



Center for Children's Law and Policy

**Delaware County Youth Diversion
Assessment: Project Update**

July 18, 2023

Values and Guiding Principles in Our Work

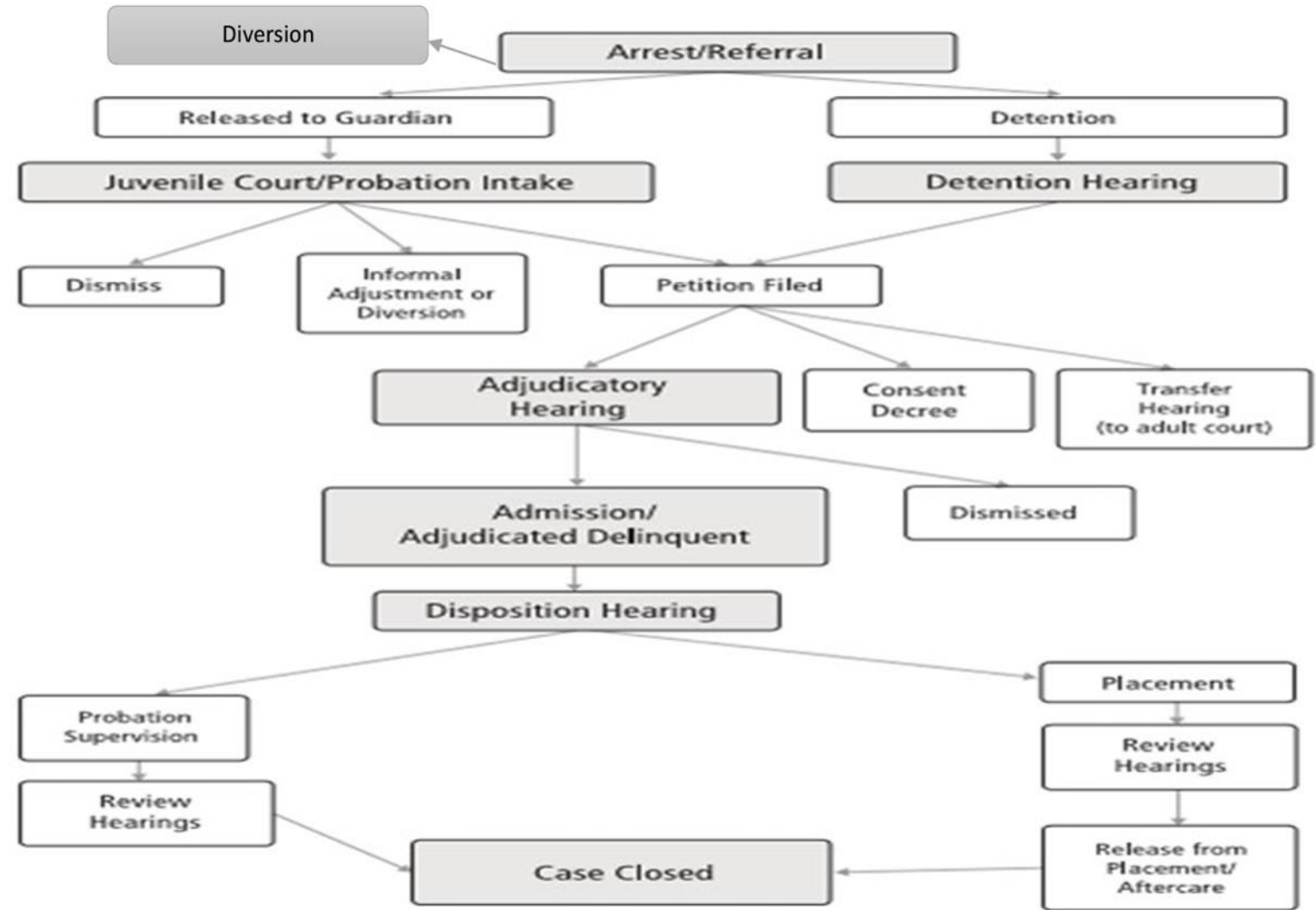
- Investing in the village
- Centering youth perspectives
- Acknowledging strengths and existing efforts but identifying new and expanded opportunities to help youth thrive
- Transparency, honesty, and a willingness to consider new ideas



