

Delaware County, Pennsylvania Youth Diversion Assessment

November 2023

Center for Children's Law and Policy

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Introduction

In October 2022, Delaware County contracted with the Center for Children’s Law and Policy (CCLP), a non-profit based in Washington, DC, to complete “an assessment of juvenile justice services in Delaware County,” in response to a request for proposals issued by the County. This report reflects the recommendations identified during CCLP’s assessment of current efforts to divert young people away from the youth legal system.

The goal of this assessment is to identify opportunities to prevent involvement with the youth legal system, traditionally known as the “juvenile justice system.”¹ This involves looking as closely as possible at the reasons youth encounter the system to identify ways to bolster opportunities for prevention. However, these opportunities can also benefit youth who do enter the legal system, through existing diversion opportunities or new opportunities. A core value of CCLP’s work is maximizing every possible opportunity to connect youth with resources in their own communities without the burdens of legal system involvement.

In this report, CCLP has focused on identifying opportunities and recommendations that can further strengthen and expand efforts to develop alternatives to youth legal system involvement. Because Black youth are significantly overrepresented in arrests and referrals to the youth legal system in Delaware County, this assessment’s findings and recommendations are also designed to address racial disparities and promote equity within the youth legal system.

This assessment acknowledges strengths within existing policies and programs in Delaware County. However, one of the primary goals of this assessment was to provide a roadmap for making improvements that would serve as a basis for discussion and potential implementation by stakeholders in Delaware County for the benefit of youth and families.

Local Context

In March 2021, the Delaware County Juvenile Detention Center at Lima was closed due to multiple credible allegations of physical, sexual, and mental abuse perpetrated by staff against children held in their custody. In addition, staff, residents, and a mental health clinician attested to substandard physical conditions, a dearth of quality services,

¹ CCLP has made an intentional choice to use the term “youth legal system” in lieu of “juvenile justice system” given the negative connotations often associated with the term “juvenile.”

and a pervasive culture of fear within the center. At the time of its closure, the 66-bed Lima facility housed six young people.

The Pennsylvania Attorney General convened a Grand Jury and issued a report on findings regarding conditions at the Lima facility, finding that “the system failed to protect these children and provide them with the tools they needed to reform and grow.”² Inspections of the facility revealed multiple structural and functional defects to the building, including graffiti, inoperable surveillance cameras, and multiple blind spots where the alleged abuse took place. The Grand Jury’s findings “uncovered a systemic failure . . . that put children’s safety at risk.”³

In response to the facility’s closure, the Delaware County Council convened the Juvenile Detention Board of Managers to reopen a new detention center or otherwise ensure safe housing for detained youth and examine the use of detention more broadly. The County Council prioritized hiring professionals with experience supporting youth, families, and communities in the wake of the allegations. The County also contracted with CCLP to explore efforts to prevent unnecessary legal system involvement by identifying recommendations that would promote increased transparency, effective practices, and greater accountability.

Efforts to prevent and deter youth from involvement with the youth legal system are integral to current conversations in Delaware County. This report is designed to help recommend a structure and approach to youth diversion that will prevent unnecessary incarceration of youth, promote youth well-being, and establish a culture of transparency and collaboration among Delaware County youth legal system stakeholders and community members that can usher in a period of healing and improved services for youth, families, and community members.

National Context

Jurisdictions throughout the country have made concerted efforts to divert young people away from the justice system altogether at the earliest possible point, or away from deeper or more extensive involvement if youth have already entered the formal

² Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General, Grand Jury Report on the Delaware County Juvenile Detention Center at Lima (“DCJDC”) (Dec. 13, 2022), <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/2022-12-13-DCJDC-Final-Report.pdf>.

³ Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General, AG Shapiro Announces Grand Jury Findings of Failures, Lack of Oversight at Delaware County Juvenile Detention Center (Dec. 13, 2022), <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/ag-shapiro-announces-grand-jury-findings-of-failures-lack-of-oversight-at-delaware-county-juvenile-detention-center>.

system. Studies show that formal interventions by the youth legal system do more harm than good for a large percentage of youth.⁴ Compared to system intervention, diversion generally decreases a young person’s likelihood of re-arrest. The Annie E. Casey Foundation recently published a literature review outlining the research evidence supporting front-end diversion efforts.⁵

The R Street Institute, a prominent think tank engaged in policy research in support of free markets and limited, effective government, has published research on the benefit of enhancing diversion efforts, including the cost-effectiveness of diversion compared with formal legal system intervention:

When crafted and implemented well, diversion programs can serve these purposes and bring a variety of positive outcomes to all parties involved. For youth, it can mean avoiding the harms of system involvement, including arrest, incarceration and a formal delinquency record. It can also increase access to services, provide role models and minimize the stigmatization that comes with being marked as a “youth offender.” **Moreover, since most young people will naturally grow out of impulsive, risk-taking behavior, diversion is a better option than any additional system involvement—not to mention more cost-effective.**⁶

For example, a 2013 study found that low-risk youth placed in diversion programs reoffended 45% less often than similar youth who were formally processed or who received restrictive sanctions.⁷ Similarly, a 2018 report concluded that youth who are not arrested or are diverted from court are less likely to be rearrested and more likely to succeed in and complete school than peers who are formally adjudicated in the youth legal system.⁸ Longitudinal studies and brain science research corroborate these

⁴ Richard A. Mendel, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, *Transforming Juvenile Probation: A Vision for Getting It Right 9* (2018) (citing Elizabeth Seigle et al., *Core Principles for Reducing Recidivism and Improving Other Outcomes for Youth in The Juvenile Justice System* (2014)).

⁵ Annie E. Casey Foundation, *Expand the Use of Diversion from the Juvenile Justice System* (2020), <https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-expandtheuseofdiversion-2020.pdf>.

⁶ Nila Bala and Emily Mooney, *Promoting Equity within Youth Diversion*, R Street Policy Study No. 178 (July 2019), <https://www.rstreet.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Corrected-178.pdf> (emphasis added).

⁷ Annie E. Casey Foundation, *Expand the Use of Diversion from the Juvenile Justice System* (2020), pg. 8, <https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-expandtheuseofdiversion-2020.pdf>.

⁸ Josh Weber et al., *Transforming Juvenile Justice Systems to Improve Public Safety and Youth Outcomes 4* (2018) (citing National Research Council, *Reforming Juvenile Justice: A Developmental Approach* (2013)).

findings, demonstrating that the majority of young people age out of delinquent behavior, with or without system intervention.⁹

Despite the increased use of diversion in many jurisdictions nationwide, disparities for youth of color persist.¹⁰ In some jurisdictions, disparities have even worsened, meaning that youth of color have not been the beneficiaries of these reform efforts. As the W. Haywood Burns Institute for Justice, Fairness, and Equity noted in a recently released report: “The long-term consequences of youthful misbehavior for youth of color are numerous and oftentimes, extreme. Most young people are allowed to grow out of these behaviors without getting entangled in the justice system. However, youth of color are more likely to be arrested, prosecuted, sentenced, and incarcerated for these behaviors than are their White peers”¹¹ Thus, there is an urgent need for jurisdictions to examine diversion efforts through the lens of racial and ethnic equity with the explicit goal of using diversion as a tool to reduce racial and ethnic disparities.

What Does “Diversion” Mean for the Purpose of this Assessment?

“Diversion” is a general term used to describe the informal handling of cases involving young people. Diversion requires stakeholders to make a conscious effort to direct young people away from or out of legal systems and toward community resources. Diversion can occur at any point in the youth legal system, from a youth’s contact with law enforcement (or potential contact with law enforcement), diversion from a youth’s referral to juvenile probation, or diversion from future involvement with the youth legal system after entering it.

CCLP and its partners have focused on identifying new opportunities to connect youth with diversion opportunities prior to formal involvement with the youth legal system, with a focus on prevention. However, any such efforts could also benefit youth who are referred to the youth legal system or child welfare system.

For the purpose of the recommendations, this report focuses on three core areas:

- **Policy and Process Recommendations:** Official policies and procedures that direct young people away from the youth legal system altogether or that prevent youth from having deeper involvement with the system – for example, deciding not to make formal arrests for behavior that would otherwise qualify as “disorderly conduct” in public schools. Policies are designed to promote timely,

⁹ *Id.* at 4-5.

¹⁰ W. Haywood Burns Institute, *Stemming the Rising Tide: Racial & Ethnic Disparities in Youth Incarceration and Strategies for Change* (May 2016).

¹¹ *Id.*

consistent, and developmentally appropriate responses to youth behavior that might otherwise resort in youth legal system involvement.

- **Programming Recommendations:** Programs and requirements that are intentionally used as a pathway away from or out of the youth legal system. To be effective, involvement with the program must stop a youth from continuing down the pathway of formal system involvement. This report seeks to identify underutilized or absent programming that could support prevention and diversion efforts.
- **Structural Recommendations to Promote Alternatives to Youth Legal System Involvement:** Collaboration and coordination are essential to securing the supports needed for youth who have had some degree of contact with the youth legal system or who are at risk of involvement with the youth legal system. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these collaborative structures have fractured or become siloed based on specific issues (e.g., school incidents and school discipline). While those efforts are important, a focus on the small number of youth who have contact with the legal system is worthwhile and often requires a more focused set of strategies.

Principles of Effective Prevention and Diversion

Effective approaches to prevention and diversion can involve approaches to steer young people away from formal processing in the youth legal system depending on a range of factors, including state and local laws and regulations, as well as the types of cases being diverted. Despite these differences, many successful prevention and diversion programs include a combination of the following elements.

Use of restorative practices: To hold youth accountable for actions that might otherwise result in legal system involvement in a meaningful and constructive way, jurisdictions engage restorative practices as a way of acknowledging and repairing harm. Research shows that these practices reduce recidivism rates and are a cost-effective alternative to court involvement and probation supervision.¹²

¹² Weber et al., at 5-6.

Identification of community-based organizations and agencies to oversee diversion instead of arms of the justice system: Shifting the responsibility of overseeing diversion away from court personnel allows probation and court professionals to focus their attention on the most serious cases. The responsible organization or agency should offer a single point of entry for assessments, referrals, care coordination, and crisis intervention; should receive operating funds from the court, county, or state government; and should be responsible for development, oversight, and tracking outcomes.¹³

Creation of oversight bodies to monitor diversion efforts: Local governments and should create oversight committees to monitor and support diversion programs in the jurisdiction. The committee should be made up of local government officials (including youth legal system stakeholders and representatives of other youth-serving components of government), service providers, public school administrators, various leaders from community organizations, families, and young people. The committee should set expectations, create program guidelines, conduct training and support for personnel, collect and analyze data, assess needs, and develop programs to expand and improve diversion options.¹⁴

Promote racial and ethnic equity and cultural responsiveness of diversion policies, practices, and programs: Racial and ethnic disparities are a pervasive and persistent challenge for youth legal systems across the country. Youth of color are overrepresented in the justice system, more likely to receive harsher and more punitive treatment than their similarly situated White counterparts, and more likely to enter and move deeper into the justice system in cases where alternatives outside of the system have proven more effective. As mentioned above, diversion is a vital mechanism for reducing racial and ethnic disparities in the youth legal system when approached with an explicit focus on using diversion to reduce and eliminate disparities.

Prevent formal system involvement for youth charged with misdemeanors: Except for youth who have committed serious violent crimes and youth who pose a significant threat to public safety, youth referred to the youth legal system should be diverted to alternatives to formal system processing whenever possible. For example, while the standard response to juvenile court involvement has been to place young people on probation, jurisdictions have developed alternatives to probation and formal system involvement with improved results for young people and public safety.¹⁵

¹³ *Id.* at 26.

¹⁴ Mendel et al. at 13, 28-29.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 25.

About the Center for Children’s Law and Policy and Its Partners

As part of this report, CCLP engaged partners to assist with efforts to evaluate prevention and diversion opportunities in Delaware County.

The Center for Children’s Law and Policy

CCLP is a nonprofit national public interest law and policy organization focused on reform of youth legal systems and other systems impacting troubled and at-risk youth. CCLP’s work is focused on three main areas: eliminating racial and ethnic disparities, reducing the unnecessary and inappropriate incarceration of children, and eliminating dangerous and inhumane practices for youth in custody. CCLP’s staff members pursue a range of different activities to achieve these goals, including training, technical assistance, administrative and legislative advocacy, research, writing, media outreach, and public education. CCLP has served a leading role in the largest and most influential juvenile justice reform initiatives in the country, including the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation’s Models for Change initiative and the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI).

CCLP has assisted jurisdictions in over 30 states with efforts to improve their youth legal systems, and CCLP staff have conducted dozens of assessments of policies and practices in youth legal systems throughout the country, and CCLP staff have played a role as expert consultants in federal litigation over practices in the youth legal system. CCLP has extensive expertise and experience with efforts to enhance diversion efforts, particularly at the earliest stages of the youth legal system.

Additionally, CCLP is familiar with the youth legal system in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. CCLP worked with several Counties as part of the MacArthur Foundation’s Models for Change Initiative. CCLP also recently partnered with the Pennsylvania Council on Crime and Delinquency and the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform to offer training and support regarding efforts to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the Commonwealth. More information on CCLP is available at www.cclp.org.

Empact Solutions

Empact Solutions was formed to address the gaps between managing the technical aspects of data and the power that data has to help inform system improvement efforts in public service institutions, especially those that are related to the justice system. Too often people think that data should be left to the “data experts” and willingly give away

the power that is often enhanced through data. Bridging the technical aspects of data with the practical application of system improvement efforts returns that power to the people who do the work. Practical, accessible and empowered communication about data welcomes all stakeholders to the table. The impact of system improvements are enhanced when they are data informed.

The staff at Empact have worked in both worlds – as technical professionals and as practitioners doing the hard work to implement change. The experts and Empact Solutions are made up of people who care about the world we live in and who believe in the power that data must inform positive change. Their focus on justice systems is embedded in the belief that justice system reform is more powerful when informed by data, and more impactful when leveraged by system stakeholders and the communities that they serve. More information on Empact Solutions is available at <https://empactsolutions.org/>.

The National Assessment Center Association

The National Assessment Center Association (NAC) was created in 2019 in response to assessment centers around the country identifying a need for more coordination, best practice sharing, networking, and advocacy on a national level. The NAC works diligently to connect to local centers listening to their success, needs, challenges, and dreams. Our membership structure allows a formalize a community of assessment centers to network, learn, advocate, and share for decades to come. NAC's efforts include creating networking opportunities for assessment centers throughout the country, providing technical assistance to jurisdictions working to create or enhance assessment centers, providing information and training regarding best practices, establishing standards for effective assessment centers, and engaging in speaking engagements and advocacy efforts to promote assessment centers as an effective alternative to legal system involvement. More information about the National Assessment Center Association is available at <https://www.nacassociation.org/>.

The Stoneleigh Foundation

The Stoneleigh Foundation is a Philadelphia-based foundation that awards Fellowships to exceptional individuals who work within and alongside youth-serving systems to catalyze change. Their Fellows undertake projects that enhance how systems work together, improve practice, and generate new knowledge through action-oriented research.

CCLP, the NAC, and project partners have had the benefitted from the expertise and insight of Anne Marie Ambrose, through her Stoneleigh Fellowship, Anne Marie Ambrose has partnered with the National Assessment Center Association and the Center for Children’s Law and Policy to perform a baseline analysis of Delaware County’s youth legal continuum, develop a diversion system assessment, and provide recommendations for improvement. Annie is a longstanding and respected leader in the field of child welfare and juvenile justice. She most recently served as Managing Director at Casey Family Programs. Previously, she served in the Nutter administration for six years as Commissioner of the Department of Human Services for the City of Philadelphia. During her tenure, she led the city through a multi-year transformation of its child welfare system called Improving Outcomes for Children. Her prior roles have included Assistant Chief of the Juvenile Unit at the Defender Association of Philadelphia and Director of Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Services at Pennsylvania’s Office of Children, Youth and Families.

More information on the Stoneleigh Foundation is available at stoneleighfoundation.org.

Methodology

CCLP staff members Tiana Davis, Policy Director for Equity and Justice; Sherika Shnider, Managing Attorney; and Jason Szanyi, Chief Executive Officer, were the primary authors of this report. CCLP drew upon seven primary sources of information when preparing this analysis:

Quantitative Data: CCLP and its project partners reviewed quantitative data provided by Delaware County, including Juvenile Probation and the Department of Human Services. CCLP has incorporated that data where appropriate to provide additional context for the report and recommendations. CCLP identified areas where limitations in the availability or quality of data limited this review. The data referenced herein are contained in a Tableau Workbook, which will be provided to the County as part of this report. CCLP thanks the Delaware County Probation Department and the Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission for their assistance in creating a data tool that can inform future conversations about progress and needs in the County. Screen shots from this interactive data tool are linked as Appendix C to this report.

Community Collaboration: CCLP assisted with the creation and facilitation of a Youth Diversion Assessment Planning Committee to consider the recommendations offered in this report and to offer additional recommendations

to promote opportunities for diversion and well-being in Delaware County. These recommendations are included as Appendix D.

Document Review: CCLP and its project partners reviewed a variety of documents to obtain context for diversion efforts in preparation for interviews with stakeholders. These documents included agency policies and procedures, public and internal reports, organizational charts and staffing information, contracts with service providers, budget information, program descriptions, and other documentation related to diversion.

Interviews: CCLP and its project partners conducted interviews with a variety of individuals, including Delaware County officials, elected officials, community leaders, service providers, and others.

Asset Mapping: CCLP and its partner, the National Assessment Center Association, worked to survey existing service providers regarding existing and potential capacity to serve as prevention and early diversion options. Results of this mapping are attached as Appendix A, and results are also referenced throughout this report.

Focus Groups and Surveys of Youth: CCLP contracted with Refuse to Quit Academy to survey approximately 500 youth within Delaware County. Additionally, CCLP, in partnership with the Juvenile Detention and Rehabilitation Department, helped to facilitate a focus group of youth charged as adults being held at the George W. Hill Correctional Facility. Summaries of the youth surveys are referenced throughout this report and in appendix B.

Review of Best Practices: CCLP and its project partners reviewed resources and other information related to research and best practices on diversion for young people in the youth legal system to inform the recommendations identified in this report. CCLP also drew upon its experience working with agencies and officials in state and local jurisdictions throughout the country on efforts to improve programming and services to divert youth, with an effort to identify resources most relevant for Delaware County. This included reviewing resources and recommendations created by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, the Pennsylvania Council on Crime and Delinquency, and the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force.

As mentioned previously, any assessment such as this will understate strengths of the youth legal system and its stakeholders, particularly given the narrow scope of the

assessment and the limited time and resources available to complete this report. However, the primary focus here was to examine the ability to identify new alternatives to justice system involvement, with a focus on what can be done to make the youth legal system process in Delaware County more efficient, effective, and equitable. That said, this report simply makes recommendations. CCLP recognizes that it is up to Delaware County's leaders and community to decide whether and what recommendations to implement.

Acknowledgments

CCLP thanks all the individuals and organizations involved in making this assessment possible, particularly the Juvenile Court and Juvenile Probation, the Juvenile Justice Leadership Council, and the members of the Youth Diversion and Planning Committee for the time and energy they put into making this assessment a success. CCLP also extends a special thanks to the youth and family members of Delaware County who shared insights and recommendations.

CCLP also extends appreciation to Empact Solutions, which provided data preparation and analytics-consulting throughout the project, the Stoneleigh Foundation, and the National Assessment Center Association for their partnership in this project. Finally, CCLP would like to thank the staff of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, which helped collaborate to produce the data needed for this report and provides outstanding support to counties throughout the Commonwealth to achieve the best possible outcomes for youth, families, and communities.

A. Overarching Observations for this Report and Recommendations

The Center for Children’s Law and Policy focuses on making specific recommendations for system improvement and transformation, using its expertise, knowledge gathered from the jurisdiction in which we are working, and application of that knowledge to practical recommendations that will benefit youth, families, and communities in jurisdictions where we have the privilege to work.

In making these recommendations, we offer the following observations:

- **CCLP and its partners encountered significant delays in accessing data as part of this assessment.**

We are grateful that we obtained the data included in the report, but the delays limited our ability to analyze the information received. There is a need for transparency and data sharing within youth legal system stakeholders and Delaware County citizens.

The Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission publishes data on youth referrals to the legal system and a range of other data points. The Commonwealth is privileged to have an organization that does so, which is lacking in many other states. However, the public data do not drill down to the level needed to identify focused interventions in particular communities, nor do the data allow for deeper digging into data points. Thankfully, JCJC has the analytical and technical expertise to help jurisdictions do just that.

This project produced an interactive tool that will allow Delaware County stakeholders to examine trends in youth legal system involvement and target investments in a more focused way. We deeply appreciate the partnership with JCJC that made the development of this data tool possible, and we hope it may enhance the data capacity of jurisdictions within the Commonwealth to examine their local data at a more granular level.

