

# 2022 YSB/JRB LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS



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A comprehensive analysis of the current capacity and functioning  
of the Youth Service Bureaus and Juvenile Review Boards of Connecticut



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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

# 2022 YSB/JRB LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

**Youth Service Bureau (YSBs) and Juvenile Review Boards (JRBS)** are a network of local prevention and intervention agencies that work to support the positive growth and development of youth in their communities. Numerous state mandates currently exist that guide the work of these organizations. However, as a network of mostly small, independent, community-focused organizations it has been as yet unclear how aligned the state as a whole is with regard to the existing state mandates.

A clear picture of the current capacity and functioning will provide a critical framework for developing system-level change. A better understanding of common barriers and opportunities that exist across the state will enable more directed and effective support to be provided to organizations. Together, this information will help strengthen the network of YSBs and JRBS within the state and will ultimately benefit the youth of Connecticut. This project had three goals (1) uncover the current landscape of YSBs and JRBS, (2) determine how their work aligns with current state mandates, and (3) identify factors that may support their work.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- By and large, YSBs and JRBS are fulfilling state mandates.
- YSBs and JRBS would benefit from support regarding data collection and use, access to services, staff training, and expansion of standards and guidelines.
- A number of common traits of YSBs and JRBS were found to correlate with more alignment to state mandates including a community-focus, strong relationships with community partners/ families, and a strong knowledge/experience base.

## SUMMATIVE STATS

### YSBS

Youth needs are expanding and becoming more complex.

On average, YSBs have **14** community partners

**58%** have expanded their direct service offerings

**59%** have seen no growth in their yearly budget

**51%** say their community partners have not expanded programming

**76%** say that there is unmet need of youth in their communities

### JRBS

Having a well training board with clear roles and responsibilities is critical.

**69%** report consistently utilizing at least some restorative practices

**56%** provide onboarding training to members but only **17%** provide training around preventing bias and preconceived ideas

Gender diversity is found on **94%** of JRBS, racial and ethnic diversity is found on **66%** of boards while sexuality diversity is only found on **27%** of boards

**19%** have guidelines on what is considered unfair and inequitable practices

**16%** have a member probationary period, **16%** require background checks, **29%** have term limits for serving



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## YSB RESULTS

YSBs across the state are typically aligned with current state mandates, with the most alignment in completing ACU Functions, working as their town(s) “community hub”, and promoting equity and inclusion in their organization and community.

Organizations would benefit from more support in training of staff, data collection/use, establishing additional standard practices, and working to identify, match, and access services that address youth needs.

Numerous factors were found to correlate with better alignment with current state mandates, including having more community partners, more core staff, and more experience directors. Organizations with larger total budgets and budgets less dependent on funds provided from DCF also tended to have more alignment with mandates. YSBs, serving larger towns and urban districts with larger total populations, larger population under 20, higher population mobility, and higher enrollment tended to have more alignment with current state mandates.

## JRB RESULTS

JRBs across the state are typically aligned with current state best practices, with most alignment in engaging with youth and families, incorporating restorative practices, utilizing standards and guidelines, and utilizing data to drive the process.

Organizations would benefit from more support in training of staff/volunteers, development of customized service plans for youth, and ensuring equity and diversity are a focus throughout the process.

Numerous factors correlated with better alignment with current best practices, including having more community services available, frequent use of CYSA Protocols and Procedures Manual, and the availability of restorative training for board members. Organization, serving districts from larger towns, and those with larger total populations, larger population under 20, and higher population mobility tended to correlate with more alignment.

## Acknowledgements

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Increasing access to service and partnerships

A focus on filling in the gaps and expanding the options will be needed to ensure solutions work regardless of location in the state, size of the organization, or structure of the organization. Recommendations included addressing waitlists for services throughout the state, exploring existing statewide options to close current service gaps, investing in transportation options to help connect youth with services, and working to increase capacity of organizations to network.

### Expanding training, guidelines, and protocols

Finding ways to deliver content across the state and broadening the methods for accessing information will help build a knowledge base and ensure consistent and thorough delivery of services and support. Recommendations included developing agreed upon processes and standards for YSBs and explicit guidance on CYSA Protocols and Procedures for JRBs, developing a repository of reading material and virtual on-demand trainings regards both youth-facing and non-youth-facing skills, and clarifying accountability standards and DCF's authority to address those standards.

### Aligning data collection and use

An overhaul of data management is required across the state and will require change over multiple years, but first there must be alignment on what data will be collected, how it will be collected, and how it will be used. Recommendations include aligning on outcome metrics to be utilized in conjunction with a standardized set of screening tools, determining how success will be measured across the state and what data will be collected to track progress, and investing in improving system wide data collection and analysis.

### Enhancing organizational dynamics

Flexibility in some organizational dynamics is required so each organization can adjust to meet the needs of their community. Recommendations include more flexibility around budgetary spending, the creation of focus/affinity groups across the state, expanding options for youth needs screening, and exploring methods to reduce staff burn-out and increase staff retention.



## SUMMARY

Youth Service Bureaus (YSBs) and Juvenile Review Boards (JRBs) have existed in Connecticut for decades. YSBs are local prevention and intervention agencies that promote wellbeing and positive youth development within their community. A JRB is a community-based diversion process that is utilized in most towns across the state as an alternative to juvenile court involvement for low-risk youth offenders. Both YSBs and JRBs work to improve youth outcomes through the identification of individual and/or community needs, the creation of and/or referral of youth to effective programming, and the continued monitoring of youth progress. In 2019, the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, in collaboration with a Connecticut statewide task force, began working to develop recommendations to improve the state's juvenile justice system through alignment of effective policies and practices with resource allocation by utilizing data driven research. Following a year of data collection and analysis, the CSG and state task force developed a comprehensive list of recommendations that aimed to address improving the juvenile justice system in Connecticut from a variety of directions and starting points. One such starting point was a focus on the YSBs and JRBs across the state. One set of recommendations proposed a "thorough evaluation of the current landscape of these organizations with regard to alignment with current state mandates, policies, and practices." **This project had three goals: (1) develop a complete picture of the landscape of YSBs and JRBs to build a comprehensive understanding of common practices, challenges, and bright spots of organizations across the state, (2) determine how the work of these organizations aligns with current state mandates, and (3) uncover insights into factors that may be contributing to success and/or creating barriers for the work to be accomplished. This report presents the results of that work. The major takeaways of the project focus on three key areas:**

1. By and large YSBs and JRBs are fulfilling state mandates, even though youth needs have significantly increased within recent years.
2. Both YSBs and JRBs would benefit from expanded support at the state level especially in areas of data collection and use, enhancing access to services, and expanding training, guidelines, and protocols.
3. Key factors that correlate with more alignment with state mandates for both YSBs and JRBs are organizations that are culturally competent, have localized community-focus, have established communication strategies, have strong relationships with partners and families, have experience and/or an in-depth knowledge base to draw from, and have a focus on customizing organizational dynamics wherever possible to help ensure the work can always focus on maximizing youth success.



## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT







## BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

### History of YSBs and JRBs

Today there are more than 100 YSBs and over 90 JRBs spread across the state. Combined, these organizations serve youth and families in approximately 140 towns in Connecticut. The first YSBs were created in the late 60's and early 70's and were designed to support youth and families in crisis. Work covered a variety of issues including misdemeanor criminal activity, families in crisis, rising school truancy, and various types of substance abuse<sup>1</sup>. The number of YSBs continued to grow in the early 70's until the state codified YSB work in state statute (Public Act No. 75-487)<sup>2</sup>, making service delivery for youth and their families a permanent part of Connecticut's youth landscape. In 1972, the existing YSBs in Connecticut formed the Connecticut Youth Service Association (CYSA), which leads, strengthens, and supports the unified network of YSBs across the state. In 1975, with funds from the federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Connecticut added an additional 40 YSBs. In the 1990's many YSBs across the state began increasing their role in the community through the development of programs focused on positive youth development, bullying prevention, and mentoring. Over the last decade there have been a number of policy changes and legislative reforms in Connecticut that have aimed to increase the diversion work of YSBs<sup>1</sup>. Changes and reforms have included removal of Families with Service Needs (FWSN)<sup>3</sup> cases from Juvenile Court, the implementation of a new referral process to YSBs<sup>4</sup>, Community-Based Diversion System Plan<sup>5</sup>, movement of the Connecticut YSBs from the State Department of Education to the Department of Children and Families (DCF)<sup>1</sup>, Raise-the-Age Legislation<sup>6</sup>, and most recently the launch of the Council of State Governments (CSG) Improving Outcomes for Youth (IOYouth) Task Force<sup>7</sup>. **Today YSBs are designed for the purpose of evaluation, planning, coordination, and implementation of a network of resources, services, and opportunities for children, youth, and their families. YSBs are the coordinating unit of community-based services to provide comprehensive delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment, and follow-up services and programs to help children, youth, and families develop positively and to function as respectable members of their communities<sup>8</sup>.**

There are numerous current state mandates in place with regard to the expectations of YSBs across Connecticut. Connecticut Gen Statute Section 10-19m (2012)<sup>8</sup> defines YSBs as the lead youth prevention agency. It specifically states that YSBs are formed

*"For the purposes of evaluation, planning, coordination and implementation of services, including prevention and intervention programs for delinquent, pre-delinquent, pregnant, parenting and troubled youths referred to such bureau by schools, police, juvenile courts, adult courts, local youth-serving agencies, parents and self-referrals. A youth service bureau shall be the coordinating unit of community-based services to provide comprehensive delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment and follow-up services. (b) A youth service bureau established pursuant to subsection (a) of this section may provide, but shall not be limited to the delivery of, the following services: (1) Individual and group counseling; (2) parent training and family therapy; (3) work placement and employment counseling; (4) alternative and special educational opportunities; (5) recreational and youth enrichment programs; (6) outreach programs to insure participation and planning by the entire community for the development of regional and community-based youth services; (7) preventive programs, including youth pregnancy, youth suicide, violence, alcohol and drug prevention; and (8)*



*programs that develop positive youth involvement. Such services shall be designed to meet the needs of youths by the diversion of troubled youths from the justice system as well as by the provision of opportunities for all youths to function as responsible members of their communities”.*

The statute tasks the YSBs with **community coordination and collaboration to help promote the wellbeing of young people and to plan programs and strategies that foster positive youth and family development. Additionally, the statute requires YSBs to assess youth needs and concerns and work to coordinate local resources to help address these needs. Youth voice and involvement in the decision making process is also highlighted. YSBs that receive funding from the state are also required to engage in five Administrative Core Unit (ACU) Functions<sup>9</sup>.** The functions include Community Involvement, Resource Development, Research & Assessment, Advocacy, and Management & Administration. Community Involvement is defined as *“engaging individuals and organizations throughout the community to help plan, develop and implement programming for youth and their families, soliciting participation in all aspects of YSB work, and raising community awareness about the YSB mission and services.”* Resource Development involves *“building a strong network of diverse community partners to help foster productive and collaborative working relationships.”* Research and Assessment emphasizes activities that help *“determine the needs of youth and families within the community and find ways to match those needs to available resources.”* It is critical that this work provides an accurate reflection of the current needs of the population and that the information gathered is utilized to build and identify new support mechanisms to address the identified needs. Advocacy involves *“speaking in favor of, recommending change, and supporting and/or defending the causes of youth and family in the community.”* This work is done at both the individual and systems levels and must be conducted with *“diplomacy and a full awareness of the context of the situation.”* Lastly, Management and Administration is defined as *“conducting the components required for successful implementation of an organization.”* The specific requirements and responsibilities will vary depending on the makeup of the organization but all YSBs across the state are required to develop an advisory board to help drive the work and all YSBs are responsible for conducting regular program monitoring and evaluation.

In 2017, the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee (JJPOC) Diversion Workgroup submitted the Community-Based Diversion System Plan<sup>5</sup> (identifying the YSBs as the *“Community Hub”*) to the state. **The Community Hub provides guidelines for a “local system” of early identification, assessment and intervention of at-risk pre-delinquent and delinquent youth.** The system is built to be addressed in the context of the family, school and community to help ensure that youth only enter the juvenile justice system if exhaustive involvement with all appropriate community services has not resulted in positive change and/or improvement. This diversion system focuses on addressing the underlying causes of the behavior by connecting youth and their families with needed services. Needs screening and service matching are critical components of the system as they help ensure youth are connected with appropriate services that will enable long-term behavior changes which will ultimately reduce or eliminate continued involvement with other state agencies (i.e. DCF, Juvenile Court, Juvenile Detention Centers). Additionally, the Community Hub places YSBs at the center of the goal of facilitating community-wide system level activities including Community Education, Screening for Appropriate Referrals, Data Collection and Evaluation, Training, and Local Interagency Services Teams (LISTs).





This extensive list of state mandates is no doubt necessary to ensure that each and every young person has access to support required to address their specific needs and that community-based approaches can be developed to help address local trends and issues. However, the unique needs of each and every community across the state make it necessary for each YSB to tailor their approach, services, and process to their town. As a result of this need for community-focused flexibility and variability, YSBs across the state come in a variety of “shapes and sizes.” The smallest YSBs are run by a single part-time staff member, while the biggest employs dozens of staff. Budgets across the state also vary significantly with some only having a yearly budget to cover a few community-based programs and others having expansive funds enabling them to employ numerous staff, multiple contractual services, and providing a large variety of direct programming. Variability like this will and does impact the extent to which a given organization can function as the driving force behind the Community Hub, however no two towns are likely to have the exact same needs so creating a system level solution will look different from one town to the next. **Finding a balance between a comprehensive, regulated, consistent statewide system and a community-based, flexible, customizable local organization is a challenge but is the only way to ensure maximum positive youth development across Connecticut.**

Since their inception, most YSBs have coordinated Juvenile Review Board services in their communities. JRBs are currently not a state mandated process, however, in the communities in which they exist, **the JRB is a community-based diversion process which is an alternative to Juvenile Court referral to support youth who have committed misdemeanor offenses or minor violations of the law and who are at low-risk of reoffending**<sup>10</sup>. JRBs typically consist of representatives from the local YSB, school, police, courts and the community. The representatives on the board work together with the youth and family to develop a service plan and agreement as an alternative to juvenile court involvement for youth experiencing school, family, and minor criminal issues. This process helps to reduce recidivism rates and develop community-based solutions to address youth needs while avoiding court involvement and the delays, cost, and stigma associated with the court and legal system. The first JRBs were started in Enfield and East Hartford in the late 60's. Over the next three decades the number of JRBs grew throughout the state. While the majority of JRBs in the state are run by their local YSB, approximately 10% of the JRBs in the state are currently run by an agency other than the YSB. Those JRBs not run by a YSB work collaboratively with their YSB (when there is one in the community) and often partner in providing JRB support and/or services for youth and their families.

