objectives and target goals, and its work should be visible to the Tulsa community in order to further promote accountability and transparency.

03

Conclusion



Conclusion

As this report makes clear, racial disparities continue to plague the youth legal system in Tulsa. Quantitative and qualitative data reviewed by CJJR indicates that youth of color simply experience the system differently than their White counterparts. While the source of these inequities is complex and multi-dimensional, ultimately, the differential treatment faced by youth of color is contributing to poor outcomes in Tulsa, including a lack of widespread community trust in a system that ideally should treat all youth and families fairly and equitably, regardless of race and ethnicity.

The recommendations in this report offer a starting point to shape a different path forward in Tulsa. The actionable steps outlined here represent strategies designed to position youth and families for long-term success; promote more equitable decision-making; elevate system transparency; build stronger relationships among system officials and community members; and maintain sustainable focus on promoting racial equity. While operationalizing these strategies will require significant energy and commitment, with courage and a relentless dedication to achieving fairness and equity, the leaders of Tulsa's youth legal system—working hand-in-hand with youth, families and community members—can begin to realize positive change.



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Glossary

Adjudication

The court process that determines if a youth committed the act for which they are charged. The term “adjudicated” is analogous to “convicted” and indicates that the court concluded the youth committed the act.

Detention

Short-term confinement, primarily used after a youth has been arrested, but before a court has determined the youth’s innocence or guilt.

Disposition

After adjudication, a plan for each adjudicated delinquent youth is formulated. This plan will include a set of rules to follow. This may include the youth being placed on probation or into the custody of OJA.

Equity

Recognition that each youth has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Out-of-School Suspensions

Suspension from school or school transportation for conduct on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, or on school transportation that (1) violates the school’s published policy, (2) seriously disrupts the educational process, or (3) endangers people or property. Students may be suspended for out-of-school conduct if it both violates the board’s published policy and seriously disrupts the educational process.

Protective Factors

Characteristics associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes or that reduce a risk factor's impact. Protective factors may be seen as positive countering events.

Racial Disparities

As existing in the legal system, racial disparities are the proportion of a racial/ethnic group within the control of the system that is greater than the proportion of such groups in the general population.

Residential Placement

Placement in a licensed publicly or privately owned facility, other than a private family home, where 24-hour care is provided to youth separated from their families. A residential placement includes residential facilities for youth, group homes, and some programs in psychiatric hospitals.

Source of Referral

The agency or individual filing a complaint with intake that initiates court processing.

Unconscious Bias

Prejudice or unsupported judgments in favor of or against one thing, person, or group as compared to another, in a way that is usually considered unfair. Unconscious bias occurs automatically as the brain makes quick judgments based on past experiences and background. As a result of unconscious biases, certain people benefit and other people are penalized.

For more information and other definitions please visit the Tulsa County Juvenile Justice Handbook and Intro to Court Services at the following links: [Tulsa County Website - Intro to Court Services](#) and [Tulsa County Handbook](#).

04

Appendix



Select List of Interviewed Agencies

Family and Children's Services	The largest community mental health center in Oklahoma servicing the Tulsa metro area through 60 different programs focused on restoring children's wellbeing, healing victims of abuse, strengthening individuals and families and providing hope and recovery for adults suffering from mental illness and addictions.
Juvenile Division of the Tulsa County District Court	The Juvenile Division handles different types of cases that involve children under the age of 18 (minors). Juvenile Deprived matters involve cases related to the abuse and/or neglect of a minor, while Juvenile Delinquency matters involve violations of criminal laws by a minor.
Morton Comprehensive Health Services	A Tulsa area federally qualified health center (FQHC) that provides medical services to northeastern Oklahoma and is able to offer its services on the ability of the patient to pay as defined by federal poverty guidelines.
Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA)	A state agency that provides services for Oklahoma's delinquent youth. OJA services include court intake, probation, and parole. OJA Provides prevention, education, and treatment services for at-risk youth throughout Oklahoma alongside community partners. This joint effort creates a statewide system that supports and encourages young people to achieve their full potential.
Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences	The Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the OSU Center for Health Sciences in Tulsa provides undergraduate medical education, residency programs, research, and patient care.
Tulsa County Family Center for Juvenile Justice	This county agency focuses on improving the community through prevention, diversion, intervention and empowerment with the youth and families they serve through a variety of programs and services.
Tulsa County Public Defender's Office	This office provides legal representation to people charged with misdemeanor and felony crimes, as well as to children under the age of 18 (minors) on different types of cases, including Juvenile Deprived matters involving cases related to the abuse and/or neglect of minors, and Juvenile Delinquency matters involving violations of criminal laws by minors.

