

# Youth Justice Innovation Grants Final Report

2017–2019



*“The vision for the Wisconsin youth justice system is that it focuses on prevention and diversion, and provides accountability and services to youth and families in the system that prepares them to thrive. Across the state, there are already many dedicated people and promising programs moving us forward toward this vision. Our collective challenge is to work together across systems – state, county and tribal agencies, courts, law enforcement, schools, service providers, and many others – to bring to fruition the vision we share.”*

*- Youth Justice Vision  
and Strategic Plan*



Wisconsin Department of  
Children and Families

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# Background

## 2017-18 Grants

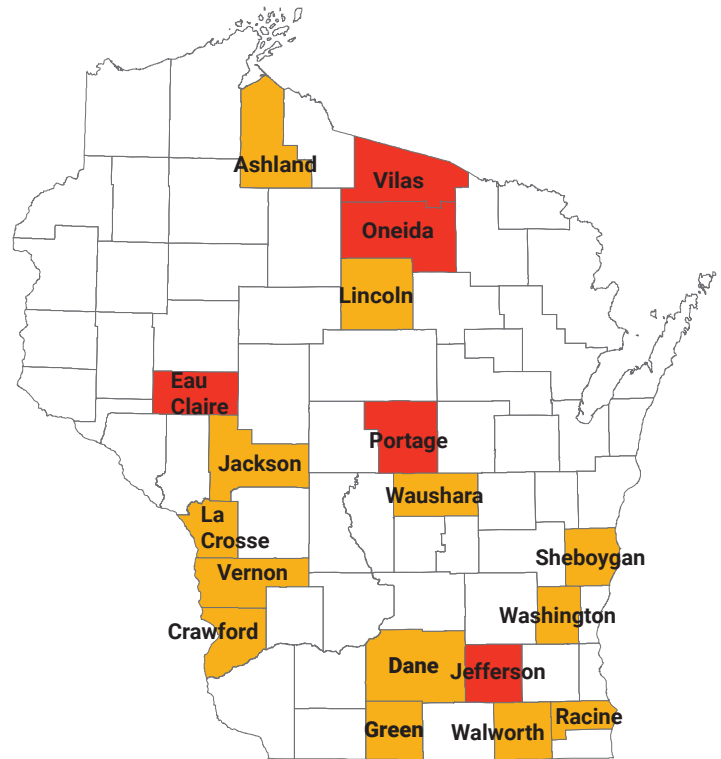
In 2017, DCF provided counties with a grant opportunity to do innovative work in one of three areas:

- Alternatives to Detention
- Robust Case Planning
- School/Justice Partnerships

The grants were related to DCF’s Youth Justice Vision and Strategic Planning work and were designed to provide funding to counties to allow them to implement a new project or practice that they would not otherwise be able to accomplish. Because the grants were funded by Youth Aids monies, counties were required to purchase or provide “community-based juvenile delinquency-related services.” Additionally, counties were required to develop projects that could be sustained beyond the life of the grant.

Four counties received initial grants in 2017:

- Eau Claire County developed an Alternative to Detention program;
- Portage County and Jefferson County both began projects around Robust Case Planning; and
- Oneida County (in conjunction with Vilas County) forged a School/Justice Partnership.



## 2018-19 Grants

In 2018, DCF expanded the Innovation Grant program to include more counties and an additional funding area – Community Partnerships. The four original counties were funded to continue their work and 12 new counties received grants:

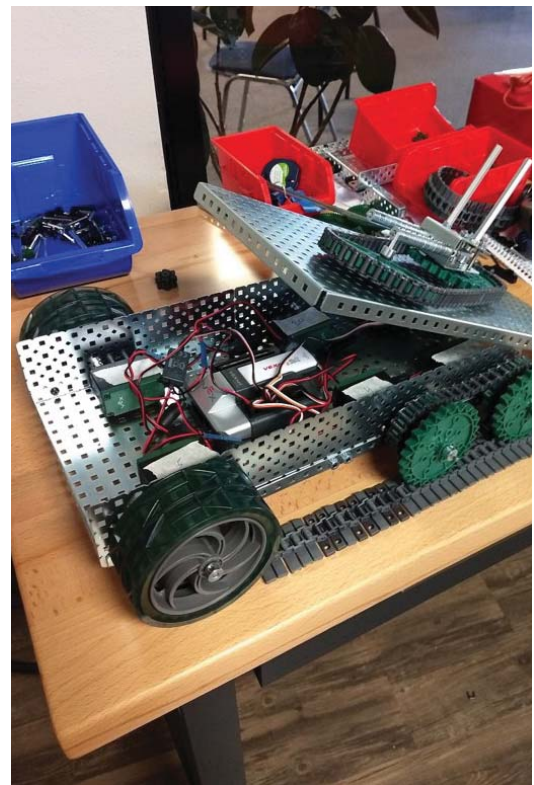
- La Crosse County and Washington County set out to do innovative work around case planning;
- Ashland County, Sheboygan County, and Walworth County developed plans to create alternatives to detention programs;
- Lincoln County and Racine County detailed plans to create community partnerships to address delinquency; and
- Vernon County in partnership with Crawford County and Dane, Green, Jackson, and Waushara counties strengthened the relationship between schools and the justice system to reduce the number of referrals to law enforcement from schools.

# Background

## Funding Amounts

County	2017-18	2018-19
Ashland		\$100,000
Dane		\$250,000
Eau Claire	\$250,000	\$125,000*
Green		\$100,000
Jackson		\$100,000
Jefferson	\$250,000	\$125,000*
La Crosse		\$250,000
Lincoln		\$200,000
Oneida/Vilas	\$100,000	\$50,000*
Portage	\$100,000	\$50,000*
Racine		\$250,000
Sheboygan		\$100,000
Vernon/ Crawford		\$100,000
Walworth		\$100,000
Washington		\$100,000
Waushara		\$100,000

\* Continuation grant



*Robot created during a Portage County STEAM session*

# Background

## Impact on Youth and Families

### ***Grant projects have provided direct services to over 350 youth statewide***

So far, grant projects have provided direct services to over 350 youth statewide. Many of the projects also engage parents and families through family case management. Some projects provide individualized therapy and treatment while others provide safe and supportive drop-in centers. Projects work with youth to complete hundreds of hours of community service. Youth in some projects are provided with both short-term and longer-term incentives to complete goals and remain in their community. Projects provide education to youth around safe and healthy relationships, e-cigarettes, social and racial justice, finding and keeping employment, and the effects of trauma. Youth gain pro-social skills in entrepreneurship, art, music, robotics, outdoor leadership, and more. Most importantly, youth at risk of being placed in detention or removed from their communities are able to safely remain in school and at home.

## Impact on Youth Justice (YJ) System

### ***...“approach youth from a position of support rather than punishment.”***

The impact of the projects extends beyond the individual youth and families served. Projects engaged local stakeholders to change approaches to delinquency in schools and communities. In addition, projects have trained hundreds of school employees and community leaders in trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, graduated responses to delinquent behavior, and use of Carey Guides and BITS.

Many of the projects unite law enforcement, the legal system, schools, and community leaders to discuss new approaches to delinquency. Several counties described stakeholders beginning to approach youth from a position of support rather than punishment.

## Looking Ahead

Innovative work in youth justice is continuing around the state. In the fall of 2019, innovation grants were awarded to ten additional counties to support work in the areas of alternatives to detention, service array/matching, and school justice partnerships/truancy prevention. Grants for the 2020-2021 period will be awarded in the fall of 2020. Counties and other local justice system partners are encouraged to use the information in this report to generate ideas, make connections, and move forward the Youth Justice Vision and Strategic Plan in their own communities.

# Alternatives to Detention

## Overview

The YJ Vision and Strategic Plan includes a “desire to ensure that youth who do enter the system are held accountable in a way that allows them to repair any harm they have caused and learn from their mistakes.”

Providing funding in this area is intended to allow counties to implement new programs or practices to reduce the use of detention for reasons other than public safety. This includes new approaches to addressing violations of conditions or rules of supervision. Project proposals may not include an electronic monitoring component, and are required to include the following elements: a specific alternative to use of detention for consequences or sanctions; use of incentives; strength-based, skill-based, and individualized approaches; and a commitment to regular collaboration among all stakeholders involved in decisions about the use of detention.

