



STATE OF  
**NEBRASKA**  
JUDICIAL BRANCH

Administrative Office  
of the Courts & Probation



# JUVENILE SERVICES DIVISION

# Detailed

# Analysis

## FISCAL YEAR 2021





Dear Stakeholders:

As I reflect on the year, I am proud to share the work that has continued as we strive to *ENHANCE* juvenile justice best practices for youth and families. Over this year, we have continued to improve probation work by focusing on targeted education as it relates to skill development for probation youth. National research suggests that teaching skills to probationers significantly improves their ability for long-term behavior change. One of the ways juvenile probation sets out to accomplish this is through a cognitive group called Nebraska-Aggression Replacement Training or NE-ART. This program is an intensive skill-building group where youth can learn how to change the way they approach situations.

Additionally, this year marked the launch of the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement ~ Nebraska work, also known as the JJSEN initiative. These efforts include partnering with multiple technical assistance experts across the nation to assess where we are as a system as well as recommend next steps to propel us forward. The initiative includes a review of the juvenile justice system, a data capacity assessment, support regarding implementation strategies, court order reform, and trauma screening. I am excited to share the recommendations and identified next steps of this work with our valued partners across the state in the upcoming year. As stated previously, it is imperative that we assess how well our current juvenile justice system is working and whether it functions in a manner that results in the best possible outcomes for youth and our communities!

I look forward to another year of hard work and continued success!

Sincerely,

Jeanne K. Brandner  
Deputy Administrator  
Juvenile Services Division



## Juvenile Probation Outcomes

The goal of juvenile probation in Nebraska is to prevent juveniles from returning to the juvenile justice system or entering the adult criminal justice system by:

- Engaging juveniles and their families in the court process;
- Eliminating barriers to accessing effective treatment and services; and
- Partnering with educational and community stakeholders.

# OUTCOMES



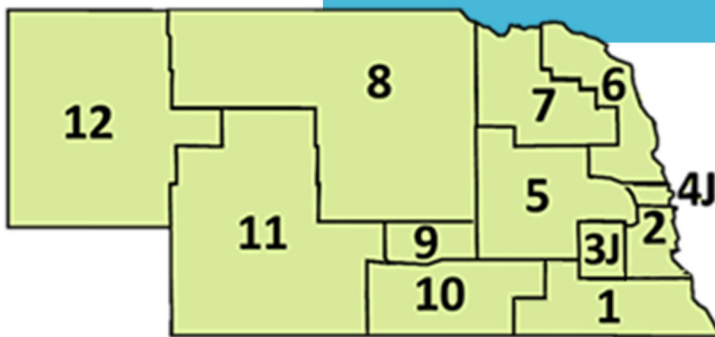
## Nebraska State Probation Vision:

Be a nationally recognized leader in the field of justice committed to excellence and safe communities.

## Nebraska State Probation Mission:

We, the leaders in community corrections, juvenile, and restorative justice, are unified in our dedication to delivering a system of seamless services which are founded on evidence-based practices and valued by Nebraska's communities, victims, offenders and courts. We create constructive change through rehabilitation, collaboration, and partnership in order to enhance safe communities.

## Map of Juvenile Districts



The map includes the judicial probation districts across the state of Nebraska covering all 93 counties.

For more information about the probation districts:

<https://supremecourt.nebraska.gov/probation/districts>

**4** Juvenile Justice System Enhancement

**5** Artwork Contest

## Initial Entry

**7** Juvenile Intake

**8** Population

**9** Adjudication

**10** Investigation

**11** Risk/Needs Assessment

**12** Juvenile Probation Officer Spotlight: Erin Curran

**13** Artwork Contest

## Total Probation Youth Served

**15** Population

**16** Case Management

**22** Out-of-Home Placement

**25** Discharge

**26** Recidivism

**27** Juvenile Probation Officer Spotlight: James Schulte

# Juvenile Justice System Enhancement

Juvenile Justice System Enhancement



Nebraska

In an ongoing effort to improve youth development and cultivate safer communities, the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement-Nebraska (JJSEN) was implemented this year. The enhancement includes bringing four national juvenile justice experts to Nebraska. The process involves a juvenile justice system review, implementation science, expansion of trauma-focused best practice, and a comprehensive data assessment. Each of the four partners contribute reports of their findings and targeted recommendations that will enhance practices and support implementation to impact youth and families statewide.

Stay tuned for more information as these reports and recommendations are published.



Robert F. Kennedy  
**Children's Action Corps**  
RFK National Resource Center  
for Juvenile Justice

The Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice is one of the JJSEN partners. John Tuell and Michelle Darling are conducting a Probation System Review.

The review process examines four core areas of the juvenile justice system: administration, probation supervision, intra-and interagency work processes, and quality assurance. The methodology used to conduct the review consists of discussions with judiciary, probation staff, and other youth justice stakeholders. They also examine training, policies, and protocols, plus provide a probation staff survey.

Dr. Robin Jenkins and Dr. Renée Boothroyd, from the Impact Center at Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, are providing education and support of practical application of Implementation Science.

Implementation Science is defined as, "The systematic study of variables and conditions that lead to full and effective use of evidence-based programs and other effective innovations in typical human service settings (Blasé & Fixsen, 2010)."



Hunter Hurst and Gene Siegel, from the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ), are conducting a Data Capacity



NATIONAL CENTER FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

System Assessment. The assessment focuses on probation's data system and the ability to capture fundamental measures of juvenile justice. The methodology used to conduct the review consists of discussions with probation staff, examination of the probation data management system, and probation data reports. NCJJ will compile the information in a report that will also highlight the areas of strengths and provide recommendations to enhance probation's ability towards more effective data tracking, reporting, and analysis.

Dr. Keith Cruise of the National Youth Screening and Assessment Partners (NYSAP), will be supporting the expansion of trauma-focused best practices for justice-involved youth. Dr. Cruise will support these efforts by assessing probation's current screening processes, guiding the implementation of a trauma screening tool, and analyzing the capacity to serve youth through best practice trauma services.





# Youth Artwork CONTEST



## Juvenile Probation Encourages Youth Creativity With Annual Artwork Contest

Juvenile Probation started an annual Artwork Contest in 2015 to encourage youth throughout the state to express themselves by telling the story of their journey. This year, twenty-two entries were received from across the state.

Probation officers were encouraged to suggest the contest to youth they supervise. All forms of art were accepted from water color, acrylic paint, pen, colored pencils, creative writing, or digital media. The results were moving and inspiring.

Submissions are highlighted throughout this report and displayed in the Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation, Juvenile Services Division.

The 1st Place Winner of the 2021 Art Contest was Maribel from Schuyler. She described her entry as follows, "This photo is a representation of what I see on my weekends, the Platte River. The time I've spent on probation has changed my life A LOT! Before probation, I would get high every day. Now, I've been sober for months.

I usually come to the Platte River instead of going to a party. It is my escape. I feel free swimming in the river and alive. I am so extremely grateful for what happened to me because it changed me for the better. I don't remember the last time I was high.

Probation has also helped me reach out for help. I'm excited for my mental health to improve with counseling. I feel as if probation is one of the best things that has happened to me."



The 2nd Place Winner was Hans from Chapman. He says he chose this subject because he has learned that without a "pack" of others by your side, it is hard to be successful in life.



