



JJDPC Quarterly Inter-Agency Meeting
Minutes

April 13, 2023

Location: Rustin Conference Center (Entrance 1)
2085 Rustin Ave., Riverside, CA 92507

IN ATTENDANCE (In-Person): Christopher Collopy, Laurel Cook, Micheal Malsed, Natasha Dunlap, Christopher Wright, Elisa Judy, Jennifer Kopfler, Marcus Cannon, Mark Petersen, Cynthia Magill, Joelle Moore, Melinda Moore, Jessica Munoz, Paul Parker, Charles Trembley, Tierra Trembley, Norma Biegel, Lynette Jones, Sharon Morris, Carolina Ayala, Brian Ortiz, Shannon Crosby, Natalie Rivera, Melissa Cushman, Jessie Kelly, Deanna McCarty, Brandon Burns

ABSENT: Pam Torres

GUEST: Brian Ortiz, Jessie Kelly

APPLICANTS: Brian Ortiz

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 9:34 am.
2. **Welcome and Introductions**
 - a. All the participants were welcomed by Chair Commissioner Christopher Collopy, and given the opportunity to introduce themselves (by name and title).
3. **Riverside County Probation - Chief Deputy Probation Officer (CDPO), Elisa Judy**
 - a. Updates / Highlights / Staffing:
 - i. DJJ is officially closing June 30, 2023, and DJJ youth will be returning. Staff are working diligently to ensure a safe and smooth transition for youth to return to the community. Approximately four (4) youth will remain in a secure setting. The returning youth will be housed at Indio juvenile hall.
 - ii. Probation is continuing to work on less restrictive or step down for Pathways youth. Pathways is currently at capacity, with thirty-one (31) youth, males and females, housed at the YTEC facility. Pathways serves as a substitute for DJJ youth
 - iii. YTEC success. During the last quarter, a field trip to Cal Poly Pomona. YTEC, juniors and seniors had a tour of the campus, received college swag that they are now proudly wearing.
 - iv. Underground Scholars have partnered with RCOE, and will be at YTEC today for a College and Career Fair for youth to learn more about college, and for youth not be looking for an educational path. Probation is still in partnership with the department of rehabilitation, and The California Family Life Center for employment opportunities for youth in custody. Commissioners were invited to attend today's College and Career Fair.
 - v. Taking part, at today's fair for youth to explore careers in vocational fields, include over fourteen (14) vendors e.g., Welding opportunities, Gateway College and Career Academy, Moreno Valley Youth Opportunity Center, MVC Public Safety, Project Rebound, California State, San Bernardino, Riverside City College scholars, Public Defenders Office, etc., it was noted the Barbering school there last week.
 - vi. Youth graduation season is underway. The department has several graduations taking place, both on campus and off grounds, and commissioners were invited to attend graduations.
4. **Riverside County Probation - Assistant Chief Probation Officer (ACPO), Christopher H. Wright**
 - a. Project Updates:
 - i. Currently, looking at plans for the future vocational programs planned at YTEC. Probation has received the first schematics, design specs and various options, and have met with Judge Petersen to review options, e.g., auto mechanics, computer skills, etc. YTEC vocational program completion is slated for 2025. Until such time, Probation will be looking at bridging vocational gaps for the youth.
 - ii. ACPO Christopher H. Wright, briefly discussed daily operations of the department, and moving forward during the process and selection of the Riverside County's new Chief Probation Officer. Chair Collopy, thanked him for taking the time to meet with members of the commission earlier this week.
5. **Riverside County Probation - Chief Deputy Probation Officer (CDPO), Natalie Rivera**
 - a. Introduction:
 - i. Introduction of Division Director Shannon Crosby, who has taken over the Special Services Division.
 - a. Current total: Twenty-eight (28) youth in STRTP placement, one (1) in a resource family home, forty-one (41) non-minor dependence mixed in foster care, twenty-seven (27) youth have dual status with DPSS as the placement agency.
 - b. Staffing Updates:
 - i. CDPO, Natalie Rivera shared, The dependents will soon be scheduling quarterly staff meetings for all Juvenile staff to attend with Judge Peterson. Judge Petersen will go over staff expectations for reports, staff will be able to ask questions, and submit topic ideas. Meetings are intended to assure everyone is on the same page.
 - ii. ACPO, Christopher H. Wright, extended an invitation to the Commission to attend any of the upcoming staff meetings with Judge Petersen, to present and share the JJDPC commission purpose and mission.