## 2017 – 2018

**Eau Claire County Department of Human Services** received the first grant in this area. The county has created an innovative youth center where young people receive services, learn skills and build relationships. The program, SPARK (Supporting Positive Actions Resilience and Knowledge), allows Eau Claire to divert youth from non-secure holds and detention and provide opportunities to engage families, use incentives to work with youth and families, and create individualized plans for each youth.

## 2018 – 2019

Eau Claire County received a continuation grant to maintain their project. Ashland, Sheboygan, and Walworth Counties all received initial grants.

**Ashland County** implemented a voluntary program to provide individualized, community service-based sanctions to encourage the use of secure detention only for youth presenting a serious risk to public safety. The project’s focus on community service also offers youth who make mistakes the opportunity to make amends and become valued members of the community.

**Sheboygan County** developed a graduated response system for supervision violations, pairing use of sanctions and incentives. Community services that serve as an alternative to detention have been enhanced and youth justice workers have been trained in new approaches to case management. Youth with significant trauma histories are referred to participate in the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT), an approach to clinical work that is trauma-informed and incorporates key principles of neurodevelopment.

**Walworth County** administered a range of interventions that emphasized accountability – presenting young people with the opportunity to learn from mistakes, while remaining a part of the community. Use of detention is limited to youth who present a threat to public safety. The county has also enhanced service provision to families – certifying parent coaches, contracting with a behavior analyst, and using tools (such as Carey BITS) to enhance case management.



# School/Justice Partnership

## Overview

The YJ Vision and Strategic Plan includes a focus on prevention and diversion. Further, many stakeholders during the input gathering process identified the need to ensure that schools are not referring youth to the justice system unnecessarily.

Funding in this area is intended to reduce the instances of school-based referrals to the delinquency system. Projects in this area include the following elements: clearly defined roles and regular collaboration between law enforcement, schools, and human services; an array of approaches to school-related misbehavior and/or truancy that minimize the use of exclusionary discipline and referrals to law enforcement; and attention to underlying family system needs.

## 2017 – 2018

**Oneida County Department of Social Services** (in partnership with the Vilas County Department of Social Services) used their grant to minimize the use of exclusionary discipline and referrals to law enforcement by starting report centers in schools. The grant has funded staff for the report centers, widespread training of system partners in trauma-informed care and motivational interviewing, and a facilitator to provide appropriate interventions to keep youth in school and out of the justice system.



# School/Justice Partnership

## 2018 – 2019

Oneida and Vilas Counties received a continuation grant to continue their work. Dane County, Green County, Jackson County, Vernon/Crawford Counties and Waushara County received initial grants.

**Dane County** focused their funds on reforming arrest and exclusionary discipline practices in their schools. Their project connects the school system, law enforcement, and other community agencies serving youth between the ages of 10 and 17. Staff are trained in restorative justice and schools have adopted alternatives to arrest and exclusionary discipline.

**Green County** developed a comprehensive truancy initiative to prevent juvenile intake referrals for habitual truancy and increase support for youth and families at risk of court involvement due to truancy. Funds are used to increase overall collaboration between school, law enforcement, and human services. Green County also provides support for expelled or at-risk of being expelled students – utilizing incentives to prevent expulsion and encourage positive school outcomes for reinstated students.

**Jackson County** developed a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) comprised of law enforcement, school officials, and DHHS staff to identify youth beginning to struggle with behavior in school or the community. The goal of the MDT is to provide appropriate interventions to avoid the need for law enforcement intervention and/or exclusionary discipline.

**Vernon County**, in partnership with Crawford County, hired a full-time staff member to work with schools, law enforcement, families, and human services professionals in both counties. The goal is to enhance the relationship between schools, families and the Youth Justice system to improve the ability of students to self-regulate, thrive, and find more effective behavioral support in school settings.

**Waushara County** initiated a Rapid Youth Justice Response model to mobilize youth justice workers to assist school personnel. This structured approach to address in-school behavior incidents serves a dual purpose: to help school professionals identify and support students with behavioral needs, while also diverting them from the youth justice system.



# Robust Case Planning

## Overview

The YJ Vision and Strategic Plan includes the observation that “all those who come into contact with youth and families in the system want to be able to tailor services to risk, needs, and strengths, provide evidence-based or evidence-informed practices and programs, and provide trauma-informed care. They want to connect youth to the supports and skills they need to find a good job or pursue higher education.” Robust case planning can help achieve this objective.

Funding in this area is intended to allow counties to implement a new or enhanced approach to case planning across all youth justice cases. Proposed projects had to include the following elements: tailored services target individual needs and strengths; planning addresses individual, family, and environmental factors underlying behavior; an emphasis on skill building and practice; and a structured approach to case planning through the life of a case.

## 2017 – 2018

Initial grants were awarded to Portage and Jefferson Counties.

**Portage County** used their grant to develop an innovative Creative Alternatives Program (CAP) to engage justice-involved youth in expressive arts and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) programming after school as well as during an intensive summer program. They also trained workers from partner organizations in the evidence-based Carey Guides and Brief Intervention Tools (BITS) to promote a more unified approach to working with youth.

**Jefferson County** implemented a family-based approach to case management for all their families with youth justice system involvement. The program joins Functional Family Case Management with a fully integrated family incentive program (which includes a service array) designed to address underlying family issues. Key components of programming include a comprehensive assessment of the youth and family, a family-based incentive program, and an individualized plan for each family using Functional Family Case Management.

## 2018 – 2019

DCF awarded Portage County and Jefferson County continuation grants. Initial grants were awarded to La Crosse County and Washington County.

**La Crosse County** implemented the Functional Family Probation model of case management for youth justice cases and Family Functional Therapy (FFT) for youth at risk of out-of-home placement due to behavior or significant mental health or family needs. The project provides multi-systemic wraparound community supports so that youth and family have support that is individualized, family-driven, culturally competent, and community based.

**Washington County** developed a project to provide in-home, intensive family services to youth in the justice system. Services provided by the Family Training Program (FTP) focus on home management, building parental capacities, behavior management, mentoring opportunities, and preserving the family unit. The overarching goal of the program is to preserve families by keeping children in their homes.

# Community Partnership

## Overview

The YJ Vision and Strategic Plan includes the objective that youth and families are connected to services that will continue beyond youth justice system involvement, when needed. This includes connections to school, employment, other positive activities, and natural supports.

This area was first introduced in 2018. Funding is intended to allow counties to forge community partnerships to provide positive school-related, employment-related, and other types of activities to young people during and beyond their involvement with the youth justice system. Projects were required to include the following elements: clearly defined roles and regular collaboration between all community partners and human services; explanation of the skills and/or developmental assets youth will gain through their involvement with the community partners; and how the project will provide the youth with connections to their community that will last beyond youth justice system involvement.

## 2018 – 2019

Initial grants were awarded to Lincoln and Racine counties.

**Lincoln County** built on existing community partnerships to create a “Youth Justice Services Group” to promote the use of community interventions. The network of community partners includes BIGS with BADGES (police officers, firefighters, and EMTs who mentor youth) and HAVEN, an organization that provides housing financial support and advocates for children, among others. Programming is designed to work with youth in the justice system and also develop a diversion and prevention program in schools.

**Racine County** implemented a Credible Messenger Program. In addition to mentoring, the program promotes positive social-emotional well-being, academic achievement, and personal and career development. Youth are also equipped with strategies to keep them out of the juvenile and criminal justice systems. The Credible Messenger Program targets adjudicated delinquent youths that score medium or high on the Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI), chronically involved in the justice system, gang-involved youth, youth returning from State Corrections or the Alternatives to Corrections through Education Program.

# County Project Profiles

## ASHLAND COUNTY

**Grant area:** Alternatives to Detention

**Grant amount(s):** \$100,000 (2018-19 Initial)

### Project Overview

In partnership with the Bad River Tribe, Ashland County started a voluntary program (led by a new coordinator position) to provide alternatives to detention, while also addressing prevention. The approach focuses on individualized, community-based sanctions centered around community service and secure detention is only used when a youth presents a serious risk to public safety. Development of a rewards and sanctions grid has created built-in positive reinforcements and uses rewards for successful completion of sanctions, as well as rewards for successful time on supervision. The overall goal has been to give youth who have made mistakes the opportunity to make amends and become a valued member of the community. This project received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019 and works closely with Ashland County's SPARK program (a recipient of the Brighter Futures Initiative Grant).