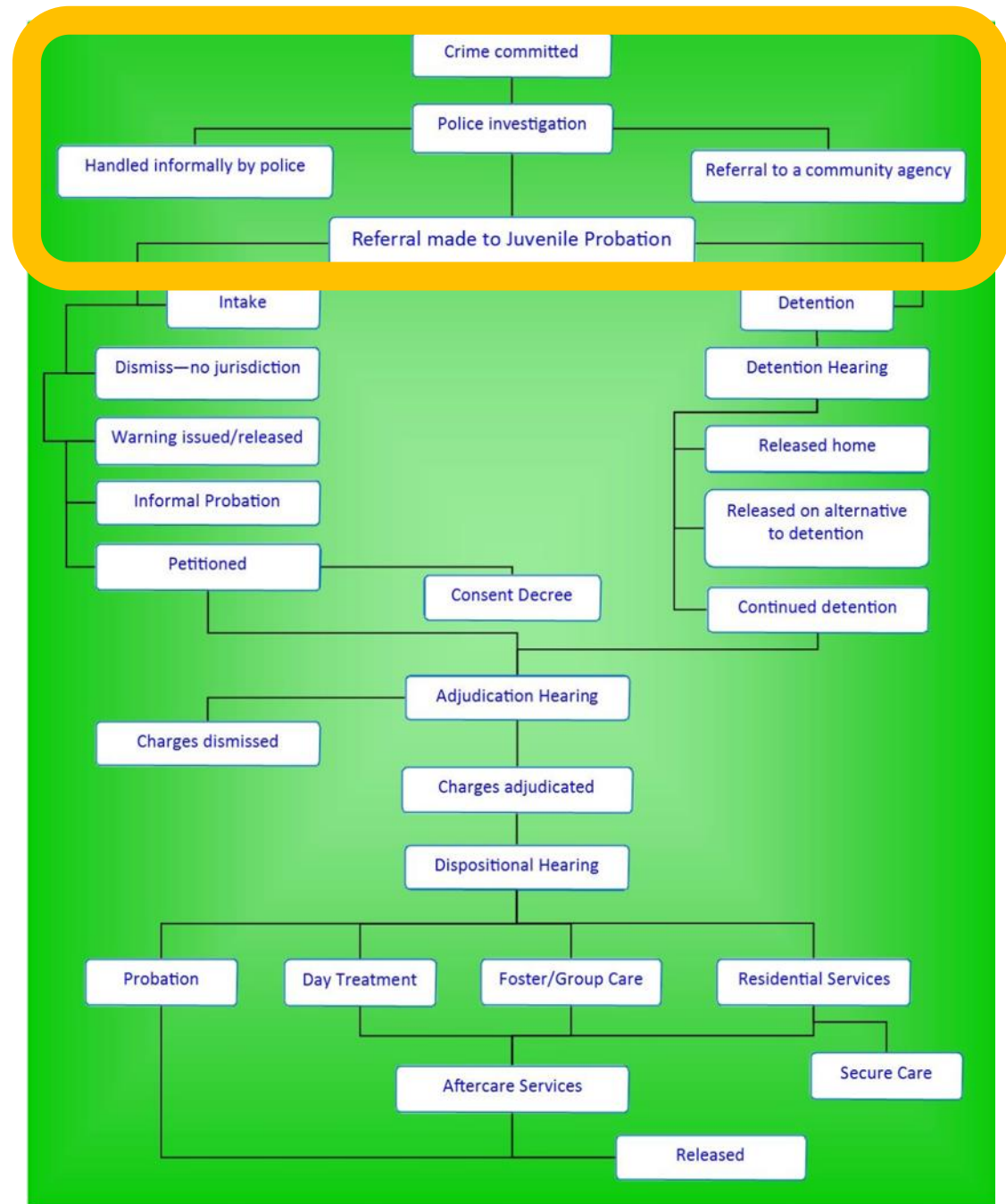


**Diversion
Processes and
Pathways**

Delaware County, PA Juvenile Justice Process Map



Lancaster County, PA Juvenile Justice Process Map



How YDD Works (as a young person would experience it)