In 2016, the Juvenile Justice Consultant and the Chief Juvenile Prosecutor from the State's Attorney's Office developed Juvenile Review Board Protocols and Procedures Manual<sup>11</sup> to guide the work of JRBs across the state. The document outlines best practices, procedures, and standards for the entire process with an emphasis on ethics, professionalism, basic restorative practices, service provision and youth and family involvement. The protocols and procedures cover a range of topics including but not limited to organization of the board, administrative information, membership roles, youth eligibility requirements and process components for intake, and initial and interim JRB meetings in addition to case closeout. The manual also includes an appendix which contains sample documents that JRBs can access and utilize during the process to complete each step and collect any relevant information regarding youth served and services recommended.



## IO Youth Task Force

In 2019, the state launched the “Improving Outcomes for Youth in Connecticut” initiative in collaboration with the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center<sup>7</sup>. The goal of the work was to develop recommendations to help improve Connecticut's juvenile justice system. The work took place over approximately twelve months beginning with the formation of a statewide task force to guide the work. Statewide data was collected and analyzed and existing policies and practices were reviewed. System level recommendations were then created based on the data collected with the ultimate goal of refining policies, practices, and resource allocation decisions to help improve outcomes of Connecticut youth. Numerous recommendations were made, covering a wide range of state agencies and departments that are involved in some way in the juvenile justice system. **One of the final recommendations of the task force was for DCF to conduct a landscape analysis of all JRBs and YSBs across Connecticut to help “determine the viability of them serving in a similar diversion role and adopting research-based standards and decision support tools, with or without additional funding”. Additionally, based on the findings of the landscape analysis the task force recommended that the state “determine whether the existing YSB/JRB model is the most efficient use of resources and conducive to a statewide, research-based approach (while allowing for local customization)”<sup>12</sup>.**

## PROJECT GOALS

The overarching goal of this project was to develop a clear picture of the landscape of YSBs and JRBs across the state, including most common characteristics, processes, and functionality, as well as the variability that exists from town to town. Additionally, this project aimed to develop a better understanding of how the state and individual organizations are doing relative to current state mandates. Due in large part to the nature of their work, YSBs vary widely in structure, approach, and direct service delivery. Until now there has not been a detailed understanding of the functioning and competency performance of the YSBs individually or in aggregate to function as a “system” within the community and across the state. In addition, because JRBs are not currently governed by state mandates and are created at the will of the community, not all communities have access to a JRB. Where JRBs operate, implementation of restorative practices also varies. **This project was designed to survey each organization in multiple areas regarding capacity, operations, approach, programming, staff, data, and processes. Additionally, analysis was conducted to help uncover internal and external factors that tend to correlate with alignment of state mandates as well as factors that might function as potential barriers for organizations trying to create alignment.** The current work primarily focuses on ACU Functions, Equity/Inclusion/Diversity, Restorative Practices, Data Collection/Use, Identify/Match/Access Services, Individual Plans, Standards/Guidelines, Training/Staffing, Community Hub, and Youth/Family Engagement. These areas represent the core mission and functions of YSBs and JRBs across the state. The landscape project was done in collaboration with CYSA and DCF, with input provided by 98 YSBs and 83 JRBs across the state. The deliverables of this project include the following:

- ❖ Average profile information for YSBs and JRBs in Connecticut (State Level)
- ❖ Tiering Sheet in 7 focus areas for YSBs and JRBs (State Level)
- ❖ Analysis of factors that are correlated with success and those that may cause barriers
- ❖ Recommendations for improving tiering scores at the individual level and the state level





## METHODOLOGY & SURVEY DESIGN

Data and information for the landscape project was gathered through the use of an online survey platform with unique links for each participating organization. Two distinct surveys were developed, one for YSBs and one for JRBs. Questions in each survey were organized into a number of distinct functional areas. YSB functional areas consisted of ACU Functions, Youth Served, Programming & Partners, Funding & Capacity, Data Collection & Assessment, and General Operations. JRB functional areas consisting of Members, Member Training, Philosophy & Ethics, Intake Process, JRB Meetings, Case Management & Service Recommendations, and Case Closeout. Questions in the survey fell into two general categories, tiering questions and context questions. Tiering questions were related to the functions and state mandates required for all organizations. Context questions were designed to provide a more complete picture of each organization and how it is structured and how it operates. Following survey completion, tiering questions were scored. Scoring was based on alignment of answers with current state mandates. Closer alignment resulted in a higher tiering score. Tiered questions were grouped into benchmark areas to better understand alignment of mandates with organizational vision and mission. Tiering at the question and benchmark areas level was then utilized to drive project recommendations, help determine how to best address limited resources, and identify how resources could be most effectively utilized. For more details on methodology and survey design see Appendix One.

## ANALYSIS

All analysis conducted for this survey was carried out utilizing self-reported data from the YSB and JRB surveys. Data utilized to conduct town-related and school-related analysis was collected from a number of state level websites. A complete list of sources of data can be found below.

- ❖ [CT Data Collaborative](#)
- ❖ [School + State Finance Project](#)
- ❖ [CT.gov EdSight](#)

### State Level Overview

Following the tiering of all questions, analysis was conducted. Analysis began with the calculation of summative statistics for both tiering and context questions. Summative statistics included percentages, frequencies, and distributions across the state. This provided a basic overview of the current state of YSBs and JRBs typical characteristics as well as a starting point for further analysis. State averages for context and tiering questions, as well as benchmark areas were calculated using a multistep process. For more information see Appendix One. A similar process was utilized to calculate regional averages and District Reference Group (DRG) averages. Common areas of statewide success and statewide areas in need of support were identified utilizing the tiering question and benchmark area averages.



## Factors Driving Tiering Scores

To begin to determine what factors may be important for driving alignment with state mandates in YSBs and JRBs, further analysis was conducted comparing organizations that scored in the top 20% of overall tiering vs organizations that scored in the bottom 20% of overall tiering. Welch's t-test (two-sample t-tests with unequal variance) were utilized to compare means of comparison groups. Significance was defined as a two-tailed p-value equal or less than 0.05. Numerous factors were analyzed over the course of the project including, but not limited to, number of community partners and services available, number of staff, organizational budget, number of youth served, components of staff training, years in operation, and location of the organization within the state, town(s) population, and local school district per pupil spending.

## Follow-Up Interviews

In conjunction with analysis, interviews were conducted with staff from individual organizations, the CYSA Executive Board, the Juvenile Justice Consultant and representatives from DCF to identify additional areas of analysis that were needed to develop a complete picture of the landscape in Connecticut. Interviewees were also asked questions pertaining to identified state trends to help further uncover the current landscape in Connecticut, shed light on factors that may influence alignment, and better inform recommendations developed for the project.



## STATE LEVEL RESULTS





## STATE LEVEL RESULTS

### Summary Statistics

#### YSB Summary Statistics

A summary analysis of YSBs across the state highlighted numerous bright spots and a few areas that would greatly benefit from further support. For more details see Appendix Two.

- ❖ **Common Bright Spots-** Almost all YSBs are conducting multiple activities in all five ACU functional areas. Most YSBs have numerous community partners that they work with on a regular basis and although state-wide youth needs appear to be increasing, many YSBs have been able to increase the number of direct services they offer to help address that growing need.
- ❖ **Common Challenges-** In many towns, staff levels, yearly budget, and the number of external services and providers have not kept pace with the new growing demand. As a result, many organizations indicated that there was still, as yet, unmet need for youth in their communities.

#### JRB Summary Statistics

JRBs also demonstrated a number of bright spots in their work and a few areas that could be improved with the help of additional outside resources. For more details see Appendix Three.

- ❖ **Common Bright Spots-** Most JRBs across the state are utilizing at least some components of restorative practices in their process and are striving for more equitable practices and a more diverse representation on their board. Additionally towns often have numerous service options on which to draw from when creating agreements with the youth they serve.
- ❖ **Common Challenges-** Training for board members is often limited, especially in the areas of bias training, and few organizational “checks & balances” are in place to ensure members are meeting the needs of the youth they serve and representing the community in an equitable and inclusive way.








### State Tiering Averages

Overall, both YSBs and JRBs are meeting state mandates required across multiple measures. Possible tiering scores ranged from 1 to 3. For more information on tiering scores see Appendix One. **State Tiering Averages for both YSBs and JRBs were above 2, indicating that the work of the network of organizations is aligned with state mandates.** State averages for benchmarks for both YSBs and JRBs are reviewed below. Additionally, based on the calculated state averages for tiering questions, areas that are working and areas that are not working as well for each benchmark area for both YSBs and JRBs were identified. Areas that are working were identified as topics (tiering questions) that had state averages above the corresponding benchmark area state average. Areas that were not working as well were identified as topics (tiering questions) that had state averages below the corresponding benchmark area state average. **Each benchmark area for both YSBs and JRBs contains both bright spots and components that would benefit from future support.**



## YSB State Tiering Averages

YSBs in general are typically completing all ACU functions (score= 2.4), functioning as the community hub (score= 2.29), and focusing on maximizing equity and inclusion in their work (score= 2.20). Training and staffing scored a state average of 2.18, but feedback from several organizations indicated this is an area that could benefit from further support. On average YSBs across the state would likely benefit from further state support around data collection and use (score= 2.01), developing more standards and guidelines with regard to protocols and procedures (score= 1.96) as well as developing further methods for service identification, matching, and access to services (score= 2.00). **On average YSBs could benefit most from support regarding Data Collection & Use, Identifying, Matching, and Accessing Services, and maintaining Standards & Guidelines.** For a more detailed breakdown of state tiering averages see Appendix Four.

| YSB Benchmark Area   | Statewide Tiering Score |
|--|-------------------------|
| Overall Average  | 2.12                    |
|  ACU Functions                     | 2.40                    |
|  Equity and Inclusion             | 2.20                    |
|  Data Collection and Use          | 2.01                    |
|  Identify, Match, Access Services | 2.00                    |
|  Standards and Guidelines         | 1.96                    |
|  Training and Staffing            | 2.18                    |
|  Community Hub                    | 2.29                    |





For each of the following benchmark areas for YSBs bright spots and areas in need of support were identified. For a more detailed look at components of benchmark scores see Appendix Five.








- ❖ **ACU Functions-** YSBs across the state typically carry out numerous activities regarding community involvement (2.5) and advocacy (2.6), but activities regarding resource development (2.3), research and assessment (2.3), and management and administration (2.3) were sometimes more limited.
- ❖ **Equity and Inclusion-** On average, YSBs are usually actively involved in LIST (2.7) and they often obtain community input from local partners (2.6). However, the average YSB does not frequently utilize data in decision making (1.7), doesn't always have a diverse staff (2.1), and typically doesn't have an equity plan or policy in place for the organization (1.6).
- ❖ **Data Collection and Use-** YSBs often conduct multiple evaluations each year covering staff (2.4), organizational procedures (2.2), and youth outcomes (2.2), however, evaluations of services (direct= 2.0, external= 1.5) are much less common and data beyond that required yearly by DCF is not typically collected (1.7).
- ❖ **Identify, Match, Access Services-** Typically YSBs across Connecticut have a standardized intake process (2.8) and screening process for Tier Two youth (2.1), however, needs identification (1.4) and service matching (1.5) are less uncommon. Additionally, available programming tends to be greater for Tier Two youth relative to Tier One youth (Tier Two= 2.9, Tier One= 1.9), but most organizations still identified a shortage of available and needed programming and service.
- ❖ **Standards and Guidelines-** YSBs across the state need to be able to customize their services and approach to fit the needs of the youth in their community, however few standard protocols exist with regard to more administrative and procedural components of the work. Background checks for staff members are common across the state (2.7), but similar background checks are uncommon for advisory board and/or board members (1.6). Indemnity (1.4) and confidentiality agreements (1.4) are very uncommon. There is no standard statewide process for setting up information sharing with the school and/or community, and standard procedural documents such as standardized referral forms (2.0) are not always available.
- ❖ **Training and Staff-** YSB staff are typically well informed regarding changes in protocols and procedures, laws, and available services (2.2). However, onboarding training (2.1) and regular professional development (1.9) are not always available to YSB staff. When available, training and development topics are limited (1.6).
- ❖ **Community Hub-** On average YSBs across the state spend considerable time and effort on prevention programming (2.8) in their communities as well as assessing ongoing youth needs (2.4). YSBs also typically coordinate support services with numerous community partners (2.4) and receive referrals from a variety of community organizations and individuals (2.3). Data sharing with schools (2.1) and other community partners (2.1) is typically limited and some organizations struggle to collaborate and coordinate with their community around planning of programming and strategies to foster positive youth development (1.9).