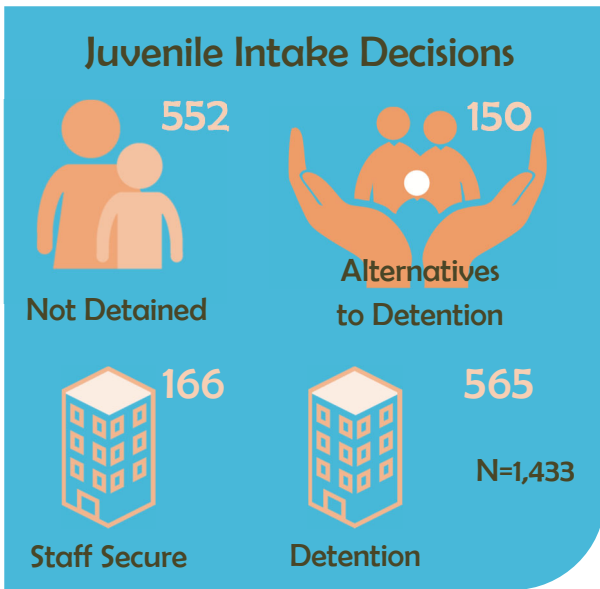
# Initial Entry of Juvenile Probation



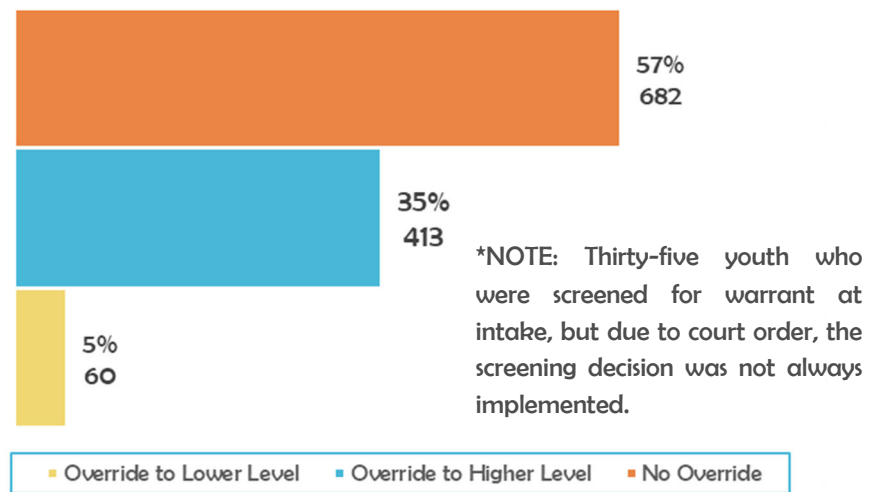


# Juvenile Intake

Nebraska State Statutes § 43-250 & 43-260 authorize Probation to manage the juvenile intake function. The goal of juvenile intake is to promote the most appropriate detention decision that is least restrictive while balancing safety of the community. This is accomplished through a standardized risk assessment tool that is administered when law enforcement contacts Probation for the purpose of determining an intake decision. The detention screening instrument examines the youth's risk to persons within the community and history of documented willful failure to appear at a scheduled court hearing within the past 12 months.



### Juvenile Intake Tool Overrides



Juvenile intake tool overrides occur when there are special circumstances that a probation officer considers to authorize a higher or lower intervention than recommended by the intake tool. Overrides are utilized to ensure community safety while utilizing the least restrictive options available and must be approved by a supervisor.



Kicking off in fiscal year 2022, the new Community Youth Coaching (CYC) alternative to detention will help connect youth with local mentors to assist (or coach) them in building essential life skills and promoting positive youth development. CYC is a rebranding of the Tracker services that have historically been used as an accountability tool when youth are supervised in the community.

Community Youth Coaching is a youth-guided, family-driven alternative to detention. A key component of the wraparound process is the acknowledgement of the youth's skills, interests, aims, and abilities provided from information gathered during team meetings, with participation by service providers, friends, and family.

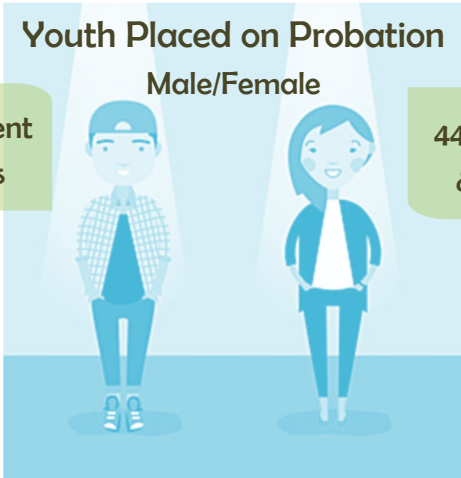
# Population

The demographic information below reflects youth placed on probation for delinquent and status-related behaviors. There were 1,959 youth placed on probation during the fiscal year. A status youth comes before the court for non-delinquent behaviors such as truancy, running away, or other behaviors that a parent is not able to control. Beginning July 1, 2017, youth who are ten years of age and under at the time of a traffic, infraction, status, misdemeanor, or felony act is committed, are no longer eligible for juvenile probation. The total number of youth placed on probation reduced by 11% as compared to FY 2020.

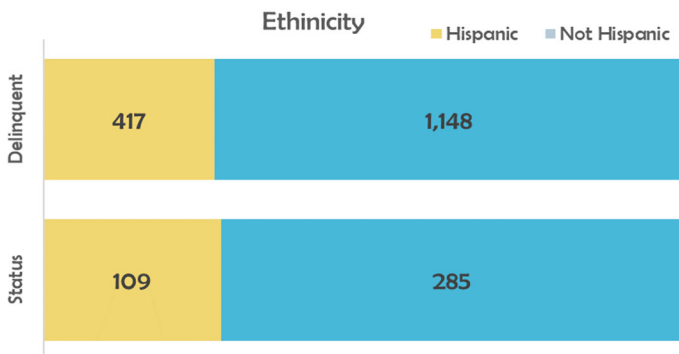
## Youth Placed on Probation

Male/Female

1,120 Delinquent  
& 215 Status

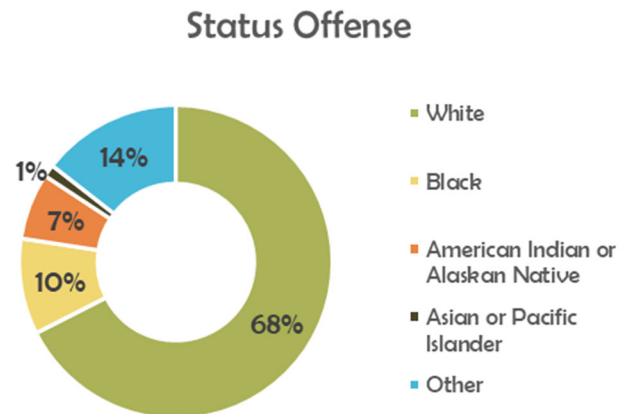
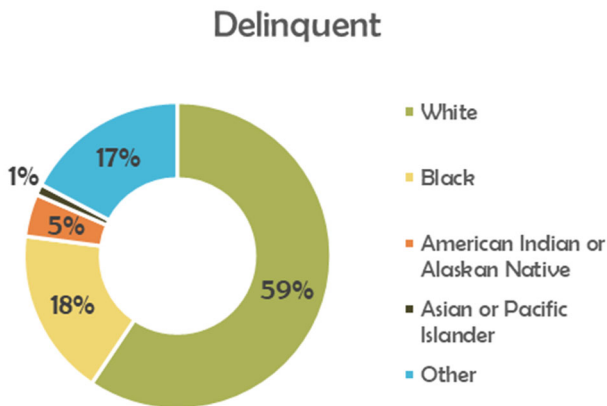


445 Delinquent  
& 179 Status



Youth Placed on Probation by Age			
Age	Delinquent	Status	Total
11	3	4	7
12	28	9	37
13	111	19	130
14	201	55	256
15	303	70	373
16	383	107	490
17	423	113	536
18	113	17	130
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,565</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>1,959</b>

