
INNOVATIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE STRATEGIES

A quarterly newsletter brought to you by the CJCC Strategic Planning Committee

THIRD QUARTER 2021

Juvenile Justice Reform

Where: North Dakota

Program: The Juvenile Court Act

https://csgjusticecenter.org/2021/05/14/north-dakota-modernizes-juvenile-justice-system/?mc_cid=504e374df2&mc_eid=3caf625d58

In response to high rates of juvenile justice involvement and recommendations from the Council of State Governments Justice Center, North Dakota passed House Bill 1035. The Juvenile Court Act intends to better serve youth by creating categories among juvenile populations to give more clarity on how to handle each type of case. These categories are juvenile delinquency, deprivation, and child welfare. In addition, the Act modifies the classification of an “unruly child” to a “child in need of services,” which gives youth access to social services without formal involvement in the justice system. The Act assumes all youth are indigent and therefore allows all youth a right to counsel instead of determining representation based on a parents’ economic status. HB 1035 requires the use of evidence-supported assessment tools for decisions on diversion and placement and limits the use of out-of-home placement. North Dakota Rep. Lawrence Klemin states that HB 1035 aligns with research and evidence and will aid the state in targeting services to those who need it and successfully support youth.

Recidivism

Where: Massachusetts

Program: Justice UTEC’s Transitional Employment Program

https://csgjusticecenter.org/2021/04/27/investments-to-reduce-recidivism-help-young-adults-in-massachusetts/?mc_cid=fd4ba0c946&mc_eid=3caf625d58

UTEC has created a transitional employment program for high-risk young adults with the goal of lowering recidivism rates. With the knowledge that young adults account for a high percentage of arrests, Massachusetts has expanded investments, providing nearly \$2 million to UTEC to reduce recidivism. UTEC’s transitional employment program works by offering paid work experience in three different enterprises designed to develop skills that can be carried over into other workplaces. In addition to workplace education and skills development, UTEC also offers access to free childcare, parenting workshops, and mental health and substance abuse counseling. Employment at UTEC Mattress Recycling demonstrates accountability, positive communication, and teamwork. UTEC’s food service facilities teach about culinary and hospitality skills. Basic design and construction knowledge is highlighted in UTEC’s Woodworking enterprise. Participants in this program are linked with UTEC at the beginning of their probation period and receive case management for a minimum of two years. This program has been stated to have commendable results by the Massachusetts Probation Services Commissioner and, although a bit stifled due to the pandemic, UTEC has managed to continue to provide services remotely through the distribution of Chromebooks.

Reducing Substance Use

Where: King County, Washington

Program: King County Drug Diversion Court

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/when-crimes-are-mixed-with-addiction-drug-court-offers-solutions/>

King County Drug Diversion Court (KCDDC) is a program developed for those charged with felony crimes committed in order to finance a substance-use disorder. Once the program is completed, all charges are dismissed. KCDDC relies upon contingency management which is an evidence-based practice that requires regular hearings, frequent drug testing, and outlines clear expectations with rewards and consequences. KCDDC provides substance-use disorder treatment, medications for opioid users, and anything else participants need to be successful such as bus passes to get to treatment, a phone for telehealth, and transitional housing. Data show that KCDDC reduces recidivism rates, decreases homelessness, and increases employment. In addition, KCDDC’s crime reduction results translated into taxpayer return of investment of \$4 for every \$1 spent on the program.