## JRB State Tiering Averages

JRBs across the state on average exceed states expectations with regard to engaging with youth and their families (score= 2.85). Additionally, they meet state expectations with regard to restorative practices (score= 2.33), standards and guidelines (score= 2.19), and utilizing data when available to drive decision making (score= 2.16). JRBs in general, however, could benefit from further support with regard to training



board members (score= 1.89), driving equity and diversity (score= 2.04), and developing methods to help ensure youth agreements are customized and meet the needs of the individual (score= 2.09). **On average JRBs could benefit most from support regarding Equity & Diversity building, Board Member Training, and development of Individualized Plans for youth.** For a more detailed breakdown of state tiering averages see Appendix Six.

| JRB Benchmark Area  | Statewide Tiering Score |
|---|-------------------------|
| Overall Average   | 2.22                    |
|  Restorative Practices         | 2.33                    |
|  Equity and Diversity          | 2.04                    |
|  Data Driven                   | 2.16                    |
|  Individual Plans            | 2.09                    |
|  Standards and Guidelines    | 2.19                    |
|  Training and Staffing       | 1.89                    |
|  Youth and Family Engagement | 2.85                    |

For each of the following benchmark areas for JRBs bright spots and areas in need of support were identified. For a more detailed look at components of benchmark scores see Appendix Seven.

- ❖ **Restorative Practices-** Many JRBs across the state utilize a number of procedures that follow a foundation of restorative practices during the JRB process. Restorative questions are commonly utilized (2.7) and the focus of recommendations is reported as restorative (2.9). Youth and family point of view is typically a part of the process and trust and openness during the process is valued (2.8). However, although components of restorative justice practices are utilized, restorative justice training is not always available for new members across the state (1.6), victims are not typically



- involved in the process (1.8), and meeting locations and physical set-up during the meeting does not commonly align with restorative practice foundations (2.2). Additionally, in many towns, limited background information regarding the youth is shared with the board ahead of the JRB meeting (2.3).
- ❖ **Equity and Diversity-** Most boards strive to advance equitable and inclusive practices during the JRB process. There are typically definitions and protocols for what is considered unfair and inequitable practices (2.5) and confidentiality of youth information is extremely important across the state (2.7). Training on preventing bias, prejudice, or preconceived ideas is limited across the state (1.5). However, very few JRBs have a clear equity plan/policy in place (1.4), board members' identities are typically not shared with youth and families ahead of board meetings (1.8) and most organizations do not have a means for youth and their families to file complaints if such a need becomes necessary (1.4).
  - ❖ **Data Driven-** Many JRBs across Connecticut are working towards utilizing available data to drive decision making. Most organizations collect data to track youth progress and outcomes (2.2) and almost all submit data yearly to DCF (2.8). However, metrics are not always tracked with community partners (2.1), information is not commonly shared with community partners (1.8), and youth screenings/assessments (1.9) and close out surveys (2.0) are not conducted in every organization across the state.
  - ❖ **Individual Plans-** On average, a variety of services are available and utilized when creating service agreements with youth (2.5), and case managers are typically available for check-ins (2.2) and emergency follow-up meetings (2.9) with youth and families if necessary. However, it is common for some services to be a standard part of all service agreements (1.6) within a given town which suggests that plans are not being tailored to the needs of the youth and follow-up meetings with youth and their families are not always scheduled and/or even held during the service agreement period. Additionally, guidelines to help board members identify appropriate services (1.7) and guidelines to help case managers conduct follow-up meetings (1.7) are uncommon across the state.
  - ❖ **Standards and Guidelines-** Many consistent guidelines exist across the state with regard to the intake process (2.7), meeting protocols and procedures (2.5), as well as standards with regard to confidentiality of youth information (2.5). However, guidelines that dictate board member expectations and other aspects of the JRB process are less common (1.9). Most JRBs do not require background checks for board members (1.5) and probationary periods for new board members are rare (1.2). There are few examples across the state of documents covering roles and responsibilities of board members (1.9) or standards regarding conflict of interest (1.7), code of conduct, professional responsibilities, and/or ethics (1.9). Additionally, there is often no minimum length of time that a case must be open (1.7) and guidelines for check-ins (1.4) and closeouts (1.9) are inconsistent across the state.
  - ❖ **Training and Staff-** JRB board members typically bring a variety of relevant areas of experience to the process (2.6) and when additional training is available for board members, the percentage of members who participate in training is high (2.2). However, onboard training is not common across the state (1.9) and when training is available, topics are limited (1.2). Additionally, guidelines specifically for case managers are generally limited (1.9), particularly with regard to case management aspects of the JRB process.





- ❖ **Youth and Family Management-** Typically, board members are creating recommendations and making decisions in consultation with youth and their families (2.9). Additionally, changes to plans are commonly considered when circumstances change for youth and their families. However, consistent check-ins with youth and their families during the process are not always conducted (2.7), and youth and their families do not appear to always be informed of all components of the process (2.7).

## Factors Driving Tiering Scores

While on average, YSBs and JRBs across the state are meeting state mandates, variability exists from town to town with regard to the organization's ability to meet landscape area benchmarks. **Many factors, both internal and external to the organization, can influence a YSBs and/or JRBs ability to meet their goals.** As such, analysis of numerous factors was conducted to help determine which factors correlate with tiering success.

- *It should be noted however, that a correlation does not necessarily mean causation. Correlation could indicate a relationship between the two factors, however it does not necessarily mean that one is responsible for driving the other.*

**Factors analyzed fell into four broad categories, internal organizational factors, budgetary factors, town-related factors, and school/district related factors. Not all factors were found to correlate with higher tiering scores, but numerous factors did correlate.** Internal factors are those factors related to the structure and/or function of the organization itself. These factors may or may not be something the organization has direct control over. Examples of internal factors include the number of core staff (full-time and part-time personnel), the number of active community partners, and the number of youth served. Budgetary factors are those factors related to the yearly available budget of the organization. These factors may or may not be something the organization has direct control over. Examples of budgetary factors include the total available budget, the percentage of the total budget that comes from DCF, and the amount of funds received from private grant foundations. Town factors are those factors related to the structure and demographics of the town(s) the organization serves. These factors are not factors the organization has any control over. Examples of town factors include total population, median household income, and region location within the state. School factors are those factors related to the spending and demographics of the school the organization serves. These factors are not factors the organization has any control over. Examples of school factors include per pupil spending and school enrollment.

## YSB Factors

**YSB Internal Factors-** A number of internal factors were found to correlate with higher overall tiering scores for YSBs. Organizations with more community partners tended to score higher as did organizations who received referrals from a more diverse group of community organizations and individuals. Additionally, organizations with higher numbers of core staff (full-time and part-time personnel) and organizations with directors who are actively involved in CYSA and/or regional chapter groups tended to have higher overall tiering scores.

- ❖ **YSBs with higher levels of community partners tended to score higher (p-value < 0.01). Additionally, YSBs who received referrals from a wider variety of sources also tended to**



**score higher (p-value < 0.01).** While the number of available community partners tends to be higher in urban and suburban settings, multiple YSBs located in more rural areas identified numerous community partners and had higher overall tiering scores compared to the state average. This correlation suggests that organizations who are able to better emulate the community hub model and who are successful collaborators have an easier time fulfilling current state mandates.

- ❖ **Organizations with more full and part-time staff tended to score higher (p-value < 0.01).** A number of small organizations (full-time staff of two or less and/or part-time staff of two or less) had higher overall tiering scores relative to the state average, however, organizations with bigger staff often scored higher. Higher scores with a small staff appears to relate to staff members being more flexible with their roles, time, and focus. This correlation suggests that even small increases in core staff numbers could have a profound impact on some organizations by expanding the functional and/or administrative capacity of the YSB.
- ❖ **YSBs with more “active” directors at the regional and/or state level tended to score higher in tiering overall relative to the state average (p-value < 0.01).** It is unclear whether this correlation is the result of better connections and networking advantages for those YSBs, a more complete understanding of current state mandates or some other component related to having a director who is active at the state and/or regional level. This correlation suggests that an increased state-wide focus on networking and collaboration could have far reaching benefits for organizations with new or more isolated directors.
- ❖ Additional factors that were analyzed but were not found to correlate with tiering were total number of staff (including contractors, volunteers, interns, etc), whether the organization and the organizational budget had grown in the last five years, the number of youth served (both tier 1 and tier 2), types and numbers of evaluations conducted, and the number of identified unmet services in the community.

**YSB Budgetary Factors-** Multiple budgetary factors were found to correlate with higher overall tiering scores. Organizations with larger overall budgets tended to score higher as did organizations who relied on DCF for a smaller percentage of their overall budget.

- ❖ **YSBs with a larger overall budget tended to score higher in overall tiering (p-value = 0.03).** A larger total budget can have far reaching implications for all YSBs across the state. Increases in staffing, internal program offerings, and potential external partnerships and collaborations could all be possible as a result of increased funding. While each and every town will have unique needs and may benefit from different resources, this correlation suggests that increased funding provides organizations with more flexibility to customize their approach, support and services to meet the needs of their community.
- ❖ **Organizations that relied on DCF for a smaller percentage of their overall budget tended to score higher (p-value = 0.01).** Huge variability exists across the state with regard to the size of a YSB's yearly budget. Most organizations with budgets well below the state average relied on DCF for a significantly larger part of their overall budget. This heavier reliance correlated with organizations typically scoring lower in overall tiering. This correlation could suggest that the minimum DCF funding level is insufficient to properly support small YSBs across the state.
- ❖ Additional factors that were analyzed but were not found to directly correlate with overall tiering scores were the total amount of funding an organization received from DCF, whether or not a YSB



received any funding from private grant foundations, the amount of funding an organization received from private grant foundations, and the percentage of funding relative to the total budget that an organization received from private grant foundations. Taken together, these factors could suggest that while the specific source and/or types of funding available are not important, a minimum level of funding is critical for success since less well funded organizations with more limited funding sources tend to get lower overall scores.

**YSB Town Factors-** Due to the community-based nature of the work of the YSBs, numerous aspects of the towns they serve can influence their work, capacity, and access to community resources. Analysis found that several town factors were correlated with overall tiering scores. Total population of the town(s) served, total population less than 20 years of age, mobility of the town population, and location within the state were all correlated with higher scores.

- ❖ **Organizations that were located in large town or urban areas showed a trend towards scoring higher compared to more rural areas (p-value = 0.06).** However, a larger population isn't a guarantee of success and numerous YSBs that serve rural communities thrive. These results suggest that the correlation with larger communities may speak more to access to community partners which tend to be more plentiful in more urban areas. As mentioned earlier, however, many rural focused YSBs have large numbers of community partners and scored above the state average suggesting that a focus on helping YSBs develop more community partners would be more impactful relative to increasing the population the YSB serves.
- ❖ **Large total populations (p-value = 0.04) and large populations under 20 years of age (p-value = 0.05) both correlated with higher tiering scores.** However, not all high scoring YSBs served large populations. Several YSBs that serve multiple rural towns in close proximity to each other scored well above the state average. This correlation suggests that serving a slightly larger population may have some benefits, but serving even just a few very rural towns simultaneously may have the same benefits as serving a much larger population.
- ❖ **Higher population mobility was found to correlate with tiering scores (p-value = 0.04).** The number of individuals moving into town was found to correlate with the total population. As a result, this correlation may simply be a side effect of the population served. Either way, as was the case with total population, YSBs that serve a few rural towns typically scored higher suggesting a YSB need not serve a very large population to succeed.
- ❖ Although several factors were found to correlate with overall tiering scores, median household income and YSB region location were not found to correlate. These results combined with the previous findings could support the notion that a more locally focused and community-customized approach is better compared to a more expansive, regional focus.

**YSB School Factors-** As is the case in town-related factors, school-related factors can have a profound impact on the work of a given YSB. Across the state, school districts are one of the most common referral sources for YSBs and schools often function as a first line of defense for youth in need of support. As such, variations in student number and available resources within the school could impact the number and types of referrals an organization sees. An analysis of school-related factors found that school enrollment and District Reference Groups (DRGs) served by YSBs correlated with overall tiering scores. DRGs represent a classification system utilized by the Connecticut State Department of Education to group like districts based on socioeconomic status.





- ❖ **YSBs that serve school districts with higher enrollment tend to score higher in overall tiering (p-value = 0.01).** The majority of YSBs in Connecticut serve a single school district. YSBs that served larger, high enrollment school districts tended to score higher in overall tiering. These results are very much in line with population data and, as a result, could be driven by the same factors. Serving a huge district was neither necessary to score high nor made it a guarantee that a YSB would score high. As was the case with population data, YSBs that serve more than one small school district were more likely to score higher than the state average. This correlation further supports the idea that increased collaboration and partnerships across resources may greatly benefit very small YSBs.
- ❖ In addition to school enrollment, there is a relationship between what DRG school districts fall into and YSB tiering scores. **A comparison of YSBs that serve DRG E districts (small rural districts with lowest enrollment) with YSBs that serve DRGs G & H (large towns with very high enrollment) as well as those that serve multiple DRGs, uncovered a significant difference (all p-values  $\leq 0.03$ ).** Not all YSBs serving large town districts scored high and multiple YSBs serving small rural DRGs ranked well above the state average. Although multiple factors are utilized to classify DRGs, it is likely that the most relevant factors in this correlation are location and enrollment size. The previous findings have suggested that both of those factors are more indicative of easy access to community partners and these findings further support that assertion. YSBs who scored well and served low enrollment, rural DRGs tended to have more identified community partners. This correlation further supports the need for statewide support to help YSBs build on their existing community partners.
- ❖ While district enrollment and DRG(s) correlated with higher tiering scores, per pupil spending at the district level did not. While it may be assumed that higher per pupil spending amounts could enable some school districts to provide more in-house support thus minimizing the burden on local YSBs, this doesn't appear to be the case. This result may suggest that all school districts that have a local YSB to work with rely heavily on the work they do. Every town in Connecticut, regardless of wealth, will have students that are in need of support beyond what the school can offer. If this is the case it further supports the need for community focused support.

## JRB Factors

**JRB Internal Factors-** As was the case with YSBs, numerous internal factors were found to correlate with overall tiering scores for JRBs. Organizations with access to more services typically scored higher. Additionally, JRBs that utilized the CYSA Protocols and Procedures Manual as a guide and provided a larger variety of training options for board members often saw higher scores. Lastly, organizations that incorporated more restorative practices into their JRB process on average scored higher.