### Key Elements

The grant funds a coordinator to work with youth, coordinate and facilitate mentors, activities, and check-ins. The project provides a safe place for young people to be after school and on weekends and introduces youth to new activities to help them find their passions. As an alternative to detention, there are also evening and weekend check-ins for youth with more serious infractions. An overall focus on volunteer and community service opportunities are individualized to a youth's interests and career goals. Transportation is provided as needed, as much of Ashland County is rural and underserved by public transit.

Much of 2019 was spent building systems and capacity. This included creating a space and a system to allow youth in the YJ system, at-risk youth, and the general population to access healthy activities that build pro-social skills and resiliency. SPARK (Student Pathways to Adventure, Resilience, and Knowledge), was developed using the evidence informed practices to enable a robust offering of after-school, weekend, and summer programs for youth. To avoid stigmatization of YJ participants, confidentiality is maintained, and all activities are offered to all youth participants, regardless of justice system involvement.

# County Project Profiles

## ASHLAND COUNTY

### Key Elements continued...

Ashland County's project offers specific alternatives to the use of detention through the development of a sanctions grid, which determines appropriate consequences for violations of court ordered conditions. This framework substitutes programming for detention – offering an alternative in situations that previously may have resulted in 72-hour holds at secure detention. Ashland has also continued to work within the legal system to educate stakeholders in the benefits of reduced use of detention. As the juvenile court continues to order participation in the program, the project continues to reduce the number and frequency of secure detention holds and increase “buy-in” from community stakeholders.

### Data

14 youth have been referred to the Youth Justice Innovations (YJI) program. 1 youth has successfully completed all requirements of the program. 2 youth are actively engaged in SPARK programming and have completed most other requirements of their court ordered involvement. 2 youth referred to the program have “aged out” and did not successfully complete the program before the turned 18. The remaining 9 referred youth are still in the early phases of the intake process.

### Project Highlight

From the program:

*We currently have two boys who were referred to the YJI program due to their interaction with the Youth Justice system. After the initial intakes and interviews with each of these boys, they each had several one on one sessions with the YJI coordinator that included some use of the Carey guide interventions, and then some conversations about their interests and goals. The boys were then individually enrolled in the SPARK drop-in program. Each boy attended the SPARK program for the first time in November of 2019 with the YJI coordinator attending discreetly as one of the youth mentor staff. Since their initial introduction to the program, each boy has independently chosen to participate and engage actively in the SPARK drop-in program once or twice per week.*

*Both boys have now enrolled in the newly launched SPARK+ programming that begins in the first week of February. The activities that they have chosen to participate include: Indoor Rock Climbing, Beginner Skateboarding, Beginner BMX, and Skiing and Snowboarding. Both boys have been a pleasure to work with in the SPARK program. There have been no challenging behaviors exhibited at the program, and we have seen no further interaction with law enforcement. It is clear that after getting to know these boys that they are perfect candidates for the Alternatives to Detention project as detention would have been detrimental to their overall well-being, pro-social skill development and community integration. This is definitely a success story, and we are confident that while they may be our first, there are many more to come.*

# County Project Profiles

## DANE COUNTY

**Grant area:** School/Justice Partnership  
**Grant amount(s):** \$250,000 (2018-19 Initial)

### Project Overview

Dane County's project addresses arrest and exclusionary discipline practices in their schools. The county works with local school districts, law enforcement, and other community agencies serving youth between the ages of 10 and 17 years old. They implemented restorative justice training and school-based restorative justice alternatives to arrest and exclusionary disciplinary practices. They also developed diversion plans, employment programming (including employability skills and entrepreneurial training), and truancy prevention and support services for the youth and their families. This project received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019.



### Key Elements

Dane County developed a workgroup that included the school district, department staff, the district attorney's office, the public defender's office, the municipal judge, law enforcement, and community agencies. These cross-agency collaborative efforts have been formalized through the creation of a Memorandum of Agreement between the Madison Policy Department, Madison Metropolitan School District, and Dane County Human Services. The county turns to this group to roll out new initiatives and improve stakeholder collaborations.

This project also introduced school, municipal court, and county social work staff to truancy-prevention programming offered by 1800 Days, a local non-profit. Restorative Justice practices are utilized, and the county has also completed a Disproportionate Minority Contact report to make recommendations to decrease the number of students funneled into the school-to-prison pipeline. The project also worked with another Madison non-profit, CEOs of Tomorrow, to introduce youth to entrepreneurial skills and experiential learning through the Out of the Woods program.

# County Project Profiles

## DANE COUNTY

### Data

CEOs of Tomorrow completed its second cohort of youth in December, and 17 youth completed all requirements and the graduation ceremony was a success.

The 1800 Days Truancy program has served 45 youth to date.

### Project Highlight

Teens participating in Out of the Woods learned basic business finance, marketing and market research in addition to training in financial literacy and coaching from local entrepreneurs. These concepts were then applied to the creation of furniture products for a first of its kind teen-run furniture business. The business was launched in December 2019 and a Completion Showcase to display products and recognize successful participation in the program was held shortly after.

Participants worked towards their Employability Skills certificate and high school youth were also able to earn high school and Madison college credit for their participation.





# County Project Profiles

## EAU CLAIRE COUNTY

**Grant area:** Alternatives to Detention  
**Grant amount(s):** \$250,000 (2017-18 Initial),  
\$125,000 (2018-19 Continuation)

### Project Overview

Eau Claire County’s goal is to reduce the number of days youth spend at the Eau Claire Academy and the Northwest Regional Juvenile Detention Center – decreasing alternate care placements and keeping young people connected to their families and communities. Grant funding is used to support the Supporting Actions Resilience and Knowledge (SPARK) program. While SPARK is primarily used as an alternative to detention, Eau Claire reports it has also been used to support reunification, diversion and early intervention efforts. The program has been fully operational since February 2018.



### Key Elements

Youth earn incentive points by successfully completing the following: listening to staff directions, following rules and expectations, participating in group and putting forth effort, building and sustaining a community of respect, demonstrating time-management, and practicing self-regulation when upset. The youth can then use points to “buy” an incentive that is most rewarding for them. Examples of incentives include cans of soda, YMCA day passes, movie tickets, gift cards, or privileges within the program.

Youth can also participate in a larger incentive day following a successful week of programming. Incentive days revolve around a local activity, designed to both reinforce positive behaviors and provide opportunities for young people to form positive connections within their community. The SPARK Program has a dedicated Advisory Board which is a subcommittee of the local Juvenile Justice Collaborating Committee (JJCC). The Advisory Board is comprised of various community partner and stakeholders and meets monthly to oversee the progress of SPARK.

# County Project Profiles

## EAU CLAIRE COUNTY

### Data

Number of Youth served:	77
Average Youth Age:	14.45
Male Youth:	47
Female Youth:	30
Youth served pre-adjudication:	30
Youth served post-adjudication:	43
Youth served to support reunification:	4
Moderate Risk Youth:	38
High Risk Youth:	10

### Project Highlight

K came to SPARK with a history of “disruptive and profane behavior.” Their first visit to SPARK was a challenge – K refused to give up their phone, used inappropriate language, and struggled to regulate their emotions. 20 minutes later, K was asked to leave to minimize disruption and keep other participants safe. Following this incident, staff worked to restructure future responses to K – turning to minimal and calm language, modeling positive behavior and coping skills, and using older youth in the program to help mentor and support K. This change in approach resulted in K asking to return to the program again. Shortly thereafter, K felt comfortable enough to disclose the reason why they were so mistrusting of adults. SPARK staff cite the many small victories and connections formed with staff as reasons they believe K to be a huge success story for their program.

*“We have been able to support these districts by providing a space for their students to come who are half days to continue getting an education. Several of them are set up with online coursework, so we have been able to support them academically. Through the counseling groups we offer we have also been able to support the youth in addressing their social/emotional needs. Some youth have even had the opportunity to gain some elective credits towards graduation for successfully completing the SPARK Program.”*

# County Project Profiles

## GREEN COUNTY

**Grant area:** School/Justice Partnership  
**Grant amount(s):** \$100,000 (2018-19 Initial)

### Project Overview

Green County designed a comprehensive truancy initiative to prevent juvenile intake referrals for habitual truancy, increase support youth and families at risk of court involvement due to truancy, prevent expulsion and/or increase support and reinstatement of expelled students, and increase overall collaboration between school, law enforcement, and human services. The county hired a coordinator and ultimately a second staff person to implement the project and provide a higher level of support for youth and families in the program at the highest risk.