- **Delaware County stakeholders must collaborate to achieve youth wellbeing.** CCLP has worked in many systems that have been in crisis or in the aftermath of a crisis. We prefer to work in systems that are not in such a state, but we recognize that we are called upon by jurisdictions that have experienced a crisis because of our expertise. We hope that Delaware County’s leaders collaborate in a productive way. We hope that the tone of conversations going forward will not

be focused on defensiveness or deflection, but on what can be enhanced to promote youth well-being.

- **Collaboration must include Delaware County’s community members and youth.**

As part of CCLP’s work, we helped convene a newly created Youth Diversion Planning Committee. CCLP recommends formalizing the Youth Diversion Planning Committee to discuss and decide upon efforts to enhance prevention and diversion opportunities. This group must include meaningful representation from the community members and youth. The County should support the involvement of youth and community members through stipends and other supports to promote participation. These perspectives are needed to infuse new ideas and opportunities into communities in the County.

- **Delaware County must increase transparency regarding the effectiveness of existing approaches to youth in contact with the legal system.**

As noted in this report, CCLP promotes transparency regarding the effectiveness of services for youth, both for youth legal system stakeholders and the public. Our review found that contracted services within the County lacked meaningful performance outcomes (e.g., reporting whether services prevented youth from future system involvement; reporting the percentage of youth who were successful in completing a particular program and service). CCLP and its partners also found that many contracts were renewed without a review of such performance measures. There are efforts underway through the Pennsylvania Standardized Performance Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) to assess program effectiveness and other efforts to establish a process for continuous quality improvement and inclusion of feedback from victims and service providers. Those are worthwhile efforts and should be continued

We encourage the inclusion of meaningful performance measures that will ensure the County is achieving the best outcomes based on its investment in particular services and supports and sharing those performance measures not just with system stakeholders, but with the communities most impacted by youth legal system involvement. Establishing targets and assessing the effectiveness of services in meeting those targets benefits youth and families, and it ensures that the County is making smart financial investments in the most effective interventions.

B. Policy and Practice Recommendations

Delaware County has some strengths in its approach to youth who enter the legal system. These include efforts to coordinate among system stakeholders, including the District Attorney's Office, Public Defender, Juvenile Probation, and the Juvenile Court. There are efforts underway to coordinate across systems of care for children and youth, in partnership with the Stoneleigh Foundation, as described later in this report, including the Multi-Systems Integration Pilot Program in partnership with Georgetown University and the Stoneleigh Foundation.

That said, there are clear opportunities notwithstanding those efforts to help prevent youth from contact with the legal system by connecting them directly with services. 2022 data from Delaware County Courts help underscore the importance of these recommendations:

- Referrals for misdemeanor and public order charges represented almost two-thirds of referrals (43% and 20%, respectively).
- School-related referrals represented one-third of referrals (32%), of which two-thirds were for misdemeanor charges (64%).
- Magisterial District Court referrals for contempt constituted almost 1 in 5 referrals (18%).
- The median time from the date of an incident occurring to a referral being received by Juvenile Probation was nearly four weeks (26 days).
- Youth of color in Delaware County were 3.8 times as likely to be referred to juvenile probation as white youth.

The recommendations outlined below are intended to help enhance the work already underway by allowing Delaware County to focus on youth with the highest needs and most complex cases by prioritizing direct diversion by schools and law enforcement to existing or enhanced community-based resources. The goal is to create pathways to quick, effective, and efficient interventions that address underlying issues for youth who are not at risk of committing serious offenses.

These recommendations are also aligned with the following recommendations of Pennsylvania's 2021 Juvenile Justice Task Force:¹⁶

- *Expand and standardize informal adjustment and other pre-petition diversion and tailor criteria for post-petition diversion*
- *Consistently divert young people with low-level cases to community-based interventions in lieu of formal delinquency proceedings, while expanding alternatives to court referral*
- *Prioritize restitution payments to victims and prevent unnecessary system involvement by eliminating the imposition of fines and most court fees and costs*
- *Prohibit written allegations in juvenile court from contempt for failure to comply in Magisterial District Court*
- *Expand and standardize school-based diversion*

We acknowledge efforts of law enforcement, probation, and judicial officers to divert youth, including through Youth Aid Panels. We also acknowledge the efforts that have been made by Juvenile Probation and the District Attorney's office to coordinate and reach out to law enforcement agencies in the County to reduce delays in referrals. Notwithstanding those efforts, the low-level nature of reasons for referral in many cases, and the unnecessary involvement of the legal system make a compelling case for the creation of more direct pathways to resources in youth's communities – particularly jurisdictions with the highest number of referrals.

Recommendations

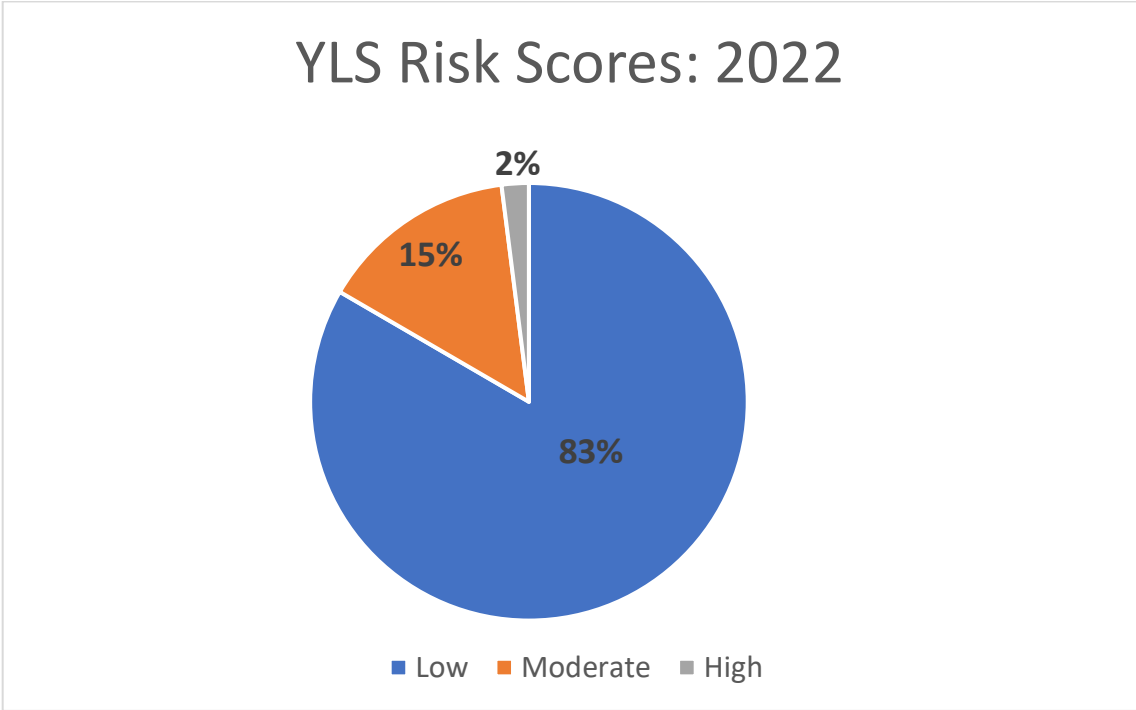
1. **Establish a County-wide policy regarding eligibility and expectations for direct diversion to community resources for certain referrals.**

There should be consistency in approaches to youth who have contact with the legal system. Indeed, this is why jurisdictions at the state and local level have established standards for diversion to community-based resources. For example, in 2008, New Jersey's Attorney General issued guidelines for law enforcement diversion to community-based resources

¹⁶ Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force, Report and Recommendations (June 2021), https://www.pacourts.us/Storage/media/pdfs/20210622/152647-pajuvenilejusticetaskforcereportandrecommendations_final.pdf.

based on concerns that youth of color were not receiving opportunities for diversion.¹⁷

There is an opportunity for stakeholders to come together to establish a consistent policy regarding direct diversion to community-based resources, which should be led by the District Attorney. This does not currently exist in Delaware County but could help prevent youth from experiencing disparate outcomes, particularly given the low-level nature of most referrals to the youth legal system. JCJC data published in its 2022 annual report underscores the opportunity to develop alternative interventions. Initial screenings using a national validated risk assessment instrument, the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS) Assessment, found that 83% of youth scored as low risk, and 15% of youth scored as moderate risk.¹⁸



Data show that a consistent approach to youth diversion and development would reach a large majority of youth who have contact with the legal

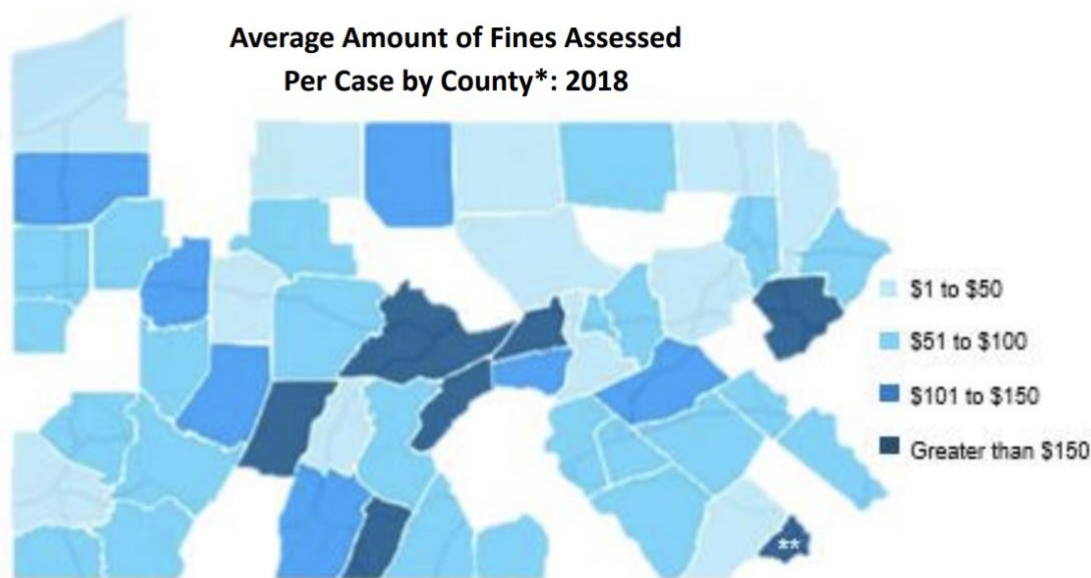
¹⁷ Attorney General Anne Milgram, Directive No. 2008-2 (March 31, 2008), <https://www.nj.gov/oag/dcj/agguide/directives/dir-2008-2.pdf>.

¹⁸ Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, 2022 Juvenile Court Annual Report (pg. 103), <https://www.jcjc.pa.gov/Research-Statistics/Disposition%20Reports/2022%20Juvenile%20Court%20Annual%20Report.pdf>.

system and help prevent the associated negative consequences of legal system involvement, which are well-established in research.

2. **Develop alternative pathways to satisfying fees and restitution obligations in a developmentally appropriate manner, including a policy to support such efforts.**

Given that one in five youth are referred to juvenile probation from the Magisterial District Courts – many for contempt of court resulting from unpaid fines, fees and restitution obligations, Delaware County should identify alternative ways of satisfying these obligations. These could include the establishment of a restitution fund and allowing youth to repair harm via restorative practices, as outlined below. In the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force Report, Delaware County was identified as having the highest amount of fines levied against youth.¹⁹ These fines are waived or vacated in certain situations, but the fact that they are levied in the first case on some of Delaware county's most vulnerable families is cause for concern.



*Seventeen counties did not impose any fines in 2018.

**Delaware County assessed, on average, the highest amount of fines in 2018 (\$294).

¹⁹ Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force, Report and Recommendations (June 2021), pgs. 49-55
https://www.pacourts.us/Storage/media/pdfs/20210622/152647-pajuvenilejusticetaskforcereportandrecommendations_final.pdf.

Delaware County has a Crime Victim's Compensation Fund, but the scope of that funding is limited and does not cover many of the costs that result in youth referrals from the Magisterial District Court (specifically the express exclusion for stolen or damaged property).²⁰ Victims should be made whole, and youth should be held accountable for harm caused, but there are many youth and families that are unlikely to meet the financial obligations resulting in youth legal system involvement. We encourage efforts underway to help victims access available funding, but also the plans to develop a restitution program for youth.

This recommendation is consistent with the recommendation of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force to "[p]rioritize restitution payments to victims and prevent unnecessary system involvement by eliminating the imposition of fines and most court fees and costs."²¹

3. Establish Memoranda of Understanding with highest referring law enforcement agencies and school systems to promote direct diversion to community-based resources.

There are significant gaps in programming for youth in Delaware County, and this report and the asset mapping attempts to identify as many of them as possible. However, there are resources that are underutilized or could serve as direct diversion opportunities if provided with resources and support. Once those resources have been identified, it is important to memorialize agreements with law enforcement agencies and school systems to prioritize direct referrals to such organizations. Without such agreements, there is a likelihood to continue to rely on referral to the youth legal system to address underlying needs that are best addressed in youth's own communities – or to ignore such needs altogether.

A consistent theme in our interviews was that children and youth were struggling but that there was an inadequate response to underlying needs, including because of the lack of capacity and response from the youth legal system. This presents an opportunity to build new and direct pathways to services and supports that can be more responsive and

²⁰ Office of the District Attorney, Crime Victim's Compensation Fund, <https://delcoda.com/crime-victims-compensation-fund/>.

²¹ Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force, Report and Recommendations (June 2021), https://www.pacourts.us/Storage/media/pdfs/20210622/152647-pajuvenilejusticetaskforcereportandrecommendations_final.pdf.

available to youth and families without the burdens of being involved with the legal system.

C. Programming Recommendations

Delaware County's Department of Human Services invests in services and supports to promote youth and family well-being. These programs include early intervention, behavioral health, and other services. The County has pursued state and federal funding to support additional services.

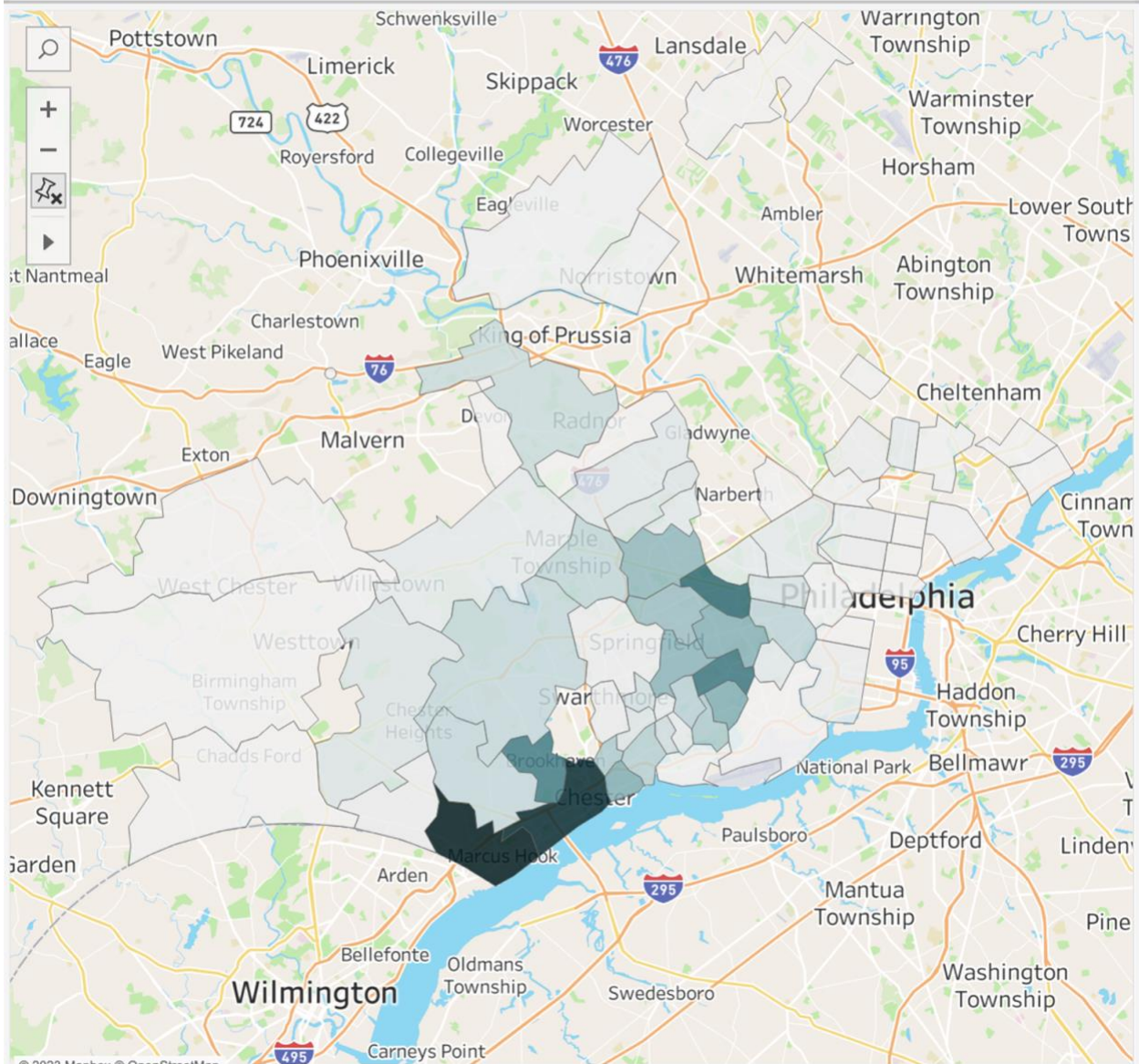
CCLP's assessment was focused on identifying opportunities to enhance programming that could serve as prevention and early diversion opportunities for youth beyond these existing resources. As part of this effort, CCLP and its partners focused on surveying those for whom this programming matters the most: youth. This included a survey of approximately 500 youth, which asked about the ways they would invest money to support youth in their own communities. The top three responses were:

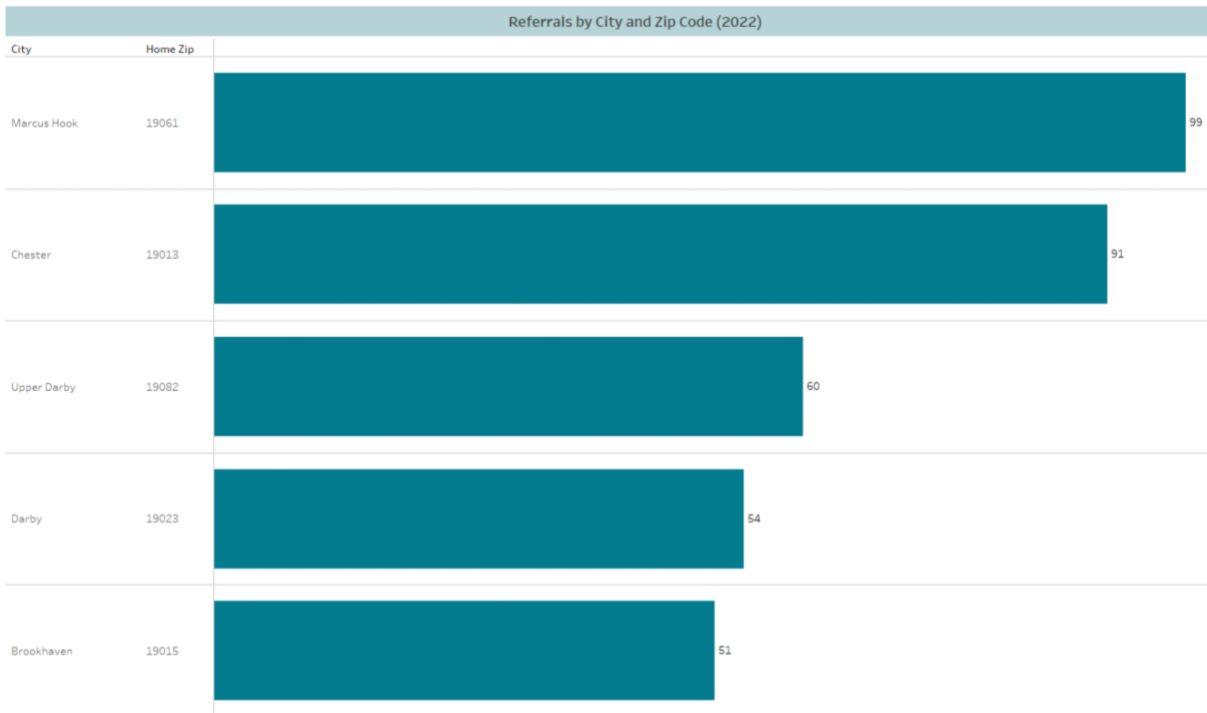
- Arts/music opportunities for creative expression (50%)
- Mental health/behavioral health (36%)
- Mentoring (33%)

These top three responses would not be a surprise to anyone who has spent time working with young people. However, they do speak to the importance of prioritizing investments in services and supports that may not exist or feature prominently within what Delaware County currently funds to support youth at risk of involvement with the legal system. Additionally, these opportunities do not exist or exist on the scale needed in jurisdictions with the highest number of youth referrals.