Let's say a young person has an encounter with the police after committing a crime.



If it's a low-level alleged offense like jumping a turnstile, they might be informally referred by the police officer to a community-based diversion provider.



1 But if it's a high-level alleged offense like grand theft or assault, they may be formally diverted. Since this police department is a partner of YDD, the police officer who stops them lets them know they can work with a community-based organization located close to where they live.



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2 In the old system, even a minor offense could lead to court, fines, and getting a criminal record. Now with YDD, they might instead be able to participate in a restorative justice process, receive support from a case manager, and engage in arts and recreation activities.



3 Within the next few days, someone from the community-based organization reaches out to them and their parent/guardian, lets them know they were referred by the police department for diversion, and sets up a time to meet.



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Los Angeles County, CA Division of Youth Diversion and Development



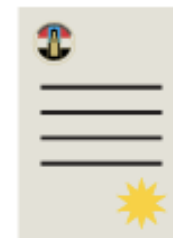
4 The youth meets and gets to know a case manager in the following weeks. They share their strengths, interests, passions, and challenges with the case manager, and they work together to develop a care plan to work through over the next several months.



5 Throughout the next 6-12 months, they meet with their case manager about once per week. The case manager connects them with meaningful services (for example, educational supports, therapy and treatments, arts and recreation, and/or job development).



6 After they complete everything in their care plan, they graduate from their diversion program. They receive a certificate saying that they will not have any criminal record related to the incident that took place.



7 They continue to be in touch with the community-based organization and can call on them for support when they need it. They attend some of their classes and events from time to time, and they're part of their community network.



8 After experiencing this process, they might be able to use their first-hand knowledge to participate in shaping other youth diversion and development work in the County.





Update: Youth Perspective

Preliminary Youth Survey Data

- Partnered with RTQ Academy to reach out to DelCo children and youth aged 10-21 via online survey; ~500 responses
- Working with Empact Solutions to categorize qualitative and quantitative data responses and drill down into subcategories of survey responses
- Demographics
 - 60% Black, 12% Latinx
 - 17% 10-15, 31% 16-18, 53% 19-21
 - 34% identifying as male, 65% as female
 - Representation from communities across the county, but largest response numbers from Chester (~40% of survey responses)
 - ~1/3 reporting contact with law enforcement of the youth legal system or preferring not to respond

Survey Headlines

- **Top 3 ways youth would invest money in their own communities:**
 - Arts/music opportunities for creative expression (50%)
 - Mental health/behavioral health (36%)
 - Mentoring (33%)





Quantitative Youth Survey Questions

I know about services and programs that are designed to help youth in my community

I know where to go to get information about services and programs for youth in my community