Green County also provides direct support for expelled youth, if needed, and increases use of rewards and incentives for positive school outcomes. The project initially was limited to Monroe, WI but expanded to include Brodhead and New Glarus, the 3 largest municipalities in the county. This project received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019.

### Key Elements

Green County's truancy initiative is comprised of three parts:

- **Education** – Students who have been expelled or are doing any portion of their school day online can work on their online assignments using program-funded computers or supplies at the Human Services office. Program staff motivate and monitor students' schoolwork to keep them on pace with their classes or their reinstatement plan.
- **"Dollars for Days"** – As part of a deferred prosecution agreement, students who have been cited for truancy can earn payment for their citation by attending school. This is monitored by the Truancy Coordinator.
- **Diversion** – the Truancy Coordinator and program staff work closely with students to identify and address barriers to school attendance. This is an intense case management piece, which project staff report is their most time-consuming task.

The project also includes monthly meetings between the Human Services Truancy Coordinator, school administrators, and local law enforcement. The project uses these meetings to discuss cases and facilitate communication between the three agencies, allowing participants to develop a better understanding of how their agency contributes to the goals of the collaborative effort. Best practice is also discussed during the monthly meetings, which enables information and new techniques to be shared not just between agencies, but also between schools. The county credits a decline in law enforcement referrals to all three agencies having a seat at the table when referrals are discussed.

# County Project Profiles

## GREEN COUNTY

### Data

The program served 22 youth from January to August 2019.

For youth with ongoing participation in the program, the percentage of days absent has decreased following the start of program intervention. The percentage of classes marked tardy has decreased or remained the same for about half of participants.

Participant	% Missing Before Program Intervention		% Missing After Program Intervention	
	Absent	Tardy	Absent	Tardy
A	100%	0%	9%	64%
B	19%	16%	13%	5%
C	43%	0%	16%	4%
D	58%	25%	23%	8%
E	29%	24%	28%	15%
F	16%	27%	13%	80%
G	74%	0%	68%	2%
H	62%	12%	44%	6%
I	26%	47%	4%	30%
J	47%	0%	35%	0%
K	42%	0%	19%	18%
L	53%	0%	42%	5%

### Project Highlight

A student was referred to the truancy program after only attending 13 out of 55 total school days between September and November. The truancy program used daily check-ins and positive reinforcements (like gift cards) when she would attend school. The program coordinated between her school, therapist, and other Green County units to help improve her attendance. Her family was also engaged in the effort and were taught to use rewards and consequences at home based on her attendance. With continued support, the student slowly shed some of her school anxiety and found being part of classroom could be enjoyable. In December, she only missed 5 days of school and in mid-January, Green County reported she was on track for perfect attendance for the month. They plan to continue to monitor her attendance and give reinforcements throughout the rest of the school year.

# County Project Profiles

## JACKSON COUNTY

**Grant area:** School/Justice Partnership  
**Grant amount(s):** \$100,000 (Initial 2018-19)

### Project Overview

Jackson County developed a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) comprised of law enforcement, school officials, and DHHS staff to identify youth beginning to struggle with behavior in school or the community. The goal of the MDT is to provide appropriate interventions to avoid the need for law enforcement intervention and/or exclusionary discipline.

The county has taken several steps to serve the goal of the MDT. A Youth Justice worker serves as a liaison between the MDT and school districts and MDT meetings are used as an opportunity to instruct school staff on appropriate usage of law enforcement and the youth justice system.

YJ staff are trained in evidence-based practices (including Carey Guides and BITS). A Youth Job Development Program helps young people in the community find and maintain employment. Additional support is also provided to families to identify and address barriers to attendance. The county uses reward programs to incentivize school attendance and positive behaviors. The project received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019.



### Key Elements

DHHS conferred with schools, law enforcement, corporation counsel, the district attorney's office and the county judge to review the mandates and state statute related to truancy. This highlighted errors in local school policy and enabled the group to finalize updates to the county's truancy referral process.

During the school year, the MDT meets monthly to discuss young people struggling with behaviors in school or in the community. As a group, they determine what appropriate interventions would prevent the use of law enforcement or a youth justice referral. DHHS social workers also regularly meet with the MDT to review school infractions and identify alternatives to detention.

The youth justice social worker completes a basic assessment for each referred youth to identify any underlying family system needs. Time with parents has been increased so social workers can help develop parenting or discipline techniques as well as assist with accessing community-based resources or addressing basic needs (like gas cards to take children to school). Any needs social workers are unable to meet are shared with the MDT to brainstorm potential solutions.

# County Project Profiles

## JACKSON COUNTY

### Data

For the 2016-17 school year there were only 17 referrals (6 JIPS, 5 DPA, 2 consults with closure and 4 consent decrees). In 2017-18 the referrals nearly tripled to 42 (6 JIPS, 16 DPA, and 20 consults with closure). And in the 2018-19 (the year of this program) referrals stayed at 41 (16 JIPS, 23 DPA, and 2 consults with closure).

The project reported that the increase of referrals reflected an improvement in communication between the school and youth justice. The increase in JIPS was likely due to a lack of response from the youth's parents. The agency is in the process of rethinking its strategy to also engage with resistive or unresponsive parents.

During the 2018-2019 school year 13 of the 41 delinquency referrals received occurred at school. During the 2017-2018 school year 17 of 42 delinquency referrals received occurred at school.

### Project Highlight

Jackson County DHHS encouraged school representatives to involve a mother more in school meetings for her two children. After learning one of the children was being bullied, the school set up one-on-one time for the youth with an adult in the school. This consistent contact resulted in a decrease in behavioral issues. Both children have also improved their attendance since the intervention.

The job program has also been a victory for Jackson County. Youth in the program have gained employment and continue to be successful as they age out of the YJ system.



# County Project Profiles

## JEFFERSON COUNTY

**Grant area:** Robust Case Planning  
**Grant amount(s):** \$250,000 (Initial 2017-18),  
\$125,000 (2018-19 Continuation)



### Project Overview

Jefferson County started an evidence-based in-home program called Fostering Resilient Families. This approach unites Functional Family Case Management (FFCM) with an integrated family incentive program designed to help the county decrease out of home placement, while increasing youth and family participation in a family-centered, strengths-based system of care. Fostering Resilient Families strives to reduce opposition between youth and their families as youth participants work towards shared and individual goals and parenting capacities are increased.

The Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI) is used to assess youth risk (needs) and protective (strengths) factors. Families are included in a discussion of the results and involved in YASI case planning. Any coordinated services are decided on by the family and directly relate back to identified individual and family goals.

### Key Elements

A therapist trained in FFCM dedicates their time to youth justice families to avoid placing families on a waitlist. Because Fostering Resilient Families is based in the home, this approach has eliminated transportation issues.

The county uses a live school app that allows case managers to track the progress of youth and their families and provide them with rewards.

Jefferson County offers trauma-focused therapy but recognizes youth have different ways of coping. As such they have also implemented alternative therapeutic programs for youth such as sensory-based programming, neurofeedback, equine or pet related therapy, and mindfulness activities (like martial arts).

# County Project Profiles

## JEFFERSON COUNTY

### Data

40 families received Fostering Resilient Families programming between April 2018 and June 30, 2019. An additional 87 youth and families were open when the project began.

### Project Highlight

D was placed on supervision for multiple disorderly conducts that occurred at school. The YASI calculated his risk factors were high and his protective factors were low. He came into the Youth Justice system with an extensive CPS history which suggested he had experienced parental drug abuse and short-term incarcerations, multiple police contacts in the home due to parent behavior, as well as physical abuse, neglect, and a lack of supervision.

D was 12 when he began Fostering Resilient Families YJ services. Early efforts between the family and their assigned case manager were tenuous as there was a lot of mistrust of the youth justice system. However, after making a connection with D's mother, the case manager was able to engage the entire family and motivate them to identify goals for D as well as the family. His mother opted to focus on school, in part because of hesitance to engage in therapy, but also because incentives planning rewarded both the youth and the parent for school participation – youth for attendance, positive behaviors and class participation and the parent for following up with the school as necessary.

Following FFCM protocol, the family met with the case manager to design a plan and monitor it regularly. D opted to work for smaller, regular incentives. Jefferson reports this plan has been successful for D and his family. Targeted areas at school have improved and he continues excel with support from his family, school, case manager, and incentive plan.