Data from 2022 illustrate the jurisdictions where youth resided with the highest rates of referrals in 2022, as indicated by the darker shaded areas of the map. Delaware County should make targeted investments in these communities, including resourcing prosocial programming and resource coordination. The data tool created as part of this project allows for the ability to drill down by Zip Code and whether referrals from the jurisdiction were school-related or not, which can help focus investments in interventions.

Referrals by Home Zip Code





Another telling data point came from questions asking about knowledge of and access to services and supports in youth’s own communities. The survey asked if youth had prior contact with law enforcement or the youth legal system. The survey then asked six questions and asked youth to rank whether they agreed or disagreed with those six statements on a five-point scale. The survey data breakdown is attached as Appendix B.

Headlines from the survey results emerged when looking at responses from youth who reported contact with law enforcement or the legal system as compared with youth who did not. Specifically, there were notable differences in the percentages of youth who disagreed with the following statements.

My community has services and supports to help youth be successful.

57% of youth with system contact responded disagree as compared with 29% of youth overall.

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

27% of youth with system contact responded disagree as compared with 16% of youth overall.

CCLP also consulted system stakeholders and community members about gaps and needs in existing services. The National Assessment Center and Empact Solutions assisted with the creation of an asset map for the County, which is attached as Appendix A. The Asset Map is not meant to be a comprehensive inventory of resources, but to help illustrate where there are strengths, gaps, and capacity limitations in Delaware County. The Asset Map is meant to be a helpful starting point for needed conversations with communities in the County.

Finally, Delaware County currently lacks a service provider that can provide meaningful restorative responses to situations where youth have done harm to a victim or their community. This is a significant gap in Delaware County's approach to youth diversion from future legal system involvement. Jurisdictions throughout the country are building restorative responses into their diversion systems in lieu of referral to court and probation, recognizing that restorative responses teach skills and competencies, promote empathy for victims, and provide meaningful ways for harm to be repaired and for victims to engage in a growth opportunity for the young person (if they choose to participate). They can achieve better public safety, youth outcomes, and cost savings in Delaware County relative to referral to the youth legal system. For example, a 2017 report published by Impact Justice's Restorative Justice Project showed that youth who were formally processed in court were twice as likely to reoffend as youth diverted into a Restorative Community Conferencing (RCC) program.²² Following the RCC program, facilitators asked participants to complete a survey to evaluate the process and its outcomes. Ninety-one percent of victim participants who completed the survey reported they would participate in another conference and an equal number (91%) stated they would recommend the process to a friend. **There were also significant cost savings to the County with use of the RCC program: RCC carried a one-time cost of \$4,500 per case, while probation supervision costs totaled \$23,000 per year.**²³

There are Youth Aid Panels that operate in Delaware County, with an aim to focus on restorative practices. However, such programs do not operate in every jurisdiction in

²² Sujatha Baliga et al., Restorative Community Conferencing: A Study of Community Works West's Restorative Justice Youth Diversion Program in Alameda County (2017), <https://impactjustice.org/resources/restorative-community-conferencing-a-study-of-community-works-vests-restorative-justice-youth-diversion-program-in-alameda-county/> .

²³*Id.* (emphasis added).

Delaware County, they do not operate according to standardized policies and practices, and they may not offer “justice” for a victim in a meaningful way – for example, assigning a youth to write an essay or letter of apology, or assigning general community service opportunities that do not promote lasting connections to a youth’s community (e.g., collecting trash). Impact Justice, a national leader in restorative practices, has a comprehensive toolkit that outlines the principles of evidence-based restorative practices, including the research evidence behind those principles. Many of the principles of Youth Aid Panels are not aligned with current research.²⁴

As noted in the 2021 Pennsylvania Task Force Report and Recommendations, “[s]takeholders 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.”²⁵ There is significant potential to do so in Delaware County, where the District Attorney is making efforts to divert youth, with an effort on showing the effectiveness and improvements to public safety resulting from such efforts. The recommendations below are designed to help enhance and improve that work by connecting youth to the earliest, most effective, and most cost-effective interventions in their own communities.

The recommendations below are consistent with those of the 2021 Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force, which urged the Commonwealth’s leaders to do the following:²⁶

- *Expand services as alternatives to arrest and court referral*
- *Expand and standardize school-based diversion*
 - *Authorize pre-arrest diversion in schools for any offense to ensure that diversion is always an option for schools and law enforcement in schools (remove all requirements for arrest and/or court referral).*
 - *Study alternatives to arrest and transportation to detention, including models that have worked in other states to provide services in lieu of arrest, such as “Receiving Centers.”*

²⁴ Impact Justice, RJDToolkit.org: A Diversion Toolkit for Communities (2019), <https://impactjustice.org/resources/rjdtoolkit-org-a-diversion-toolkit-for-communities/>.

²⁵ Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force, Report and Recommendations (June 2021), https://www.pacourts.us/Storage/media/pdfs/20210622/152647-pajuvenilejusticetaskforcereportandrecommendations_final.pdf.

²⁶ *Id.*

Recommendations

1. **Identify funding to target support for pro-social opportunities in the top 5 jurisdictions with the highest rates of referrals where youth reside.**

Given the feedback from youth, and what we know about the importance of prosocial opportunities for youth as an opportunity to prevent legal system involvement, Delaware County should consider how to direct funding to areas of greatest opportunity for prevention. The data tool created through this project has significant potential to help justify targeted funding through grant opportunities within the Commonwealth (e.g., seed money from the Pennsylvania Council on Crime and Delinquency) or federal funding from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. It could also include reallocating existing resources that are directed County-wide that are underutilized.

2. **Invest in additional capacity for mentoring opportunities in the highest referring jurisdictions.**

Significant federal and state funding is available for mentoring opportunities for youth who would have the potential for legal system involvement. Delaware County is fortunate to have existing capacity to support mentoring in the County, but there is a clear benefit to adding to that capacity, particularly in the jurisdictions with the highest rates of referrals where youth reside. The data gathered in this report outlining the jurisdictions with the highest rates of referrals and the youth survey data articulating the importance of mentoring would make a compelling case for additional funding.

3. **Establish a mechanism to more quickly connect youth and families to services in their own communities.**

Any jurisdiction could benefit from additional funding, services, and supports for youth prevention and early intervention programs. CCLP supports efforts to increase funding that goes to those efforts. In the meantime, there can be efforts to streamline and improve accessibility to and knowledge about existing resources. CCLP recommends considering piloting a model that would allow for immediate access to existing resources. As mentioned above, this could include piloting or implementing an Assessment Center in one or more parts of Delaware County, which could serve as a hub for connecting youth and families with programs and services.

This does not need to be a brick-and-mortar structure, as noted by the National Assessment Center Association. There are many different models utilized in jurisdictions throughout the country that provide rapid and effective responses in different ways. This model would help law enforcement and schools make more timely and efficient referrals and could reduce the burden on the County's Juvenile Probation and Court system. It would also help achieve more effective and cost-effective responses to youth and families in crisis in Delaware County.

4. **Identify and invest in a community-based provider to offer rapid, evidence-based, and trauma-informed restorative responses to school and community-based incidents in one or two jurisdictions.**

As mentioned above, Delaware County does not currently have the capacity to use robust evidence-based restorative practices to respond to situations where there is conflict or where youth have caused harm. CCLP understands that there was some capacity to offer such services in the past, and that the Youth Aid Panels generally do approach situations with a restorative framework. That said, there would be a benefit to piloting a more intensive restorative approach in Delaware County. This could be in one or more townships or boroughs, or even in one or two high schools that generate referrals to the youth legal system.

This could help prevent situations from escalating to the point of serious and violent conflict in schools or in the community. There are many videos illustrating how evidence-based restorative practices can be impactful, including [this video from Baltimore City, Maryland](#), and [this video from Oakland, California](#). The use of restorative practices takes time and effort, but the investment yields benefit to youth, families, victims, and communities – and cost-savings to jurisdictions.

CCLP and its partners recommend consulting with Impact Justice's restorative justice team to request technical assistance. The link to do so after consulting the Toolkit is <https://rjdtoolkit.impactjustice.org/contact-us/>.

5. **Track outcomes from jurisdictions to determine whether interventions are effective at preventing youth legal system involvement.**

As mentioned above, the data tool created through this project, in

partnership with Juvenile Probation and JCJC, should provide a helpful mechanism for transparency around whether such investments are having the intended impact in the focus jurisdictions. These data should be shared, discussed, and used to enhance future efforts and priorities for funding with system and community stakeholders. Contracted providers should also be held accountable for their work in more rigorous ways, as detailed below.

D. Structural Recommendations

As noted previously, there are some strengths within Delaware County's approach to youth involved with the legal system. These include the existing partnerships with child-serving agencies and organizations; efforts to coordinate with system stakeholders, including Juvenile Probation, the District Attorney, the Public Defender, and DHS. Efforts such as the Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools initiative and Delaware County's work on youth involved in multiple systems of care demonstrate the power of collaborative efforts to promote youth well-being and collaborate to solve challenges that stand in the way of all youth achieving their full potential.

There is an opportunity to build collaboration and shared values in Delaware County to do the same thing for youth at risk of involvement in the youth legal system. As the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force recommended, there is a need to "[i]ncrease system accountability and address inequities through enhanced data reporting to the public and wider representation on oversight bodies."²⁷

Youth who have contact with the youth legal system should not be viewed as separate and apart from youth who face challenges in other systems, including the behavioral health, child welfare, and education systems. However, given the urgency and frequency of conversations around youth charged with crimes in Delaware County, CCLP believes there would be value in focusing on collaborating to assess needs and opportunities for this group of young people.

Recommendations

- 1. Establish an interdisciplinary oversight committee, with significant youth and community representation, to guide review implementation of recommendations to improve Delaware County's approaches to preventing involvement with the youth legal system.**
As noted previously, Delaware County has engaged in collaborative structures to address significant and complex challenges related to children and youth, including via the Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools initiative. Additionally, in 2022, Delaware County joined a youth Multi-Systems Integration Pilot Program led by Georgetown University and the Stoneleigh Foundation. With the guidance provided by the Center for

²⁷ Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force, Report and Recommendations (June 2021), https://www.pacourts.us/Storage/media/pdfs/20210622/152647-pajuvenilejusticetaskforcereportandrecommendations_final.pdf.

Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy, the child-serving systems of Delaware County have worked to enhance and improve collaboration to better serve the youth and families of Delaware County. As part of that work, Juvenile Probation and the Delaware County Children and Youth Services Department have been working to identify alternatives to legal system involvement.

There is also a newly created Youth Diversion Planning Committee. This Committee has focused on engaging new partners in communities throughout Delaware County who have rich insights into gaps and needed services and supports. Their recommendations are attached to this report as Appendix D. Engaging new community partners, community members, and youth – and meeting in places and spaces where youth are most impacted by the system – will be essential to enhancing diversion efforts. CCLP recommends formalizing the Youth Diversion Planning Committee as a vehicle for discussing and deciding upon efforts to enhance prevention and diversion opportunities. CCLP also recommends establishing resources to support youth and family members who contribute their time to such efforts via stipends for their time, efforts, and insights (e.g., stipends, childcare opportunities, flexible meeting attendance options).

The Los Angeles County Department of Youth Development coordinates a group of youth, community, and system stakeholders to do so, and their efforts may be able to serve as a model for Delaware County to consider. More information can be found on the Los Angeles County Department of Youth Development website, <https://dyd.lacounty.gov/>. There is also an accessible report on Los Angeles County's approach to collaboration with youth leaders in the service of prevention and diversion.²⁸

2. **Establish a regular process to review and discuss data regarding referrals to the youth legal system within the oversight committee.**

Delaware County and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have the support of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission in data collection and reporting. These data necessary to have constructive and productive conversations about progress that has been made and areas of continued need and improvement.

²⁸ Los Angeles County Department of Youth Development, How to Guide: Designing Youth Diversion & Development in Los Angeles County, http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dhs/1125236_YDDBOOKLET-052422.pdf.

One of the key components of CCLP's proposal was building upon data capacity within JCJC and Delaware County to develop a tool that would make data accessible, interactive, and localized to promote conversations among system stakeholders, community members, and youth. While the public data available on the JCJC website is valuable, it is limited in the ability to dig deeper into specific trends and localities. These data are needed to identify real-time needs and to help pursue targeted investments that will impact youth, families, and communities.

The data tool developed as part of this report should be updated and maintained to help ensure there is transparency and productive discussions among stakeholders regarding the realities of youth in contact with the legal system in the County. By promoting a culture of data sharing and discussion, the County will move toward more results-focused, timely, and productive interventions for youth in contact with the legal system.

3. **Establish performance measures and standards for DHS contracts focused on engagement and completion rates, metrics regarding equity, and a process for continuous quality improvement.**

As referenced earlier in this report, there are services that are currently under contract with DHS to support services when youth in contact with the legal system. CCLP worked to identify the scope and performance measures included in these contracts.

CCLP and its project partners found that many contracts were renewed for extended periods without data regarding outcomes related to the impact of services upon youth well-being. Additionally, feedback from interviews suggested that some contracted services were renewed despite evidence that they led to deeper youth legal system involvement. One of the examples cited in interviews were the County's contracts for the use of electronic monitoring for youth. Some stakeholders noted that the ability of youth to disable or remove electronic monitoring devices was a chronic problem but that other jurisdictions employed more modern and sophisticated technology that would make it much more difficult for this to occur. We recognize there are efforts to explore new technology underway. We also recognize that an electronic monitor is not a sustainable way of engaging youth in skill-building and facilitating community connections to help them avoid future legal system involvement.

CCLP recommends establishing performance measures specific to race equity and a process for continuous quality improvement to ensure Delaware County is contracting with providers that provide the most effective and cost-efficient services. As noted in the introduction, we recognize that the work to apply the Pennsylvania Standardized Performance Evaluation Protocol is an important part of such an effort. An evaluation framework for outcomes related specifically to diversion, prevention, and equity from Human Impact Partners can enhance with the development of meaningful metrics in current and future contracts.²⁹

4. Build capacity to reach out to support community-based organizations not currently included in prevention and diversion efforts.

A key theme in feedback from community leaders and community-based organizations was feeling that they could offer enhanced or more formal support to prevent youth or divert youth from legal system involvement with additional funding and programmatic support. CCLP recognizes that there are rules regarding solicitations for funding. However, there are jurisdictions that have made exemplary efforts to engage a broader array of community partners and help with building the capacity of organizations to apply for funding to support their work, including removing barriers to participating in funding opportunities. CCLP recommends that County leaders consult with officials in Onondaga County, New York (Syracuse) to learn about their efforts to build up the capacity of community-based organizations to partner in their youth legal system reform efforts.³⁰ Ramsey County, Minnesota, is another jurisdiction that can serve as a partner in such efforts.³¹ CCLP is willing to facilitate connections with those jurisdictions about their efforts to support capacity building for community-based organizations.

5. Establish a Youth Development Department within DHS.

There has been a shift in many states and counties to keep youth in their own communities, recognizing that this is where youth will ultimately

²⁹ Human Impact Partners, Advancing Racial Equity in Youth Diversion: An Evaluation Framework Informed by Los Angeles County (June 2019), <https://humanimpact.org/hipprojects/evaluateyouthdiversion/>.

³⁰ Contact: Damian Pratt, Director of Juvenile Justice & Detention Services, Onondaga County Department of Children & Family Services (315) 435-3730, DamianPratt@ongov.net.

³¹ Ramsey County Attorney's Office, (Re)Imagining Justice for Youth, <https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/leadership/county-attorneys-office/reimagining-justice-youth>.

return – even if they do spend some time in an out-of-home placement. There is value in having a County-level entity that can coordinate a continuum of care for youth who have contact with the legal system, including prevention, diversion, alternatives to detention, out-of-home care, and reentry services. This is particularly true given that Delaware County funds the service array used to support young people who have contact with the youth legal system.

Delaware County should invest in developing a division of DHS that could engage in the development of this continuum. This would include seeking federal, state, and local grant funding; monitoring contract performance measures and Continuous Quality Improvement efforts in a rigorous and evidence-based manner; and supporting capacity-building within community-based organizations in jurisdictions with the highest rates of referral to the youth legal system.

6. Utilize an Assessment Center (mentioned earlier) to focus on case management, referrals to services, and barrier removal.

Because of Delaware County’s population of youth under supervision, the County can consider more efficient, effective, and timely responses to law enforcement and school involvement with youth. As noted previously, during this assessment, Juvenile Probation reported that they had 1,392 juveniles under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court, with roughly 80% of their caseload as assessed as low to moderate risk.

Many jurisdictions have focused on expanding the use of community-based diversion options in lieu of diverting youth *after* a referral to the youth legal system. For example, the Shelby County Youth and Family Resource Center (YFRC) serves as a single point of contact for youth who are struggling at home, community, or school—or at-risk of justice system involvement—to identify opportunities for prevention and intervention. Additionally, Lucas County, Ohio – one of the jurisdictions featured in the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Transforming Juvenile Probation report, has created a Misdemeanor Services Unit, which the report describes as follows:

[A]ll youth referred to juvenile court on misdemeanors in Lucas County are now either diverted from court or overseen by specialized case managers in the county’s new Misdemeanor Services Unit. Based on an initial assessment, youth overseen by this unit are referred to

appropriate resource providers in the community such as a mentoring program, positive youth development activity or evidence-based family treatment program . . .

But unlike conventional probation cases, the case managers do not require these youth to attend regular meetings, submit to drug testing or participate in activities under threat of further court action. Most importantly, while case managers work diligently to gain young people's cooperation, Lucas County does not return youth with misdemeanors to court for noncompliance with their service plans. Instead, these young people's cases are terminated as unsuccessful completions. Only if they commit a felony offense are youth on the misdemeanor caseload referred to court and potentially placed on probation.³²

Shifting toward an Assessment Center model could further the goals of reducing unnecessary legal system involvement for youth and families and create more cost-effective, timely, and effective connections to services.

³² Richard A. Mendel, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Transforming Juvenile Probation: A Vision for Getting It Right 37 (2018) (emphasis added), <https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-transformingjuvenileprobation-2018.pdf>.

Conclusion

CCLP and its partners appreciated the opportunity to learn about and recommend strengths and new opportunities to support youth, families, and communities in Delaware County. We have appreciated the candor and willingness to engage with our organization and our partners in this assessment. We have attempted to provide specific recommendations that we believe are worth consideration in challenging times.

As noted in the introduction to this report, Delaware County is at an inflection point. There is the potential to make significant investments in youth diversion and development that can yield benefits to the County for years to come in the wake of significant trauma experienced by justice-involved youth and their families. We hope that the County will take advantage of this moment to make significant changes in policies, practices, and programming and invest in alternatives to youth legal system involvement.

That said, CCLP and our partners offer these observations and recommendations as suggestions for Delaware County stakeholders and community members to consider. They are observations and recommendations that we hope will be carefully considered, as they are a product of our year of work with stakeholders in the County. We make them with the hope of achieving a brighter future for youth, families, and communities in Delaware County.

Appendix A: Delaware County Asset Map



Delaware County Community Assets for At-Risk Youth

This resource is designed to provide information about the resources accessible within Delaware County to at-risk youth while also aiding in the identification of potential service gaps. It encompasses a summary of feedback from Delaware County's youth regarding the availability of resources and their needs. Additionally, this resource includes a community resource map.

The creation of the community resource map was informed by responses garnered from a community provider survey, as well as contract details from Delaware County. It's important to acknowledge that while this map is comprehensive, it might not encompass all providers within Delaware County. The map's purpose is to serve as a tool to engage the community in discussions regarding potentially absent providers, the utilization of community assets, and any shortcomings in the availability or existence of programs and services for both youth and families.

Youth Feedback

As part of our work in Delaware County, we partnered with RTQ Academy to reach out to young people in Delaware County aged 10-21 via online survey. We received ~500 responses. Quantitative questions were ranked on a scale from 1 (Agree) to 5 (disagree), with 3 as the neutral midpoint. Of import to us when it comes to asset mapping are the responses to the following questions:

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

60% Selected neutral or disagree

“My community has services and supports to help youth be successful.”

60% Selected neutral or disagree

"If I had money to help youth in my community, I would spend it on"

50% Art/Music Opportunities for Creative Expression

36% Mental Health / Behavioral Health

33% Mentoring

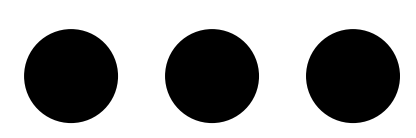
Community Resources Map

Youth Development Prosocial / Recreational Basic Needs Community Safety Therapeutic Residential

The objective of the *resources map* is to document current assets to support informed community action planning for the development or expansion of an assessment center.