- ❖ **Similar to YSBs, access to more services in their community correlated with higher scores (p-value < 0.01).** This correlation was seen across all locations in the state. A more expansive list of services translates into the ability to customize youth agreements and address a wider range of youth needs. This correlation further supports the benefits of a focus on expanding services statewide.
- ❖ **The use of the CYSA Protocols and Procedures Manual was also found to correlate with higher overall tiering scores (p-value < 0.01).** The CYSA manual provides a detailed starting point and numerous template documents for organizations to utilize which helps build a framework for the process. This correlation supports the importance and benefits of clear



procedural guidelines and standards.

- ❖ **Availability of staff training, particularly with regard to restorative practices, was found to correlate with overall higher scoring (p-value < 0.01).** Organizations that received restorative training were more likely to incorporate more restorative practices into their JRB process which was additionally found to correlate with higher tiering. While it is unclear whether one factor is driving the other or whether a separate component is driving both, it is clear that a focus on restorative practices is likely beneficial. The correlation supports the benefits of a statewide focus on restorative justice.
- ❖ Although numerous factors were found to correlate with higher tiering, some factors were found to have no relationship. Number of years in operation, number of active board members, maximum number of board members allowed at meetings, and whether board members were chosen by the YSB or another outside agency or group all showed no correlation with success. Combined these factors suggest that several components related to the makeup of the board are less important compared to the practices of the board and available services in the community.

**JRB Budgetary Factors-** Budgetary breakdown by JRB was not available for this project. **It should be noted, however, that large variability exists statewide with regard to the total budgets of individual JRBs.** Access to funding, availability of funding, and amount of funding all vary greatly. As such, a future analysis of tiering scores and JRB yearly budgets would be extremely important to develop a further and more complete picture of the landscape of JRB across Connecticut.

**JRB Town Factors-** JRBs were very similar to YSBs with regard to the correlation between town factors and overall tiering scores.

- ❖ **Total population (p-value = 0.07), population under 20 years of age (p-value = 0.09), population mobility (p-value = 0.04), and location within the state (p-value < 0.01) were all positively correlated with tiering scores.** Median household income and region within the state were not correlated. These similarities may be due to the fact that 90% of JRBs are run by their local YSB. As a result, factors that influence YSBs are likely to influence JRBs as well. As before, a large population size was not a guarantee of higher scores, numerous small, rural JRBs ranked well above the state average. Like YSBs, a threshold minimum population served may be helpful to consider in the future.

**JRB School Factors-** Some similarities also exist with regard to correlations between town-related factors and both types of organizations.

- ❖ **JRB tiering scores were found to correlate with variability in district DRGs served. A comparison of JRBs that serve DRG B (small rural, low poverty districts) with JRBs that serve DRGs G, H, & I (large towns and urban districts with very high enrollment) as well as those that serve multiple DRGs, highlighted a significant difference (all p-values ≤ 0.04).** Once again, an argument can be made that the similarities are due to the high incidence of YSBs running local JRBs.
- ❖ Unlike YSBs, JRB scores were not correlated with school enrollment. This difference could be in part due to the fact that most JRB referrals come by way of the police (63% of JRB referrals came from the police in SY20-21) and not the school. As such, this could suggest that success of JRBs may be influenced at least in part by factors related to the local law enforcement and their



- relationship with the JRB.
- ❖ Similar to YSBs, no relationship was seen between school per pupil spending and the JRB's tiering score. As mentioned above this could indicate that all towns look to JRBs for support for students in their community.



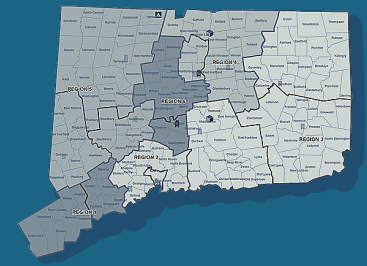


# Youth Service Bureaus

## State Level Averages

104 YSBs serve 139 towns across the state  
Total # of YSBs surveyed: 98

Connecticut has a general population of 3.6 million people in 8 counties and 169 towns



### COMMUNITY

All figures reflect totals for towns covered unless otherwise noted

#### Town Data:

- Avg. total population: **32,900**
- Avg. population under 20yrs: **7,800**
- Avg. median income: **96,800\***
- Avg. yearly total moved into town: **4000^**

#### School Data:

- Avg. per pupil spending: **\$19,786\***
- Avg. enrollment: **4,400**
- DRGs served statewide: **A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I**

\* average of all towns covered ^ as reported for 2019

### ORGANIZATION

Based on information self-reported in the Landscape Analysis

#### Organization Details:

- Avg. # of community partners: **14**
- Avg. # of core staff (FT+PT): **2FT & 2PT**
- On avg. did org. grow over last five years?: **Yes**
- On avg. did org. budget grow over last five years?: **No**
- Avg. number of tier 1 youth served in year: **300**
- Avg. number of tier 2 youth served in year: **100**

#### Budget Info:

- Avg. % budget DCF funded: **14.6**
- Avg. % budget private grants funded: **4.1**

### AREA BENCHMARKS

The following areas were selected to determine each YSB's functions and ability to provide services in accordance with state mandates.



**ACU Functions-** The YSB is able to fulfill the five ACU functions required by state statute.



**Equity and Inclusion-** Equitable practices are a focus and the YSB provides a means to help ensure that all youth and their families have access to programming and services.



**Data Collection and Use-** Thorough and informative data is collected and then utilized to help ensure decisions, changes, and processes are impactful and sustainable.



**Identify, Match, & Access Services-** The YSB has the capacity to identify and meet the needs of the youth and families in their communities.



**Standards and Guidelines-** Internal practices and processes are carefully thought out and planned to ensure consistency and fairness is addressed.



**Training and Staffing-** Individuals are provided with the necessary training and staff are chosen to provide a diverse and knowledgeable staff.

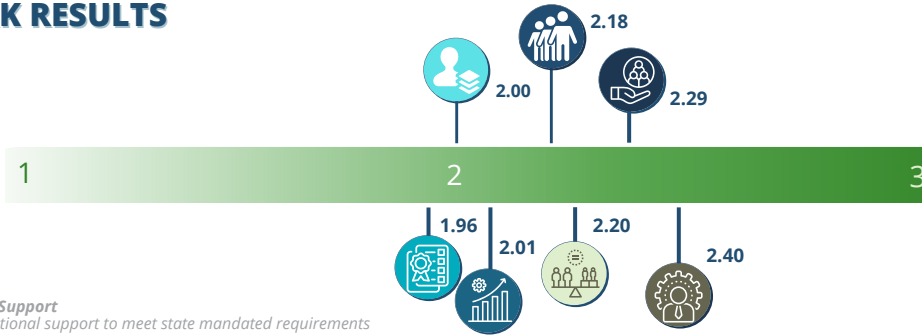


**Community Hub-** The YSB is able to drive a coordinated community response to the youth and family needs in their community by working with community partners to identify youth needs and connecting youth and their families with appropriate services and support.

### BENCHMARK RESULTS



Overall State Average



- 1 - Room for Growth and Support**  
YSBs are in need of additional support to meet state mandated requirements
- 2 - Striving for Success**  
YSBs are typically meeting state mandated requirements across multiple measures
- 3 - Maximizing Impact**  
YSBs are meeting and sometimes exceeding state mandated requirements

### STATE LEVEL HIGHLIGHTS:



Community involvement and advocacy activities are robust



Internally focused data collection practices are common



Staff members typically go through a thorough background check



Prevention efforts and community needs assessments are common



Community collaborations and input helps foster equity and inclusion



Working to identify youth need is common practice



Staff members are typically well informed regarding charges in the organization and in the town

### RECOMMENDATIONS:



Identify methods for expanding and supporting administrative capacity will benefit all



Collection and use of youth progress and outcome data must be expanded



More explicit guidelines regarding process and standards would ensure youth receive consistent high-quality support



Supporting increased collaboration and information sharing would benefit the entire state



Developing guidelines around policies and practices that more directly address potential inequities is needed



Supporting increased access to and collaboration with community partners is critical statewide



Staff would greatly benefit from increased access to training and professional development



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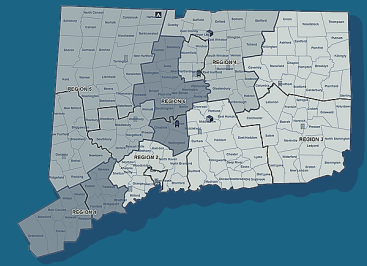
# Juvenile Review Boards

## State Level Averages

88 JRBs serve 129 towns across the state

Total # of JRBs surveyed: 83

Connecticut has a general population of 3.6 million people in 8 counties and 169 towns



### COMMUNITY

All figures reflect totals for towns covered unless otherwise noted

#### Town Data:

Avg. total population: **35,500**

Avg. population under 20yrs: **8,400**

Avg. median income: **\$92,000**

Avg. yearly total moved into town: **4,300**<sup>^</sup>

#### School Data:

Avg. per pupil spending: **\$19,590**<sup>\*</sup>

Avg. enrollment: **4,700**

DRGs served statewide: **A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I**

<sup>\*</sup> average of all towns covered <sup>^</sup> as reported for 2019

### ORGANIZATION

Based on information self-reported in the Landscape Analysis

#### Organization Details:

Avg. # of community partners: **14**

Avg. # of years serving: **15**

Avg. # of board members: **10**

On avg. do orgs. utilize CYSA JRB Manual?: **Yes**

On avg. do orgs. have onboarding training?: **Yes**

On avg. do orgs. have restorative practice training?: **Yes**

On avg. do orgs. have bias training?: **No**

On avg. do orgs. have mental health training?: **No**

On avg. do orgs. use some restorative practices?: **Yes**

### AREA BENCHMARKS

The following areas were selected to determine each JRB's functions and ability to provide services in accordance with state mandates.



**Restorative Practices-** Restorative practices are utilized throughout the JRB process to help improve and repair relationships.



**Equity and Diversity-** Equitable practices are utilized throughout the JRB process and there is diverse representation within the JRB to help ensure a fair and equitable experiences for all youth



**Data Driven-** Thorough and informative data is collected and then utilized to help ensure decisions, changes, and processes are impactful and sustainable



**Individual Plans-** Each youth is provided with a tailored plan that ensures support and services will help address the underlying needs of the child



**Standards and Guidelines-** Internal practices and processes are carefully thought out and planned to ensure the board is always informed, consistent and effective



**Training and Staffing-** Staff is provided with the necessary training and staff are chosen to provide a diverse and knowledgeable board

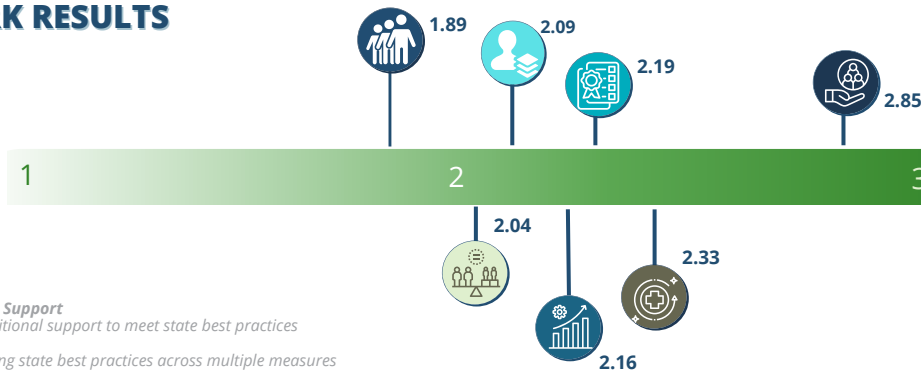


**Youth and Family Engagement-** Youth and their families are an integral part of the JRB process

### BENCHMARK RESULTS



Overall State Average



- 1 - **Room for Growth and Support**  
JRBs are in need of additional support to meet state best practices
- 2 - **Striving for Success**  
JRBs are typically meeting state best practices across multiple measures
- 3 - **Maximizing Impact**  
JRBs are meeting and sometimes exceeding state best practices

### STATE LEVEL HIGHLIGHTS:



At least some restorative practices are typically used during the JRB process



Data is typically collected regarding youth progress during the process



Standards are common around the intake process, meetings, and protocols/procedures



Agreements and decisions are typically made in conjunction with the youth and family



Definitions regarding unfair/unequitable practices are common



Numerous services are typically available and changes are considered when needed



Staff members often bring relevant experience to the board and when available, the percentage of staff that receive training is high

### RECOMMENDATIONS:



More restorative training for staff and utilizing more neutral locations and room set up would be beneficial



More data on youth progress should be collected from community partners and at closeout



Background checks, probationary periods, and guidelines for check-ins and closeouts are not common



Check-ins should be more consistent and youth and families should always be informed regarding all aspects of the process



Equity plans and methods for youth and families to file complaints would help drive equity



Some services are included in all agreements and guidelines on appropriate services are not always available



More onboarding training would be helpful. Training should cover a variety of topics and should be available for case managers



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## INTERVIEW TAKEAWAYS

In addition to analysis of the data collected for this project, interviews were conducted with organizations across the state. Interview questions covered a variety of topics including but not limited to identifying individual and community needs, developing community partnerships, maximizing productivity, staff training, expanding available services, and developing standards and guidelines. Questions focused on gathering information to help develop a better understanding of strategies that likely helped drive higher scores and factors that can result in the creation of barriers. **Through these interviews a number of key factors were identified that can help to guide recommendations and will ensure that future changes and support can be developed in such a way that will maximize impact across the state.**

Key factors included the following:

- ❖ Maintaining a culturally competent, localized community-focus
- ❖ Establishing effective communication strategies
- ❖ Developing strong relationships with partners and families
- ❖ Drawing on experience and an in-depth knowledge base
- ❖ Customizing organizational dynamics to enable a focus on youth need

### Culturally Competent, Localized Community-Focus

Results from this study suggest that organizations that are more connected to their community through things like diverse representation of staff, active coordination and collaboration of community partners, and involving youth in community policy decisions score higher in overall tiering. The importance of a community focus and connection was echoed in the project interviews.