## Youth Placed on Probation by Race

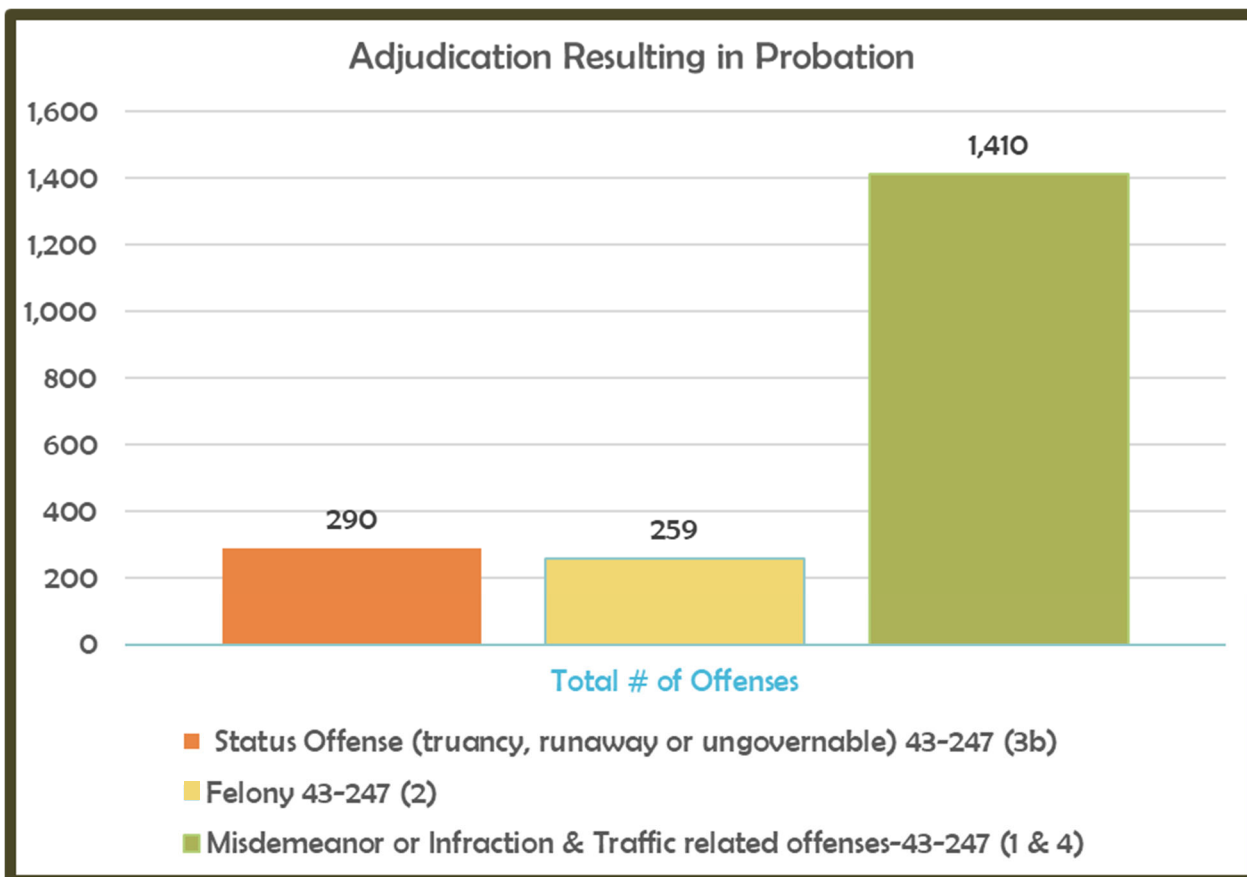




# Adjudication

The Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation has oversight for youth who are subject to supervision by a probation officer and have been adjudicated under one or more of the following subdivisions of Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-247 (1), (2), (3b) and (4). Adjudication is the fact-finding phase of a juvenile case in which a judge receives and weighs evidence before determining whether a delinquency or status offense has been proven.

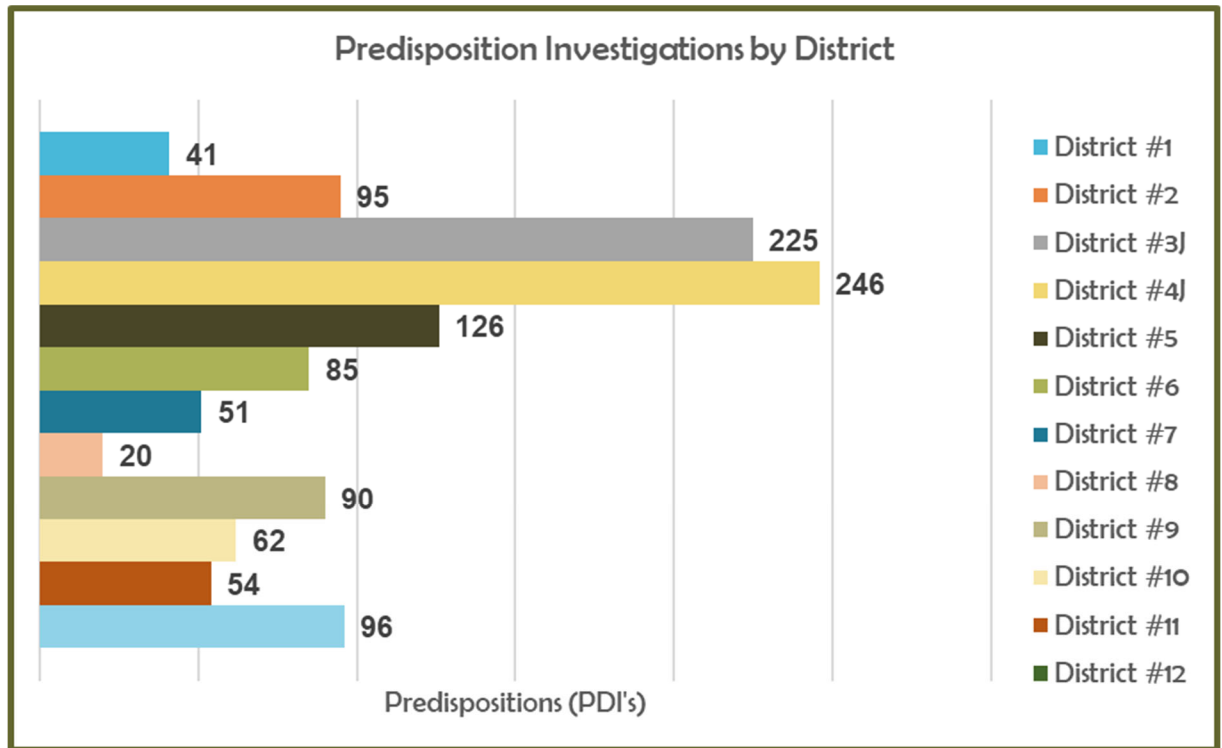
Each subdivision refers to the type of behavior (offense) that brought the youth before the court. The chart below identifies the percentage of youth who were adjudicated in each category; some were for multiple offenses. The majority of youth placed on probation were adjudicated under subdivision (1) for offenses which are considered a misdemeanor or infraction.



Of the 290 status offenses in fiscal year 2021, 85% were for truancy, which was 12% less than fiscal year 2020.

# Investigation

Probation is responsible for completion of comprehensive investigations, also known as the predisposition investigation (PDI). Investigations include: interviews with the youth and family, collateral contacts, validated risk assessments, available treatment reports, and/or evaluations. The investigation and recommendations target the youth’s risks and needs, as well as the services that will be most effective in reducing the juvenile’s risk for continued delinquent behaviors. The total for the year was 1,191, which is down 8% from fiscal year 2020.



Quote from a youth on probation:

“My probation journey has been like a drive. It has driven me to do better as a person, with my actions, and be careful with whom I’m around. The road represents the path and obstacles I am going to come across. It is easy to get side tracked. Mountains represent the goals you set for yourself and how big and great the outcome can be.”

# Risk/Needs Assessment

## Initial Risk Assessment Category

Probation staff are trained in and utilize the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI 2.0), which is a gender-informed, culturally-informed, strengths-focused risk/needs/responsivity assessment tool. The YLS/CMI 2.0 reliably and accurately classifies and predicts the possibility of continued delinquent acts, which supports a probation officer's case management priorities. Probation moved from the original inventory to the 2.0 in January of 2021.

### LOW

**27%**

Percentage of youth placed on probation that were assessed as low risk using the YLS/CMI for continued unlawful behavior

### MODERATE

**64%**

Percentage of youth placed on probation that were assessed at moderate-low, moderate, or moderate high risk using the YLS/CMI for continued unlawful behavior

### HIGH/VERY HIGH

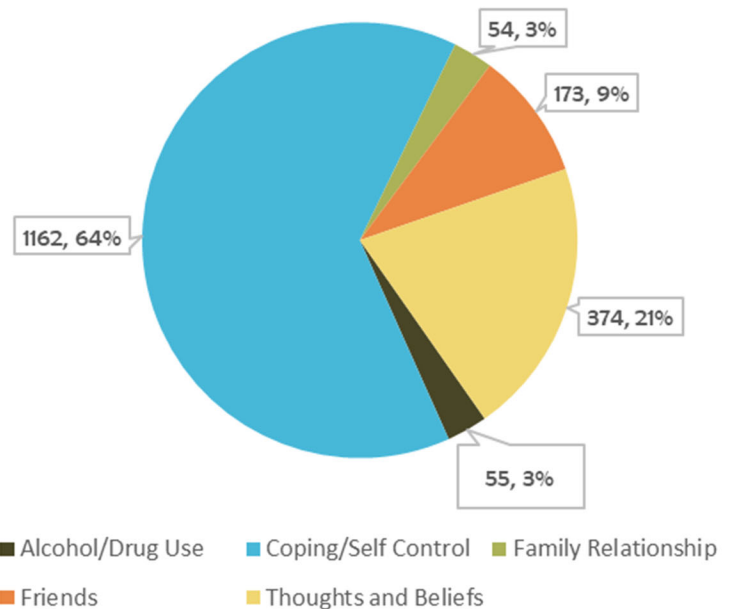
**9%**

Percentage of youth placed on probation that were assessed at high or very high risk using the YLS/CMI for continued unlawful behavior

The YLS/CMI measures 8 key areas:

- prior and current offenses/dispositions;
- education/employment;
- substance abuse;
- personality/behavior;
- family circumstances/parenting;
- peer relations;
- leisure/recreation; and
- attitudes/orientation.

## Drivers Identified on Success Plans



## Determining the "Driver"

Determining the single most influential criminogenic risk factor or "driver" is essential to risk reduction as not all criminogenic risks influence behavior equally. The "driver" is used to focus case management and create a Success Plan, which is for targeting behavior change.

# SPOTLIGHT



Pictured: Probation Administrator Deb Minardi and Chief Justice Mike Heavican presenting Erin with her award on December 7, 2021.