Accepting referrals - no waitlist



Not accepting referrals for justice-involved youth, but could with more resources



Services are available virtual or mobile




Services are free or on a sliding-fee scale


Blue Circles indicate the provider is currently contracted to work with youth through DYS or CYS


YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Alternative Learning
Educational Assistance + Advocacy
Job Training + Placement
Life Skills Training
Mentoring (Individual)
Mentoring (Group)

 Accepting referrals - no waitlist



 Not accepting referrals for justice-involved youth, but could with more resources

 Services are available virtual or mobile

 Services are free or on a sliding-fee scale


   

I Choose Life Ministries
Mentoring

The Empowerment Zone
Mentoring - Individual and Group
Life Skills
Job Placement

Child Guidance Resource Center
Life Skills Program



Swarthmore Public Library

Greater Philadelphia YMCA
Mentoring - Group and Individual


 

Music Works
School-based Autism Support




Child Guidance Resource Center
Positive Parenting Program

Legacy Arts Club
Life skills training
Mentoring - Individual and Group



DCIU Project Elect
Case Management
Educational Assistance and Advocacy
Life Skills Training Program


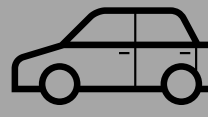

AFA Youth and Children's Empowerment Program
Mentoring - Individual and Group

Purple House Project
Domestic Violence Advocacy
Job Training
Mentoring



Delaware County Literacy Council
Educational Assistance + Advocacy
Job Training and Placement Services
Mentoring - Individual & Group


Episcopal Community Services
Life Skills Training Program
Job Training and Placement
Educational Assistance




KenCrest
Job Training and Placement
Developmental Early Intervention

Focus Youth Network
Mentoring - Individual and Group
Job Training and Placement



Community Wellness Academy
Mentoring - Individual and Group
Youth and Family Education

J. Lewis Library
Life Skills and Training Program
Educational Assistance

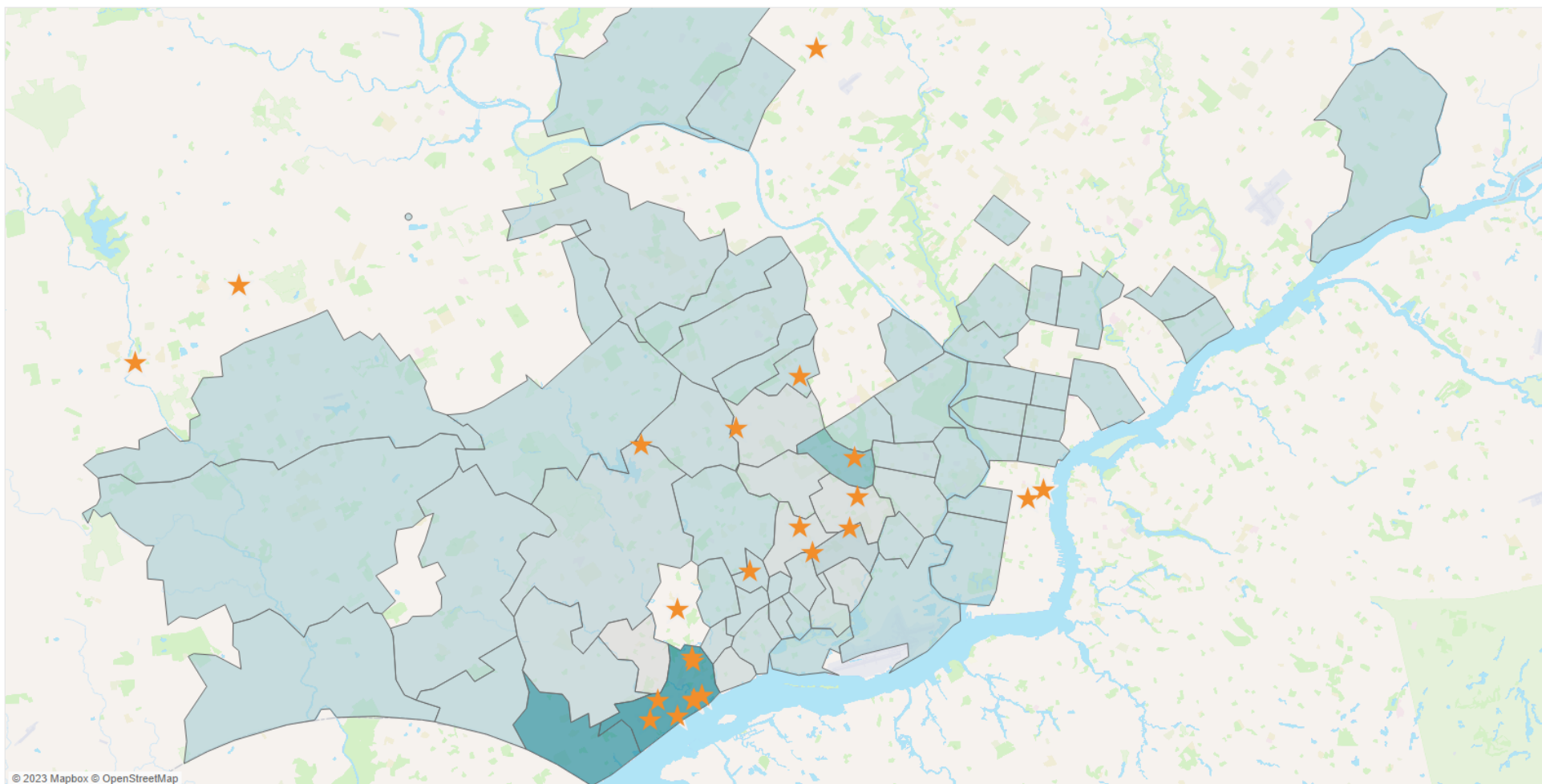
Making a Change
Life Skills Training
Mentoring - Individual and Group
Education
Peer Support

Keystone Adolescent Center
Life Skills Training Program

MultiCultural Community Family Services
Life Skills Training
Job Training and Placement
Youth and Family Education

Referrals to Delaware County Youth Probation in 2022 by Home Zip Code and Location of Community Assets
 Program Category: Youth Development

Number of Referrals
1 70



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Accepting referrals - no waitlist



Not accepting referrals for justice-involved youth, but could with more resources



Services are available virtual or mobile



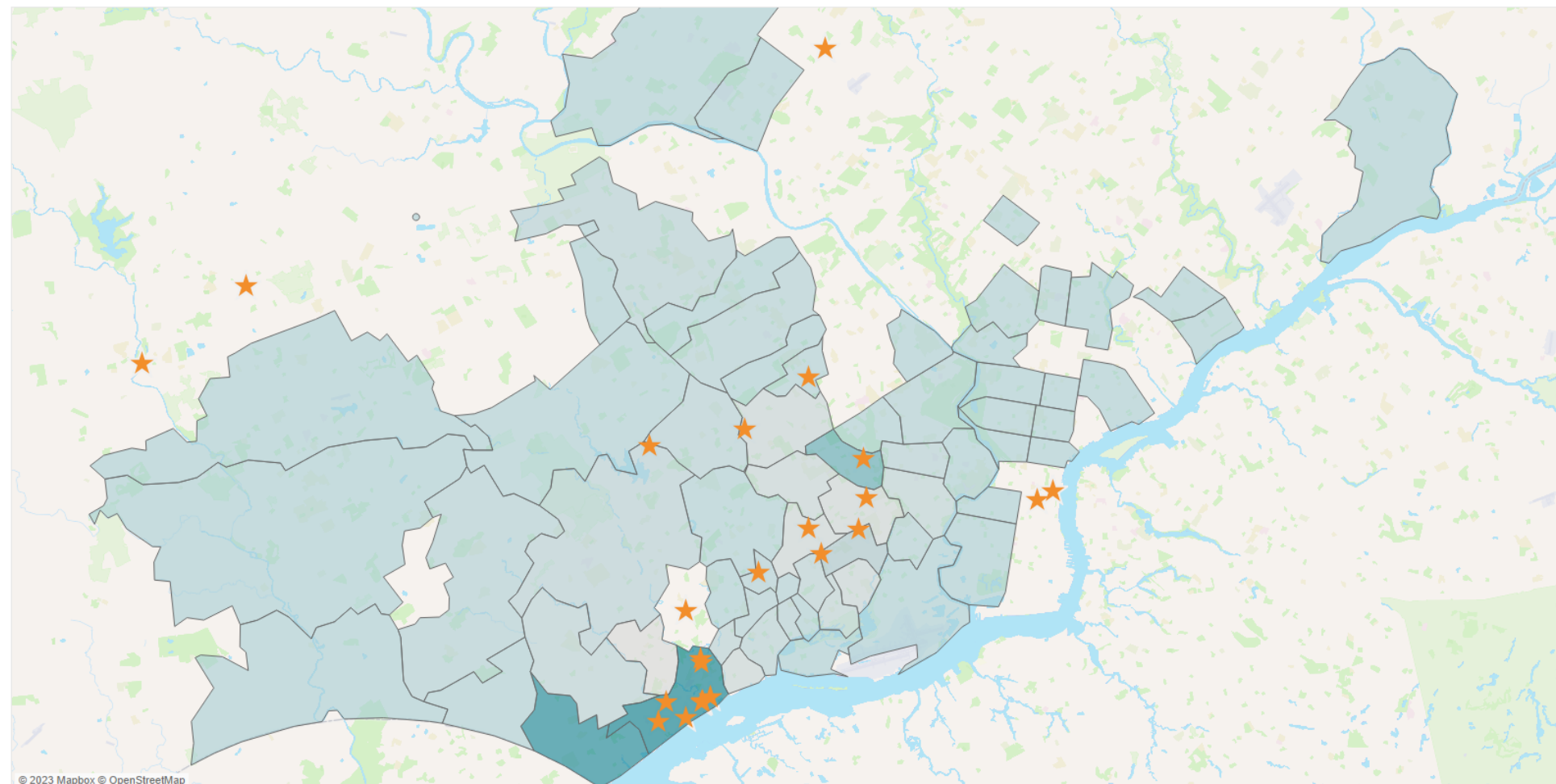
Services are free or on a sliding-fee scale

Alternative Learning
Educational Assistance + Advocacy
Job Training + Placement
Life Skills Training
Mentoring (Individual)
Mentoring (Group)



Referrals to Delaware County Youth Probation in 2022 by Home Zip Code and Location of Community Assets
 Program Category: Youth Development

Number of Referrals
 1 70





Accepting referrals - no waitlist



Not accepting referrals for justice-involved youth, but could with more resources



Services are available virtual or mobile



Services are free or on a sliding-fee scale

SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL

Community Centers
Culturals
Faith-based
Parks & Rec
Schools

The Salvation Army
Kids Club

African Youth Empowerment Program (AYEP)
Cultural + After-school / Summer

Legacy Arts Club
Art Program + After-school/Summer

Main Line Art Center
Art Program + After-school/Summer

Sunrise of Philadelphia
Faith-based + After-school/Summer

Swarthmore Public Library
Cultural

Greater Philadelphia YMCA
Social/ Recreational

Darby Public Library
Education
Cultural

Community Arts Center
Education
Social/Recreational

J. Lewis Library
After-school / Summer programming

AFA Youth and Children's Empowerment Program
After-school / Summer Program
Cultural Programs

Episcopal Community Services
After-school / Summer programming
Peer Support
Cultural Programs
Social/Recreational

Keep Music Alive
Cultural Programs

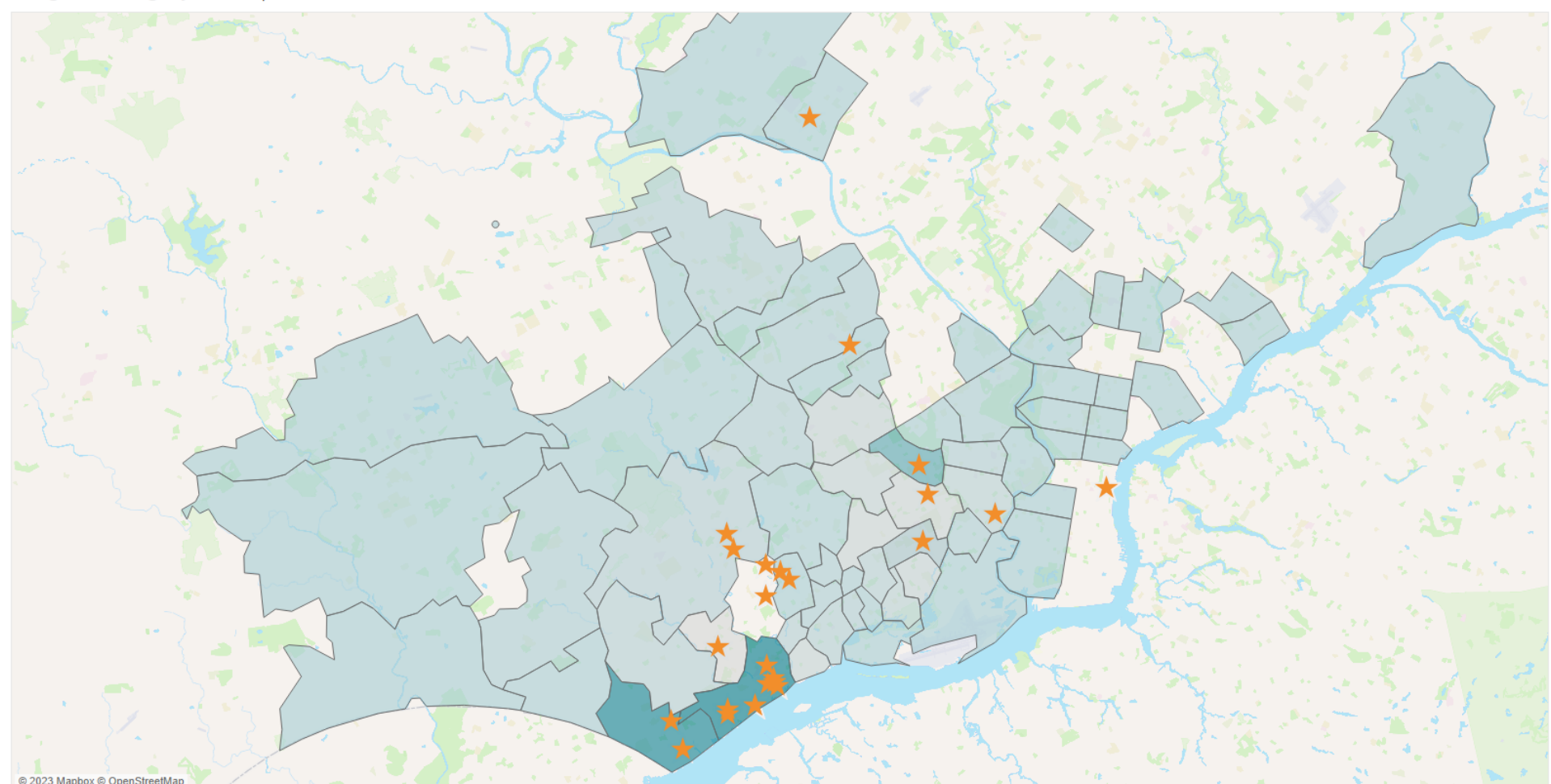
Camp Encouragement
After-school / Summer programming
Peer Support
Cultural Programs

Be Proud Foundation
Art Services

Chester Eastside, Inc
After-school / Summer programming
Cultural Services
Social and Recreational

Referrals to Delaware County Youth Probation in 2022 by Home Zip Code and Location of Community Assets
Program Category: Social / Recreational

Number of Referrals
1 70





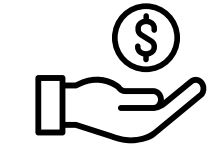
Accepting referrals - no waitlist



Not accepting referrals for justice-involved youth, but could with more resources



Services are available virtual or mobile



Services are free or on a sliding-fee scale

SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL

Community Centers
Culturals
Faith-based
Parks & Rec
Schools

Upper Chichester Community Center

Summer Camps

The Trippley Foundation

Summer Camp
Recreational

CAAT Center for Art, Music & Technology

Social Club

Camp Encouragement

Social & Emotional Support

Chester Eastside Ministry

After-school/Summer
Cultural programs

Keep Music Alive

Recreational / Music

Chester Children's Chorus

Recreational / Music

Chester Education Foundation

After-school

Yes We Can

Recreational

Youth Development United

Recreational

Boys and Girls Club of Chester County

After-school

Girls First

After-school/Summer

Chester Bidy League

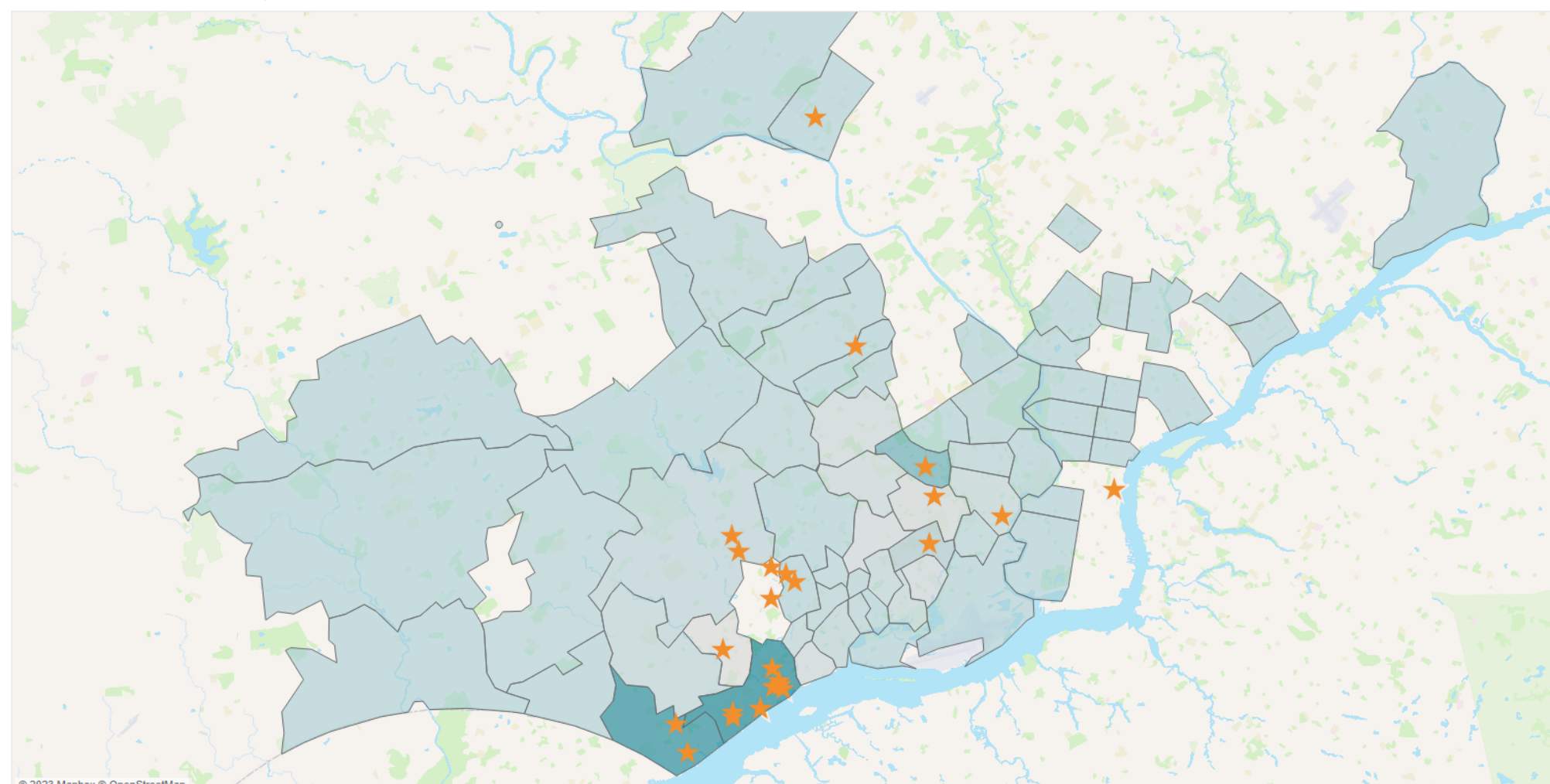
Recreational

Jonnie Slow's War Ready Boxing

Recreational

Referrals to Delaware County Youth Probation in 2022 by Home Zip Code and Location of Community Assets
Program Category: Social / Recreational

Number of Referrals
1 70





Accepting referrals - no waitlist



Not accepting referrals for justice-involved youth, but could with more resources



Services are available virtual or mobile



Services are free or on a sliding-fee scale

BASIC NEEDS

- Benefits
- Child Care
- Clothing
- Dental
- Family Planning
- Flex Funds
- Food
- Gender Affirming
- Housing
- Hygiene
- ID/Docs
- Interpreter/Translation
- Medical
- Medication
- Technology
- Transportation
- Vision