6. Riverside County Behavioral Health - Deputy Director, Marcus Cannon

- a. Highlights / Updates
 - i. Behavioral Health recently established a Continuous Quality Improvement Meeting (CQI), with participation from various agencies, and is specific to juveniles' needs. Expanding and improving medication management is among one of the priority topics of the meetings.
 - ii. The Department of Health Care Services has announced benefits that will go live next year, allowing for Medicaid reimbursement for health care services provided in adult and juvenile institutions. Mr. Cannon provided a brief description of the steps: Behavioral Health, Correctional agencies and Justice agencies, for the preparation phase of the rollout process.
 - iii. Behavioral Health, Probation, and The Department of Public Social Service recently worked together to submit an application to the Department of Health Care services for funding. Funding would be used to transform and or change the electronic health records systems to prepare for billing opportunities. Mr. Cannon will keep the group updated about whether or not funds were successfully awarded.
 - iv. The City of Riverside, the department of behavioral health, as well as a construction partner, is working on a youth permanent housing location in the city of Riverside. The project will be known as Aspire Apartments. A ground breaking/ribbon cutting was held this week. There will be thirty-two (32) units designed primarily to serve transitional aged youth that are 18 to 25 years of age, who are Community College students with a history of homelessness. Mid-2024 is the target completion date for project completion. He noted behavioral health will be on site as the service provider.
 - v. Mr. Cannon, briefly, touched on the Crisis Support System of Care data Report, which was discussed at the last quarterly meeting. The report will be shared with the group after today's meeting.
 - vi. Further conversation ensued on housing transition for transitional age youth, once they are over the age of twenty-five (25) and still in supportive housing.

7. Riverside County Superior Court – Judge, Mark Petersen

- a. Highlights / Updates:
 - i. Recap of future YTEC vocational program plans.
 - ii. Currently, three (3) judicial officers are handling juvenile justice cases, one (1) in each region. Presently, there are (5) 5 Dependency judges, two (2) in Southwest, two (2) in Riverside, and one (1) in Indio.
 - iii. At present, caseloads for judges are between three-hundred (300), topping out at about six-hundred (600) cases per judge throughout the county. Dependency is closer to five hundred fifty (550), to six-hundred (600) per judge, and delinquency is closer to two hundred eighty-five (285) to three-hundred (300) per judge.
 - iv. Juvenile dependency cases have been trending higher for these last few months. It was noted last year dependency cases had trended higher. Juvenile delinquency cases were staying about the same, with a slight downward trend. The numbers are holding firm, keeping judges very busy.
 - v. A new judge, Judge Rushton, will start Monday in Southwest, and he will handle dependency cases.
 - vi. DJJ officially closes on June 30th. Seventeen Riverside County youth are in the DJJ facility. In April, May and June, youths will come back for hearings. Currently, no reports have been presented to the judge. Decisions on whether a DJJ youth will remain in/out of custody have not been rendered.
 - vii. Further discussed, judges appointed from Sacramento to fill vacancies. Reasonable caseloads, per judge, and new Indio courthouse delays.