**All interviewees emphasized the importance of knowing the community you serve and having a “commitment to the community.”** One interviewee identified 5 C’s “*Commitment, Compassion, Consistency, Confidentiality, and Case Management*” as being critical for success and another said that staff must be “*truly dedicated to the individual youth, responsive to changing needs of the community, and adaptable to the widening berth of YSB services.*” Many organizations mentioned they found it critical to “*be a presence in the community*” and several found that living within the community provided invaluable knowledge and connection. Mirroring the community through representation on boards and staff helps bring an intimate understanding of the *REAL* needs of the community (e.g. transportation issues, language barriers, economic disparity, institutional racism). One individual said “*building a strong board is essential for the success of JRBs.*” While this doesn’t mean that all staff must live in the town in which they work to foster a successful organization, it does make a strong argument that bigger, more regionally focused organizations may not be better. **A more localized community-focus will likely maximize the impact for youth.**

### Effective Communication Strategies

Active connections with school and community partners, active involvement in LIST, and strong communication with families all correlated with higher tiering scores. All these factors suggest an organization with effective communication strategies will be able to more effectively align with state mandates. This was a concept that was highlighted by a number of interviewees during the project.





Numerous interviewees mentioned the importance of regular meetings and an open dialogue with regard to community partners and families. However, these factors are easier said than done in some circumstances. Many individuals spoke of high rates of turnover at schools and other community organizations, reluctance of families and individuals to seek help due to preconceived perceptions about "asking for help." Additionally some mentioned struggling to "meet the students where they are at" due to a reluctance of the organization or municipality to utilize social media and forms of communication outside of emails and phone calls. While each situation will be different, multiple organizations felt there would be immense value in learning from each other and "hearing success stories and failures". **Increasing communication with other YSBs and JRBs across the state could be an important first step towards developing more effective communication strategies with community partners and families as well.** Additionally, utilizing existing partnerships and staff can help organizations connect to their community. One interview highlighted that "having board members with diverse expertise, backgrounds, and different connections has allowed for increased access to programs, supports, and services." While this may be a simple concept in theory, in practice many organizations across the state could benefit from support in building these communication channels.

## Strong Relationships with Partners and Families

Throughout the project, tiering results support the importance of maintaining an extensive network of active community partners. In addition, numerous benchmark areas rely heavily on developing strong relationships with youth and their families through openness, trust building, and transparency. These were components that were frequently mentioned during interviews.

**With regard to community partnerships, interviewees often spoke of building a "commitment to collaboration" and being "diligent about following through with new and existing community partners."** However, many of the organizations that were most successful with regard to developing community partnerships spoke of "personal relationships," "existing relationships being key," and a "long history" of developing their network. Other organizations identified struggling with waitlists for external services and the time required to stay current on changes in available services. One interviewee noted "while there is always a hearty referral network, the majority of community agencies/providers are experiencing staffing shortages that have resulted in longer wait lists for youth and families to access services." Still, others said that constant turnover at existing partnerships (e.g. schools) made even maintaining existing collaborations difficult at times. Although there is no easy answer to solve these challenges, some approaches suggested by interviewees were utilizing existing community partners to find and develop new partnerships, merging and/or collaborating with other departments and organizations to enhance capacity and access to services, and finding innovative ways to maximize existing partnerships and develop new partnerships. One interviewee noted that their organization partnered with the local gardening club for mentorships, while another interviewee identified a number of benefits that had come about since partnering with the local Parks and Recreation department. **Effective, strong partnerships need not take the typical form. Each and every town will have its own unique set of opportunities that can be utilized to best suit the needs of the community.**

**All interviewees identified the critical importance of developing strong relationships with families**



**in order to make the biggest impact.** One interviewee spoke of the importance of staff "*speaking the language of the community,*" while another commented that because both staff members were residents of the town it provided a connection and showed a level of interest and involvement in the town that helped drive success. However, not all staff will be able to live in the communities they serve and even as full time residents, trust is not something that is created overnight. One interviewee said "*relationships are essential to the YSB and take time and trust to establish and prosper.*" Another interviewee highlighted the "*importance of understanding and addressing trauma history to ensure support of social/mental/emotional wellbeing.*" However, several interviewees mentioned the "*stigma*" of asking for help as a common barrier to success.

**Meeting families where they are is critical for building strong relationships, but the process takes time and ensuring quality support may limit the quantity of youth an individual staff member can help.**

## Experience and an In-Depth Knowledge Base

Organizations that have directors that are active in the CYSA, either at the state or regional level tended to score higher. Participation at the state and regional level often comes after many years of experience and those years of experience bring with it a wealth of knowledge, connections, and know-how. The importance of this kind of experience was echoed in numerous interviews.

**Experience and knowledge being important components of maximizing alignment with state mandates was mentioned in numerous interviews.** Many interviewees that represent organizations that scored high spoke of "*years of experience.*" One interviewee said "*experienced staff and administrative team ensures the YSB is able to pivot and adapt and ensure the health and productivity of the organization remains positive.*" Organizations with less experienced directors and/or staff members said they struggled with "*not necessarily knowing the best people to talk to*" or "*knowing the best way to do things.*" One interviewee stated that "*most YSB's suffer from inferior funding, budget cuts, and offer non-competitive wages, so maintaining staff and leadership long-term can become difficult for the YSB to actualize.*" This divergence highlights the importance of fostering a statewide community of learning. Through coupling a community-focus with a statewide conversation, organizations across the state can benefit from the years of experience that exists. One interviewee suggested creating a collection of "*templates to help with policy writing*" in addition to "*reading materials regarding how to handle certain types of cases and deeper dives into various concepts (i.e. Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism, Social/Mental/Emotional Wellbeing).*" Another interviewee said that "*working with a network of support to help create guidelines, protocols, and procedures is important in order to ensure they are thorough, fair, and legal.*" **A plethora of institutional knowledge can be found across the state' finding a way to harness and share that knowledge will benefit organizations and, by extension, youth across the state.**

## Customizing Organizational Dynamics

Context questions illustrated that each YSB and JRB is unique in at least some way and town and school data demonstrated that each town the organization serves is different as well. While standards and guidelines are important to ensure quality support is provided to all youth across the state, this data suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach may not work. Instead, organizations must have the ability to customize the dynamics under which they operate to address their communities specific needs. **A framework of protocols and procedures can exist statewide to help ensure consistent, equitable,**



and thorough service delivery, but there must also be space for the ability to customize based on each community's needs.

While the four previous key factors manifest in similar ways for organizations across the state, numerous additional challenges manifest in different ways from organization to organization depending on specifics of the YSB or JRB. Some interviewees struggle with transportation needs for the youth they serve, while others identified difficulties finding time to reach out to potential new partners given limited staffing. Still, others identify fatigue and burnout resulting from the need to constantly *"adapt to the situation"* and try to *"be flexible- both with schedules and job duties as dictated by the needs of those they serve."* Additionally, many organizations that rely heavily on volunteers (particularly JRBs) struggle to find time to get all staff trained. A varied list of challenges will ultimately require a varied list of solutions. One interviewee mentioned that their JRB Enhancement funds have *"allowed their board to support families and ensure their needs are being met."* Another discussed the value of *"going through a detailed strategic planning process every 3-5 years."* A third said *"flexibility in workshop offerings on multiple days and times along with the workshops being offered virtually allows our JRB to participate."* Numerous specific training topics were also mentioned including *"way to promote best-practices and information/updates on relevant youth populations including children with special needs, LGBTQIA+, BIPOC, etc."* **Building in methods and resources to help organizations customize and target solutions will help to address each organization's specific needs.**



# RECOMMENDATIONS







## RECOMMENDATIONS

Following survey review, analysis, and interviews, numerous changes, supports, and initiatives have been identified that should result in a substantial impact on the work of YSBs and JRBs across the state. Below is a complete list of proposed recommendations based on the work to date. Recommendations are organized into four broad categories:

- ❖ Increasing Access to Services and Partnerships
- ❖ Expanding Training, Guidelines, and Protocols
- ❖ Aligning Data Collection and Use
- ❖ Enhancing Organizational Dynamics

### Increasing Access to Services and Partnerships

**Access to and collaboration with a diverse group of community partners was shown to be critical to alignment with state mandates during analysis.** Organizational staff reiterated that sentiment throughout the interview process. Increasing access to more services and creating and strengthening partnerships across the state will benefit everyone. **A multi-pronged approach must be utilized to ensure that solutions can be found regardless of location across the state or structure of the organization.** The following are proposed recommendations to increase access to services and partnerships:

- ❖ Explore access to existing statewide services that may have specialized contract requirements or specific eligibility requirements to address current gaps in community supports and educate YSBs and JRBs regarding availability and eligibility requirements
- ❖ Increased investment in transportation services for organizations that may be located in communities that don't have access or affordable transportation options
- ❖ Work with CYSA membership to identify common barriers to service access and develop methods to address barriers
- ❖ Establishment of regular collaboration meetings between CYSA members to work to enhance partner relationships, networking between members, and assist in the identification of available resources and services
- ❖ Identifying solutions to address increasing waitlists for community services across the state
- ❖ Provide funding to increase capacity to network for new partnerships, particularly in smaller organizations that have limited staff to handle this work
- ❖ Training for YSBs on developing and sustaining collaboration and self advocacy
- ❖ Conduct gap analysis to determine where waitlists exist across the state, what are the barriers to access at the community level, and how solutions can be implemented

### Expanding Training, Guidelines, and Protocols

**Variability exists across the state with regard to access to training and development of informative guidelines and standards.** More training and more access to guidelines and protocols can help ensure youth are served in an equitable, thorough, and consistent manner. Additionally, expanding training and available guidelines and protocols will help maximize service quality. **Time and experience can be significant barriers to both areas, and as a result finding ways to seamlessly deliver content and**



**broaden options for access to information will be critical.** The following are proposed recommendations to expand training, guidelines, and protocols:


- ❖ Update JRB Protocols and Procedures guidelines
- ❖ Explicit guidance around the use of the CYSA Protocols and Procedures Manual for JRBs
- ❖ Continue to develop, refine, and publish agreed upon process and standards for YSBs
- ❖ Continue to develop, refine and publish a repository of protocols and documents for YSBs to access and utilize
- ❖ Develop a repository of reading materials that cover “deep dives” into a variety of common youth issues (i.e. Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism, Youth with Special Needs) and documents that review methods and suggestions for handling specific types of “hard to address” cases
- ❖ Creation of a state wide, curated collection of virtual, on-demand training regarding compliance related topics (example: Bias, FERPA, DEI, Mentoring, etc). Training should be available as both first time and refresher training.
- ❖ Creation of a state wide, curated collection of virtual, on-demand skills based training regarding non-youth-facing skills. (examples: Administrative Activities, Data Collection, Networking, Position Specific Topics- Case Management, etc)
- ❖ Development of regularly scheduled topical trainings identified through state trends and CYSA member suggestions.
- ❖ Identify and implement mandatory training for organizations. (e.g. Restorative justice training for JRB board members)
- ❖ Clarify how the state will assess accountability for organizations, including components of ACU Functions and Youth Outcomes
- ❖ Clarify what DCF is authorized to do if organizations do not meet accountability standards

## Aligning Data Collection and Use

**Very few organizations have been able to effectively keep pace with the data needs of their work.**

Everyone recognizes the importance of collecting the right data and utilizing it to help drive informed decisions. With the right data in hand, youth across the state can be served more effectively and efficiently and organizations can ensure that the services they provide are making a difference. **A complete statewide overhaul of data collection and use will be a multi-year process, but some initial, critical steps will be to align on what data will be collected, determine how it will be collected and shared, and agree on how it can be used best.** The following are proposed recommendations to align data collection and use:

- ❖ Develop a set of agreed upon outcome metrics for YSBs and JRBs to utilize in conjunction with screening tools
- ❖ DCF and CYSA must determine how success will be measured and what data will be collected to track success (success measures must be actionable and clear criteria must be established to help organizations grow)
- ❖ Identifying and aligning data needed by state agencies and other state level committees
- ❖ Identification and alignment of what data should be collected to better assess youth outcomes
- ❖ Additional investment in improving YSBs and JRBs methods for consistent and complete data collection and reporting
- ❖ Additional investment in improving system wide data collection and analysis

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- ❖ Develop methods for sharing compiled informations, data, and outcomes measures back to organizations and state partners
  - ❖ Provide funding to create a Data Management position in smaller organizations that have limited staff to collection and manage their data
  - ❖ Develop statewide methods for tracking data on service matching when referrals are made through the YSB or JRB to ensure consistency of data collection resources

## Enhancing Organizational Dynamics

**No two organizations are exactly alike, as such a certain amount of flexibility must be built into a set of recommendations to enable improvements to be made across the state.** YSBs and JRBs are designed with the express purpose of providing tailored support for the youth in their communities. No two communities and no two children are going to have the same needs, so no two organizations will be able to function exactly the same way. **By building in some flexibility across the state, each organization can adjust their dynamics to meet their unique needs and situation.** The following are proposed recommendations to enhance organizational dynamics:

- ❖ Increased flexibility around current funding when possible to enable organizations to invest in a wider range of youth populations, youth needs, and program types, as well as other costs such as infrastructure repairs/improvements
- ❖ Work with YSBs to identify methods for expanding services within their communities. (e.g. additional specialized staff-mental health experts, additional community collaborations, etc)
- ❖ Expanded options around youth needs screening tools that could be utilized to address various needs across YSB and JRB youth with funding and training to accompany expanded options
- ❖ Creation of facilitated focus groups and/or affinity groups for both YSBs and JRBs. (e.g. Finding New Partnerships, Learn from the Experience of Others, How to Effectively Use Social Media to connect with youth)
- ❖ Exploring methods and resources to help organizational staff avoid burnout and increase retention
- ❖ Explore methods and resources to minimize the “stigma” that many families face in seeking out and utilizing services of YSBs and JRBs
- ❖ Work with CYSA members to identify methods for supporting and enhancing ACU Functions
- ❖ Increase training and support in conducting community needs assessments

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## DEFINITIONS & ACRONYMS

**Administrative Core Functions (ACU)** - YSBs that receive grant money from DCF are required to complete five administrative core functions: Community Involvement, Resource Development, Research & Assessment, Advocacy, and Management & Administration

**Council of State Governments (CSG)** - National nonprofit organization that partnered with the State of Connecticut to conduct the Improving Outcomes for Youth study and develop recommendations based on the work in conjunction with the IOYouth Task Force.