I know where to get help if I need it

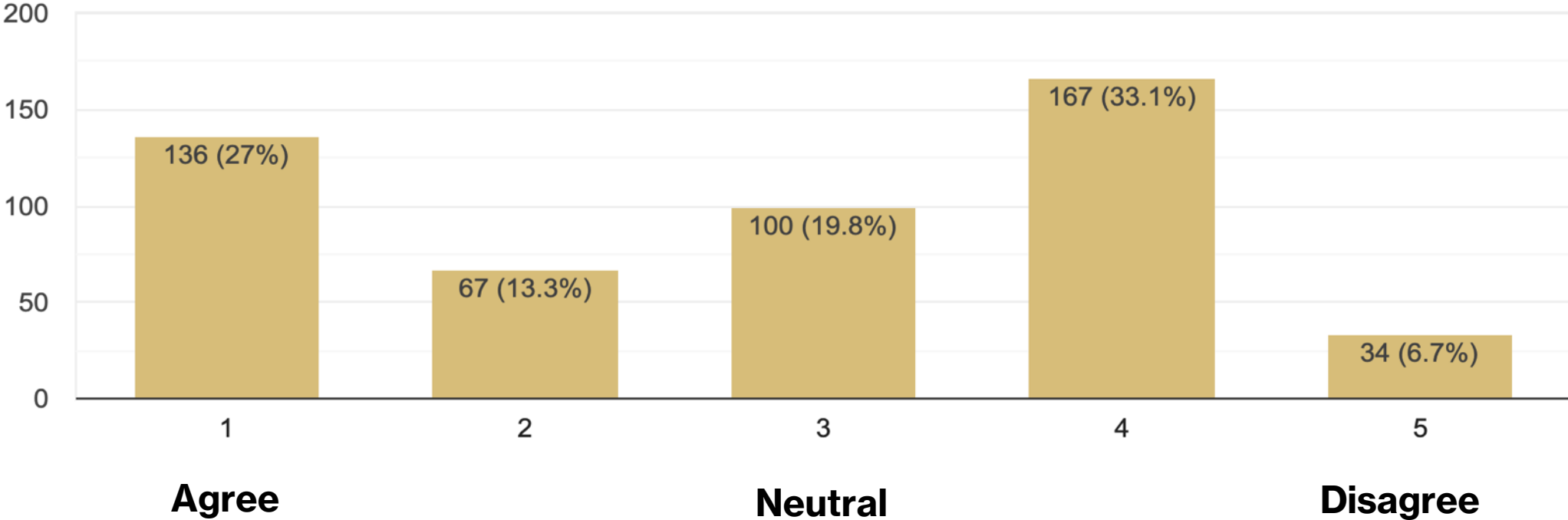
My community has services and supports to help youth be successful

I am satisfied with the quality of services and supports for youth in my community

Adults understand what youth in my community need to be successful

The importance of drilling down into the data in the coming weeks...

I know where to go to get information about services and programs for youth in my community.