8. Riverside County Office on Education (RCOE), Deanna McCarty

- a. Highlights / Updates:
 - i. Dates, times and locations were provided for this year's graduation season. Commissioners were invited to attend graduations.
 - ii. Reports utilized to look the juvenile system showed a 98% graduation rate last year for the students in the juvenile court systems and schools
 - iii. Juvenile system and juvenile court students have completed one (1) semester, with the University of California of Riverside (UCR) courses. One third of students enrolled in alternative education in juvenile halls passed those classes with a C or above.
- b. Support Updates:
 - i. Targeting and identifying tribal foster youth to ascertain more intense support and build relationships with the Tribal Alliance. Currently, only 7% of Tribal foster students are identified statewide.
 - ii. Communication with agencies e.g., Probation, Behavioral Health, DPSS and Tribal, etc., to get data sharing agreements in place for data resources and reports between all agencies. This is also, the time of year for the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).
- c. Staffing/Training:



- i. For assistance with the DJJ realignment, RCOE is looking at the appropriate steps to assure staffing is appropriate, to meet student needs, coming back to school requires high school programming. Additionally, noted RCOE also provides support to the Pathways to Success graduates.
- ii. Further discussed, state's operations committee, other county probation relationships and DJJ realignment operations. She emphasized being on the JJDC committee allows RCOE to see the importance of communication between across agencies in order to best serve our youth.

9. The Happier Life Project - Executive Director, Carolina Ayala

- a. Overview/Updates:
 - i. The Happier Life Project is a non-profit recovery community organization in the community. Serving individuals and families impacted by substance-use disorder in Riverside County. Bringing services and shared lived experience to the community, to help serve and assist in the community, and is currently with Oak Grove.
 - ii. Recovery coaches (some) are interns from Cal State San Marcos and Cal State San Bernardino that will work with the Family Justice Center.
 - iii. The Happier Life Project, serves all of Riverside County, provides no cost, peer-based recovery support, offers support groups e.g., My Future Epic, teaches life skills for youth, Community Reinforcement approach and family training (CRAFT), a behavior therapy approach in psychotherapy for treating addiction developed by Robert J. Myers. The Happier Life Project is involved in community events like recovery socials, and often gathers in the community with the youth for one-on-one support.
 - iv. No clinicians are on staff. However, they work with other partners that provide clinical services.
 - v. Contact information: <https://thehappierlifeproject.org/> or (888) 638-8457

10. Riverside County Counsel – Attorney, Melissa Cushman

- a. Updates:
 - i. No updates

11. Operation Safe House, Inc. - Norma Biegel

- a. Overview/Updates:
 - i. Operation Safe House, Inc. is countywide and provides emergency shelter, intervention and outreach services to runaways, homeless and other youth in crises.
 - ii. In Riverside during the last 3 months, we served 37 youth with 211 plus individual hours. Eighteen families received 37.5 with 311 bed nights for the youth. In the desert, 28 youth over the last 3 months with 163 individual hours, 18 families, we serve 31.5 family hours and 331 bed nights.
 - iii. Operations Safe House, Emergency Shelter - A four (4) bed emergence shelter with a transitional living program for young adults 18 to 21, was in danger of closing because of loss of funding. They have since been able to secure funding from the county and will now be able to sustain operations for another year.
 - iv. Operation Safe House, received funding from the Riverside county, for a pilot program with Molina health Care. The additional funding is for outreach teams to be on the streets to offer services and shelter.
 - v. Ms. Biegel, shared a large squishmallow with the group. She noted Operation SafeHouse uses squishmallows as therapy tools to offer comfort and support to youth. Furthermore, she shared the names of two (2) books: Where's Mom Now That I Need Her?, and Where's Dad Now That I Need Him? The books are filled with great information and helpful tips for anyone. It was noted Operation Safe House, has received payment from Probation.

12. Community Care Licensing (CCL) - Licensing Program Manager, Natasha Dunlap

- a. Updates:
 - i. Governor's Executive Orders extension allowing facilities to obtain a mental health contract and accreditation is ending on June 30, 2023. Facilities must complete and maintain accreditation and enter into a mental health contract with the County.
 - ii. There are three (3) to four (4) facilities in the Riverside region which have not obtained either their mental health approval or accreditation. Facilities who have not obtained approval have either chosen not to take the necessary steps to obtain approval or were denied by the county. Those facilities will need to let Community Care Licensing know if they will be reverting back to group home facilities or if they will be closing.
 - iii. As part of the executive order, those facilities will need to be in substantial compliance, and provide CCL with updates. If facilities do decide to revert back to group homes, they would more than likely become private pay or regional centers.
 - iv. Each of the three (3) to four (4) facilities have a capacity to house six (6). The locations are in Riverside, Perris, Escondido. It was noted, one (1) youth is placed in the county (Perris, CA), the other youth has all been placed outside of Riverside county. Noted youth placed outside of county facilities usually have different services that can better meet the youth's treatment needs.