**Connecticut Youth Services Association (CYSA)** - A membership organization of Connecticut Youth Service Bureaus, led by a volunteer board of bureau leaders. The organization leads, strengthens and supports a unified network of Youth Service Bureaus dedicated to promoting the well-being of Connecticut's children, youth, and families.

**Department of Children and Families (DCF)** - The oversight organization of the youth service bureaus in Connecticut and the agency responsible for managing the Grant Program which assists municipalities and private youth-serving organizations designated to act as agents for municipalities in establishing, maintaining, or expanding such YSBs.

**District Reference Group (DRG)** - Classification system utilized by the Connecticut State Department of Education to group local school districts based on socioeconomic status of their student population.

**Families with Service Needs (FWSN)** - Specific behaviors of youth under 18 including running away from home, being beyond control for parent/guardian, and engaging in immoral or indecent behavior.

**Community Based Diversion System Plan (Community Hub)** - A roadmap for developmentally appropriate, community-based responses to divert children and youth from the juvenile justice system. By creating a "system" of early identification, assessment, and intervention, the individual criminogenic, social/emotional, behavioral, mental health and academic needs of at-risk pre-delinquent and delinquent children and youth can be addressed within the context of their family, school, and community such that no child or youth is entered into the juvenile justice system without having exhausted appropriate community resources.

**Improving Outcomes for Youth (IOYouth)** - Initiative to assess recent juvenile justice system reforms to determine whether there has been alignment with state mandates. Based on results, next steps were to be determined to drive policies, practices, and resource allocation decisions to improve youth outcomes.

**Juvenile Justice Consultant (JJ Consultant)** - Consultant that contracts with the CYSA to address juvenile justice related issues, reform, policy, training, and advocacy across the state that impact member organizations.

**Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC)** - Statewide committee tasked with evaluating policy related to the juvenile justice system and oversee continued reform of the system as a whole, including but not limited to setting goals, assessing impact, planning for implementation, and reporting to the state.



**Juvenile Review Board (JRB)** - Community-based diversion process for youth that would normally be referred to Juvenile court but were identified as low risk. The process works to repair harm and address the underlying causes of the violation through the development and implementation of a service program specifically designed to address the needs of the youth.

**Local Interagency Service Team (LIST)** - The team consists of representatives from state agencies and local communities. The purpose is to develop strategies to address planning, implementation, and evaluation of juvenile justice service delivery through communication, coordination, and planning among all team members.

**Ohio Youth Problem, Functioning, and Satisfaction Scales (Ohio Scales)** - An assessment tool utilized to measure the problem severity and individual functioning outcomes of youth (5-18 years of age) who receive mental health services.

**Tier One Services (Tier 1)** - Services provided by Youth Service Bureaus that last less than twenty hours. Services can take the form of short-term programs where participants are signed up or registered or they can take the form of large group events where participants do not need to sign up or pre-register.

**Tier Two Services (Tier 2)** - Services provided by Youth Service Bureaus that last for a combined total of more than twenty hours. Services can take a variety of forms and cover a variety of topics. Tier Two services are typically, but not always, provided to youth that have been referred to the bureau through a Juvenile Review Board.

**Youth Service Bureau (YSB)** - An organization that works to plan, evaluate, coordinate, and implement resources, services, and support for youth and families in their community to ensure all youth develop positively and become responsible members of their communities.

# APPENDICES







## APPENDIX ONE

### Survey Creation

Ahead of survey development, a preliminary review of current state mandates and YSB and JRB expectations was conducted to provide a starting point to develop questions. Additional discussions with YSBs and JRBs across the state, the CYSA Executive Board, the Juvenile Justice Consultant (JJ Consultant) and representatives from DCF were conducted to further guide survey development. Questions and multiple choice answers were created and finalized in conjunction with the Executive Board of the CYSA, the JJ Consultant and staff at DCF. Two distinct surveys were developed, one focusing on YSBs which consisted of 154 questions covering 6 different functional areas and one focusing on JRBs which consisted of 167 questions covering 7 different functional areas.

Questions in each survey were organized into a number of distinct functional areas. Both tiering and context questions were included in sections. YSB functional areas consisted of the following:

1. **ACU Functions-** Questions pertaining to mandated Administrative Core Unit Functions that all YSBs are required by state statute to carry out.
2. **Youth Served-** Questions pertaining to the makeup and demographics of youth who participate in programming offered by or through the local YSB.
3. **Programming and Partners-** Questions pertaining to programming offered by the YSB either through direct referral or contractual means, as well as existing community partners that work with the YSB in some capacity.
4. **Funding and Capacity-** Questions pertaining to current budget and sources of funding in addition to capacity with regard to staffing, programming, and the organization's ability to serve the youth in their communities based on these factors.
5. **Data Collection and Assessment-** Questions pertaining to methods and range of data collection in addition to methods and variety of screening, evaluation, and assessment on areas including staff, internal and external programming, youth outcomes, and service matching.
6. **General Operations-** Questions pertaining to many of the day to day operations and overall structure of the organization.

JRB functional areas consisted of the following:

1. **Members-** Questions pertaining to how new board members are chosen and what the expectations and responsibilities of active board members are.
2. **Member Training-** Questions pertaining to how new and existing board members are trained and what topics are they trained on.
3. **Philosophy and Ethics-** Questions pertaining to how the JRB process is approached and what measures are taken to help ensure fair and equitable treatment of all youth.
4. **Intake Process-** Questions pertaining to what and how information is gathered to help board members better understand the circumstances of the case and enable a more individualized plan and approach.
5. **JRB Meetings-** Questions pertaining to how the meeting is conducted and how the youth and their families are included in the process.
6. **Case Management and Service Recommendations-** Questions pertaining to what services are available to youth and how the board helps ensure that agreements continue to meet the specific needs of the youth during the agreement period.





7. **Case Closeout-** Questions pertaining to how closeouts are conducted and what information is collected from the youth and their family.

A total of 99 YSBs (96%) and 83 JRBs (84%) completed the surveys.

## Context and Tiering Questions

Due to the unique and customized nature of the YSBs and JRBs across the state, context questions were included in both surveys. Context questions help to develop a clear picture of the structural, budgetary, functional, and focus variation that exist across organizations that could lead to possible benefits and/or areas of challenge. Context questions were used to help clarify how recommendations, changes, and support can be best approached across the state. Additionally, they help to identify what changes can be addressed at the individual organization level vs changes that would need more broad support. The following are a few examples of context questions found in the two surveys:

- ❖ How many of each of the following types of staff do you utilize at your organization?
- ❖ Over the last five years, has your organizational budget grown, shrunk, or generally stayed the same?
- ❖ For how many years has your JRB been accepting cases in your town(s)?
- ❖ What agency/organization runs your JRB?

Tiering questions were developed to help build a clear picture of how organizations and the state as a whole are able to address the current state mandates. Current expectations are expansive, but very little structure around specific metrics has been created to enable individual organizations, the State, or CYSA in general to identify barriers and challenges, develop solutions, and track improvements and growth. In order to improve the system, there must be a clear path forward with clear stepping stones to success. More metrics to help develop a clear picture of where YSBs and JRBs are and how the State, CYSA, and the organizations themselves can work to improve is critical. The tiering questions within the surveys serve as a starting point to help identify where the state as a whole currently stands in this work. The following are a few examples of tiering questions found in the two surveys:

- ❖ Which of the following ACU functional areas does your organization complete in some way?
- ❖ Does your organization regularly participate in a Local Interagency Service Team (LIST)?
- ❖ Is there a probationary period for JRB members before their actual appointment begins?
- ❖ During the intake process, are OHIO scales screening completed?

Tiering questions were grouped into categories (Benchmark Areas) that represent the overall mission and vision of YSBs and JRBs in Connecticut. YSB benchmark areas included the following:

1. **ACU Functions-** Is the YSB able to fulfill the five ACU functions required by state statute?
2. **Equity and Inclusion-** Are equitable practices a focus and has the YSB developed a means to help ensure that all youth and their families have access to programming and services?
3. **Data Collection and Use-** Is thorough and informative data being collected, and is that data utilized to help ensure decisions, changes, and processes are impactful and sustainable?
4. **Identify, Match, and Access Services-** Does the YSB have the capacity to identify and meet the needs of the youth and families in their communities?
5. **Standards and Guidelines-** Are internal practices and processes carefully thought out and planned to ensure consistency and fairness is addressed?
6. **Training and Staffing-** Are staff provided with the necessary training, and are staff chosen to help



create a diverse and knowledgeable organization?

7. **Community Hub-** Is the YSB able to drive a coordinated community response to youth and family needs by working with community partners to identify present needs and connect individuals with appropriate services and support?

JRB benchmark areas included the following:

1. **Restorative Practices-** Are the tenets of restorative practices being utilized to help improve and repair relationships?
2. **Equity and Diversity-** Are equitable practices being utilized throughout the JRB process, and is there diverse representation within the JRB to help ensure a fair and equitable experience for all youth?
3. **Data Driven-** Is thorough and informative data being collected and then utilized to help ensure that decisions, changes, and processes are impactful and sustainable?
4. **Individual Plans-** Is each youth provided with a tailored plan that ensures support and services that will help address the underlying needs of the individual?
5. **Standards and Guidelines-** Are internal practices and processes carefully thought out and planned to ensure consistency and fairness is addressed?
6. **Training and Staffing-** Are staff provided with the necessary training, and are staff chosen to provide a diverse and knowledgeable board?
7. **Youth and Family Engagement-** Are youth and their families an integral part of the JRB process?

Answers for each tiering question were ranked on a scale of 1 to 3. Ranking was utilized to help inform and identify successes and gaps in organizational functionality and capacity as well as assess alignment to current state mandates. The rubric used to rank each question was developed in collaboration with the Executive Board of the CYSA, the JJ Consultant, and staff at DCF. The tiering scale was organized as follows:

- ❖ Tiering of 1=*Room for Growth and Support-* The organization is in need of additional support to meet state mandated requirements
- ❖ Tiering of 2=*Striving for Success-* The organization is typically meeting state mandated requirements across multiple measures
- ❖ Tiering of 3=*Maximizing Impact-* The organization is meeting and sometimes exceeding state mandated requirements

After each question was tiered, all questions within a benchmark area were averaged to create a benchmark score. Below is an example of a tiered question and the benchmark area average calculation.

Tiering Question Example: Depending on how the organization answered Q109, they received a score of 3, 2, or 1 for the question.

| Question   | Maximizing Impact (3) | Striving for Success (2) | Room for Growth and/or Support (1) |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>(Q109- JRB Survey) During the JRB meeting, are restorative questions used to guide the conversation</i> | Yes                   | Sometimes                | Not Sure, No                       |



Benchmark Area Average Example: Once all tiering questions were scored, the benchmark score was calculated by averaging all questions that make up the benchmark area.

| Q109 | Q92 | Q93 | Q105 | Q88 | Q24 | Q25 | Q30 | Q62 | Q63 | Q87 | Q97 | Restorative Avg. |
|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------|
| 3    | 1   | 2   | 3    | 3   | 3   | 3   | 3   | 3   | 3   | 1   | 1   | 2.42             |

State averages for tiering questions and benchmark areas were then determined by averaging all individual organizational scores to calculate a statewide average.





## APPENDIX TWO

### YSB Data

#### ACU Functions

Overall, the mandated Administrative Core Unit Functions that all YSBs are required by state statute to carry out are being performed, but YSBs need additional support with Research and Assessment.