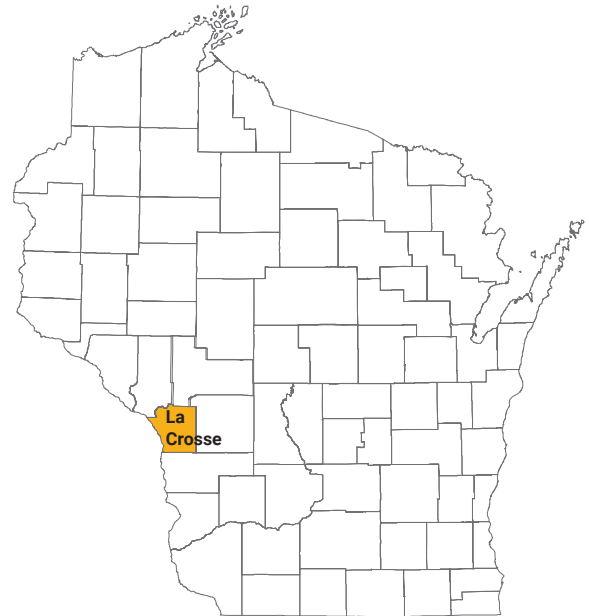
# County Project Profiles

## LA CROSSE COUNTY

**Grant area:** Robust Case Planning  
**Grant amount(s):** \$250,000 (Initial 2018-19)

### Project Overview

La Crosse County implemented a two-tiered case planning approach to expand and improve case management and existing multisystemic wraparound supports. Youth Justice social workers and therapists trained in Functional Family Probation (called Functional Family Case Management or FFCM in La Crosse) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT) provide evidence-based case management and intensive therapeutic interventions for youth on supervision as well as other youth with significant needs. FFCM and FFT complement the multisystemic wraparound supports offered by the La Crosse System of Care (SOC) and enable the county to shift the focus of their intervention efforts from an individual service model to a “community of care.” The project received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019.



### Key Elements

FFT is a family-centered approach – first determining the function of behavior and then focusing on family needs and strengths. Based on needs, appropriate interventions are recommended and accessed in partnership with the families. Practitioners are encouraged to meet the youth and their family where they are at in their current stage of change. They then work side-by-side with family members to teach and model skills in real time. This creates the opportunity for youth and their parents to experience a different way of responding to challenges, while also understanding the immediate effects of that response.

FFCM draws on FFT, shifting the focus of youth justice workers to include an understanding that case management occurs in phases. Applying the right goals, skills, and activities at the right time can help workers stay on track during very complicated client situations, risks, and histories. It also draws on the support of family and community members. Youth Justice worker caseloads have been reduced to about 12 cases per worker in order to accommodate this model.

# County Project Profiles

## LA CROSSE COUNTY

### Key Elements continued...

Four therapists have received Functional Family Therapy (FFT) training. All Youth Justice Social Workers in La Crosse have completed the first year of FFCM training. Extensive follow up, consultation, and coaching sessions are built into each training to ensure information retention and proficiency in the execution of the model. Additionally, supervisory staff are trained on both the model as well as coaching and quality assurance techniques to ensure continued fidelity.

The SOC was created in 2016 through a collaborative partnership between the School District of La Crosse and La Crosse County. It is designed to decrease arrest and disproportionate minority contact within the youth justice system, increase collaboration across stakeholders, and identify and fill service gaps in the community. The SOC coordinator is also trained in FFCM.

### Data

18 families received FFT in 2019. All youth who participated in FFT have successfully remained in the community.

4 families on the verge of placing a youth outside of the home were able to be stabilized with FFT.

The La Crosse SOC hosted several trainings for parents to improve their understanding of trauma and its effects as it relates to family and behavior. 18 racially diverse parents participated in a training on historical trauma and 28 racially diverse parents participated in training on Adverse Childhood Experiences.

### Project Highlight

A family with a lengthy history of system involvement was initially resistant to services. However, the YJ social worker (trained in FFCM) assigned to the family was able to build a relationship with them – something no other unit had been able to do successfully.

# County Project Profiles

## LINCOLN COUNTY

**Grant area:** Community Partnerships  
**Grant amount(s):** \$200,000 (Initial 2018-19)

### Project Overview

Lincoln County built on existing community partnerships to create the Youth Justice Collaborative Committee (YJCC) – weaving together supervision and community interventions to facilitate skill development, long-term connections, and interventions that meet the specific needs of youth. The program targets youth in the justice system with a proactive diversion and prevention program in partnership with schools. Lincoln County’s project also sought to develop an on-going collaborative group that will continue to collaborate and educate each other beyond the conclusion of grant funding.

Informal and formal youth services work in tandem to promote and develop services and programming focused on building resilience in youth and families. Merrill Mentoring matches a diverse group of adult mentors with youth. Merrill Area Public Schools starting the History Harvesting Project to bring generations together and develop a deeper understanding of community. Lincoln County law enforcement have also been trained in crisis intervention and DSS staff in the principles of trauma-informed care. The project received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019.

In August of 2019, a two day Trauma Informed Care Agency Strategic Planning Meeting was held. Through the course of this, participants representing a variety of public and non-profit agencies in Lincoln County developed a better understanding of trauma informed care, identified resources available in Lincoln County, and prioritized five specific opportunities (action items) to build a community of resilience.



# County Project Profiles

## LINCOLN COUNTY

### Key Elements

The following groups are all part of the YJCC:

- Social Services
- UW-Extension
- Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) & Kinship of Tomahawk
- North Central Health Care (NCHC)
- Merrill Area Public Schools (MAPS) & Aware and Active Citizens (AAC)
- TB Scott Library

Lincoln County's approach underscores the importance of forging connections between youth and adults as critical in building resilience in the community to prevent further community trauma. Two existing mentorship programs are united under the umbrella of Merrill Mentoring – Kinship of Tomahawk and BBBS in Merrill. As partners, they work together to further mentoring opportunities in their respective communities, as well as Lincoln County as a whole.

Youth mental health services are administrated by NCHC. Their participation in the YJCC is critical to the diversion of intake referrals to the appropriate system. In October 2019, NCHC provided a 5 day law enforcement specific Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), designed to help officers distinguish mental health from delinquent behaviors and identify the most appropriate intervention strategies for each. In December 2019, a complementary 2 day Crisis Intervention Partnerships (CIP) training was held for community partners to learn about resources and interventions law enforcement rely on in response to crisis.

The AAC initially approached the YJCC to discuss incorporating youth in community-based projects to create a deeper appreciation of Merrill's cultural history and increase citizen engagement. The reception of a curriculum development seminar in February 2019 led to AAC partnering with MAPS to incorporate the community-developed Oral History into Merrill High School and launch History Harvesting, which tasks students (under the direction of teacher advisors) with interviewing residents to collect stories and photographs that are later incorporated into local events.

Recognizing early attempts to incorporate trauma-based skill building into work with families, a concerted, conscious effort was made to offer training for community agency staff. Training was offered in two similar, but distinct sessions: Wisconsin Trauma Project - Strengthening Families for Caregivers and Strengthening Families Through Mindfulness - MSFP (intended for ages 10-14).



# County Project Profiles

## LINCOLN COUNTY

### Data

BBBS of Northcentral Wisconsin has opened 31 new matches in the youth mentoring program in Merrill. Additionally, they report recruiting firefighters, a teacher, and the co-owner of a local car dealership to participate in the program, increasing the number of adult mentors in the Merrill community by 10.

The City of Merrill Police Department sent nine members of their department to CIT. A total of 16 officers in Lincoln County attended the full 5-day training. Fifty community members participated in the complementary CIP training. The Lincoln County Sheriff's Office sent staff to this training in addition to local social service staff, educators, family caregivers, community therapists, and court personnel.

Six community staff across four agencies were trained during in Strengthening Families for Caregivers. These staff members later facilitated family groups in teams of 2 for 7 weeks beginning in October 2019. Additional group sessions are pending.

Four staff across three agencies were trained in Strengthening Families Through Mindfulness. Five families (including one foster family) registered for the first group beginning in March 2020. Sessions were intended to last for 8 weeks.

### Project Highlight

MAPS, AAC and TB Scott Library organized a curriculum development seminar led by Dr. Arjit Sen of UW-Milwaukee. Dr. Sen shared information about community engagement and storytelling and encouraged Merrill area residents to explore the history of their town from individual, family, and business perspectives. A youth participant of this event (who was identified to participate as result of a delinquency referral) expressed positive feedback for this event, highlighting that he felt he was an important contributor of the process. Likewise, other partner participants acknowledged that he was able to volunteer important information.