Erin Curran works in the Juvenile Drug Court in judicial district 2 as a supervision probation officer. She has been in this position for five years and was drawn to it due to her love of helping probation youth. Previously, Erin, who is a licensed therapist, provided in-home therapy for Juvenile Drug Court and worked with gang-involved youth. She assisted about fifty families and has a strong desire to work directly with youth.

Erin earned the “Probation Officer of the Year” award on December 7, 2021 for her “unsurmountable” dedication to youth and families. One of her coworkers wrote in her nomination form, “Erin’s passion and empathy toward the youth and family she serves radiates. I have seen her use her own funds to provide incentives to youth. The passion she has for the youth and families is displayed in her ability to advocate and seek resources for them. This passion goes well beyond her current caseload, it over-arches into the community.” Erin says when she was notified she won the award, she was speechless. She feels this is a tremendous honor and says she works with the best team of officers in the state.

**“Erin’s passion and empathy toward the youth and family she serves radiates.”**

In the spring of 2021, Erin developed a community garden on a donated plot of land within walking distance from the office that was donated to Sarpy County Court. This was an opportunity for her to educate the youth and show them how to give back to the community. The youth had

mixed reactions from the plan, but showed up for work sessions a couple nights a week and over lunch to weed and pull out the produce. In fact, this garden produced enough produce for 2-3 donations a week to local pantries as well as ample food for the youth to take home. Many of them cooked the harvest with their families and shared the experiences they gained. Even the pantries were excited to receive such a regular abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Erin organized a cookout during the summer and invited the district officers, attorneys, judges, youth, and families. It was a great experience to get to know each other in a casual environment and share their experiences.

In her position, Erin sees only a portion of the youth’s journey. There are a few youth that she has remained in contact with that have had successes. Logan graduated Drug Court in December 2020 and high school in May of 2021. He moved to New York with his mother and stopped to see her on his last trip to Nebraska. He is still doing well in his sobriety.



**Erin encouraged Zach to write down his “journey” while in detention and he won 3rd place in the Artwork contest.**

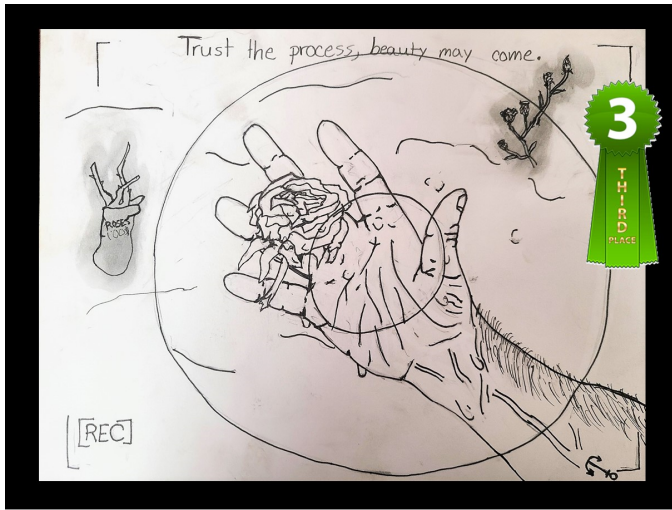
Zach is another youth that stands out in Erin’s mind because she worked with him for 3½ years. He had significant substance abuse and was in detention when she encouraged him to write a poem about his “Journey” for the 2021 Youth Artwork Contest. Zach earned one of

the 3<sup>rd</sup> Place awards and has since aged out of the system. (See opposite page.)

Erin realizes that working in drug court isn’t an easy fix for the youth that are enrolled. It is a long journey with many addiction obstacles along the way. She has learned that it is not a big win, but small milestones that are the most significant. It is like ‘planting seeds’ and not being able to watch them grow. Her role is to help provide the tools for these youth to maneuver and be successful in life.

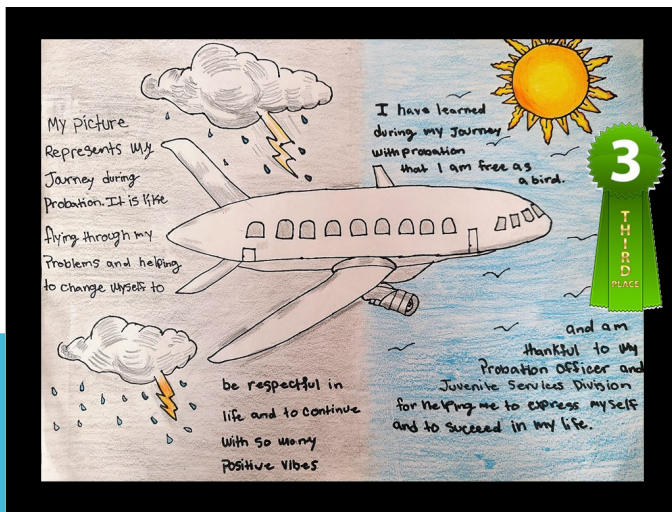


# 2021 Artwork Contest Winners

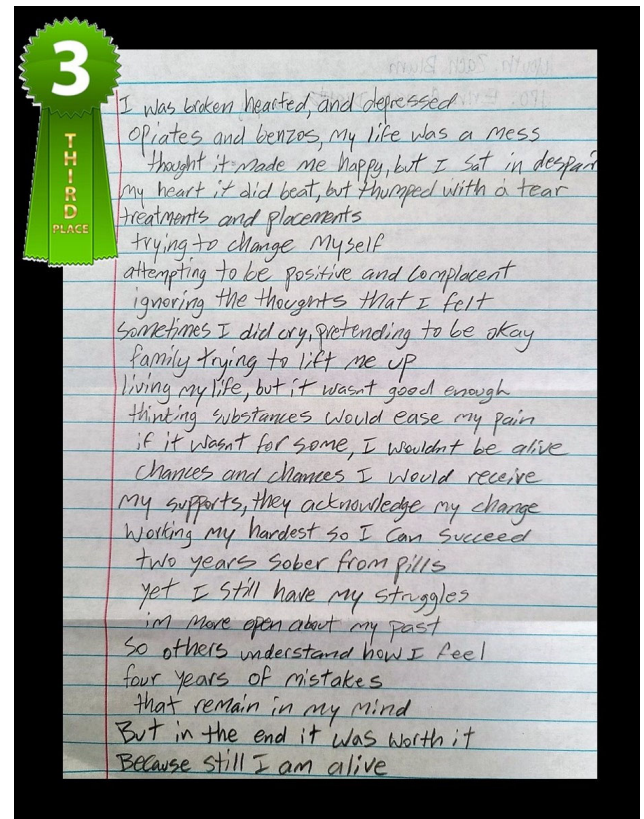


Brian from Belgrade says, "My drawing fits my probation process because it shows someone capturing the deep beauty of something torn up and bruised. It fits because I found the beauty out of this tough process and used it to shape me for who I am."

This year, there was a three-way tie for third place.



Vadhira from Schuyler describes her drawing, "My picture represents my journey during probation. It is like flying through my problems and helping to change myself to be more respectful in life and to continue with so many positive vibes. I have learned that I am free as a bird and am thankful to my probation officer and Juvenile Services Division for helping me to express myself and to succeed in life."



Zach from Papillion created a poem to describe his journey in probation.

# Total Youth Served by Juvenile Probation

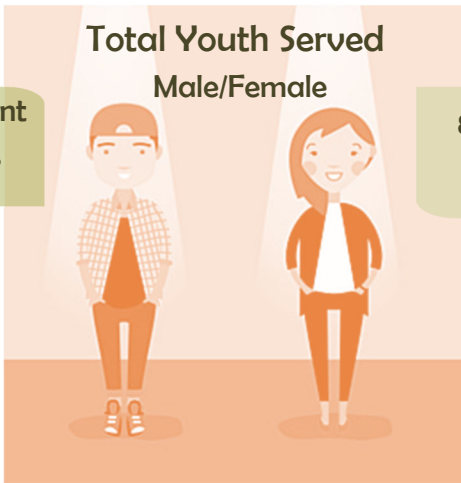


# Population

In this section, all data represents the total population of youth actively supervised on probation, which includes youth already on probation from the previous year. There were 3,663 youth served during this fiscal year. The table below shows demographic data for the population of youth served by probation separated by delinquent and status-related offenses. The total number of youth served on probation reduced by 12% as compared to FY 2020.