AFA All for All Agency

Benefits
Basic Needs

Legacy Arts Club

Benefits
Basic Needs

Community Action Agency

Housing
Basic Needs

Episcopal Community Services

Basic Needs
Benefits

Multicultural Community Family Services

Basic Needs
Benefits

Catholic Social Services

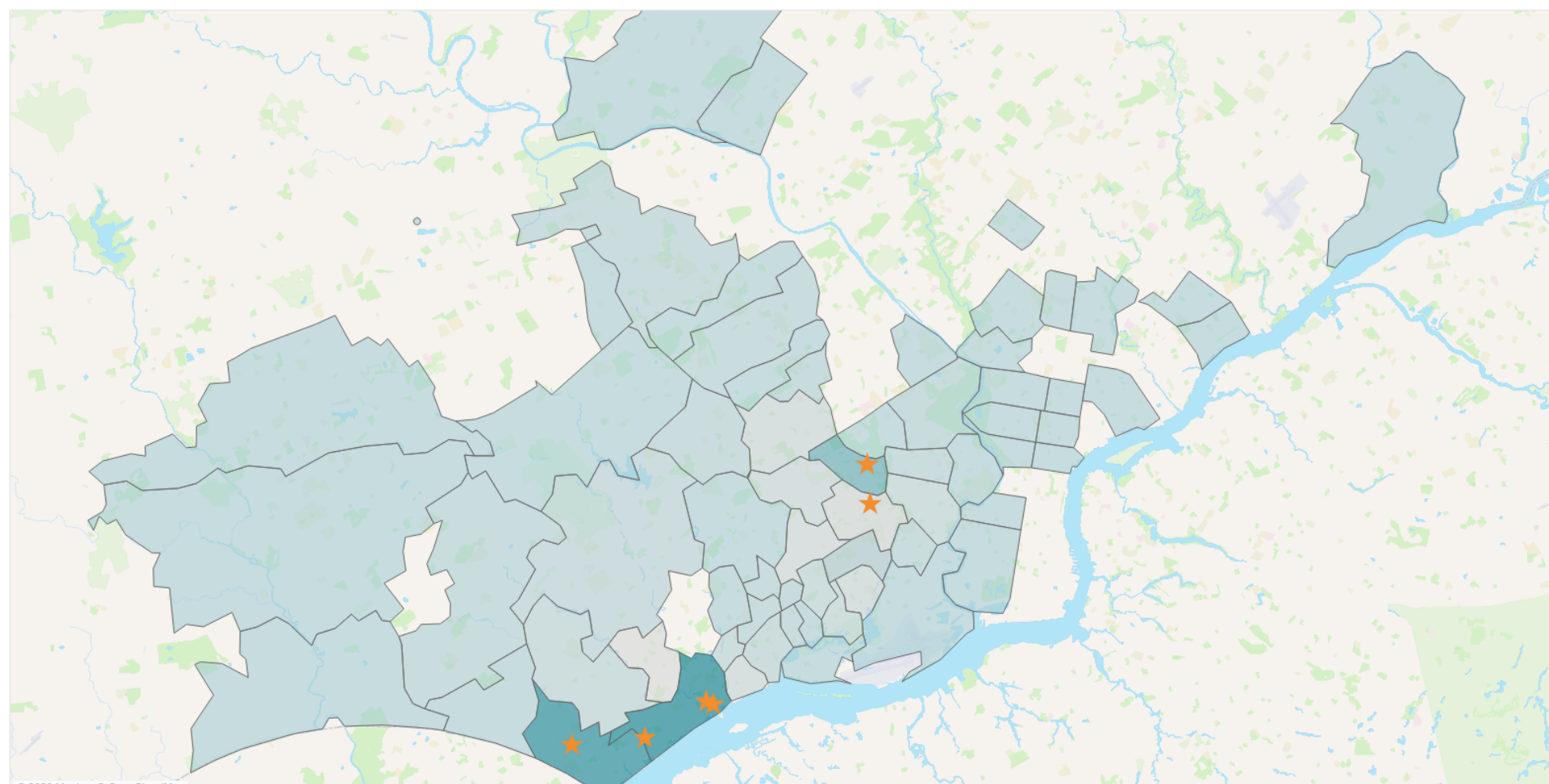
Basic Need
Food
Housing

Chester Access Center

Basic Need
Food


Referrals to Delaware County Youth Probation in 2022 by Home Zip Code and Location of Community Assets
Program Category: Basic Needs

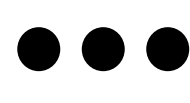
Number of Referrals
1 70





COMMUNITY SAFETY / VIOLENCE REDUCTION

Public Health (Prevention)
Restorative Justice
Mobile/Crisis Services
Early Intervention/Diversion

 Accepting referrals - no waitlist

 Not accepting referrals for justice-involved youth, but could with more resources

 Services are available virtual or mobile

 Services are free or on a sliding-fee scale

The Academy
Community Management

Youth Aid Panel
Diversion

Justice Works
Intervention Services
33 Youth (2022)

Greater Philadelphia YMCA
Gun Violence Prevention Program
Restorative Justice

Making a Change Group
Gun Violence Intervention
Network Empowerment

Be Proud Foundation
Day Treatment
60 Youth (2022)

Keystone
Family Intervention
Aggression Replacement
Training

Center for Arson
Fire Setters Program
7 Youth (2022)

Abraxas PATH
Youth and Family Reentry
25 Youth (2022)

Youth Advocate Program
Wrap Around
17 Youth (2022)

Alephoi Village
Intensive Supervision

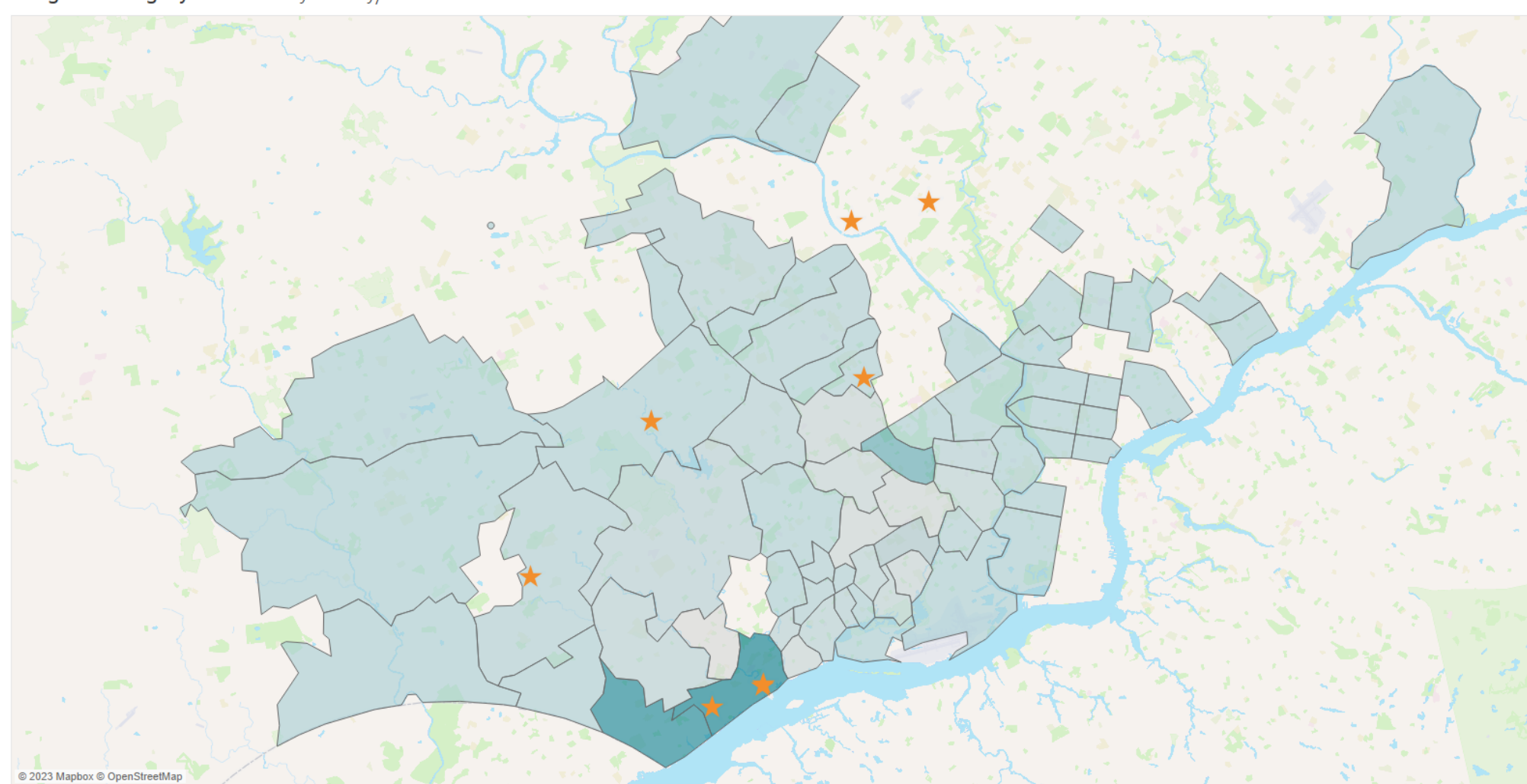
Preventative Aftercare
In-home Aftercare

Child Guidance Resource Center
Truancy & Delinquency
Prevention

Safe Cooridors
Early Intervention

Referrals to Delaware County Youth Probation in 2022 by Home Zip Code and Location of Community Assets
Program Category: Community Safety/Violence Prevention

Number of Referrals
2 70





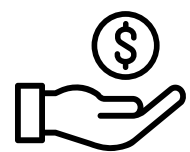
Accepting referrals - no waitlist



Not accepting referrals for justice-involved youth, but could with more resources



Services are available virtual or mobile



Services are free or on a sliding-fee scale

THERAPEUTIC SERVICES

- Caregiver Peer Support
- Complementary Wellness Therapies
- Crisis Response (Nt mobile)
- Integrated MH and SA Treatment
- Intensive Outpatient and Day Treatment
- Medication Assisted SA Treatment
- Medication Therapy
- Mobile Crisis Response
- Outpatient Substance Use Disorder Services
- Outpatient Therapy - Family
- Outpatient Therapy – Group
- Outpatient Therapy - Individual
- Respite and Support Services for Caregivers
- Respite Services (including crisis)
- School-based MH Services
- Trauma-Specific Treatments
- Youth and Family Education
- Youth Peer Support

Child Guidance Resource Centers
Multi-Systemic Therapy

Catholic Social Services
Outpatient Therapy - Group, Individual, and Family
Medication Therapy

The Academy
Counseling - Individual
Emergency Intervention
188 Youth (2022)

Peter's Place
Outpatient Group
Youth and Caregiver Peer Support
Crisis Response (not mobile)
School-based Mental Health

Family Support Line of Delaware County
Outpatient Therapy- Individual, Group and Family
Crisis Response (not mobile)
Trauma-specific treatments
School-based mental health
Child Sexual Abuse Advocacy

The Empowerment Zone
Crisis Response (Mobile and Not Mobile)
Peer Support
School-based Mental health
Trauma-specific Treatment

Chester Community Coalition
Outpatient Individual and Group
Trauma-specific Treatment
School-based Mental Health

Music Works
Outpatient Therapy - Group
Medical Assistance

Northern Children's Services
Outpatient Therapy - Individual
School-based Mental Health

Abraxas
PATH Program
25 Youth (2022)

Family and Community Services of Delaware County
Outpatient - Individual and Family
Medication
Caregiver Support

Keystone
Counseling - Individual, Family

Ascend Ministries
Outpatient - Individual and Group
Substance Use Disorder Services
Day Treatment

Rising Hope for Change
School-based Mental Health
Youth Peer Support

Salvation Army
Counseling - Individual, Family

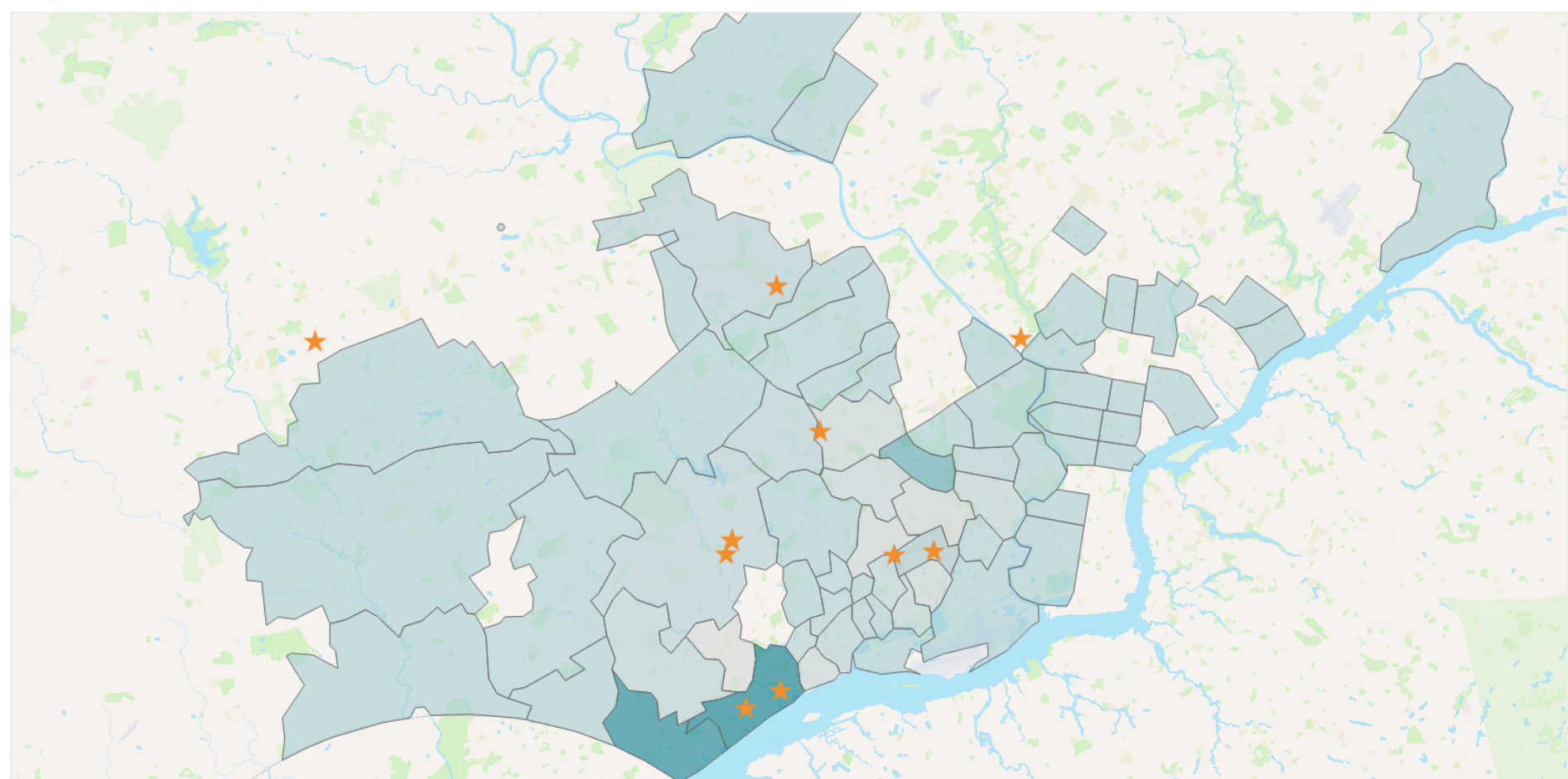
MVP Recovery
Substance Use Recovery Specialists

Holcomb Behavioral Health
Drug and Alcohol Evaluations
29 Youth (2022)

Adelphoi Village
Outpatient - Group
Trauma-Specific Treatments

Referrals to Delaware County Youth Probation in 2022 by Home Zip Code and Location of Community Assets
Program Category: Therapeutic

Number of Referrals
1 70





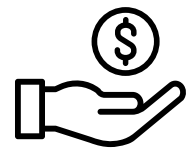
Accepting referrals - no waitlist



Not accepting referrals for justice-involved youth, but could with more resources



Services are available virtual or mobile



Services are free or on a sliding-fee scale

Chester Community Coalition

Youth Peer Support

Camp Encouragement

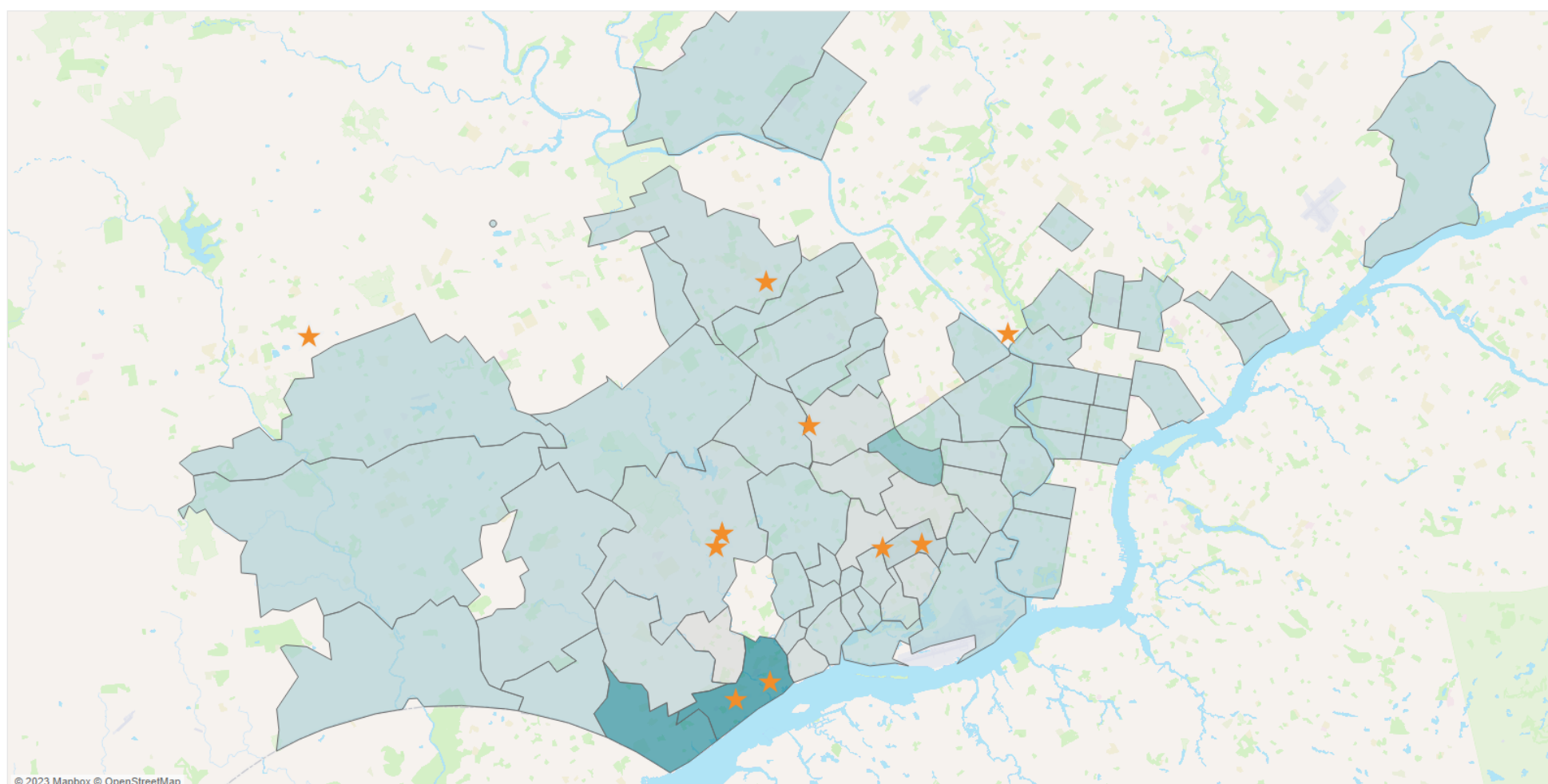
Grief Support

THERAPEUTIC SERVICES


- Caregiver Peer Support
- Complementary Wellness Therapies
- Crisis Response (Nt mobile)
- Integrated MH and SA Treatment
- Intensive Outpatient and Day Treatment
- Medication Assisted SA Treatment
- Medication Therapy
- Mobile Crisis Response
- Outpatient Substance Use Disorder Services
- Outpatient Therapy - Family
- Outpatient Therapy – Group
- Outpatient Therapy - Individual
- Respite and Support Services for Caregivers
- Respite Services (including crisis)
- School-based MH Services
- Trauma-Specific Treatments
- Youth and Family Education
- Youth Peer Support


Referrals to Delaware County Youth Probation in 2022 by Home Zip Code and Location of Community Assets
 Program Category: Therapeutic