Another success from this event is the inclusion of an oral history component in Merrill High School curriculum – bringing together generations to develop a story connected to community.

# County Project Profiles

## ONEIDA COUNTY AND VILAS COUNTY

**Grant area:** School/Justice Partnership  
**Grant amount(s):** \$100,000 (2017-18 Initial), \$50,000 (2018-19 Continuation)

### Project Overview

Oneida and Vilas Counties built on the work of a local pre-existing truancy interventions to minimize the use of exclusionary discipline and referrals to law enforcement. The Counties' Truancy Task Force draws membership from Departments of Social Services, a sheriff's department, Corporation Counsels, judges, and local school districts. Meetings are held bi-monthly to discuss truancy prevention and coordinate between agencies.

This project focuses on new approaches to misbehavior and truancy including a report center and Coping and Support Training (CAST) skills group. Report center staff are trained in Motivational Interviewing (MI) and Trauma-Informed Care (TIC), and a facilitator is trained in psycho-social interventions.

Oneida and Vilas Counties also hosted a speaker to address schools in Rhinelander, Eagle River, and Minocqua about cyberbullying and sexting. Evening presentations were available for parents and interested community members.



### Key Elements

The Truancy Task force was utilized to assist with planning, goal setting, and identifying common issues and concerns among school districts. Members include:

- Oneida and Vilas Departments of Social Services
- Oneida County Sheriff's Department
- Oneida and Vilas Corporation Counsel's Offices
- Judges from Oneida and Vilas
- Rhinelander, Northland Pines, and Lakeland Union High School school districts

MI and TIC was provided to the three school districts to develop understanding of trauma and encourage resilience among students. Staff also participated in a workshop on Restorative Justice practices.

# County Project Profiles

## ONEIDA COUNTY AND VILAS COUNTY

### Data

Approximately 500 people were trained in TIC at schools in Oneida and Vilas Counties and 100 people were trained in MI.

### Project Highlight

This project was very encouraged by the graduates of CAST programing wanting to form a mentoring group for new students entering the program.



# County Project Profiles

## PORTAGE COUNTY

**Grant area:** Robust Case Planning

**Grant amount(s):** \$100,000 (2017-18 Initial), \$ 50,000 (2017-18 Continuation)

### Project Overview

Portage County contracted with a certified art therapist and certified music therapist to provide weekly sessions to youth with YJ involvement at the Portage Gateway Report Center. The county also collaborates with local experts to provide weekly STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) sessions. STEAM sessions are an opportunity for youth to process feelings related to trauma, use self-expression to develop coping skills, and serve as an introduction to education and career options that may not have otherwise been considered.

The project also provided training in Carey Guides and BITS to 38 county workers to allow them to use evidence-based strategies which target a youth's criminogenic needs.



### Key Elements

Music and Art Therapists meet with each participant to determine their current level of skill and to assess their interests. The therapists discuss the benefits of the therapy sessions in relation to each youth's personal circumstances and the behaviors that led them to become involved in the youth justice system. The program was focused on providing hands-on opportunities for justice involved youth to identify, try, and explore innovative therapeutic techniques to help them develop healthy coping strategies and re-direct negative thoughts and behaviors into positive outcomes for themselves and the community. Youth gain self-esteem and confidence, while also experiencing a sense of accomplishment through mastery of their individual projects. During the creative process, youth learn to problem solve and are able to practice social skills with their other peers in the group.

The music and art therapy project enhances services at the Portage Gateway Report Center (Gateway), a larger program Portage County created in partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of Portage County. The Gateway Program's goal is to reduce recidivism, prevent out-of-home placement and instill in youth a sense of connectedness to the Portage community. In lieu of detention as a court sanction, youth spend Saturday and Sunday in the Diversion program at Gateway. Gateway also hosts youth with truancy referrals as an alternative to the formal YJ system.

The Innovation grant further enhanced the programming at Gateway. As a result of this continuum of service and attention to the underlying factors which cause youth to enter our systems, Portage County reduced the use of detention by 50%, and reduced both recidivism and out-of-home placements.

# County Project Profiles

## PORTAGE COUNTY

### Data

The project provided:

- Art Therapy – 170 sessions
- Music Therapy – 34 & Gateway Lessons – 20 sessions (54 Total)
- Robotics – 107 sessions
- Carey Guides and BITS – 3-5 lessons weekly

Resulting in:

- Only 7 out of 22 participants were referred by law enforcement for additional offenses during program participation; 68% of our highest risk youth did not reoffend during program participation
- Only 1 out of 22 participants were placed outside of their home during program participation; 95.5% of youth were not placed out of their homes during program participation.

Portage County reduced the use of detention by 50% and reduced both recidivism and out-of-home placements.

### Project Highlight

When the program began, most youth participants were reluctant to try the new programming and apprehensive about participating. After experiencing the art, music, and robotics programming, they were fully engaged and looked forward to participating in the sessions each week. Some youth would use their free time to work on projects. It's been a win-win for staff, youth, families and the community.

# County Project Profiles

## RACINE COUNTY

**Grant area:** Community Partnership  
**Grant amount(s):** \$250,000 (2018-19 Initial)

### Project Overview

Recognizing the importance of credibility when connecting youth with community supports, Racine County implemented a Credible Messenger Program. The program is based on the Arches Credible Messenger Program in New York City and is designed to bring services to youth in their communities. It pairs mentors with intimate knowledge of a neighborhood or the justice system with youth, their families, and assigned case manager to promote change and accountability. The objective is not to just prevent subsequent criminal behavior, but to build skills so youth can be successful in school and work and develop the core competencies needed to be successful in the community.



The program targets youth residing within specific geographic areas within Racine County who are enrolled in the Racine Unified School District (RUSD) and involved in the youth justice system. This includes adjudicated delinquent youths who score medium or high on the Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI), youth with chronic justice system involvement, youth with gang involvement, and youth returning to the community from state corrections or Racine county Alternatives to Corrections through Education Program. The project received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019.

### Key Elements

Credibility lies in the ability to create a relationship based on similarities, an understanding of where youth come from, an understanding of involvement with the justice system that youth can appreciate and the ability of the messenger to communicate with the youth. Recognizing this, Credible Messenger Program staff mentors include a mix of people who have been justice-involved, work in the private and non-profit sectors, and are respected residents of the community.

The program is run at the YMCA in a neighborhood where many of the youth referred to the Human Services Department reside. It is designed with the assumption that some participants may continue to display negative attitudes and behaviors during the program. If youth do not attend meetings or engage in negative behavior, mentors will seek out the young person and continue engaging with them. Racine reports this approach is successful as many credible messenger mentors have maintained relationships with youth and families beyond enrollment in the program.



# County Project Profiles

## RACINE COUNTY

### Key Elements continued...

Referrals to the program incorporate Behavioral Analysis from the YASI. Upon receipt of a referral, mentors first meet with the assigned case manager to discuss the referral. Then, as a team, the mentor and case manager meet with the youth and family to formulate a case plan. Using the YASI as a guide, input and suggestions are solicited from the youth and their family members.

The program uses evidence-based curricula Thinking for a Change and Interactive Journaling which uses journaling to assess youth readiness to change and determine appropriate strategies that lead to success. Scores on the YASI wheel are used to match youth to the appropriate Interactive Journaling curriculum.

Racine also offers wraparound funds, or funds to assist in the payment of fees for extra-curriculars, enrichment programs, sports, or family enrichment activities, to assist with stabilizing a youth's home environment. These funds are intended to reduce stress and direct the youth's focus back into the programming, while also connecting the youth and their family with enrichment activities.

### Data

During the grant period, 37 youth were referred to the Credible Messenger Program.

20 of the 37 youth (57%) received charges while in the program, but most of the charges stemmed from behaviors prior to program referral. 19 of these youth were referred while in the Alternatives to Corrections program. While technically an out-of-home placement, the Alternatives to Corrections program is located in Racine County, enabling families and youth to continue involvement in the program.