Tulsa Police Department	Principal law enforcement agency for the city of Tulsa, Oklahoma.
Tulsa Public Schools	The Tulsa area's largest school district that provides education to over 30,000 students each year in grades pre-K through 12th grade.
Youth Services of Tulsa	The only agency in the Tulsa area focused on serving youth ages 12-24 in the areas of runaway and homeless services, counseling and substance abuse services, youth development and delinquency prevention.

Youth Survey Questions

1. **What do you think are the major reasons that cause youth to commit crimes (check all that apply)?**
 - a. Lack of formal education
 - b. Lack of money
 - c. Lack of family support
 - d. Dropping out of school
 - e. Peer pressure
 - f. Other (please describe)
2. **Circle how likely each event would help to discourage youth from committing crimes or help in the rehabilitation of the youth that have committed crimes (very unlikely; unlikely; neutral; likely; very likely):**
 - a. Stronger legal consequences
 - b. Jail time
 - c. Being tried as adults
 - d. Community service
 - e. Volunteer work
 - f. Hefty fines
 - g. Counseling
 - h. Job Opportunities
 - i. Sporting & music programs
 - j. Mentorship
3. **The current local police are doing enough to prevent youth crimes (strongly disagree; disagree; neutral; agree; strongly agree).**
4. **Local school leadership is doing enough to prevent youth crimes (strongly disagree; disagree; neutral; agree; strongly agree).**
5. **Local government leadership is doing enough to prevent youth crimes (strongly disagree; disagree; neutral; agree; strongly agree).**
6. **Community leaders (e.g., community organization leaders, faith-based organizations, etc.) are doing enough to prevent youth crimes (strongly disagree; disagree; neutral; agree; strongly agree).**
7. **In my neighborhood, it's easy for a young person to get a good-paying job (strongly disagree; disagree; neutral; agree; strongly agree).**

8.	In my neighborhood, it's hard to make much money without doing something illegal (strongly disagree; disagree; neutral; agree; strongly agree).
9.	I'll never have as much opportunity (e.g., economic, educational, housing, etc.) to succeed as people from other neighborhoods (strongly disagree; disagree; neutral; agree; strongly agree).

Community Resident Survey Questions

1.	What crime/public safety issues are of greatest concern to your community?
2.	Are there racial/ethnic differences in how community residents evaluate interactions with law enforcement? If so, what are the differences?
3.	<p>What crime prevention strategies, specific to youth crime prevention, do you know of?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What crime prevention strategies, specific to youth crime prevention, do residents support? b. What crime prevention strategies, specific to youth crime prevention, do residents not support?
4.	What is your personal experience or interest in the juvenile legal system?
5.	<p>How does the juvenile legal system in Tulsa affect your community? How have you seen or experienced that personally?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Does race play a role in the treatment of youth in the juvenile legal system? If yes, how so? b. When you hear leaders talk about the juvenile legal system, what do they typically understand or handle well? c. When you hear leaders talk about the juvenile legal system, what do they typically misunderstand or overlook?

System Representative Interview Questions

1.	From your perspective, do disparities exist for particular populations in Tulsa's juvenile legal system?
2.	How would you describe how the system you work in attempts to mitigate disparities?
3.	Are there other entities that are working to address this issue? What is working well or what should we do more of?
4.	Are there entities that are not working to address this issue or could do more?
5.	Where do you see high impact opportunities that could improve the system of juvenile justice (e.g., policies, practices, programs)?

6.	What are some low hanging fruit opportunities that would make an impact on this issue?
7.	Where do you see the biggest challenge in community engagement/empowerment?
8.	Where could the system that you work in influence policy (e.g., budget, sentencing laws, advocacy)?
9.	What have you observed as barriers to enacting new policy?
10.	What else did we not ask about already that you would like to address?
11.	Who else should we be talking to on this topic?

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This report is the work of the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) at Georgetown University, McCourt School of Public Policy in partnership with Youth Services of Tulsa.