Number of Referrals
 1 70




RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

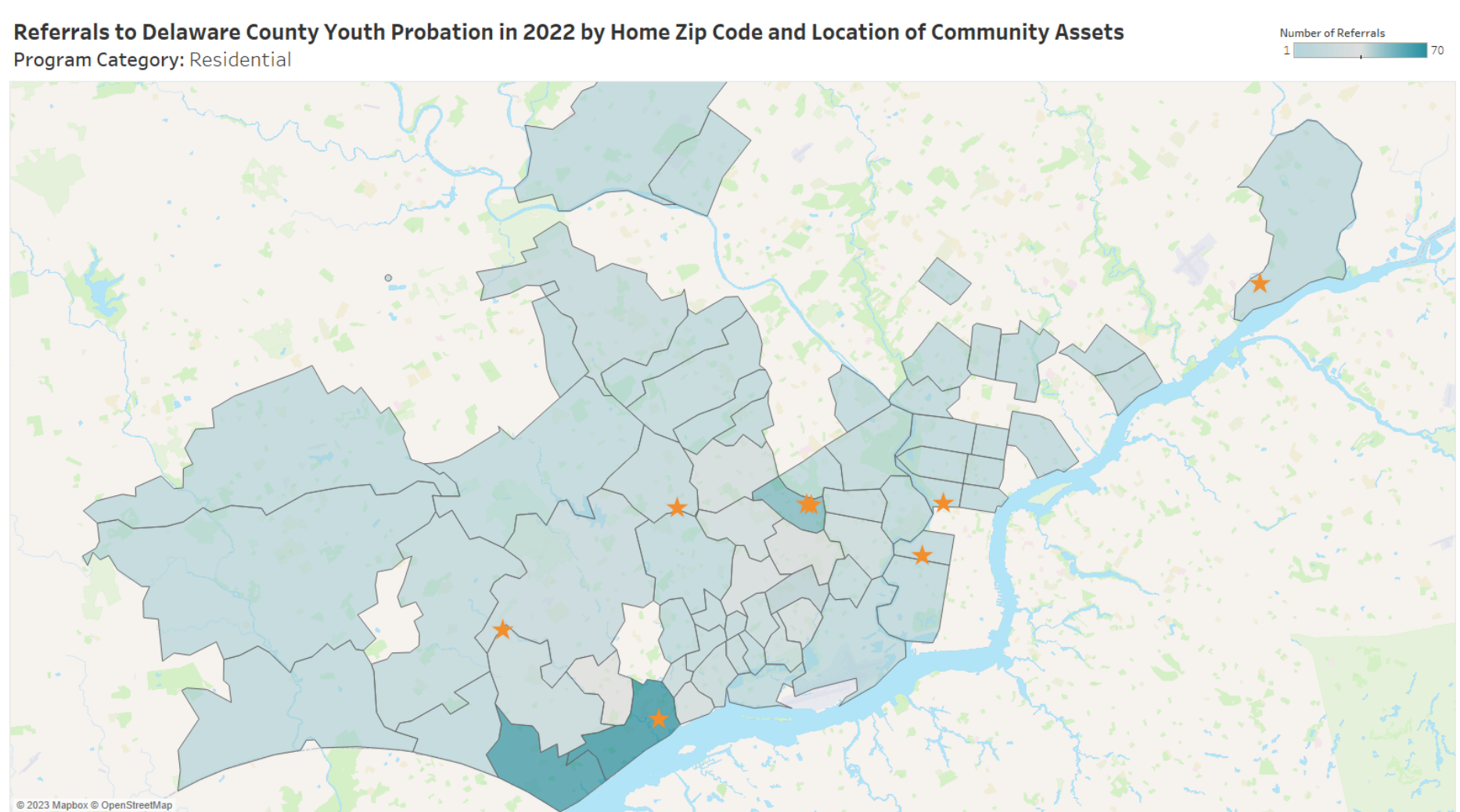
 Accepting referrals - no waitlist

 Not accepting referrals for justice-involved youth, but could with more resources

 Services are available virtual or mobile

 Services are free or on a sliding-fee scale

- Treatment Family Homes
- Therapeutic Group Homes
- Residential Psychiatric Treatment
- Inpatient Hospital Services
- Residential Crisis and Stabilization
- Inpatient Medical Detox
- Residential Substance Use Services
- Shelter and Respite Housing
- Other



Appendix B: Youth Survey Data

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

	Neutral	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Overall	42%	16%
Youth of Color	34%	18%
Youth w/System/Police Contact	39%	27%
Marcus Hook	44%	33%
Chester	40%	16%
Upper Darby	19%	19%
Darby	57%	7%
Brookhaven	32%	19%

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

	Neutral	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Overall	20%	40%
Youth of Color	17%	34%
Youth w/System/Police Contact	38%	41%
Marcus Hook	31%	28%
Chester	14%	38%
Upper Darby	25%	38%
Darby	12%	60%
Brookhaven	18%	19%

I know where to get help if I need it.

	Neutral	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Overall	30%	29%
Youth of Color	28%	22%
Youth w/System/Police Contact	22%	42%
Marcus Hook	25%	19%
Chester	26%	26%
Upper Darby	50%	19%
Darby	57%	12%
Brookhaven	27%	19%

My community has services and supports to help youth be successful.

	Neutral	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Overall	30%	29%
Youth of Color	36%	17%
Youth w/System/Police Contact	10%	57%
Marcus Hook	32%	36%
Chester	28%	27%
Upper Darby	38%	25%
Darby	12%	50%
Brookhaven	32%	23%

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

	Neutral	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Overall	29%	36%
Youth of Color	21%	38%
Youth w/System/Police Contact	38%	31%
Marcus Hook	31%	28%
Chester	27%	34%
Upper Darby	19%	37%
Darby	57%	12%
Brookhaven	32%	31%

Adults understand what youth in my community need to be successful.

	Neutral	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Overall	32%	31%
Youth of Color	27%	30%
Youth w/System/Police Contact	26%	44%
Marcus Hook	39%	19%
Chester	34%	22%
Upper Darby	13%	57%
Darby	10%	57%
Brookhaven	23%	32%

Appendix C: Delaware County Youth Diversion Data Tool Screenshots



Referrals: Overview

Use the dropdown to view demographics of youth by referral or unique youth.

Referrals or Unique Youth Referrals
Referral Year 2022

Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

656

total youth

854

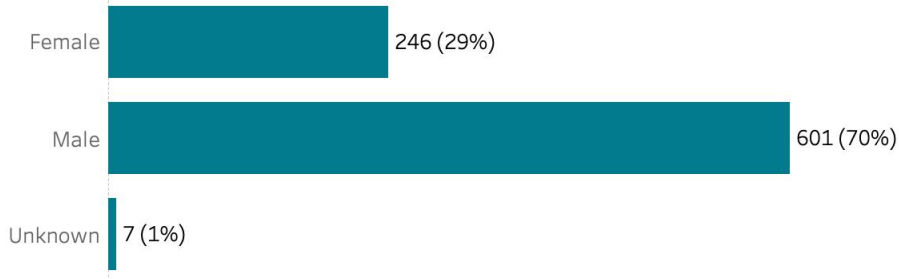
total referrals

▼ Referrals

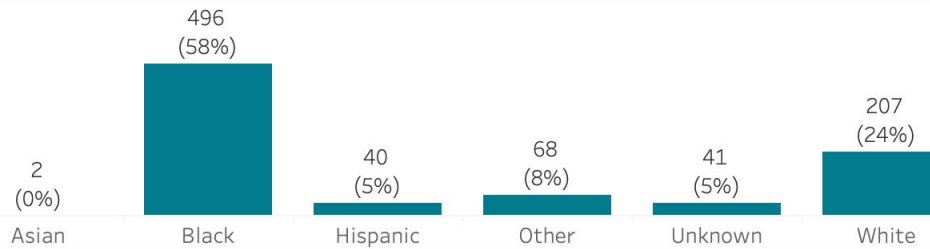
Demographics

- Case Characteristics
- Offense Details - City
- Referral Source
- Frequency
- Race & Population
- Offense Overview
- Petitions
- Referral Outcome
- Outcome - Characteristics
- Processing Times
- Processing Time - Source
- Processing Time Detail
- Referral Trends
- Process Time Trends
- QA Dates
- Asset Map

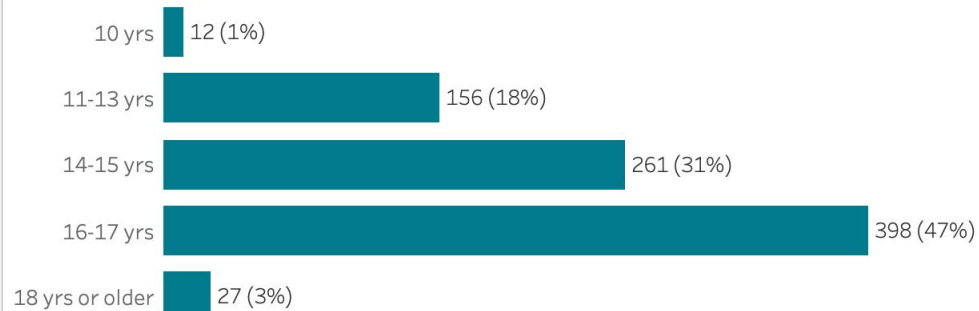
Gender



Race/Ethnicity



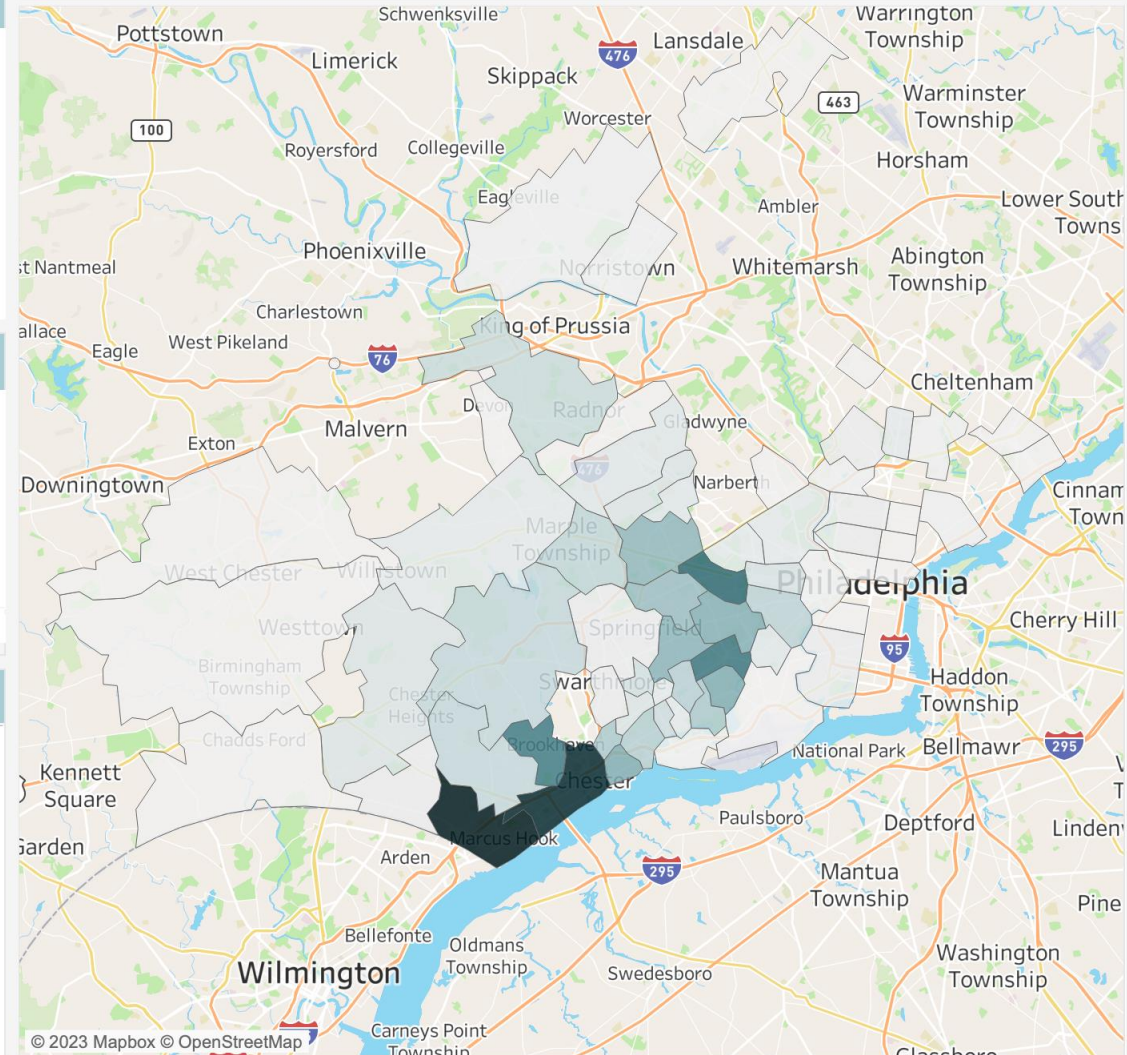
Age at Time of Incident



Referrals by Home Zip Code

75 referrals are for youth from out of state.

- Pennsylvania Only
- Include all states





Referrals: Overview Case Characteristics

Referral Received
2022

Click on the bars to filter the views

Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

Referrals

Demographics

Case Characteristics

Offense Details - City

Referral Source

Frequency

Race & Population

Offense Overview

Petitions

Referral Outcome

Outcome - Characteristics

Processing Times

Processing Time - Source

Processing Time Detail

Referral Trends

Process Time Trends

QA Dates

Asset Map

656

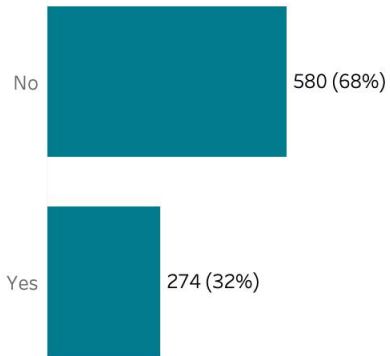
total youth

854

total referrals

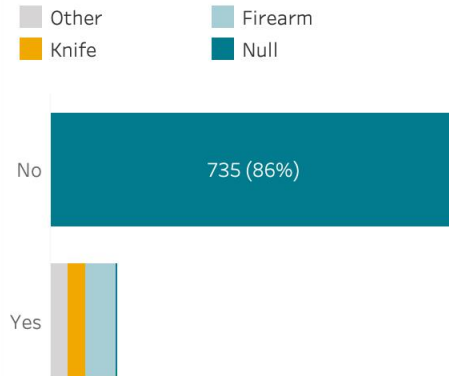
School Related Referrals

(Note: Any charge noted as "school related" counts the referral as "school related.")

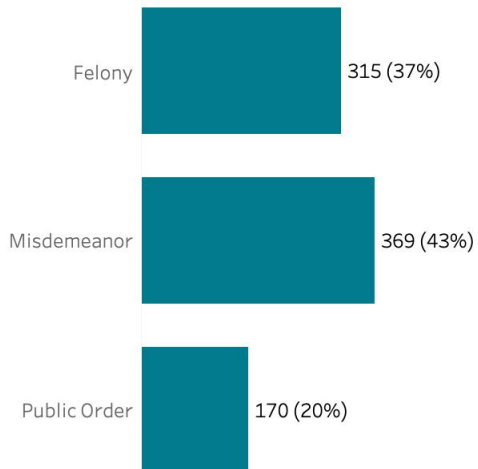


Weapons Involved Referrals

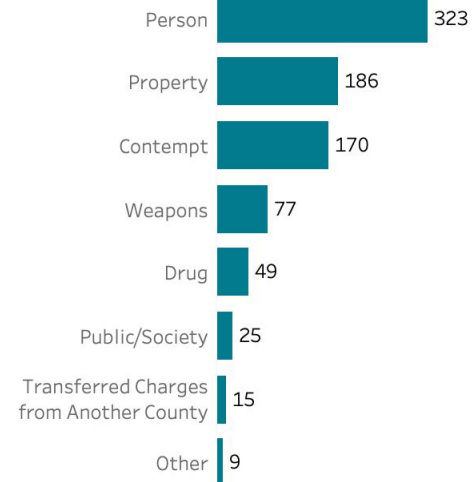
(Note: Any charge noted as "weapons involved" counts the referral as "weapons involved.")



Most Serious Offense Category



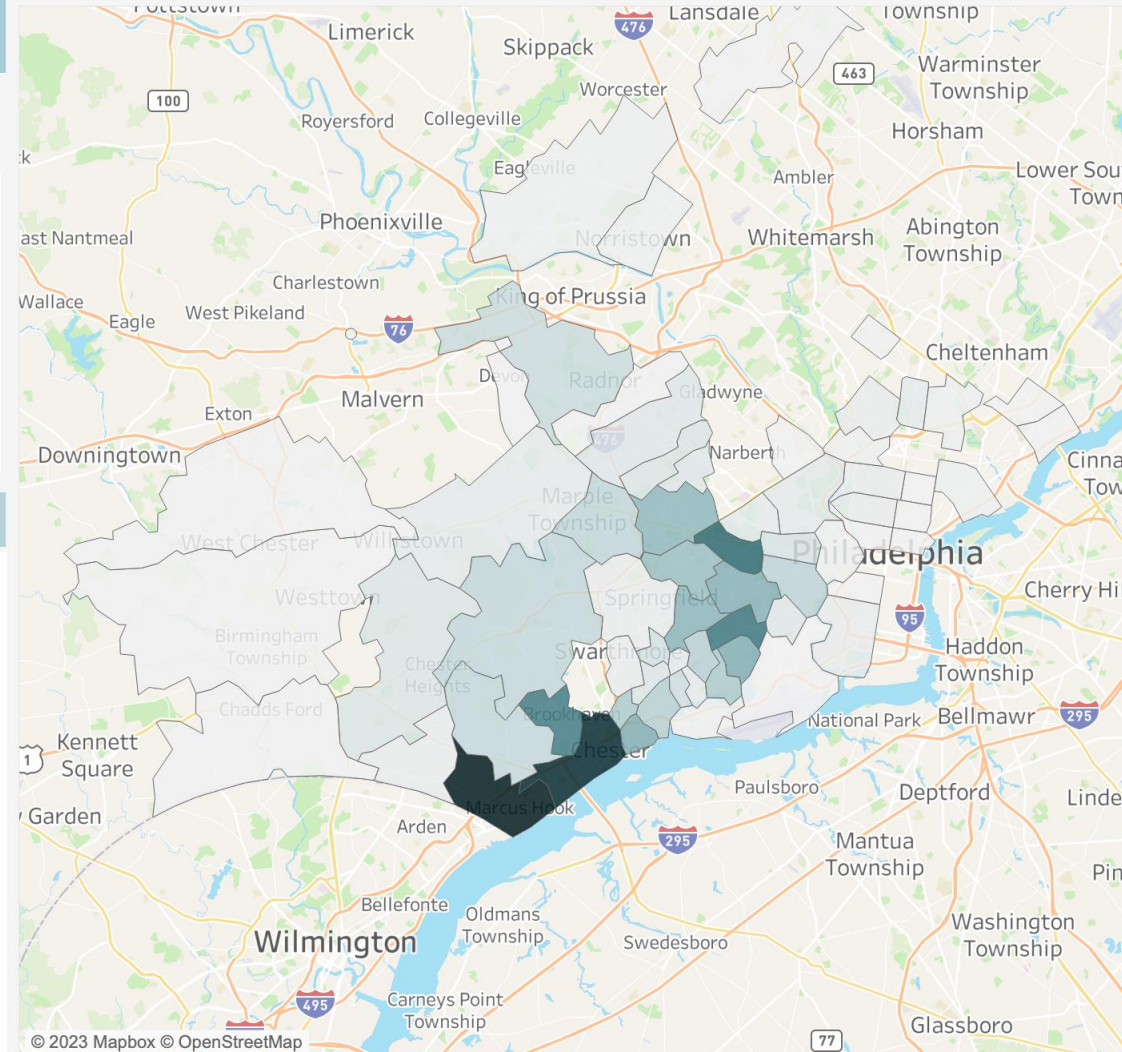
Most Serious Offense Types



Referrals by Home Zip Code

75 referrals are for youth from out of state.

Pennsylvania Only
 Include all states





Referrals: Offenses by Location

Year of Referral Date

2022

Click on the bars to filter the views.

Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

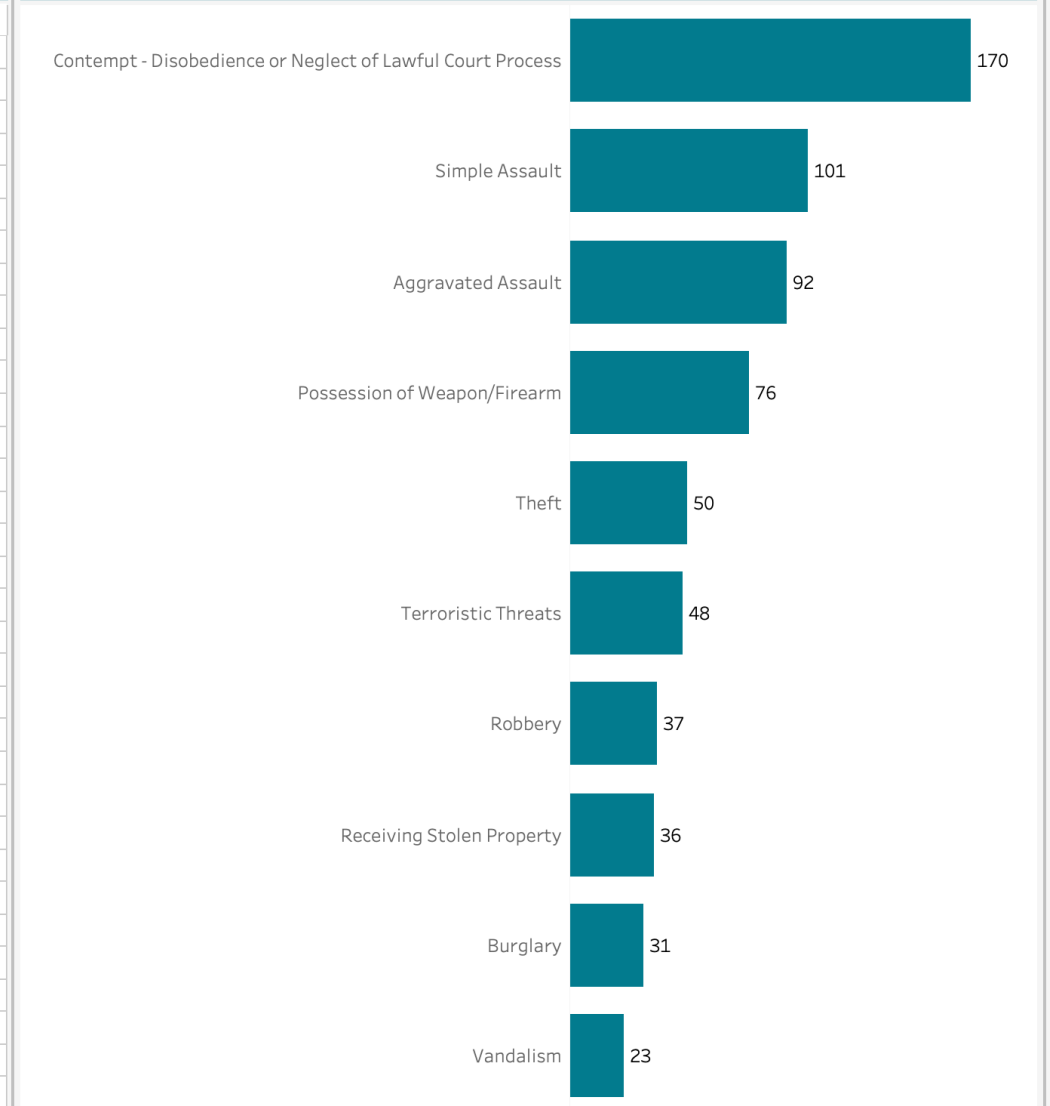
Referrals

- Demographics
- Case Characteristics
- Offense Details - City**
- Referral Source
- Frequency
- Race & Population
- Offense Overview
- Petitions
- Referral Outcome
- Outcome - Characteristics
- Processing Times
- Processing Time - Source
- Processing Time Detail
- Referral Trends
- Process Time Trends
- QA Dates
- Asset Map

Referrals by City and Zip Code (2022)

City	Home Zip	Count
Marcus Hook	19061	99
Chester	19013	91
Upper Darby	19082	60
Darby	19023	54
Brookhaven	19015	51
Sharon Hill	19079	29
Crum Lynne	19022	29
Lansdowne	19050	28
Clifton Heights	19018	26
Havertown	19083	25
Drexel Hill	19026	22
Woodlyn	19094	17
Folcroft	19032	17
Ridley Park	19078	15
Glenolden	19036	14
Broomall	19008	12
Media	19063	11
Aston	19014	11
Wayne	19087	10
Prospect Park	19076	9
Morton	19070	8
Glen Mills	19342	6
Folsom	19033	6
Bryn Mawr	19010	5
Norwood	19074	4
Newtown Square	19073	4
Holmes	19043	4
Swarthmore	19081	3
Springfield	19064	3
Garnet Valley	19060	3
Essington	19029	2
Villanova	19085	1
Chadds Ford	19317	1

Top 10 Most Serious Offenses (2022)





Referrals: Referral Source

Use the dropdown to view characteristics of the case

Year of Referral Date
2022

Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

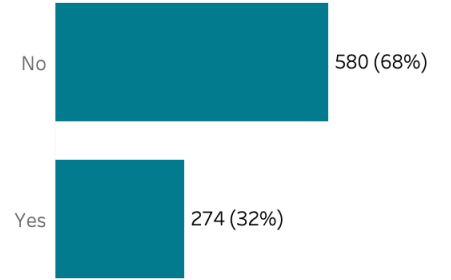
▼ Referrals

- Demographics
- Case Characteristics
- Offense Details - City
- Referral Source**
- Frequency
- Race & Population
- Offense Overview
- Petitions
- Referral Outcome
- Outcome - Characteristics
- Processing Times
- Processing Time - Source
- Processing Time Detail
- Referral Trends
- Process Time Trends
- QA Dates
- Asset Map

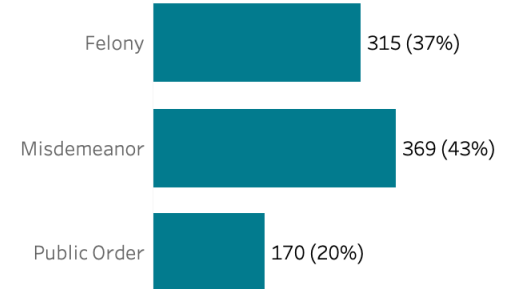
Referral Source

Magisterial District Judge 152 18%	Haverfor Township Police 48 6%	Chester City Police 38 4%	Sharon Hill Borough Police 37 4%	PA STATE POLICE DEPARTMENT 36 4%	
	27 3%	Marple Township Police 21 2%	Radnor Township Police 20 2%	Prospect Park Borough Police 19 2%	Darby Borough Police 15 2%
Upper Darby Township Police 104 12%	Marcus Hook Borough Police 24 3%	Chester Township Police Department 14 2%	Folcroft Borough Police 9 1%	Parkside Borough Police 9 1%	Yeadon Police 8 1%
	Ridley Township Police 23 3%	Darby Township Police 13 2%	Montgomery County		Upper Pa.
	Brookhaven Borough Police 22 3%	Aston Township Police 11 1%	Lower Chichester	Ridley Park	
Upper Chichester Township Police 63 7%	Lansdowne Borough Police 21 2%	Eddystone Borough Police 11 1%	Tinicum Township		
		Collingdale Borough Police			

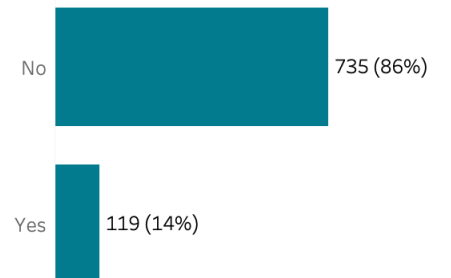
School Related



Most Serious Offense Category



Weapons Involved





Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

▼ Referrals

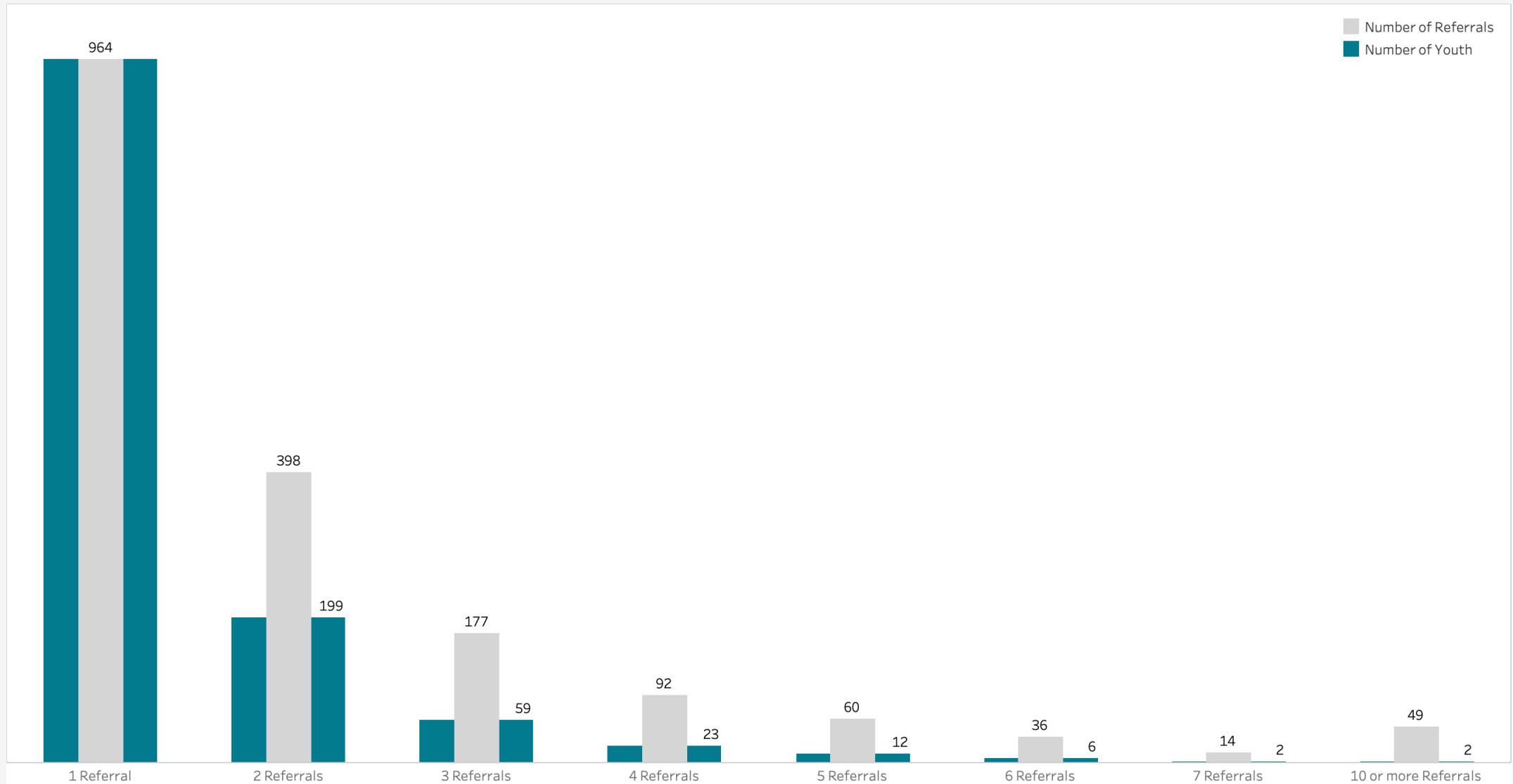
- Demographics
- Case Characteristics
- Offense Details - City
- Referral Source
- Frequency**
- Race & Population
- Offense Overview
- Petitions
- Referral Outcome
- Outcome - Characteristics
- Processing Times
- Processing Time - Source
- Processing Time Detail
- Referral Trends
- Process Time Trends
- QA Dates
- Asset Map

Referrals: Number of Referrals and Numbers of Youth

Race/Ethnicity
All

Referral Received
All

Number of Youth Associated with Numbers of Referrals





Referrals: Race & Population

Year Referral Received
2022

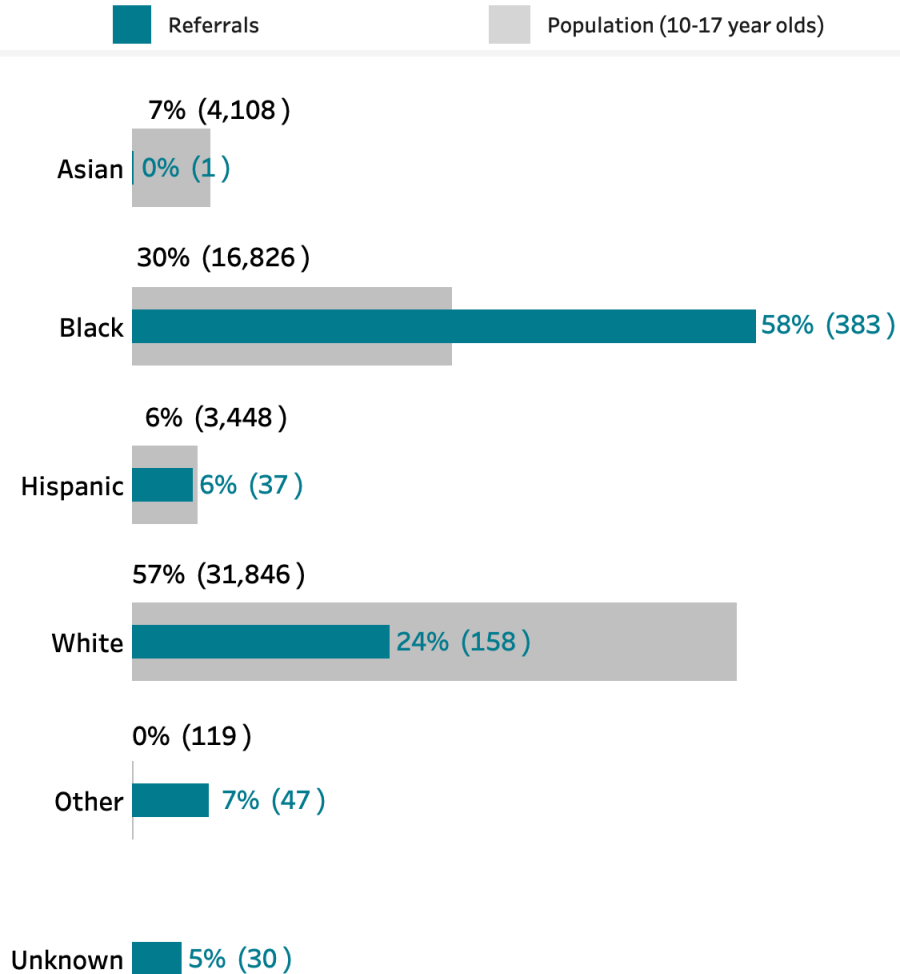
Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

▼ Referrals

- Demographics
- Case Characteristics
- Offense Details - City
- Referral Source
- Frequency
- Race & Population**
- Offense Overview
- Petitions
- Referral Outcome
- Outcome - Characteristics
- Processing Times
- Processing Time - Source
- Processing Time Detail
- Referral Trends
- Process Time Trends
- QA Dates
- Asset Map

Population Compared to Referrals

(Source: U.S. Census, 10-17 year old youth)



Based on the number of youth referred and census data:

Youth of color in Delaware County are 3.8 times as likely to be referred to the juvenile justice system compared to white youth.





Referrals: Offense by Characteristics

Click on the bars to limit the list to the right.

Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

Referral Year
2022

School Related
All

Weapon Related
All

Select Youth Characteristic
Race/Ethnicity

Select Computation
Within Groups

▼ Referrals

- Demographics
- Case Characteristics
- Offense Details - City
- Referral Source
- Frequency
- Race & Population
- Offense Overview**
- Petitions
- Referral Outcome
- Outcome - Characteristics
- Processing Times
- Processing Time - Source
- Processing Time Detail
- Referral Trends
- Process Time Trends
- QA Dates
- Asset Map

Most serious offense broken down by Race/Ethnicity for 854 referrals.

Race/Ethnicity	Offense Type	Count (Percentage)	System Jid	Referral Id	Referral Da..	Most Serio..	Charge Code	Charge Desc
White	Felony	59 (29%)	64113	445096	2/18/2022	Felony	186106A1	Firearms Not To Be Carried W/O License
	Misdemeanor	116 (56%)	75191	447090	3/28/2022	Felony	183921A	Conspiracy - Theft By Unlaw Taking-Movab Theft By Unlaw Taking-Movable Prop
	Public Order	32 (15%)	78751	454278	7/22/2022	Felony	183301A1I	Arson-Danger Of Death Or Bodily Inj
Black	Felony	215 (43%)	79337	455856	8/11/2022	Public Order	424132(2)	Contempt - Disobedience or Neglect of Law
	Misdemeanor	195 (39%)	79463	455927	8/26/2022	Public Order	424132(2)	Contempt - Disobedience or Neglect of Law
	Public Order	86 (17%)	79463	459413	10/21/2022	Misdemean..	35780-113..	INT POSS CONTR SUBST BY PER NOT REG
Hispanic	Felony	19 (48%)	79463	451122	6/10/2022	Felony	186105A1	Possession Of Firearm Prohibited
	Misdemeanor	18 (45%)	164399	459444	8/24/2022	Misdemean..	50	(35780-113A311) - Marijuana-Small Amt Pe (35780-113A32) - Use/Poss Of Drug Parap
	Public Order	3 (8%)	164399	447073	3/28/2022	Felony	183921A	Conspiracy - Theft By Unlaw Taking-Movab Theft By Unlaw Taking-Movable Prop
Other	Felony	22 (32%)		449083	4/27/2022	Felony	183925A	Receiving Stolen Property
	Misdemeanor	33 (49%)		454312	7/22/2022	Felony	183925A	Receiving Stolen Property
	Public Order	13 (19%)	166038	457989	8/9/2022	Felony	50	(186106A1) - Firearms Not To Be Carried W
Unknown	Misdemeanor	5 (12%)	166239	461145	7/18/2022	Felony	50	(186106A1) - Firearms Not To Be Carried W
	Public Order	36 (88%)	167224	444679	2/9/2022	Felony	183702A	Conspiracy - Robbery Of Motor Vehicle Robbery Of Motor Vehicle
Asian	Misdemeanor	2 (100%)	168604	453445	8/2/2022	Public Order	424132(2)	Contempt - Disobedience or Neglect of Law
				453447	8/2/2022	Public Order	424132(2)	Contempt - Disobedience or Neglect of Law



Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

▼ Referrals

- Demographics
- Case Characteristics
- Offense Details - City
- Referral Source
- Frequency
- Race & Population
- Offense Overview

Petitions

- Referral Outcome
- Outcome - Characteristics
- Processing Times
- Processing Time - Source
- Processing Time Detail
- Referral Trends
- Process Time Trends
- QA Dates
- Asset Map