### Project Highlight

From the program:

*Since we are just hitting our 1-year mark, we have seen many youth's participation increase and some youth asked if they could attend more days than the program offered. We have heard the following from parents: they have wanted a program like this with people who look like them and my child and have had the same experiences as them. We have had some families say they did not want anything to do with the program, however, we have continued to reach out to them and re-engage them back into the program.*

*The success that we have had includes youth completing interactive journaling, getting employment in the community, earning incentives for completing programming, developing relationships with their mentors, and youth remaining in the community with their families and the people who love and support them.*

# County Project Profiles

## SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

**Grant area:** Alternatives to Detention  
**Grant amount(s):** \$100,000 (2018-19 Initial)

### Project Overview

The goal of Sheboygan County's project is to decrease the use of secure detention for non-public safety related issues. To achieve this goal, the county has centered its work around six outcomes:

1. Considering the least restrictive responses for every violation of supervision.
2. Identifying gaps in services and developing alternative services for youth and families as needed.
3. Identifying and utilizing developmentally appropriate interventions with caregivers, community service providers, and youth.
4. Developing Approach Goals within the first 3 months of supervision.
5. Youth comply with court-ordered conditions and successfully complete court orders.
6. Community service opportunities are consistently available sanctions for youth.

The target population is youth on delinquency court ordered supervision. The project received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019.



### Key Elements

Sheboygan County is still in the process of putting a formal system of graduated response in place. In the meantime, all Youth Justice Workers have completed Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI) training and use the YASI to help identify alternative responses to secure detention. Materials from the Carey Group (including 8 Keys to Success posters, Criminogenic Needs pocket cards, and Brief Intervention Tools (BITs) Toolkits) were purchased for staff members.

A service matrix was completed by Sheboygan County as part of YASI implementation. Services and gaps were identified in the following 9 domains: family, school, community/peer, alcohol/drugs, mental health, violence/aggression, attitudes, skills, and free time/employment. Service Gap Action Plans were developed for many of the county-identified needs and completion of those Action Plans are ongoing.

# County Project Profiles

## SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

### Key Elements continued...

Youth with significant trauma histories are referred to participate in Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT), led by trained staff. NMT is an approach to clinical work that is trauma-informed and incorporates key principles of neurodevelopment into the problem-solving process. Several staff members have begun training with the Neurosequential Network/Child Trauma Academy so Sheboygan county Health and Human Services can receive site certification to provide NMTs.

Sheboygan County uses incentives to encourage youth. Incentives include praise, positive reports to parents and the court, certificates of program completion, snacks, and token awards for appointment attendance and meeting goals.

Community service opportunities are available for sanctions of youth for non-public safety related violations of court orders. The program allowed up to 25 hours of community service to be completed per referral. Placement at community worksites is determined with youth based on their interests, skill levels, and availabilities.

Programming allows for workers to utilize alternative interventions to detention, including community service. Up to 25 hours of community service are allowed per referral and youth receive support to complete required hours. Placement at community worksites was determined with the youth based on the youth's interest, skill level, and availability.

### Data

#### Sheboygan County Youth Admissions to the Juvenile Detention Center

Admissions	January – June 2019	July – December 2019
Total # Days	751	740
# Youth Admitted	54	49
Total Admissions	100	78
Law Enforcement Referrals	372	324
<b>Total LE Referrals for 2019</b>	<b>696</b>	

#### Sheboygan County Youth Admissions to the Juvenile Detention Center by Type

Type of Admission	January – June 2019	July – December 2019
TPC	78	53
Capias	2	1
Writ	0	3
Sanctions	1	5
Short-term Detention	19	16

# County Project Profiles

## SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

### Data continued...

Compared to the first half of the year, there was a decrease in the number of youth admitted to secure detention, the number of total admissions, and the total number of detention days. The most significant use of secure detention continues to be youth taken into Temporary Physical Custody (TPC). Additionally, 2 youth in Sheboygan have completed NMTs. One of these youth received recommended services (including horse mentoring) from grant funding. The other received recommended services from CCS. An additional young person is expected to begin and complete an NMT in 2020.

### Project Highlight

A young person with a significant history of aggression and law enforcement interventions and referrals at home and school was assigned to participate in an NMT. They were supported by a parent, school staff, and assigned social workers. Results included her developmental age in different areas, the importance of interventions, and appropriate dosing of interventions. Separate meetings to discuss the results were held for the youth and her family and school staff. The results of the NMT provided valuable insight for the school staff who worked with her daily and a sensory room was developed to help this youth feel regulated at school. The materials and objects found in this room are available to be used as coping skills throughout the school day.



# County Project Profiles

## VERNON COUNTY AND CRAWFORD COUNTY

**Grant area:** School/Justice Partnership  
**Grant amount(s):** \$100,000 (2018-19 Initial)

### Project Overview

The overall goal of Vernon and Crawford Counties' project is to enhance the partnership between schools, families and the YJ system to ultimately improve the ability of students to self-regulate, thrive and be behaviorally supported more effectively in school settings. Desired outcomes include a decrease in youth justice referrals, a decrease in crisis and behavioral contact between schools and law enforcement, and improved relationships between the different agencies and the youth and their families.

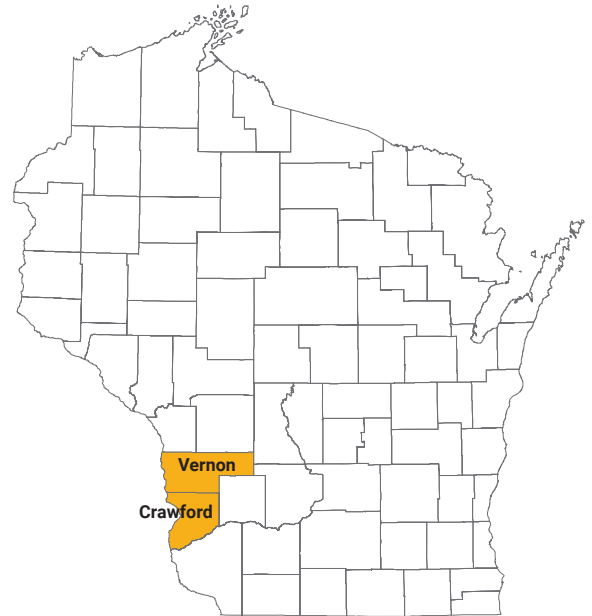
Vernon County, in partnership with Crawford County, hired a full-time staff member to work with schools, law enforcement, families, and human services professionals in both counties. Initially, the staff person provided crisis/behavioral response to the different agencies when needed, ensured that youth needs were met, identified risks and created treatment plans for youth, and referred youth to the appropriate providers.

However, the counties adopted a systems approach midway through the project, and the focus of the staff person shifted to educating school districts about trauma informed care. When the staff person left their position in early October 2019, focus shifted again to providing schools and community members with the tools needed to continue to support trauma informed care knowledge, awareness, and approaches in the schools.

### Key Elements

School Justice Partnership meetings were established in both Vernon County and Crawford County. In Crawford County, participants are invited from schools, human services agencies, and law enforcement. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed with an agreed upon graduated response model.

Both Vernon County and Crawford County use Teen Court when appropriate, and schools and law enforcement agencies were further educated on the use of this response and process. Tools and trainings have been provided to schools and law enforcement to help them better identify trauma behaviors and apply trauma informed responses to help regulate youth and decrease reliance on disciplinary approaches and youth justice responses.



# County Project Profiles

## VERNON COUNTY AND CRAWFORD COUNTY

### Key Elements continued...

While direct practice was limited in this project, the coordinator did ensure the individual and family needs of referred youth were met. A focus on meeting family needs was also addressed in presentations on trauma and its effects for schools and law enforcement. Ongoing discussions with partners during meetings also emphasized the importance of family inclusion in intervention planning.

The coordinator worked with school districts to facilitate group sessions for children identified as at-risk. The group covered a variety of topics including bullying, self-regulation, risk, conflict management, and healthy relationships. The coordinator also provided outreach to all school districts in Vernon and Crawford Counties to offer training on Trauma Sensitive Schools. Several districts reported information from these trainings were useful in identifying behaviors associated with trauma and could help reduce law enforcement contact or disciplinary responses in school.

### Data

The coordinator worked with 13 youth in Vernon and Crawford counties. Only 1 had later police contact.

The coordinator led 30 group sessions for at-risk youth. School districts that participated in the group work identified that it was beneficial for students as well as staff.