13. Kids in Konflikt (KIK) – Executive Director, Lynette Jones

- a. Overview/Updates:
- i. Services from December until current, 1026 referral received, of those 811 youth were served. With a staff of five (5), and four (4) non-paid interns, with two being Spanish speaking. Additionally, KIK, has put in 4973 hours, with a success rate of 361 youth or 97.8% that have completed their classes, 364 youth or 97.1% have completed the program, and 333 kiddos or 99.4 that have completed their assignments. It was noted that a large influx of referrals, as of late, have come from Murrieta and Temecula.
 - ii. Programs consist of twelve (12) different components, e.g., 8 week and the 2 hour victim awareness, gang awareness sets, offender awareness, life skills, parenting, domestic violence awareness, healthy boundaries relationships, tutoring, and mentoring services that are all free of charge. Most classes are online but are also offered in person throughout Riverside county.
 - iii. Partnering with The Urban Conservation Corps (UCC). UCC offers employment for the youth, (aged 16 to 24). UCC is an accredited school, offers youth an opportunity to get their high school, and offers green jobs. KIK, will have a representative at UCC, once a month for more information and resources.
 - iv. KIK, will be at the Youth Opportunity Center (YOC), in Rubidoux starting in May, every Wednesday from 1:00pm to 5:00pm.
 - v. Preparing for the annual summit, to be held on June 28th, at the YOC center. KIK will be sending out invitations, and all are welcome to attend.
 - vi. KIK, recently paid for behind the wheel training, and the driving and written DMV test for six of the of the youth. Additionally, they are preparing for their upcoming graduation, and have paid for caps and gowns for two (2) youth graduating, as well as helping other youth with their prom items and more.
 - vii. Staff are continuing training e.g., Trauma Informed training, Post COVID training.
 - viii. KIC, goes every Thursday, to YTEC, and Pathways and work with two (2) female youth from each of those programs.
 - ix. Further conversation ensued on: staff experience and community partnerships for gang and substance abuse intervention. For more information on KIC's services/resources, please call the 24-hour line 951-961-5066. That's our 24 hour, which accepts both text messages and phone calls. The office number is 951-500-1294, Monday through Friday from 10:00 am and 8:00 PM.

14. Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) - Director of Public Social Services, Jennifer Kopfler

- a. Updates:
- i. Calls to the hotline were down in December, January, February, and March saw an increase in calls as it does every year. This resulted in additional warrants, and an increase of youth coming into care.
 - ii. DPSS continues to hire and hold training overlapping induction classes for social workers. As of the end of December and thus-far, DPSS has brought in just under two hundred forty (240) new workers. The target is three hundred and thirty-nine (339) for just social worker classification.
 - iii. The average caseload for social workers working with families is approximately thirty (30). New investigations at about eighteen (18). On average, about seventy-five (75) warrants per month and not many are being denied. Placement continues to be the biggest challenge.
 - iv. Prevention Services Referrals – Through FFPFA funding, allows DPSS to evaluate out those to provide upfront services that would otherwise become an investigation, and direct them to Prevention Services with the goal of preventing them from coming into care.
 - v. DPSS is developing an office for Health and Wellness, to address and assist secondary traumatic stress of social workers who provide services.
 - vi. Partnership between Riverside and San Bernardino counties. AB 153 Children's Crisis Continuum pilot program. A joint effort with San Bernardino County Probation, Children Services and Behavioral Health was awarded a \$10,000,000.00 grant. Riverside County was one of one of the few counties to be awarded the grant. The partnership with San Bernardino is a joint effort to look at what would be an ideal continuum of care for a seamless transition of services for youth to step up or step down into placement. DPSS leases cottages on Childhelp's property. Their welcome center is also on the property and is where children with complex needs are awaiting placement.
 - vii. DPSS leases cottages on Childhelp's property. Their welcome center is also on the property and is where children with complex needs are awaiting placement. Currently, three (3) youth are placed at Childhelp, and Childhelp is one facility that, in all probability, will not be renewing their mental health contract. Ms. Kopfler noted only the property and facilities are utilized, and Childhelp does not provide any services.
 - viii. Further discussed, placement struggles for Probation due to state requirements, and the closing of Group homes who are willing to be certified and state funding to assist them with that process. Social worker hiring and retention.