## Total Youth Served Male/Female

2,165 Delinquent  
& 343 Status

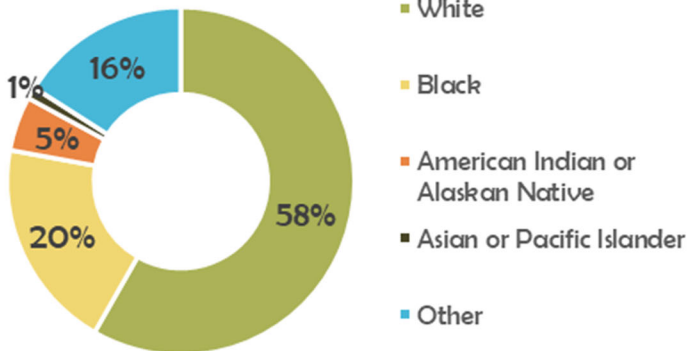


857 Delinquent  
& 298 Status

### Ethnicity



### Delinquent

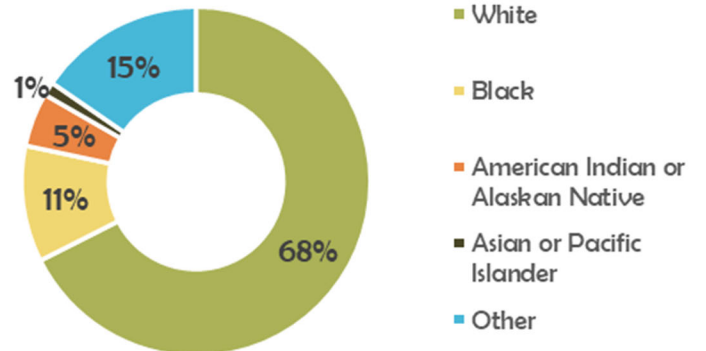


## Total Youth Served by Age

Age of Youth	Delinquent	Status	Total
11	6	4	10
12	44	12	56
13	155	31	186
14	344	79	423
15	533	116	649
16	733	179	912
17	850	184	1,034
18	357	36	393
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,022</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>3,663</b>

## Total Youth Served by Race

### Status Offense





# Case Management

## NE-ART Training

Nebraska-Aggression Replacement Training, also known as NE-ART, is a cognitive restructuring, eight-week group curriculum that was initially trained by the Center for Anti-Bullying & Non-Violence and launched in 2019. The curriculum is designed for moderate to high-risk youth, and focuses on the demonstration, repetition, and practice of three primary components; 1) learning positive social skills, 2) learning self-control, and 3) identifying negative thinking traps and how we can counter thinking traps with positive traits. These components are key in order for youth to overlearn the material and then transfer it to real world situations.

Since the launch of NE-ART, we have received countless encouraging stories from probation officers and the judiciary regarding the positive effects observed by youth who have completed the program. During this reporting period, 330 youth participated in the program with 61% of those youth graduating successfully. Youth who successfully graduate from the program have the opportunity to celebrate their successes with family, friends, and with their judge, if available, during a formal ceremony.

**Fiscal Year 2021**

Youth who successfully graduated from the 8-week curriculum



### COMMENTS FROM YOUTH

Would you recommend this group to others?

- o Yes, because it helped my anger issues
- o Yes, because it really helps you understand why you react the way you do
- o Yes, because it helps you think ahead before making a decision

What did you learn about yourself that you didn't already know?

- o That I am more responsible than I know
- o If I use my skills I have really good conflict resolution
- o I learned about how I use some coping skills without even realizing it
- o That I can hold back and calm down instead of saying something I will regret

## AC4E Training

Advanced Coaching for Excellence (AC4E) launched in 2017 and focuses on the four core elements shown in the diagram on the right. As part of the AC4E initiative, probation officers supervising high-risk youth received targeted training regarding skill building. They are also trained on the essential focus of dosage or the intensity of engagement related to the risk level.

In addition, staff learned to use the *Keys to Success* resource, which includes activities and services directly linked to the youth's "driver." Probation officers have a variety of tools to help youth develop new skills.





# RISE Program

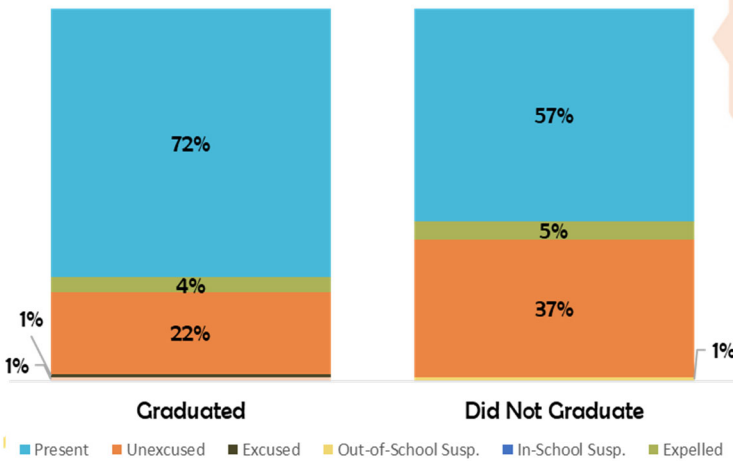
# Case Management



The Recognizing Increased Skills in Education (RISE) Program, implemented in 2007, is a grant-funded AmeriCorps program, which allows Probation to place AmeriCorps members, titled "RISE Program Specialists," in nine probation offices. RISE Program Specialists are responsible for organizing and facilitating a skill-based curriculum to adjudicated youth, which includes five chapters; Goal Setting, Motivation, Organization, Class Participation/Study Skills and Test Taking. When youth successfully complete all chapters, they are considered RISE graduates. As a

result of completing the RISE Program curriculum, youth will build skills, improve school attendance, decrease negative behaviors, and be less likely to be involved in future delinquent activities. As skill development takes time, additional support is provided to youth for 3 to 6 months after completion of the curriculum.

Attendance Comparison for RISE Graduates vs Non Graduates



There is a direct correlation between RISE graduation and positive attendance outcomes as demonstrated in the graph.

# of Youth Served: **228**

# of Youth Who Graduated RISE: **101**



A group of RISE Specialists at the AmeriCorps member kickoff

## AmeriCorps Member Service Experience-Michelle



In 2020, I earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology and Spanish from Central College in Pella, Iowa. I stumbled upon the RISE Program Specialist position in Lancaster County, an opportunity that served as a perfect combination of everything that I had developed a deep passion for: human behavior, cultural diversity, and youth empowerment. I served as a RISE Program Specialist in District 3J for approximately a year and two months. I had the pleasure of experiencing a variety of successes, some which included interacting with more than 25 youth, throwing an impromptu 16<sup>th</sup> birthday party, partaking in the creation and implementation of an Adolescent Brain Development Curriculum for the district, and aiding youth in the discovery and development of their own skills.

It is through these experiences, and, most importantly, the support and guidance that I received from each and every member of both the AmeriCorps/RISE team and the District 3J staff, that equipped me for a position as a Probation Truancy Officer in Lancaster County.

RISE Specialists are much more than individuals who facilitate educational-based groups; they are positive support people that provide youth with care and acceptance that is necessary for personal growth and success.

# Case Management

## Graduated Response

Research continues to build evidence supporting the implementation of age-appropriate graduated responses for youth on juvenile probation. Due to this, Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-286.01 was enhanced in 2017 to support the creation of a standardized matrix for youth incentives and sanctions. This is essential, as working with youth to change behavior can take time and have multiple differing responses. If youth are unable to change their behavior and continue to violate the court order, an alleged probation violation can be submitted to the court.



### 4-to-1 Ratio:

Research suggests a ratio of four positive (incentives) to each negative (sanction) in order to effect long-term behavior change.

The ratio of incentives to sanctions for fiscal year 2021 was 2.6 to 1.

### When would a motion to revoke probation be requested?

Nebraska Revised Statute §43-286.01 states: "Failure to complete a sanction may result in repeating the sanction, increasing the duration, or selecting a different sanction similar in nature. Continued failure to comply could result in a request for a motion to revoke probation."

### MOTION TO REVOKE PROBATION

DISTRICT	1	2	3J	4J	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
FILINGS	50	62	197	318	88	86	253	16	152	92	148	78	1,540

# Tangible Incentives

# Case Management

In December of 2019, the Juvenile Services Division was awarded a three-year grant from the Sherwood Foundation. This grant allows juvenile probation officers to award tangible incentives to probation-involved youth to reinforce positive behaviors. National research supports the effect this strategy can have on young people as it allows them to develop a positive sense of themselves at a critical time in brain development and builds on their strengths. Since the grant was awarded, this practice has been in place and positive results have been witnessed.

Juvenile probation officers have the ability to award both individual and group incentives. One example of group incentives is offering snacks when youth are involved in a cognitive group, which helps keep them engaged. Throughout the course of the group, juvenile probation officers use tangible incentives to encourage participation which in turn enhances what they take away from the program.

Individual incentives are used by juvenile probation officers during the course of their engagement at one-on-one meetings. Examples of both individual and group incentives are: gift cards from a variety of fast food establishments, local gas stations, and movie theatres, socks, art supplies, Bluetooth earbuds, water bottles, journals, and a variety of sporting goods to name a few.