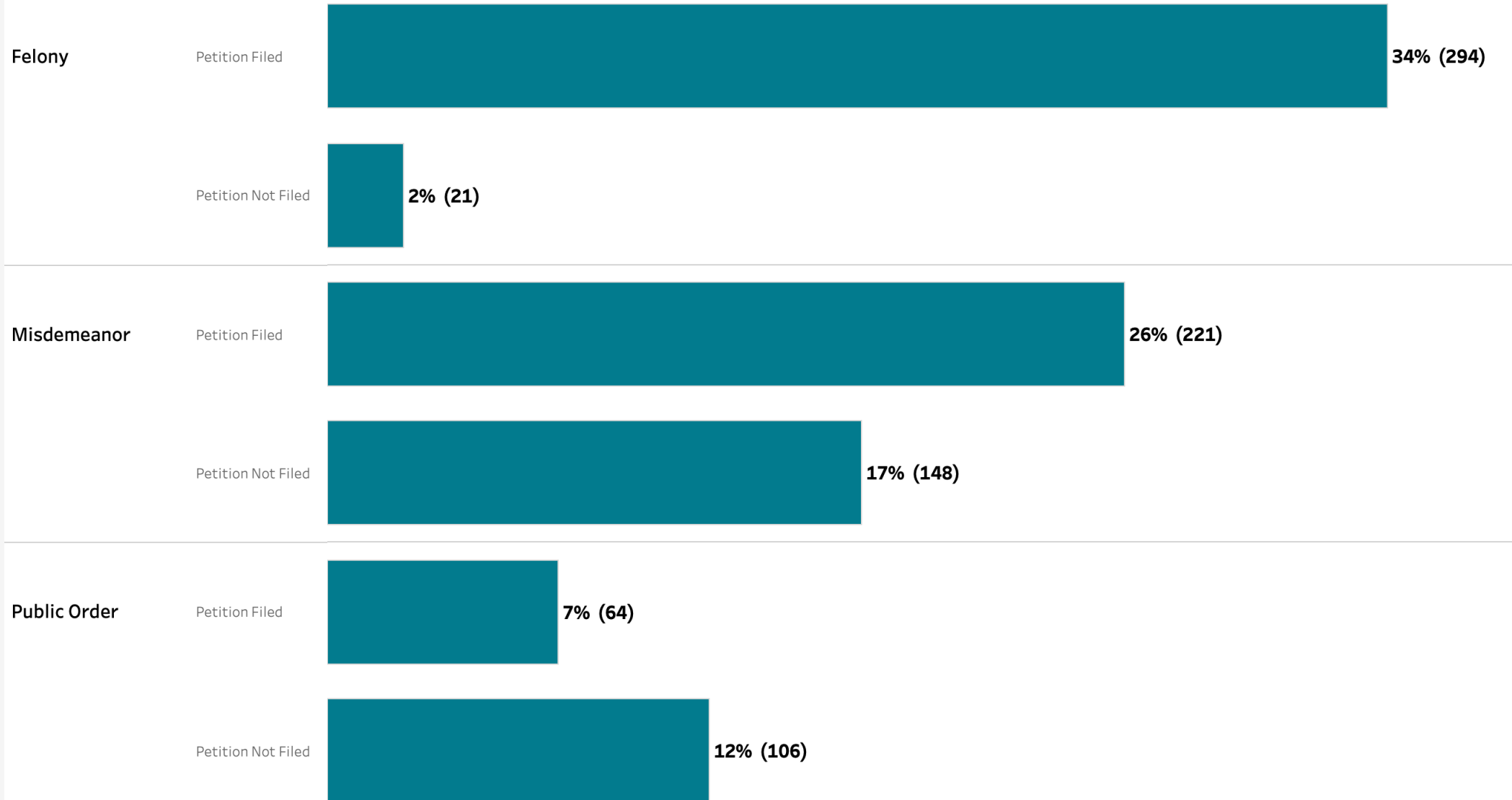
Referrals: Referral Outcomes

Referral Year
2022

Select Youth or Case Characteristic
Most Serious Offense Category

Select Computation
Across all Groups

Referral decision for 854 referrals broken down by Most Serious Offense Category





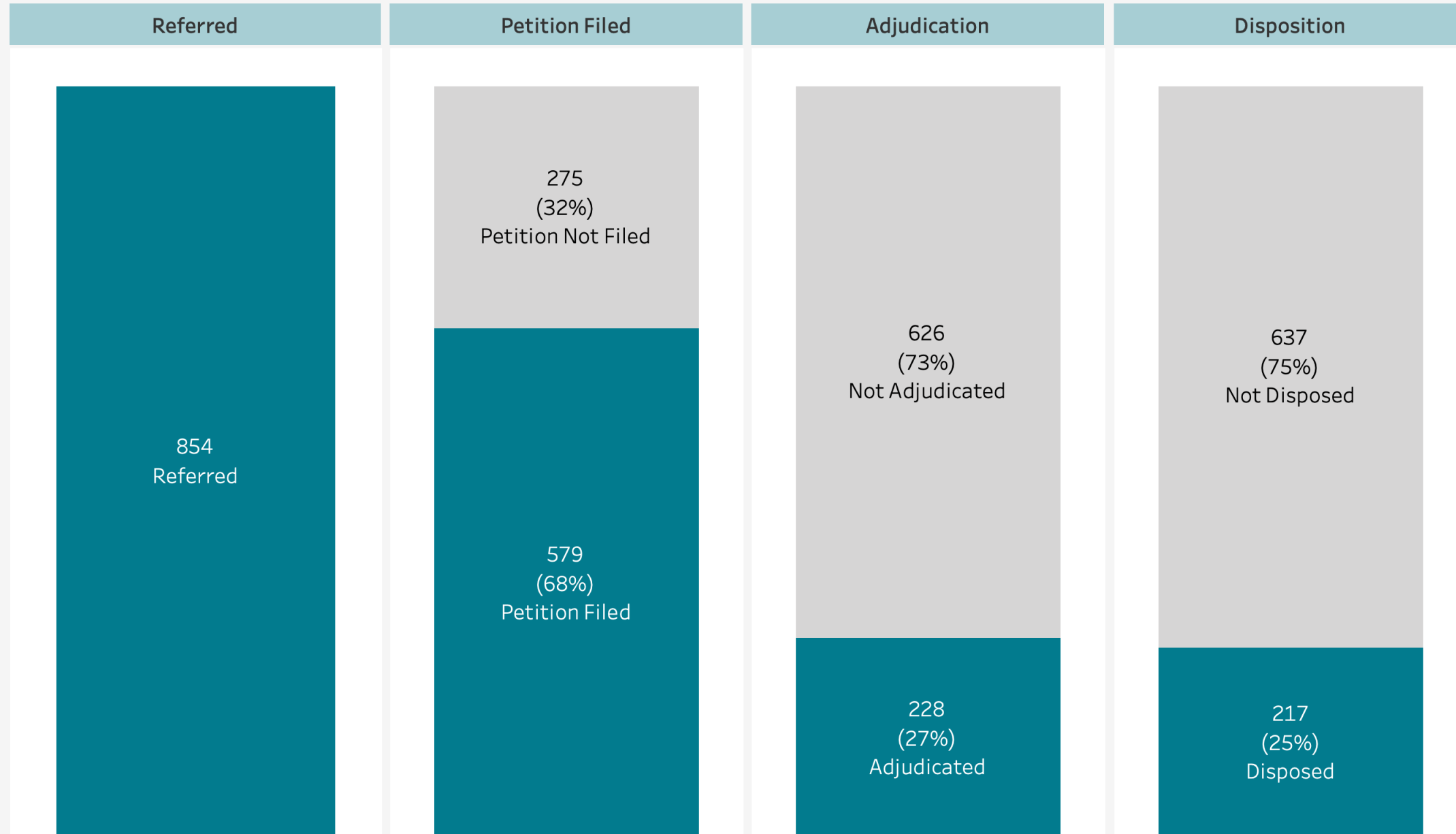
Referrals: Referral Outcomes

Referral Year
2022

Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

▼ Referrals

- Demographics
- Case Characteristics
- Offense Details - City
- Referral Source
- Frequency
- Race & Population
- Offense Overview
- Petitions
- Referral Outcome**
- Outcome - Characteristics
- Processing Times
- Processing Time - Source
- Processing Time Detail
- Referral Trends
- Process Time Trends
- QA Dates
- Asset Map





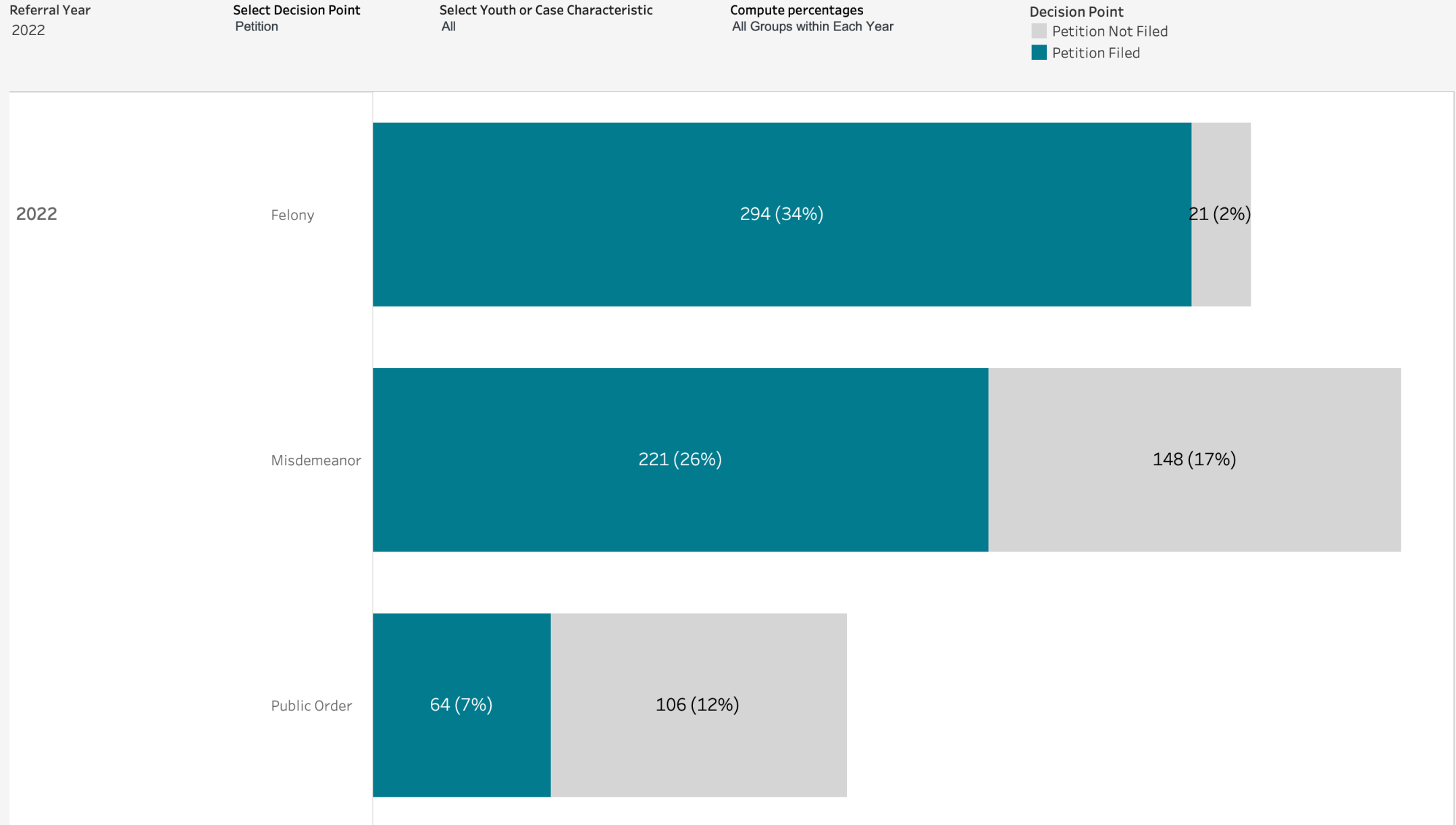
Referrals: Referral Outcomes by Characteristic

Includes all referrals and is not limited by the prior step.

Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

▼ Referrals

- Demographics
- Case Characteristics
- Offense Details - City
- Referral Source
- Frequency
- Race & Population
- Offense Overview
- Petitions
- Referral Outcome
- Outcome - Characteristics**
- Processing Times
- Processing Time - Source
- Processing Time Detail
- Referral Trends
- Process Time Trends
- QA Dates
- Asset Map





Referrals: Processing Times

Year Referral Received
All

Petition Filed Count
All

Referral Source
All

Select Average/Median
Median

Note: Referral dates after offense dates are not included.

Dataset Time Frame:
1/4/2022 - 12/30/2022

Incident to Referral Received

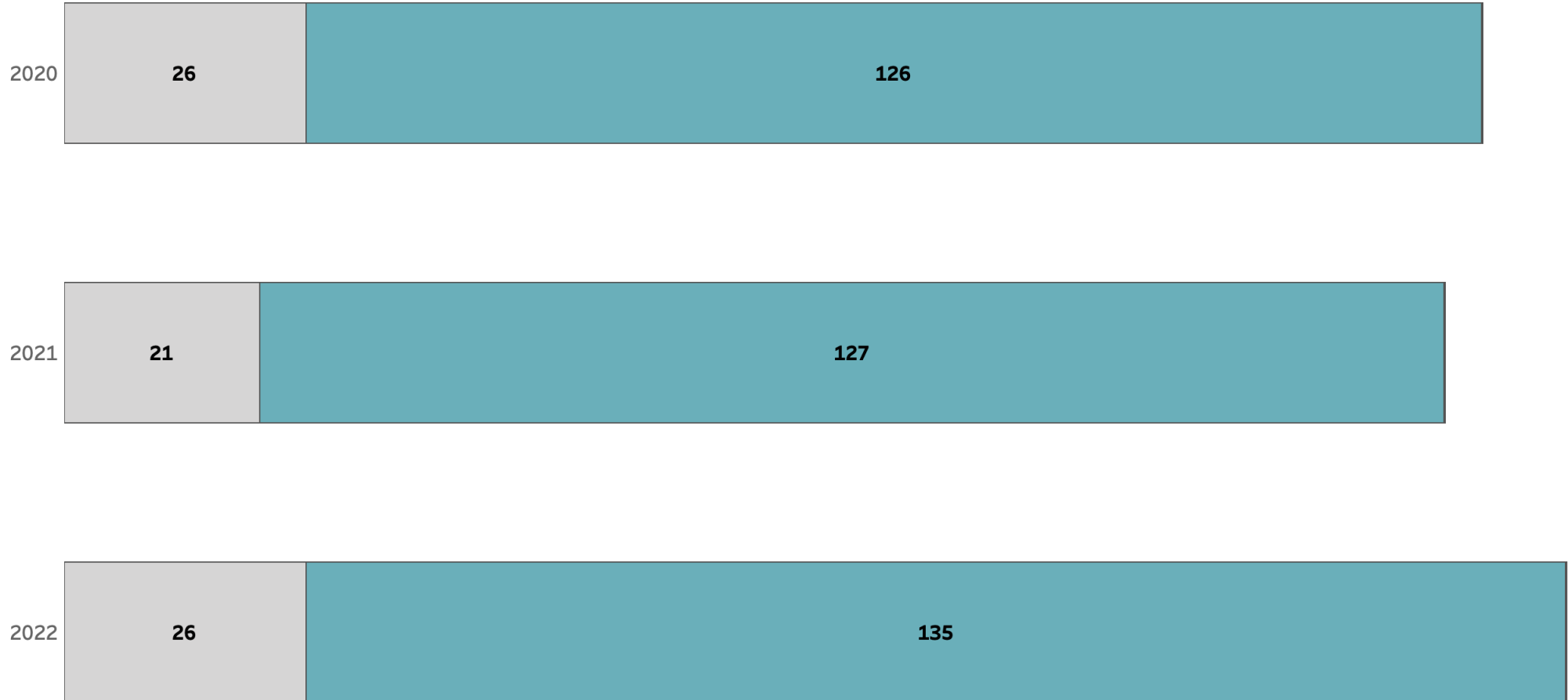
Referral Received to Petition

Petition to Adjudication

Adjudication to Disposition

▼ Referrals

- Demographics
- Case Characteristics
- Offense Details - City
- Referral Source
- Frequency
- Race & Population
- Offense Overview
- Petitions
- Referral Outcome
- Outcome - Characteristics
- Processing Times**
- Processing Time - Source
- Processing Time Detail
- Referral Trends
- LOS Trends
- QA Dates
- Asset Map



Appendix D: Youth Diversion Assessment Planning Committee Recommendations

**Youth Diversion Assessment Planning Committee
Recommendations**

The Delaware County Youth Diversion Planning Committee, through numerous dedicated meetings and collaborative efforts, developed a comprehensive set of recommendations to address critical community concerns about the local youth legal system. With the primary goal of promoting well-being among Delaware County's youth and families, these recommendations cover a broad spectrum of issues that demand prompt attention and action.¹

	Community Concern	Community Recommendation
Structural	Harmful media narratives Lack of counter-narrative programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in programs that shift the narrative. • Invest in a cultural shift.
	Racial bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track data on race and ethnicity throughout the system. • Provide training on racism and racial disparities to all people who work in or provide services for the youth legal system. • Create ways for Black and Brown communities to hold the youth legal system accountable for its actions. • Build trust, transparency, and collaboration with communities of color.
	Systems are siloed and efforts lack coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve collaboration and coordination of youth and family serving systems across Delaware County.(Youth Diversion Planning, Healthy Kids Healthy Schools, etc.).
Structural (Inclusive Partnerships)	Lack of commitment to youth involvement. Lack of youth involvement in decision making. Not enough young people's voices or representation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a paid Youth Advisory Board. • Invest in getting young people to the table when it comes to policy. • Invest in youth leadership development. • Involve young people in policy creation. • Get them involved. Give them a seat or many seats at the table. Give them a microphone.

¹ The Youth Diversion Planning Committee workshopped and submitted these recommendations in the language presented here. CCLP made only minor changes to ensure clarity and consistency with the committee's intended meaning, as confirmed during the workshop sessions and other meetings.

	Lack of family involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring families to the table.
	Lack of community empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build community organizing power. Support community candidates. Build a base of support.
Policy and Practice (System Responses)	System Responses More prevention versus intervention services Lack of involvement from the District Attorney and defenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on PREVENTION rather than responses to crime. Promote accountability without punishment. Develop alternative solutions. Restorative practices, restorative justice. Be proactive. Absent system stakeholders must get involved
	Lack of System/Community Bridges and Trust Cultural disconnect Lack of grace from parents to child, child to parent, officer to parent, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police and DA- Conduct assemblies in schools so youth won't be afraid, and they will know who the players are. Make it easier for police and young people to know each other and not be afraid. Implement training and other educational resources for specific groups.
	Poor Communication/ Lack of Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find new ways to get information out to the community (mass emails, others?).
	System Accountability -Too much checking boxes for youth once they are in the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold systems accountable for outcomes. Develop methods of accountability to our youth and system outcomes.
	Access to early prevention programming (no funding) Treatment is only accessible once a youth is diagnosed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate a grant writing position into the Courts/Juvenile to be able to develop and increase access to non-traditional programs like High Fidelity Wraparound and other EBM that do not fall into the treatment model which is funded by a BHMCO. Extend High Fidelity Wraparound to every child touching the CYS/JPO system (2 existing programs are currently very underutilized).
Programming Needs	Lack of art programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in the power and value of art for youth.
	Lack of resources for families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in family programs that strengthen the household.

Lack of awareness of resources- Youth and families are unaware of what's available in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a database and other mechanisms to disseminate information for resources. • Conduct canvassing for the database (canvass communities, and programs to find resources and to share resources).
No trainings available to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct trainings for communities to be certified in things like restorative justice and peer specialist programming.
Schools referring youth to youth legal system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement restorative approaches in schools to address minor infractions. Include peer-based and peer-supported approaches that reinforce positive peer connections and build community. • Avoid approaches that mirror or endorse the oppressive power dynamics of “traditional court practices” • Avoid approaches that negatively label youth or give their peers power over them. • Use Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools School Based Assessment Program as a means of early prevention
Lack of holistic mental health resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in holistic wellness programs and spaces. • Invest in mental health resources • Leverage colleges and universities to support needed research based on zip codes and how we can use that research to create solutions. • Implement Youth Mental Health Courts that prioritize treatment and youth wellbeing over control, compliance, and supervision. • Onboard the Juvenile Mental Health Treatment Court Model that was developed in 2019/2020
Lack of mental health resources	
Lack of mental health acknowledgment in the home	
Out-of-Home placement too often use as first option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement more diversionary programs such as YAP in more municipalities • Investment in community-centered restorative justice programs. • Implement a community decision-making process for out-of-home placement and legal system alternatives.
Over-reliance on punitive responses	
Youth and family peer support not available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer support programs works for young people and families- Credibility.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs like MY LIFE lend opportunity for youth to meet other youth who are experiencing similar hardships • Make programs and supports easily accessible with less bureaucracy. • Implement workshop/training to support youth and families to navigate the systems in which they are involved and help them access support and resources. • Multifamily circles. Restorative justice circles.
	Lack of structured community resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources and organizations that support the community should be based on immediate need of that community and should be measured. (need based planning)
	Lack of safe spaces for youth to “rise above” Need for more culturally identifiable role models., mentors, service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Resource Centers. Outreach services. YMCA. YWCA. Youth Build. Boys and Girls Clubs. PAL centers. • Advertising. Mass communications. Tap into schools, community Barber shops, churches, stores, et cetera. • Prioritize after school hours which are the most vulnerable, to allow for increased access and parent investment into sports, arts (Iceland Model)
	Workforce and economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs. Opportunities to make money. Vocational training. • Create opportunity. • Help youth find their value and worth. Y • Youth want and need to know how they can “get there”.
Material Needs	Lack of housing resources for youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in housing for young people
	Food instability and other needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct food drives in every area of Delaware County twice a month. • Conduct clothing drives and baby showers for mothers in need.
	Living wages for families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No solutions proposed.

Youth Diversion Assessment Planning Committee- Major Themes

CCLP carefully distilled the recommendations from the Delaware County Youth Justice Planning Committee into five main themes. These themes represent the core ideas behind the proposed actions, offering a clear and organized approach to address various challenges affecting the local youth legal system. This distillation provides a focused direction for improving the youth legal system and youth well-being in Delaware County.

Structural

Coordination and Collaboration: Coordinate and share resources across child-serving systems to meet needs outside of the youth legal system and achieve better outcomes for youth and families.

Narrative Transformation: Shift harmful media narratives about youth and youth crime to foster positive cultural change.

Racism and Racial Disparities: Acknowledge that racism is a structural problem that affects all aspects of the youth legal system,

Structural: Inclusive Partnerships

Youth Empowerment: Establish paid Youth Advisory Boards and involve young people in decision-making processes.

Community Engagement: Ensure families and communities are actively involved in shaping systems through leadership development.

System Role: Transform systems by shifting to a culture that shares power and decision-making with and is accountable to impacted communities.

Policy and Practice: System Responses

Preventive and Restorative Focus: Focus on prevention services rather than reactive interventions. Focus on rehabilitation and restoration, rather than punishment and incarceration.

Limit Incarceration: Incarceration harms youth, families, and communities. Reserve detention and secure placement as a last resort, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

Prevent Unnecessary Entry and Movement Deeper Into the Legal System: Expand access to diversion by implementing policies that make diversion the default option. Divert youth from the legal system as early as possible to avoid collateral harms and consequences of legal system involvement.

Accountability and Trust: Promote accountability without punitive measures, enhance community trust, and ensure transparent communication.

Programming Needs

Investment in Youth: Support youth through art programs, training opportunities, and mental health resources.

Resource Accessibility: Create databases and awareness to ensure communities know about available resources.

Community Training: Offer programs that empower the community with essential skills to prevent youth legal system involvement, including restorative justice.

Material Needs

Youth Supportive Infrastructure: Invest in housing and essential resources for youth. Support family well-being as the foundation of youth well-being.

Community Assistance: Conduct regular drives to address basic needs like food, clothing, and material support for families in need.