15. Voices for Children – Jessica Muñoz, President and CEO

a. Updates:

- i. Ms. Muñoz, noted she was promoted to President and CEO effective March 1st, and Ms. Sharron Morris has been promoted to Managing Director, and Ms. Morris will be attending the Commission meetings as the primary representative.
- ii. To date, they have served 440 children with CASA volunteers for this fiscal year and we are on track to exceed yet again year on year the number of children who served last year which is 486.
- iii. Recently, they're kicked off a recruitment campaign in both San Diego and Riverside county in honor of foster care month, which is May, to recruit 100 more volunteers, and we exceed that number.
- iv. CASA is still in need of more male and Latino volunteers. Ms. Morris put the word out that they are still recruiting CASA volunteers, and if anyone is one of any locations for CASA to speak, set up booths and post fliers to please let them know. Noted was it would be a conflict for most at today's meeting to become a CASA.
- v. The Pechanga Band of Indians approached CASA, and asked if we would join their CASA program. They graciously accepted, signed an MOU, and assigned the first CASA volunteer to a sovereign nation, youth last week.
- vi. A brief discussion ensued about CASA training and background checks for volunteers.

16. Office of the Public Defender – Attorney, Joelle Moore

a. Updates /Overview / Highlights:

- i. An overview of the SPARK (Support, Partnerships, Advocacy and Resources for Kids) program, and the JJCC funding, renewed for next year.
- ii. In the first quarter last year, SPARK received thirty-seven (37) referrals. This year's first quarter, they received one-hundred and twenty-four (124) new client referrals, and numbers are expanding rapidly.
- iii. SPARK is targeting efforts, and prioritizing services in some higher-need areas e.g., Metro Riverside, Moreno Valley, Perris Unified school district etc.
- iv. Expanding partnerships and attending planning meetings to expand to various communities and to be part of the discussion to prevent or shorten interaction with the juvenile justice system.
- v. Brief review of AB 740, requiring school officials to contact council at the time of suspension and prior to any disciplinary meetings for any foster youth, including youth who are subject to a juvenile court petition, youth on probation, or active petition, etc. In order for the council to take part with and to contribute to the process, offer help and guidance, and provide options available for the youth and their families.
- vi. Establishing a Miranda program under SB 395 and SB 203 that requires any youth, under the age of 18, to be provided with an attorney's advisement before they waive their constitutional Miranda rights.

b. Staffing/Training:

- i. Focusing on recruitment and retention. The unit has seen a loss of seasoned attorneys to the bench, other agencies, and other counties. Currently, The Public Defender Office is filling vacancies to maximize services, and revamping orientation and training programs.
- ii. Joelle Moore provided additional information on SB 395 and SB 203 funding, upcoming Legislation, Public Defender's Office and Juvenile Defense Panel representation, School district awareness of statewide legal requirement of youth with 602 status.
- iii. A brief run-down of The Project Graduate Program run by The Riverside County Bar Association and the Riverside Superior Court.

17. Juvenile Defense Panel (JDP) – Attorney, Brandon Burns

a. Updates/Overview/Highlights:

- i. No Updates

18. Meeting adjourned by unanimous vote at 11:31am

19. Next Meeting:

Date: July 13, 2023

Time: 9:30 am

Location: Rustin Conference Center (Entrance 1) Room # 1056

2085 Rustin Ave., Riverside, CA 92507