Celebrations can also occur when youth complete programming. One example upon completion, the officer will hold a graduation and provide pizza, cake, sodas, and snacks using the gift certificates.



# Success Story

Sochy is one who is especially appreciative of the incentives program because she was not used to receiving positive feedback and/or praise from others, including her family and teachers. She gets excited about every one she has earned on her journey. Now when she receives an incentive, she is very thankful that someone believes in her and she typically provides immediate feedback. Positive reinforcement and tangible incentives have played a role in improving her self esteem and attitude.

Sochy has come a long way since her start of probation. She has maintained sobriety, began attending school regularly, has been extremely cooperative, texts her officer several times per week, and has completed substance treatment. Sochy told her officer how much she appreciates all the incentives she has earned and now feels like someone has her back.



TOTAL NUMBER OF TANGIBLE INCENTIVES AWARDED IN FY 2021

# 3,515

TOTAL VALUE OF INCENTIVES AWARDED IN FY 2021

# \$34,580.79



# Case Management

## Home-Based Initiative

Youth on juvenile probation receive individualized supervision and services which are core to effective case management. Probation officers that supervise youth are highly skilled and provide many interventions including cognitive restructuring groups, motivational interviewing, and field visits. Therefore, dosage and service duration are key. Focusing on the *right service*, at the *right time*, for the *right youth* is imperative to creating individualized case plans for youth on probation.



### Juvenile Justice Home-Based Initiative

The expansion of the home-based initiative kicked off in April of 2017. Since that time, two evidence-informed services have been expanded. These services are Multisystemic Therapy (MST) and the Boys Town Ecological In-Home Family Treatment (EIHFT) program.



An average of **79.2** families received MST services per month during this fiscal year

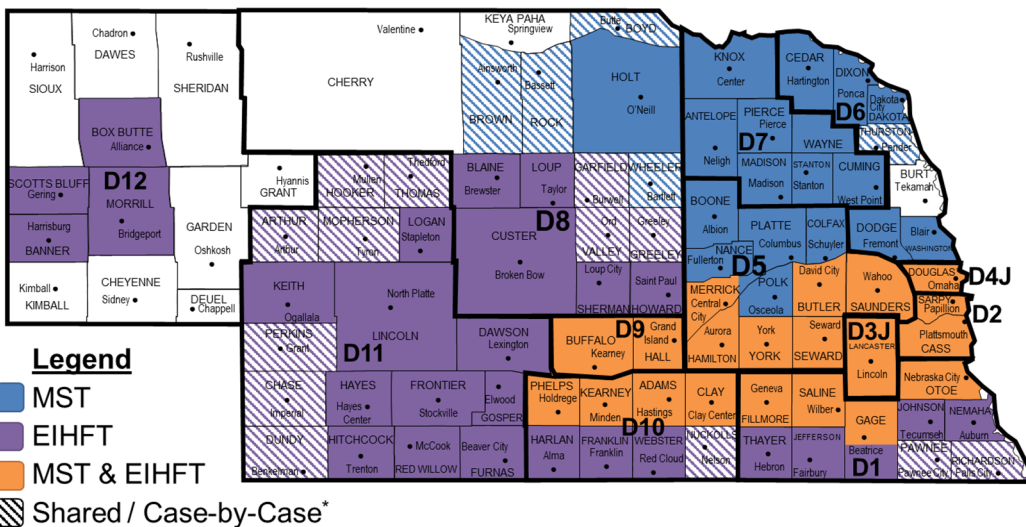


Evidence-informed home-based services covers **88%** of Nebraska counties



An average of **91.1** families received EIHFT services per month during this fiscal year

## MST & EIHFT Service Area Map



Counties with access to evidence-informed intensive home-based services increased in FY 2021, as compared to FY 2020. Efforts to expand coverage of EIHFT services launched 13 new counties. At the same time, MST providers experienced reductions in caseload capacity due to staff turnover and challenges with hiring clinical staff.

\*Case-by-Case areas will be served when possible given geographic restraints on response time and concurrent caseloads

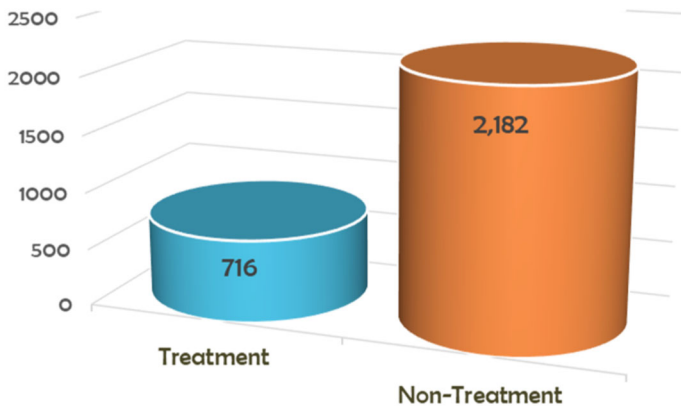


# Financials

# Case Management

Probation staff work with registered service providers statewide to ensure youth have access to quality behavioral health and non-clinical supportive services. Financial assistance is available to ensure youth can access services. With targeted services, supervision outcomes can improve youths' risk of recidivism. Treatment services may include: substance-use or mental health treatment (out-patient or residential), and medication management. Non-treatment services may include: educational tutoring, electronic monitoring, tracker, shelter care, foster care, and transportation.

**Service Type Per Youth Receiving Financial Assistance**



## Average Daily Cost of Probation

*Includes personnel and operating expenses*

**\$34.54**

*Services funded by Probation are tracked through vouchers*

Service provision for youth funded by alternative streams is not represented (i.e. Medicaid, private insurance, etc.). Youth may appear in both treatment and non-treatment counts. Detention is not included.

## Average Annual/ Monthly Cost for Youth Receiving Financial Assistance

**\$4,519.77**  
Overall Avg./ Youth

**\$376.65**  
Monthly Avg./ Youth



**In-Home/Community-Based Services**

**\$27,755.74**  
Overall Avg./ Youth

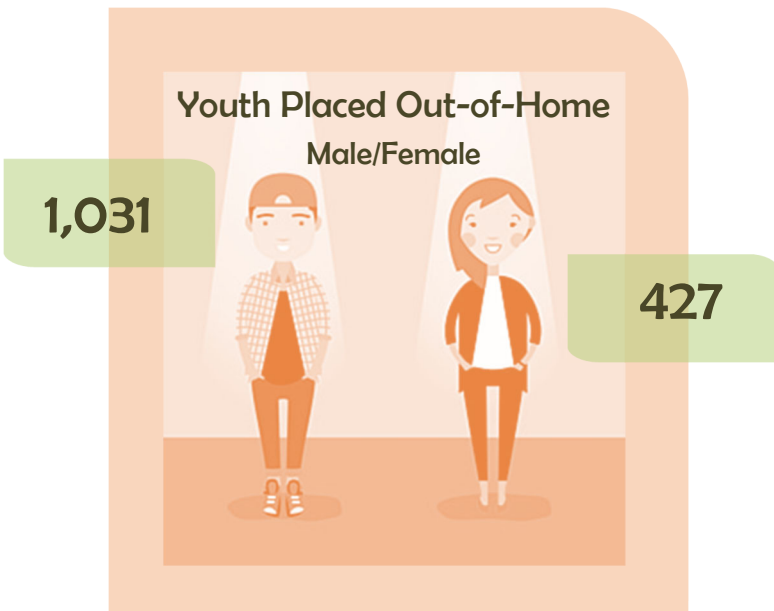
**\$2,312.98**  
Monthly Avg./ Youth



**Out-of-Home Services**

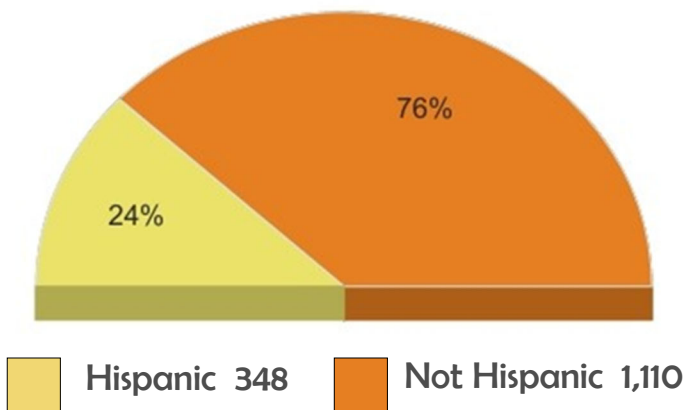
# Out-of-Home Placement

Juvenile justice reform efforts prioritize the reduction of unnecessary placement of youth outside of their homes. Efforts continue to enhance and expand access to home-based services which will assist in accomplishing this priority. There are still times when all efforts have been exhausted and an out-of-home placement is necessary to provide for community safety and treatment services. These out-of-home placements include congregative care (treatment and non-treatment), foster care, detention alternatives, detention, runaway, youth residential treatment centers, and jail. In fiscal year 2021, 1,458 youth were served in an out-of-home placement for one day or more.