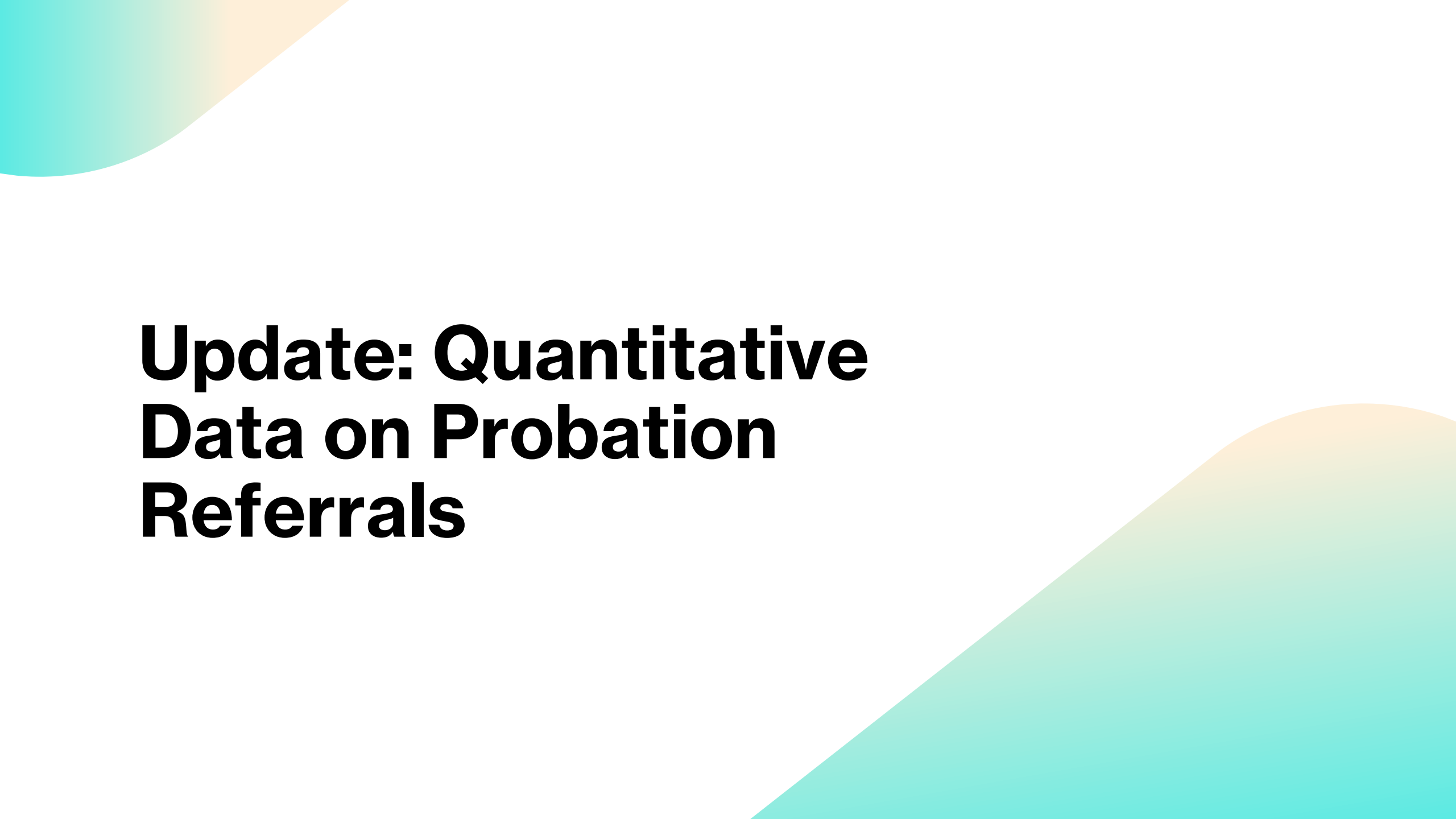


Focus Group Headlines

Focus group with youth at George W. Hill

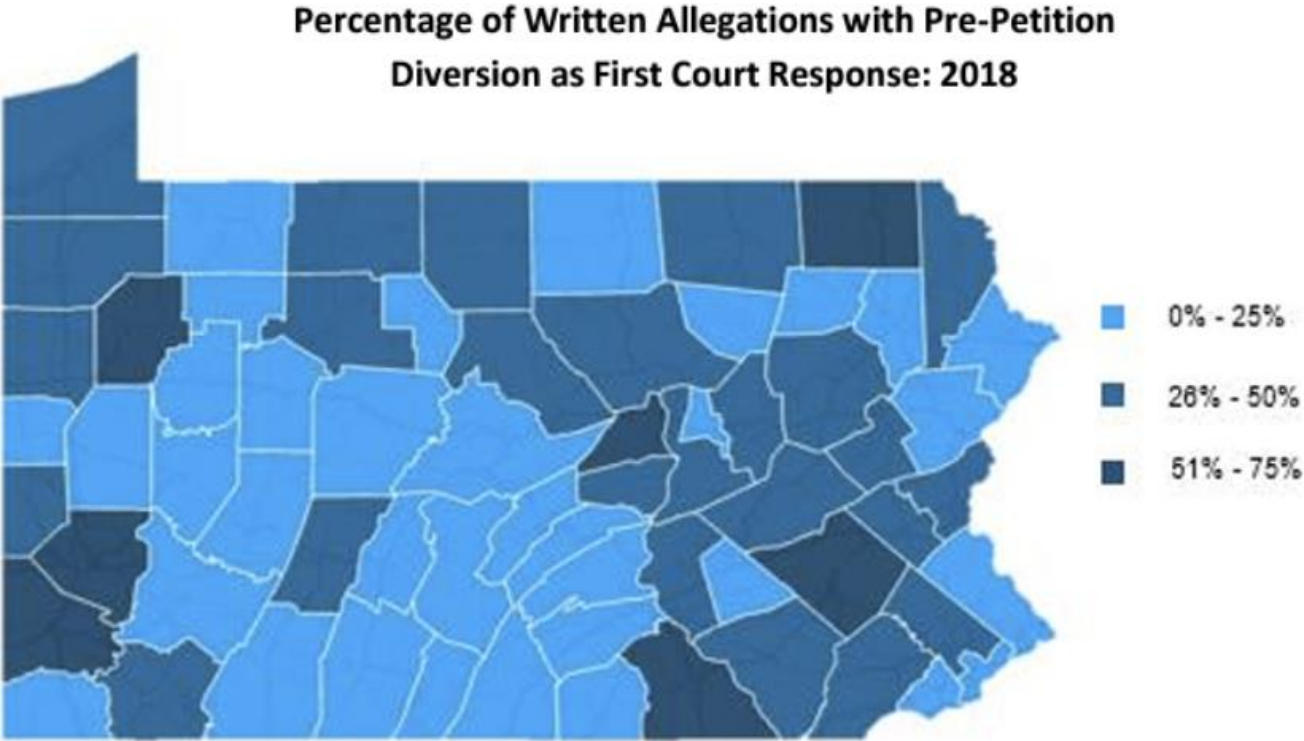
- **Challenges:** Peer pressure, not knowing what is available, not having resources to go to in the community
- **Needs:** parks, programming for youth, recreational opportunities; mentors and advocates; credible messengers; seeing other options and opportunities

People make mistakes. Everyone deserves a second chance. You should be held accountable and there should be a consequence, but not this.



Update: Quantitative Data on Probation Referrals

2021 Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force Report and Recommendations



In roundtables, stakeholders from a wide range of groups, including juvenile court judges, prosecutors, and victim advocates/restorative justice providers, stated that diversion from court was a strength of the system but needed to be expanded and more directly funded.



Update: Analysis of Current Contracted Programming

Goals

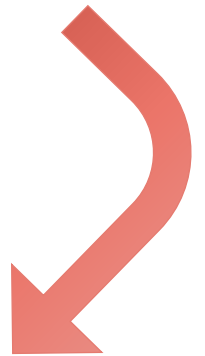
- **What we are trying to do:**
 - Identify gaps in services that can serve as primary, secondary, and tertiary services
 - Identify ways to reallocate or add resources to support diversion and intervention at the earliest and soonest point
 - Identify meaningful performance measures regarding youth diversion outcomes
- **What we are not trying to do:**
 - Formal program assessment (e.g., Standardized Performance Evaluation Protocol, which is already underway)



Initial Observations

- Expand primary prevention opportunities (including to serve as direct diversion options)
- Open access to contracted services as early diversion options (vs. requiring system involvement)
- Add restorative practices, resource navigation, and peer support/credible messengers
- Performance measures for CBOs
 - Engagement
 - Completion
 - Client experience

Pierce County, WA's effort to incorporate programming focused on positive youth development





Update: Landscape Analysis of Community-Based Providers

Efforts to Date

- **Distribution:** Survey sent to 173 organizations and individuals in DelCo
- **Responses to date:** 20% (33). We will be working with Implementation Team members to increase response rate
- **Headlines to date:**
 - Over 50% of respondents who do not take referrals of young people who have been arrested or referred to juvenile probation would be willing to if they had additional resources.
 - Over 90% of respondents would like more information about accepting referrals from the youth legal system or for referrals of youth being diverted away from the youth legal system.