- ❖ 99% of YSBs engage in Community Involvement
- ❖ 90% of YSBs complete Resource Development
- ❖ 89% of YSBs oversee Management and Administration
- ❖ 87% of YSBs engage in Advocacy
- ❖ 69% of YSBs perform Research and Assessment

#### Youth Served

Of 98 YSB respondents, the following was reported:

|                       | 0 Youth Served | 1-50 Youth Served | 51-100 Youth Served | 101-200 Youth Served | 201+ Youth Served | Report an Unmet Need |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| YSBs serving Tier 1*  | -              | 17                | 13                  | 20                   | 48                | 60                   |
| YSBs serving Tier 2** | 5              | 30                | 24                  | 19                   | 20                | 79                   |

\*Tier 1 youth participate in YSB programming for less than 20 hours

\*\*Tier 2 youth participate in YSB programming for more than 20 hours

Majority of YSBs:

- ❖ Have **grown direct services** over the past five years but external programming has stayed the same
- ❖ Serve **approximately 300 Tier 1** youth per year and **just over 100 Tier 2** youth per year
- ❖ Have seen an **increase in the complexity** of Tier two cases
- ❖ Agree that **additional staff and funding will help** with Tier Two unmet need

The YSBs are evenly divided on whether or not new legislation has impacted the number of Tier Two youth they serve, however:

- ❖ 76% believe there is opportunity to better serve Tier 2 youth
- ❖ 47% have standard intake for Tier Two youth
- ❖ 19% provide service matching for Tier Two youth
- ❖ 17% provide screening for Tier two youth

#### Programming and Partners

Direct services are growing but but external services are not keeping up with demand

- ❖ 58% say **direct services have expanded** in the last 5 years
- ❖ Expansion of direct services are **typically due to increased need**



- ❖ 51% say **external services have stayed the same**
- ❖ To determine what new programming is needed, **information is gathered from:**
  - School
  - Family
  - Community
  - Youth

| Most Frequently Available Direct Services  | Least Frequently Available Direct Services  |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Positive Youth Development</li> <li>2. Youth Enrichment</li> <li>3. Youth Leadership</li> <li>4. Drug Prevention</li> <li>5. Community Engagement</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Special Education Opportunities</li> <li>2. Work Placement Assistance</li> <li>3. Pregnant Youth</li> <li>4. Early Childhood</li> <li>5. Employment Assistance</li> </ol> |

The typical YSBs partners with **14 community organizations to address youth need and partners with 7 community organizations to provide events and programming.**

| Common Identified Community Partners by # of YSBs |                          |                    |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 92 Schools  | 66 Counseling Agencies   | 29 Mentoring Prgms |
| 85 Police   | 61 Substance Abuse Prgms | 27 Outpatient Care |
| 81 Other Youth Organizations                      | 57 Local Businesses      | 27 EMPS            |
| 80 Recreation Departments                         | 51 Churches              | 21 Juvenile Court  |
| 70 Local Community Groups                         | 48 Medical/Psych Prgms   | 8 Other            |
| 68 Community Service Agencies                     | 33 State Agencies        |                    |

### Funding and Capacity

Generally, internal services offered by the YSBs have expanded due to the increased community need, but **staffing and funding have not seen the same growth to support that expansion.**

Roughly half of the YSBs surveyed say that **at least some of their funding is restricted** either by limiting what specific needs can be covered by funds or what specific programming can be covered. Just over a third of YSBs indicated that **changes to truancy and/or FWSN laws have impacted capacity.**



Over the last five years:

- ❖ **59%** of YSBs reported that their budget has stayed the same
- ❖ **75%** report that there has been no change in funding sources
- ❖ **76%** report that staffing is the most underfunded area of operations

### Data Collection and Assessment

Through self reporting, it was determined that **typically, YSBs collect data on paper and excel sheets** primarily through referral and intake forms as well as events and program documents. Additionally, data is collected through case management notes through conversations with youth and their families.

| Most Common Data Collection Sources by # of YSBs |                      |                    |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|
| 84 Intake  | 68 Case Management   | 59 Check-ins       |
| 81 Events  | 67 Youth and Parents | 39 Close-out Forms |
| 79 Referral Forms                                | 60 Permission Slips  | 5 Phone Calls      |

### General Operations

The average YSB

- ❖ Provides or coordinates services for **children 0-20 years of age**
- ❖ Has **not seen a change in their overall budget** over the last five years
- ❖ Spends approximately **60% of its budget on staffing, 30% on programming**, and the rest on items such as infrastructure and supplies

### Staffing and Training

Almost half of all YSBs have **2 or fewer full-time staff members** and  $\frac{2}{3}$  have **2 or fewer part-time staff**, while 4 organizations are run entirely by part-time staff.

| Most Frequently Available Staff Training  | Least Frequently Available Staff Training   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sexual Harassment</li> <li>2. Organizational Protocols and Procedures</li> <li>3. Mandated Reporter</li> <li>4. QPR</li> <li>5. NARCAN</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. FERPA/Education</li> <li>2. Strengthening Framework</li> <li>3. DEI</li> <li>4. Mentoring</li> <li>5. Bias</li> </ol> |

- ❖ **81%** conduct staff background checks
- ❖ **17%** utilize staff confidentiality agreements
- ❖ **13%** have an equity plan or policy in place



### Board Representation

When adding to the board, the following were reported as Diversity and Experience considerations:

| Most Common Considerations   | Least Common Considerations  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Gender Diversity</li><li>2. Experience in Schools</li><li>3. Training in Education</li><li>4. Training Youth Development</li><li>5. Experience in Law Enforcement</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Sexuality Diversity</li><li>2. Training in Youth Ministry</li><li>3. Experience in Youth Ministry</li><li>4. Ethnic Diversity</li><li>5. Training in Bias</li></ol> |

Representation on YSB Advisory Boards across the state consisted of the following:

- ❖ 71% from school system
- ❖ 70% have an Individual under 21
- ❖ 64% individual from police
- ❖ 64% private youth organization
- ❖ 56% individual interest in helping youth
- ❖ 50% individual from at least one municipality





## APPENDIX THREE

### JRB Data

The average JRB

- ❖ Has operated for 15 years
- ❖ Is run by the local YSB
- ❖ Is always able to accept cases
- ❖ Has 10 board members
- ❖ Serves one town
- ❖ Accepts second offenses
- ❖ YSB appoints board members
- ❖ There is no maximum # of terms a member can serve

### Members

JRBs generally **strive for diversity** among their board members but membership is typically not restricted by policies around mandatory background checks, probationary periods or term limits.

| Most Common Board Diversity by % of JRBs |               |
|--|---------------|
| 94% Gender                               | 59% Cultural  |
| 66% Racial                               | 27% Sexuality |
| 66% Ethnic                               |               |

- ❖ 16% have probationary period
- ❖ 77% have board members sign confidentiality agreements
- ❖ 29% have term limits for serving on the board
- ❖ 16% require member background checks

| Factors Considered when Choosing New Board Members by % of JRBs |  |
|---|--|
| 98% Establishing community representation                       | 78% Personal fit with purpose of the board |
| 90% Training and experience they bring                          | 69% Ensuring board diversity               |

### Member Training

JRBs largely provide restorative practices training and **56% provide onboarding training but only 17% report providing training around preventing bias, prejudice, and/or preconceived ideas.**



| Most Common Training Available   | Least Common Training Available  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Restorative practices (71%)</li> <li>2. Protocols and procedure (61%)</li> <li>3. Juvenile laws (36%)</li> <li>4. QPR (29%)</li> <li>5. Mandated reporter (29%)</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mental Health (22%)</li> <li>2. Social-Emotional Learning (17%)</li> <li>3. Bias (12%)</li> <li>4. Strength framework (8%)</li> <li>5. DEI (5%)</li> </ol> |

### Philosophy and Ethics

JRBs would benefit from more guidelines for procedures.

- ❖ 69% consistently use restorative practices
- ❖ 36% have a document covering roles and responsibilities
- ❖ 20% have guidelines for determining appropriate service matching
- ❖ 19% have guidelines on unfair and inequitable behavior
- ❖ 13% use data to try to drive equitable practices

### Intake Process

Many JRBs use **trust and relationship building questions** during intake and have a standard intake process but **information is often not shared with the board ahead of the meeting.**

- ❖ 77% have a standard intake process
- ❖ 82% handle youth intakes the same way regardless of the situation
- ❖ 33% always administer the OHIO scale at intake
- ❖ 53% have referral forms available for Community partners
- ❖ 92% explain to youth during the intake process that they are giving up some rights
- ❖ 20% contact the victim during the process
- ❖ 34% share all intake data with the board ahead of the meeting

### JRB Meetings

Many restorative practices are utilized by JRBs but **additional meeting practices** in regard to location and setting should be considered.

- ❖ 18 JRBs hold meetings in Police Stations
- ❖ 12 JRBs hold meetings in Town Hall Council Chambers
- ❖ 16 JRBs position board members on one side of the room and families on the other side

| Common Meeting Practices Among Typical JRBs            |  |
|--|--|
| Schedule meetings in collaboration with family         | 10 board members attend each meeting     |
| Provide services free of charge                        | Provide Youth the opportunity to explain |
| Provide translation services if needed                 | Allow family members to ask questions    |
| Allow families to choose virtual or in-person meetings | Allow all board members to ask questions |



### Case Management and Service Recommendation

The average JRB has access to **14 different service types** of which the five most common by percentage of JRBs are:

- ❖ **100%** Community Service
- ❖ **96%** Letters of Apology
- ❖ **96%** Positive Youth Development programming
- ❖ **94%** Individual/group/family counseling
- ❖ **89%** Mental Health assessment/evaluation

Least common services available by percentage of of JRBs are:

- ❖ **46%** Employment Services
- ❖ **49%** Mediation
- ❖ **60%** Journaling
- ❖ **66%** Mentoring
- ❖ **66%** Physical Health and Well-Being

| Most Frequent Considerations For Recommendations by % of JRBs |   |
|---|---|
| 96% Clients needs   | 90% Underlying cause of incident            |
| 95% Client understanding impact                               | 89% Planning in collaboration with client   |
| 92% Restorative practices                                     | 87% Incorporating client input and feedback |
| 90% Client acknowledging harm                                 | 87% Clients perspective                     |

### Case Closeout

The **majority of JRBs use CYSA Protocols and Procedures** as is or with some modifications, but many JRBs lack guidelines for staff in regard to check-ins. Many JRBs conduct close-out but do not have guidelines and the surveys administered are inconsistent.

- ❖ **81%** conduct a close out with the family
- ❖ **34%** have guidelines for conducting a closeout
- ❖ **19%** always administer the OHIO scale at closeout

## APPENDIX FOUR



The table below listed the state average for each benchmark area of YSBs. Additionally, it listed the percent of YSBs that fell above or below various thresholds (Above State Average, Below a Score of 2.0, Above a Score of 2.5)

|  | ACU Functions | Equity & Inclusion | Data Collection & Use | Identify, Match, Access Services | Standards & Guidelines | Training & Staffing | Community Hub | Overall |
|--|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------|
| State Average for Benchmark                    | 2.4           | 2.2                | 2.01                  | 2.00                             | 1.96                   | 2.18                | 2.29          | 2.13    |
| % of YSBs above state average for benchmark    | 56%           | 53%                | 50%                   | 59%                              | 42%                    | 49%                 | 48%           | 49%     |
| % of YSBs who scored below a 2 for benchmark   | 20%           | 26%                | 58%                   | 41%                              | 58%                    | 34%                 | 22%           | 37%     |
| % of YSBs who scored above a 2.5 for benchmark | 45%           | 29%                | 5%                    | 6%                               | 10%                    | 24%                 | 32%           | 14%     |



## APPENDIX FIVE

The table below listed the state average for each benchmark area and each tiering question used to calculate the benchmark average for YSBs. Question number corresponds to the question number on the survey. Questions appear as they did in the survey. State averages were calculated by averaging all YSB scores for the given question. Answer options for each tiering question can be accessed through this [YSB Survey](#) link.

| Question #  | Question  | State Avg |
|---|---|-----------|
|    | <b>ACU Functions</b>  | 2.40      |
| 2   | Which of the following Community Involvement activities does your organization complete in some way?  | 2.54      |
| 4   | Which of the following Resource Development activities does your organization complete in some way?   | 2.33      |
| 6   | Which of the following Research and Assessment activities does your organization complete in some way?  | 2.30      |
| 8   | Which of the following Advocacy activities does your organization complete in some way?   | 2.56      |
| 10  | Which of the following Management and Administration activities does your organization complete in some way?  | 2.27      |
|  | <b>Community Hub</b>  | 2.29      |
| 12  | In what ways does your organization lead prevention efforts in your town(s) to help promote the wellbeing of young people in your communities?  | 2.80      |
| 13  | In what ways does your organization mobilize your communities to encourage citizens, institutions, service organizations, and decision-makers to plan programs and strategies that foster positive youth and family | 1.87      |



| Question #  | Question   | State Avg   |
|---|--|-------------|
|   | development?   |             |
| 14  | In what ways does your organization provide ongoing assessment of youth concerns/issues and coordinate communities to maximize the use of their resources to meet youth needs? | 2.42        |
| 51  | Which of the following organizations/individuals would your organization receive referrals from?   | 2.27        |
| 52  | Which of the following programming types does your organization provide to youth through direct services?  | 2.48        |
| 60  | Which of the following organizations/individuals has your organization partnered with to provide community events and/or programming?  | 2.34        |
| 61  | Which of the following types of organizations/individuals does your organization often partner with to address youth needs or to provide programming?                          | 2.38        |
| 112   | Does your organization share any data with schools in your town(s)?  | 2.14        |
| 113   | Does your organization share any data with other community partners in your town(s)?   | 2.08        |
| 114   | Does your organization receive any data from schools in your town(s)?  | 2.33        |
| 115   | Does your organization receive any data from other community partners in your town(s)?   | 2.12        |
|  | <b>Equity and Inclusion</b>  | <b>2.20</b> |
| 65  | Does your organization currently receive community input regarding community needs and solutions through   | 2.59        |



| Question #  | Question  | State Avg   |
|---|---|-------------|
|   | groups such as community roundtables, community committees, and/or community task forces?   |             |
| 67  | Does your organization hold community forums that are open to the public and cover various community needs?                             | 2.22        |
| 69  | Does your organization participate in a Local Interagency Service Team (LISTs)  | 2.69        |
| 108   | If/when your organization reviews youth data, how is the data disaggregated?  | 2.46        |
| 109   | Does your organization currently utilize existing data to drive equitable practices?  | 1.72        |
| 131   | Which of the following representatives are members of your board?   | 2.05        |
| 132   | Which of the following areas of diversity, experience, and/or career are currently represented on your board?                           | 2.26        |
| 144   | Does your organization have an equity plan/policy?  | 1.63        |
|  | <b>Identify, Match, Access Services</b>   | <b>2.00</b> |
| 6   | Which of the following Research and Assessment activities does your organization complete in some way? ( <i>Specific Answer</i> )       | 1.41        |
| 8   | Which of the following Advocacy activities does your organization complete in some way? ( <i>Specific Answer</i> )                      | 1.59        |
| 15  | In what way does your organization offer opportunities for youth involvement in community policy decisions affecting their development? | 2.06        |
| 19  | Does your organization conduct OHIO scales screening  | 1.44        |