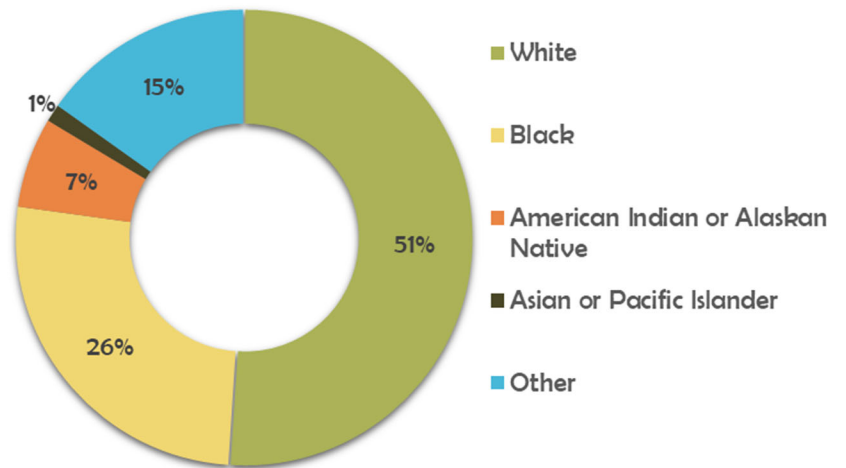


Age at Out-of-Home Placement	
Age of Youth	# of Probationers
12	48
13	93
14	193
15	302
16	352
17	352
18	1185

Out-of-Home Placement by Ethnicity



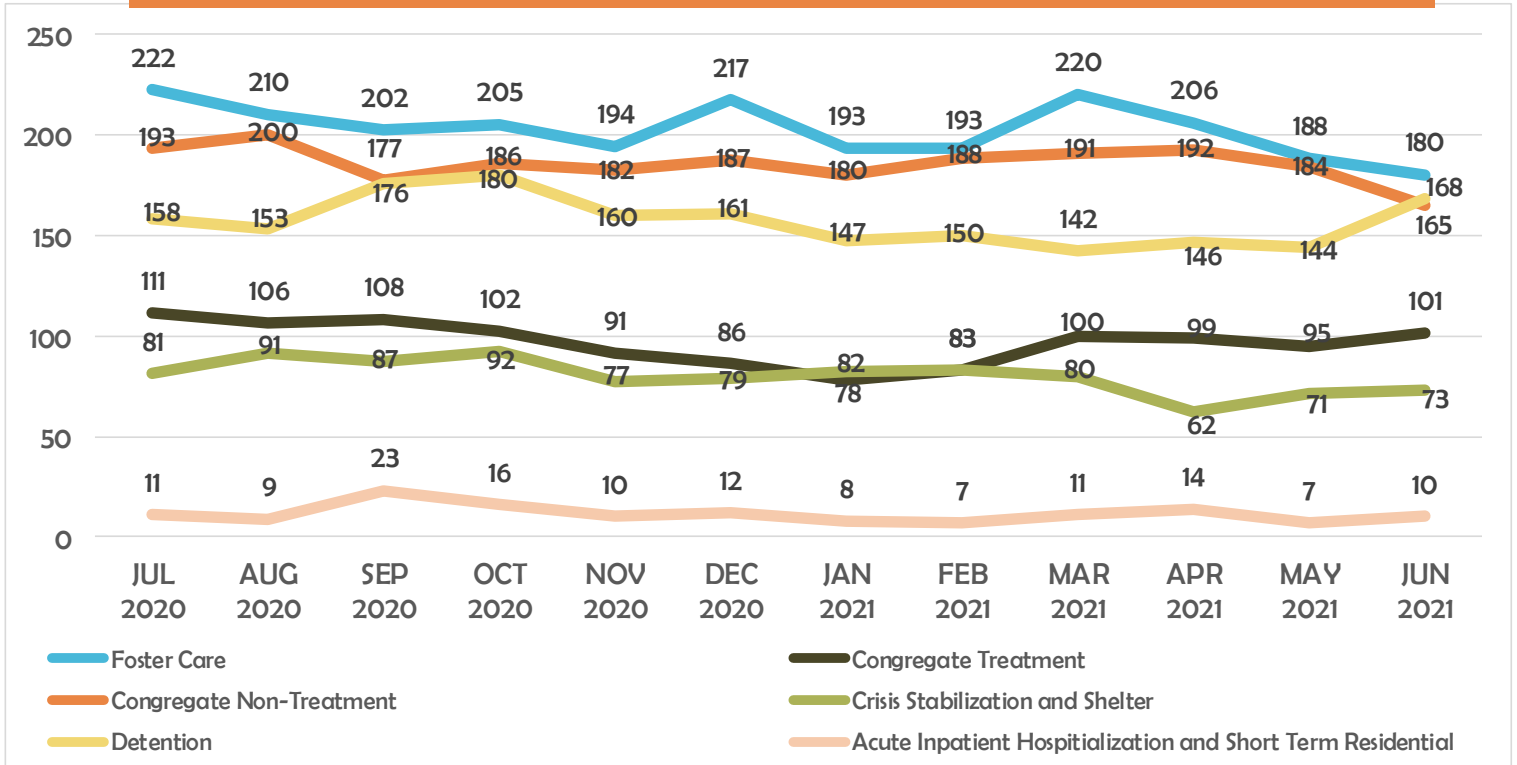
Out-of-Home Placement by Race



# Out-of-Home Placement

When youth are placed out-of-home, probation officers work immediately with the placement staff, youth, and family to develop a plan for the youth to transition back to their homes and local community, ensuring public safety. This is especially important when youth are placed out of state because distance becomes a key factor to transition planning.

**Total Number of Youth in Out-of-Home Placement per Month**



Congregate Non-Treatment: group homes (A, B and developmental disability), maternity group homes (parenting and non-parenting), and independent living  
 Congregate Treatment: psychiatric residential treatment facilities and treatment group homes  
 Detention: secure and staff secure  
 Foster Care: developmental disability, extended family home, professional foster care, emergency foster care, foster care, relative/kinship, and respite

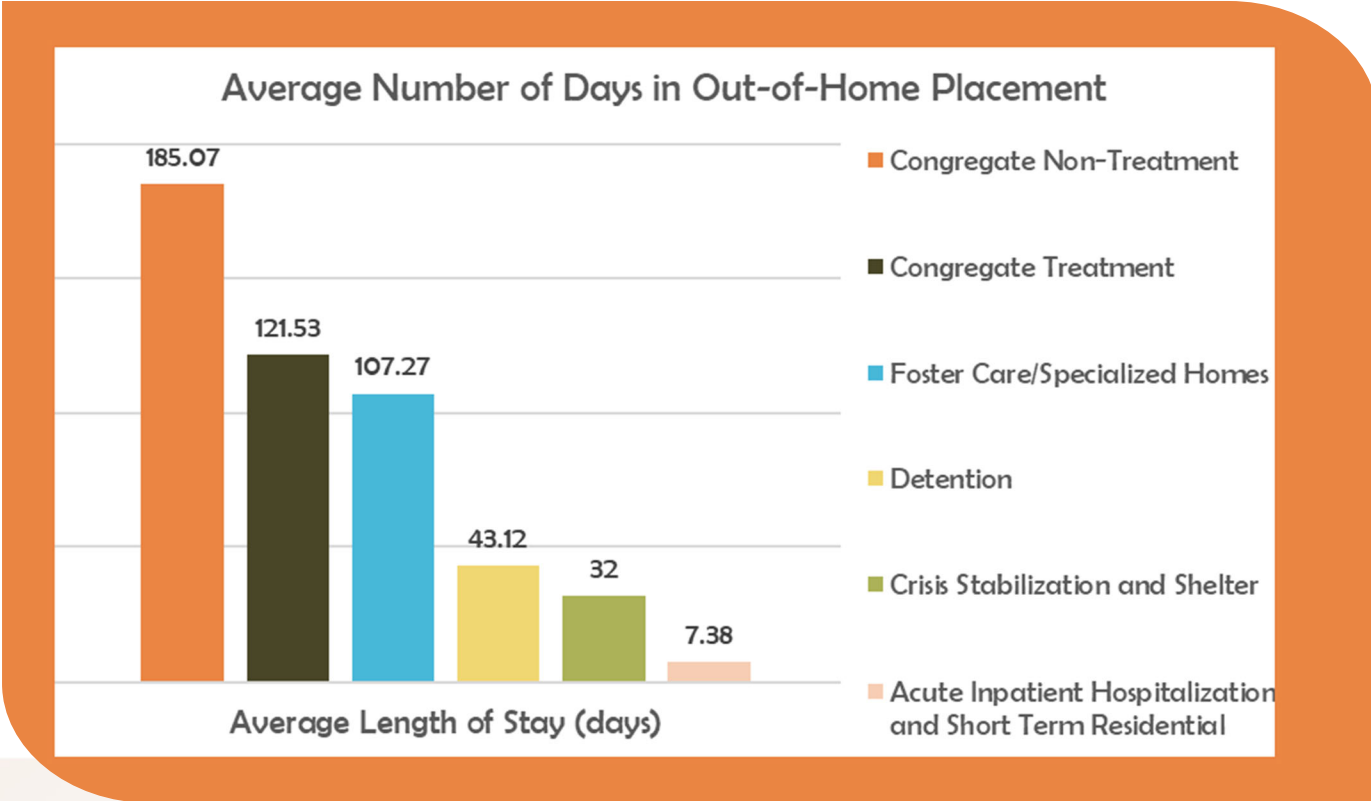
**OUT-OF-STATE CARE** → **12%**

In fiscal year 2021, of youth placed out-of-home, 169 were placed in treatment or non-treatment congregated care out of the state of Nebraska