### Project Highlight

From the project:

*The first biggest challenge we faced in both Counties when initially presenting the School-Justice Partnership values, goals and roles, was that some partners struggled with feeling supported, and rather felt that the partnership was identifying what was being done wrong in the school setting. Some partners voiced not feeling that the School-Justice Partnership meetings or MOU was needed and opted not to participate after the initial meetings. Once these initial concerns were brought forward, the CJS Coordinator as well as other partners from the Court and DHS were able to openly discuss further the intentions and goals of the partnership. As more partners gained further understanding that the role of this was to further enhance our practice for the benefit of not only those partners engaging with youth and families, but also for the families themselves, there was more buy in and willingness to come to the talk to speak openly about the School-Justice Partnership.*

# County Project Profiles

## WALWORTH COUNTY

**Grant area:** Alternatives to Detention  
**Grant amount(s):** \$100,000 (2018-19 Initial)

### Project Overview

This project developed a range of interventions needed to hold youth accountable in ways that allow them to learn from their mistakes and to limit the use of detention for when there was a threat to public safety. The county's goal is to decrease the use of electronic monitoring, secure detention, and shelter care over time and engage youth and families in non-punitive options like parent training, Carey Guides and BITs, 10-Steps to Risk Reduction, and a behavior analyst.

The county provided enhanced services to families through certifying parent coaches, contracting with a behavior analyst for families who would benefit from those services, and using tools (such as Carey BITS) to enhance case management. The project received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019.



### Key Elements

The overarching goal of the project was to have the youth justice system move away from being punitive to taking a strengths-based approach.

The program developed a graduated rewards and sanctions system that incorporates the goals of a collaboratively developed case plan and implemented accountability programs and practices that consider victim impact. The program worked with a parent coach to actively engage parents.

### Data

	2017	1/2018–8/2018	9/2018–12/2018 (Grant Awarded)	2019
# Youth on Electronic Monitoring	19	9	4	2
# Youth Placed in Secure Detention	17	10	2	12
# Youth Placed in Shelter Care	2	4	0	4



# County Project Profiles

## WALWORTH COUNTY

### Data continued...

In year one of the project, Walworth County saw the biggest change in the use of electronic monitoring. Despite an uptick in secure detention in 2019, Walworth County reports youth incarcerated in 2019 were dangerous and difficult to move out of secure detention to less restrictive placement (like home, foster care, treatment programs, or residential care). In many cases, interventions had been tried prior to incarceration. However, it should be noted no Walworth County youth were ordered to corrections in 2019.

### Project Highlight

A female, middle school-aged youth was having serious problems with aggression and violence. She had been in and out of detention and psychiatric hospitals and her behavior was progressively getting worse. Additionally, she had not attended school in over a year. A Residential Care Center (RCC) accurately assessed an issue not previously identified, which helped a behavior analyst effectively work with the youth, foster parents, and parents to decrease incidences of aggression and violence. Services put in place helped her to transition from a treatment level foster home back to her home with her parents.

Additionally, it was discovered the youth responded very positively to small incentives, like earning a book by attending classes at school. She was successful with two incentive plans for class attendance. At the end of 8th grade, she graduated having attended 100% of days. She had a better experience in school than before and was very proud of her accomplishments.

Walworth County continues to support in-home placement for this young person through the continuation of services from the behavior analyst, connecting the family with respite resources, providing incentives for the youth, and giving the family prosocial opportunities, like a family membership to the local YMCA. A foster parent has also committed to providing respite, using incentives with the youth, and keeping her parents “in the loop.” Though this youth is high needs, with the above-named services, she remains stable at home, at school, and in the community, and has not been referred to law enforcement.

# County Project Profiles

## WASHINGTON COUNTY

**Grant area:** Robust Case Planning  
**Grant amount(s):** \$100,000 (2018-19 Initial)

### Project Overview

Washington County provides in-home, intensive family services to youth in the justice system who are at risk of removal from the home. The services, provided by the Family Training Program (FTP), focus on home management, building parental capacities, behavior management, mentoring opportunities, and preserving the family unit. Families take part in an initial assessment and then work with FTP on evidence-based programming targeted to a family's identified area of need.

FTP provides a structured approach: in-home assessment, in-home family training to reach a series of short-term behavioral goals, mentoring to help youth find employment and practice social skills in the community, and weekly face-to-face contact with the family. This approach provides strategies that can be used throughout the life of a case and beyond, as families build skills to increase their confidence and independence in the management of their own family dynamics. This program received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019.



### Key Elements

Washington County purchased home family services through the Family Training program (FTP). The FTP program helps parents manage their children's behavior, with an emphasis on working with families in their homes. This environment is often the most natural and comfortable environment from which to engage and interact with families, which can help with a more accurate assessment of needs.

Philosophical approaches of FTP are centered around education, relationship building, and accountability – allowing services to focus equal amounts of time on the parent(s) and the youth. Parents are taught and coached to handle youth behaviors with positive, non-punitive methods that can help diffuse volatile situations. Youth are taught strategies to self-regulate their own emotions and engage more positively with adults.

# County Project Profiles

## WASHINGTON COUNTY

### Key Elements continued...

Commonly offered evidence-based programming through FTP includes:

- Trauma-Informed Care
- 1 2 3 Magic
- Conscious Discipline
- Love and Logic
- Empowering Parents

### Data

Between October 2018 and December 2019, 18 families were served by FTP. In those families, there were 27 parents and 43 youth served. Of the 18 families, 100% reported an increase in parenting knowledge.

1 youth was removed for approximately 60 days but returned home with the assistance of FTP.

5 youth were placed outside the home at the time of referral to FTP. 4 were successfully reunified and 1 remains actively engaged in the reunification process.

There have been no new child abuse or neglect referrals among FTP recipients and there have only been 3 referrals for delinquency charges.

### Project Highlight

“Katie” was involved with the Family Training Program when she was 16. Katie struggled with issues related to anger, depression, abandonment from her incarcerated father, and attachment. She was at risk of being placed outside the home due to risky behavior and poor relationships with others. FTP was able to work with Katie on her unresolved trauma and she was able to graduate high school through an online program, improve her relationships, and obtain employment. Katie remained in contact with the FTP worker and was able to complete her supervision successfully.

# County Project Profiles

## WAUSHARA COUNTY

**Grant area:** School/Justice Partnership  
**Grant amount(s):** \$100,000 (2018-19 Initial)

### Project Overview

Waushara County implemented a Rapid Youth Justice Response model. The goal of the model is to help school professionals identify and support students with behavioral needs and divert them from YJ system involvement. This referral model provides schools with additional resources to address behavioral issues presented at school, engages youth and their families with appropriate community resources, and reduces contact between these youth and the formal YJ system. It also effectively responds to low risk behaviors (disorderly conduct, swearing, walking out of class, etc.) and engages the youth and their family in appropriate services and restorative justice practices in a timely manner. Rapid response helps school professionals better identify and support students with behavioral health needs.



The Rapid Youth Justice Response model mobilizes youth justice workers to assist school personnel with a structured approach to in-school behavior incidents. Youth justice workers assist with de-escalation when needed, help identify the needs of students and families, and work together to address needs without court intervention. This program received a continuation grant from DCF in 2019.

### Key Elements

The Rapid Youth Justice Response model focuses on engaging families, addressing underlying system needs, removing barriers to service delivery, and responding quickly to assess and move youth and families to appropriate services and interventions. As the model is community-based, with cross-sector impact, an MOA, graduated response model, and guidance around confidentiality and data collection were developed in collaboration with the Waushara County Department of Human Services, Wautoma Area School District, the Waushara County Sheriff's Department, the School Resource Officer, and the Wautoma Police Department.

# County Project Profiles

## WAUSHARA COUNTY

### Key Elements continued...

The project is designed to quickly respond to in-school behavior. In addition to receiving school-related referrals, the project had regular monthly collaborative meetings with school personnel. This allowed for the identification of youth and families who did not meet the criteria for CPS or YJ interventions, but had risk factors that could lead to on-going services in the future. The project provides outreach to those families and access to preventative resources to help avoid formal referrals.

Social workers affiliated with project expulsion hearings and speak on behalf of youth and families. They also help young people and their family members navigate the expulsion process. On several occasions, the project was able to advocate for youth who had been expelled and help them gain readmittance to school.

### Data

Between September 2018 and June 2019, the program worked with 33 youth; only one has resulted in a formal delinquency referral from Law enforcement and that incident was not related to a school issue.

### Project Highlight

A youth referred to the program was facing an expulsion hearing alone (his mother was not very involved, and his father had passed away several years before). Waushara staff recognized the youth needed to complete an AODA assessment before the School Board would consider readmittance. The Department was able to assist him in getting his AODA assessment completed and also supported his request for a review from the School Board. He was ultimately readmitted into the district.