| Question #  | Question   | State Avg   |
|---|--|-------------|
|   | with Tier one youth?   |             |
| 22  | Which, if any, of the following programming are NOT available to Tier One youth (either through direct, contractual, or referral services)?                                | 1.94        |
| 30  | Does your organization have a standardized intake process for Tier Two youth?  | 2.78        |
| 32  | Do you complete an intake with every Tier Two Youth?   | 2.05        |
| 38  | Does your organization conduct screening with each Tier Two youth?   | 2.14        |
| 40  | Does your organization conduct service matching with each Tier Two youth?  | 2.08        |
| 43  | Does your organization conduct OHIO scales screening with each Tier Two youth?   | 1.54        |
| 45  | What if any programming is NOT available (or you are not aware is available) to Tier Two youth in your town(s) (either through direct, contractual, or referral services)? | 2.92        |
|  | <b>Standards and Guidelines</b>  | <b>1.96</b> |
| 3   | What basic strategies does your organization utilize to foster community involvement?  | 1.86        |
| 5   | What basic strategies does your organization utilize to foster resource development?   | 2.04        |
| 7   | What basic strategies does your organization utilize to foster research and assessment?  | 2.33        |
| 10  | Which of the following Management and Administration activities does your organization complete in some way?   | 2.21        |





| Question #  | Question  | State Avg   |
|---|---|-------------|
|   | <i>(Specific Answers)</i>   |             |
| 32  | Do you complete an intake with every Tier Two Youth?  | 2.08        |
| 33/34   | Does your organization have a referral form for schools/community partners/parents/caregivers, to enable referral of a Tier Two youth outside of the JRB process? | 2.00        |
| 136   | Are board members required to complete a background check before serving?   | 1.57        |
| 140   | Are organizational staff required to complete a background check before being hired?  | 2.74        |
| 141   | Do organizational staff sign an indemnity agreement before beginning work?  | 1.42        |
| 142   | Do organizational staff sign a confidentiality statement before beginning work?   | 1.37        |
|  | <b>Training and Staffing</b>  | <b>2.18</b> |
| 10  | Which of the following Management and Administration activities does your organization complete in some way?<br><i>(Specific Answer)</i>                          | 2.59        |
| 147   | Do new organizational staff participate in any onboarding training before they begin?   | 2.14        |
| 148   | If yes, which of the following areas are included in onboarding training?   | 1.58        |
| 150   | Which of the following professional development training does your organization provide to current staff?   | 1.88        |
| 151   | When changes in protocols, procedures, and/or laws  | 2.21        |



| Question #  | Question  | State Avg   |
|---|---|-------------|
|   | occur that affect your organization, how are staff informed of the changes?   |             |
| 152   | When changes in available services occur that affect access to youth referral in your town, how are staff informed of the changes?                        | 2.00        |
| 153   | Who in your organization is responsible for ensuring that staff are informed regarding changes in protocols, procedures, laws, and/or available services? | 2.83        |
|  | <b>Data Collection and Use</b>  | <b>2.01</b> |
| 6   | Which of the following Research and Assessment activities does your organization complete in some way? ( <i>Specific Answer</i> )                         | 2.34        |
| 19  | Does your organization conduct OHIO scales screening with Tier one youth?   | 1.44        |
| 43  | Does your organization conduct OHIO scales screening with each Tier Two youth?  | 1.78        |
| 93  | Does your organization collect data concerning the youth served by your organization beyond the required DCF data?  | 1.67        |
| 98  | Is your organization currently able to conduct evaluation of staff?   | 2.44        |
| 99  | Is your organization currently able to conduct evaluations of organizational procedures?  | 2.23        |
| 101   | Is your organization currently able to conduct evaluation of direct services/programs utilized by youth?  | 2.02        |
| 104   | Is your organization currently able to conduct evaluation   | 1.45        |



| Question # | Question   | State Avg |
|------------|--|-----------|
|            | of external services/programs utilized by youth?                                       |           |
| 106        | Is your organization currently able to conduct evaluation of youth outcomes?           | 2.33      |
| 114        | Does your organization receive any data from schools in your town(s)?                  | 2.38      |
| 115        | Does your organization receive any data from other community partners in your town(s)? | 2.12      |



## APPENDIX SIX

The table below listed the state average for each benchmark area of JRBs. Additionally, it listed the percent of JRBs that fell above or below various thresholds (Above State Average, Below a Score of 2.0, Above a Score of 2.5)


|  | Restorative Practices | Equity & Diversity | Data Driven | Individual Plans | Standards & Guidelines | Training & Staffing | Youth & Family Engagement | Overall |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------|
| State Average for Benchmark                    | 2.33                  | 2.04               | 2.16        | 2.09             | 2.19                   | 1.89                | 2.85                      | 2.22    |
| % of YSBs above state average for benchmark    | 58%                   | 48%                | 51%         | 64%              | 55%                    | 43%                 | 66%                       | 58%     |
| % of YSBs who scored below a 2 for benchmark   | 12%                   | 42%                | 30%         | 35%              | 22%                    | 57%                 | 0%                        | 18%     |
| % of YSBs who scored above a 2.5 for benchmark | 40%                   | 4%                 | 25%         | 13%              | 18%                    | 12%                 | 96%                       | 7%      |







## APPENDIX SEVEN

The table below listed the state average for each benchmark area and each tiering question used to calculate the benchmark average for JRBs. Question number corresponds to the question number on the survey. Questions appear as they did in the survey. State averages were calculated by averaging all JRB scores for the given question. Answer options for each tiering question can be accessed through this [JRB Survey](#) link

| Question #  | Question   | State Avg |
|---|--|-----------|
|  | Restorative Practices  | 2.3       |
| 22  | Which of the following areas are included in onboarding training?  | 1.6       |
| 23  | What training is available for current members of the JRB?   | 2.4       |
| 28  | Have your board members been trained in restorative justice?   | 2.4       |
| 59  | What values are considered when the board is making recommendations?   | 2.9       |
| 60  | When the board makes recommendations during a case, which of the following are taken into consideration, or are part of the process to create the agreement? | 2.8       |
| 83  | Is the victim of the incident contacted by the JRB before or during the process?   | 1.8       |
| 84  | What information from the intake form is shared with the members of the board prior to the JRB meeting/meeting with the family?                              | 2.3       |
| 87  | Where are JRB meetings held?   | 2.3       |
| 88  | How is the room most often set up during the JRB meeting? (choose the option that is closest to the meeting set up)  | 2.2       |
| 92  | Are victims allowed to attend JRB meetings if appropriate?   | 1.6       |



| Question #  | Question   | State Avg |
|---|--|-----------|
| 100   | Does each JRB member introduce themselves to the family at the beginning of the JRB meeting?                             | 3.0       |
| 104   | During the JRB meeting, are restorative questions used to guide the conversation?  | 2.7       |
|    | Equity and Diversity   | 2.0       |
| 6   | Which of the following areas of diversity, experience, and/or career are currently represented through your JRB members? | 2.6       |
| 7   | What factors are considered when choosing board members?   | 2.5       |
| 15  | Is a current and complete list of board members available to families ahead of the JRB meeting?                          | 1.8       |
| 24  | Is there training for board members to help prevent bias, prejudice, and/or preconceived ideas?                          | 1.5       |
| 38  | Does your JRB have guidelines and/or definitions for the board regarding unfair or inequitable behavior?                 | 2.5       |
| 40  | Do you have policies and procedures in place if a parent wants to file a complaint regarding the board?                  | 1.4       |
| 47  | Does your JRB have an equity plan/policy?  | 1.4       |
| 50  | Does your organization currently utilize existing data to drive equitable practices?                                     | 1.9       |
| 58  | When board members communicate outside the meeting, are youth names included in communications?                          | 2.7       |
|  | Youth and Family Engagement  | 2.9       |



| Question # | Question  | State Avg |
|------------|---|-----------|
| 61         | When recommendations are made for a client in a case, would the board be willing to make a change to the decision based on the request of a family member?                                    | 2.9       |
| 78         | During the intake process, is the purpose of the JRB and the process of the JRB fully explained to the family?  | 3.0       |
| 79         | During the intake process, is it explained to the family that their participation in the JRB process results in the youth giving up certain rights they would have if the case went to court? | 2.9       |
| 80         | During the intake process, is the family informed that data will be collected concerning the case?  | 2.8       |
| 81         | During the intake process, is the family informed that data may be shared with other individuals during the case?   | 2.7       |
| 93         | Are families allowed to bring other people, aside from lawyers, to the JRB meeting?   | 2.7       |
| 101        | During the meeting, does the youth have an opportunity to explain the circumstances of the incident?  | 3.0       |
| 105        | During the JRB meetings, do board members ask the youth and their family why they feel that the JRB process is the best way to resolve the case?  | 2.9       |
| 106        | During the JRB meetings, are youth and their families given the opportunity to ask board members questions?   | 2.9       |
| 121        | Is the final recommendation plan explained to the family?   | 3.0       |
| 133        | Are regular follow-ups conducted with youth during the contract period?   | 2.7       |
| 157        | Are the strengths of the youth discussed with the youth and/or family during close out?   | 2.8       |



| Question #  | Question  | State Avg  |
|---|---|------------|
| 158   | Are the youth successes acknowledged at closeout?   | 2.8        |
| 159   | Are youth and/or families provided with a means of contacting the case manager or board members in the future if they require additional support? | 3.0        |
| 160   | Are youth given options for additional voluntary programming?   | 2.8        |
|    | <b>Individual Youth Plan</b>  | <b>2.1</b> |
| 62  | Are there any services/activities/programs that are included in ALL client agreements, regardless of the circumstances of the case?               | 1.6        |
| 111   | Are follow-up meetings typically held between the youth/family and the board during the contract period?  | 2.2        |
| 114   | If follow-up meetings are held, which of the following would be possible outcomes of the meeting?   | 2.0        |
| 115   | Are the same number of follow-up meetings held for all youth?   | 2.1        |
| 116   | Can emergency and/or extra follow-up meetings be held during the contract period?   | 2.9        |
| 118   | Does your JRB have guidelines to help determine what would be appropriate services for an individual?   | 1.7        |
| 122   | Which of the following types/categories of services are available for the youth who participate with your JRB?                                    | 2.5        |
| 139   | Are all follow-ups conducted the same way for all youth during the contact period?  | 1.7        |
|  | <b>Standards and Guidelines</b>   | <b>2.2</b> |






| Question # | Question  | State Avg |
|------------|---|-----------|
| 12         | Is there a probationary period for JRB members before their actual appointment begins?  | 1.2       |
| 16         | Are JRB members required to submit to a background check before serving?  | 1.5       |
| 17         | Do JRB members sign an indemnity agreement before participating in meetings?  | 2.2       |
| 18         | Do JRB members sign a confidentiality agreement before participating in meetings?   | 2.6       |
| 33         | Does your JRB have a Protocols and Procedures document that all members can access and follow?                                    | 2.5       |
| 35         | Does your JRB have a document that covers roles and responsibilities of board members and the chairperson?                        | 1.9       |
| 37         | If a JRB member did not adhere to the protocols, procedures, roles, and/or responsibilities could they be removed from the board? | 2.9       |
| 42         | Does your JRB have guidelines or definitions concerning what constitutes a conflict of interest?                                  | 1.7       |
| 44         | Does the JRB have a stated code of conduct, code of professional responsibilities, and/or code of ethics?                         | 1.9       |
| 53         | Does your JRB have protocols and procedures to help ensure youth information remains confidential?                                | 2.5       |
| 55         | What would be the result of a member knowingly participating in a breach of confidentiality?                                      | 2.8       |
| 67         | Does your JRB have protocol and procedures to address a situation when a case is not going to be accepted?                        | 2.2       |
| 72         | Does your JRB have a referral form available for referring  | 2.3       |



| Question #  | Question   | State Avg  |
|---|--|------------|
|   | agencies/individuals?  |            |
| 75  | Does your JRB have a standardized intake process?  | 2.7        |
| 94  | Generally, are police officers present at the meeting for delinquency cases?   | 1.4        |
| 95  | Do individuals outside the board who attend JRB meetings need to sign any agreements? (i.e. police officer)              | 2.3        |
| 120   | Once recommendations are determined is a timeline of service completion created?   | 2.9        |
| 126   | Does your JRB have a designated case manager for all clients?  | 2.6        |
| 137   | Does your JRB have guidelines and/or protocols for handling check-ins during the contract period?                        | 1.4        |
| 141   | How long on average are cases open?  | 2.3        |
| 142   | What is the minimum length of time that a case must be open?   | 1.7        |
| 150   | Do you conduct a case closing with the youth and family?   | 2.8        |
| 151   | Does your JRB have guidelines and/or protocols for a closeout?   | 1.9        |
| 154   | When a youth fails to successfully complete an agreement, do you return the case to the referring agency?                | 2.5        |
| 156   | If in person/virtual, who is typically present with the youth and family?  | 2.0        |
|  | <b>Training and Staffing</b>   | <b>1.9</b> |
| 6   | Which of the following areas of diversity, experience, and/or career are currently represented through your JRB members? | 2.6        |
| 21  | Do new JRB members participate in any onboarding training  | 1.9        |



| Question #  | Question   | State Avg  |
|---|--|------------|
|   | before they begin?   |            |
| 22  | If yes, which of the following areas are included in onboarding training?  | 1.2        |
| 27  | Is there training available for board members regarding mandated reporting?  | 1.6        |
| 29  | What percentage of the board has been trained?   | 2.2        |
| 35  | Does your JRB have a document that covers roles and responsibilities of board members, the administrator, the case manager, and the chairperson? | 1.9        |
|  | <b>Data Driven</b>   | <b>2.2</b> |
| 82  | During the intake process, are OHIO scales screening completed?  | 2.4        |
| 143   | If youth are referred to community partners for specific support, are youth metrics tracked with outside service providers?                      | 2.1        |
| 144   | If youth are referred to community partners for specific support, what, if any, information about the youth is shared with the service provider? | 1.8        |
| 145   | Is data collected regarding youth experience, progress, and/or outcomes during the contract period?  | 2.2        |
| 147   | Does your JRB submit data yearly to DCF?   | 2.8        |
| 161   | During the closeout process, are OHIO scales screening completed?  | 1.9        |
| 162   | Do you utilize the closeout survey provided by CYSA/DCF?   | 2.0        |