# Out-of-Home Placement

When a youth is placed out-of-home, each placement type has an optimal “average length of stay” detailed in each of the specific *Juvenile Service Definitions*, found on the Supreme Court website. This “average length of stay” reflects the time the service has shown evidence to achieve the service outcomes with the overarching goal of behavior change and risk reduction. Additionally, research demonstrates that short-term placements such as detention should focus on immediate community safety risks and have shown to increase risk if utilized for low-risk youth and for long periods of time.



In the last fiscal year, total out-of-home placements have reduced by **19%**

# Discharge

When a youth is placed on probation, it is key that a skilled probation officer works closely with the youth to ensure all court ordered probation conditions are successfully completed. This should result in a reduction of the youth’s risk and a change in those behaviors that brought the youth before the court. Once a youth has completed his or her probation conditions, a judge releases the youth from probation supervision. There are three options: the youth may be discharged from probation successfully, unsuccessfully, or probation may be revoked. A basic measure of success for juvenile probation is the number of youth that successfully complete probation.

In this fiscal year, 2,738 juvenile court cases were discharged from probation (129 youth were released for an “other” discharge option and are not included in the total). Examples include a district override or adjudication transfer.

District #	Successful Discharges	Unsuccessful/ Revoked Discharges
1	75	19
2	173	19
3J	250	83
4J	443	177
5	158	17
6	147	25
7	107	44
8	46	10
9	231	95
10	82	23
11	251	45
12	199	19
Total	2,162	576



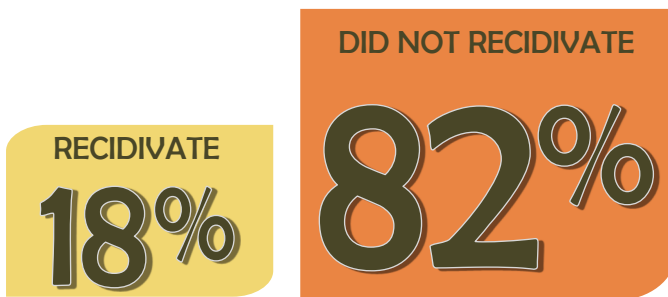
**4%**  
of the youth discharged in fiscal year 2021 reached the age of majority

Average Number of Months on Probation Discharged FY 2021



# Recidivism

Recidivism is nationally supported as a way to measure impact of juvenile probation. Over the past few years, since implementing the Juvenile justice reform efforts, the Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation has been measuring recidivism for youth who are placed on probation. Additionally, the Supreme Court created a standard definition for recidivism which is documented below. It is essential to note that there is not a national standard definition for recidivism; however, experts suggest using a consistent definition over time to determine impact.



*Note:* Youth included in this data were discharged in fiscal year 2020.

Recidivism was reduced for youth successfully discharged from probation over the last three fiscal years



## Nebraska Supreme Court Recidivism Definition

For the purpose of accurately assessing program recidivism across justice programs, Nebraska State Probation and Nebraska Problem-Solving Courts shall utilize the following uniform definitions of recidivism for all adults and juveniles within their respective programs.

- A) **Adults:** As applied to adults, recidivism shall mean a final conviction of a Class I or II misdemeanor, a Class IV felony or above, or a Class W misdemeanor based on a violation of state law or an ordinance of any city or village enacted in conformance with state law, within three years of being successfully released.
- B) **Juveniles:**
  - 1) As applied to juveniles, recidivism shall mean that within one year of being successfully released from a probation or problem-solving court program, the juvenile has:
    - a) an adjudication pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 43-247(1) or (2)
    - b) for a juvenile fourteen years or older, a final conviction for a Class W misdemeanor based on a violation of state traffic laws or ordinances of any city or village enacted in conformance with state law; or
    - c) a prosecution and final conviction as an adult for any crimes set forth in subsection A) above
  - 2) For juveniles that age-out of the juvenile system within one year of program exit and who did not recidivate post-program as juveniles, the adult definition of post-program recidivism, including any drug-related or alcohol-related conviction, shall apply.



## Juvenile Probation Officer

# SPOTLIGHT

# James Schulte



James Schulte from district 10 has helped bring a Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Yoga/Mindfulness class to benefit the youth in his district. The program started in 2019 due to the leadership of Chief Joe Budnick with female clients in a six-month pilot. In August 2021, males were added to the schedule. To date, sixty females and eighteen males have completed the program.

Many of the youth have experienced trauma in their lives and after doing some research, James found that according to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), at least 75% of youth in the juvenile justice system have experienced traumatic victimization. The presence of DBT/Yoga/Mindfulness, or similar trauma-informed programs, show results of improved mood and self-regulation skills along with less physical altercations, health complaints, and requests for medication.

The DBT / Yoga / Mindfulness program is a 12-week program that is held twice weekly: one for females and one for males. It has two components. Yoga is held for the first 45 minutes followed by group therapy for an additional 45 minutes. This program uses the body mechanics and emotions to re-center and calm.

James felt in order to support the program he needed to participate, so he urged other staff members to join him. A female officer attends the female group and a male officer attends the male class for the yoga portion only so the youth can do the therapy portion of the class in a safe place without judgement from a person of authority. The officers attend the classes as participants to show the youth that it's not embarrassing or difficult.

When James first explains the class to his male youth, he usually receives

negative reactions. Therefore, he meets with each male youth prior to the first class, to prepare and explain that it is a safe place without judgement where stress, anxiety, and worries can be put away to focus on the moment. He also gives each youth a pair of socks from the incentives program so he/she has something warm and soft on their feet during class.

**Quote from a youth: "This is the most quiet I have in my life!"**

James has witnessed the benefits of the program in the lives of the youth that have participated.

*See his stories below.*

James attended an IEP meeting with a male youth who became upset from eight adults telling him what needs to be done and changes he needed to do with school. At one point, this youth became red-faced, clenching his jaw and cheeks. James leaned over to him and simply said, "breathe." The youth instantly closed his eyes and focused on his breathing which allowed him to relax and listen to the adults in the meeting.

**Quote from a youth: "This is a safe place!"**

Another young gentleman was having a bad day at court. He was in full crisis afterwards when he learned he was being sent to placement. He showed up for class and James discussed being in the moment. The youth stated he was in a better mindset after the group class.

Another remarkable change involves a 12 year-old male youth who has ADHD and suffered a lot of trauma in his life. He started with a screaming tantrum and said his condition combined with scoliosis makes it impossible for him to ever relax. As the classes continued, James and the other youth encouraged him to work through his fear and feel safe so he could calm himself. This young man now will fall asleep during relaxation time and feels safe. This youth's mother stated that when her son attends yoga, his behaviors improve.

One of the young ladies had a lot of violent anger and would punch holes in her walls. She has now completed the 12 weeks of DBT/Yoga/Mindfulness classes and uses the breathing tools she has learned. This youth was so interested that she began using crystals, reading mindfulness books, and doing journaling.

James is convinced that mindfulness has helped their district's juveniles and is excited to see where this program goes. He says, "We in probation are a team with many different tools to include juvenile justice knowledge, work and personal experiences, and partnerships. I now have seen how valuable this tool is in helping our youth who have significant trauma in their lives. I personally plan to keep this tool in my toolbox."

Staff members from district 10 in a yoga session: black shirt-Andrew Denman, front female-Amanda Cunningham, blue shirt-James Schulte, grey shirt male-Landrum Fleming, and back row female-Kristen Butcher.



STATE OF  
**NEBRASKA**  
JUDICIAL BRANCH

Administrative Office  
of the Courts & Probation

# JUVENILE SERVICES DIVISION



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*Created by  
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Tami Rupe  
June 2022*

