

Kansas News

Juvenile Services Reinvestment Grants Announced

The Kansas Department of Corrections, Division of Juvenile Services, recently provided notifications to Boards of County Commissioners of approved grant requests of more than \$3.5 million. This new grant opportunity is available as a result of reforms enacted in 2016 with Senate Bill 367, which permit the department to reinvest in evidence-based programs in the community as an alternative to out of home placements or commitments to the Kansas Juvenile Correctional Complex.

Megan Milner, KDOC Director of Juvenile Community Based Services stated "I have had the opportunity to speak with many of these partners who will be implementing these programs and services and there is an overall excitement with the ability afforded through these grant monies to do some new things to serve kids and families. And the reality is that without the work many of you are doing on behalf of juvenile justice reform, these opportunities would not be available. This is a collective accomplishment by the whole system." [Read more](#)

[List of Reinvestment and Collaboration Grants awarded](#)

KJCC Youth Make Christmas Donation to Harvesters

Last month during the week prior to Christmas, 53 residents of KJCC contributed a total of \$ 383.93 from their personal accounts that went to the Harvester's Organization in support of area food banks. Personal contributions ranged in size from \$1 to \$40 per resident. [Read more](#)

Training Catalog Now Available Online

KDOC-JS has developed a Training Catalog for 2018 to provide staff who work in the juvenile justice field with a schedule of training offerings. The catalog includes information for each training available to include a brief description, the target audience, delivery method, the dates/times/locations and any required prerequisites. Several trainings have unique requirements to pre-register in advance, so it is suggested to contact the KDOC staff listed for that training you are interested in. To access the Training Catalog, [Click here](#)

As additional trainings are made available, KDOC-JS will provide updated information. In some cases, regional trainers will be in contact with supervisors of officers to provide registration instructions.

Shawnee County to Offer Work Skills Training for Juvenile Offenders at No Cost to Taxpayers

Shawnee County's corrections department will begin offering a work life skills program for juvenile offenders, at no cost to taxpayers. County Commissioners Kevin Cook, Shelly Buhler and Bob Archer voted 3-0 Thursday to approve a contract arranging for the corrections department to pay \$5,000 to the Topeka Youth Project to provide the program this year. The program will be financed using money from the corrections department's wellness account, said corrections director Brian Cole. [Read more](#)

Youth-led Youth Advocacy Organization Forms in Wichita

FROM KANSAS APPLESEED

As many of you may know, a top priority of the work that we do to reform the juvenile justice system is to involve those that are most directly affected by that system. In that vein, it has been a goal to establish a youth-led advocacy group made up of formerly incarcerated or justice system involved youth. In the past few months that goal has become a reality and we are excited to let you all know about it!

Progeny is the name of this new group, and their membership is made up exclusively of young people that are either formerly incarcerated or formerly justice involved. We'll plan to keep you updated in these weekly emails about Progeny's advocacy and how you can support it.

A special thanks to The Seed House in Wichita for their wonderful efforts in collaborating and supporting Progeny. We are so excited to have the support of so many excellent people and we are very eager to see what the future holds for these young people and their work!

Human Trafficking Hearing

FROM KANSAS APPLESEED

On January 22, legislators in Topeka heard from leaders in Kansas that are working to combat human trafficking and provide adequate services to survivors of human trafficking. Many experts testified that the State needs to do more to make sure that victims of human trafficking are identified and treated as victims, and aren't lumped in with the actual criminals who are perpetrating this crime.

Legislators seemed very concerned by the testimony presented and there was much discussion on what the State could do to improve its practices in dealing with human trafficking in Kansas.

The Juvenile Justice Corner

Jim Johnson, Program Consultant
DOC - Juvenile Community Based Services

Editor's Note – I recently had the opportunity to visit with the Juvenile Services' regional trainers when they spent two days together reviewing lesson plans and attending a class. During that time they shared some thoughts and reflections about their first year in relation to their first training project and initial experiences.

The year 2017 was full of challenges, opportunities and some deadlines as we moved forward with juvenile justice reform in Kansas. One major area of focus has been meeting the requirement to upgrade training for staff who come into contact with justice involved youth. To accomplish this, approximately one year ago KDOC-JS added five training positions, one supervisor (Michelle Montgomery) and four regional trainers (the current trainers are Kelly Rodriguez, Crystal Payne, Shannon Cavender and Jennifer Maxwell).

When the regional trainers started in their roles, their overall goals were to provide quality training and be a resource so supervision officers across the state felt better equipped to perform their jobs. A significant part of the first year was devoted to allowing the trainers to get trained and work on curriculum development.

Through providing the graduated responses training and making site visits in jurisdictions, the trainers are learning more about the challenges and opportunities officers face on a regular basis which has been very helpful in developing training plans and curriculum. They are grateful and appreciative of all they have learned and the response they have received from around the state.

Moving into 2018, you can sense the enthusiasm the trainers have for the officers they are working with. They share a collective excitement about supporting the people who make a difference with the youth and families across the state.

Human Trafficking - Kansas

2 Arrested for Using Online Site to Sell Child for Sex

Two Wichitans are accused of using an online site to sell a child for sex. According to the probable cause affidavit, the then 15-year-old girl met the accused and exchanged information when she was walking in southeast Wichita.

[Read more](#)

Stories of Human Trafficking Shared

The Emporia community had an opportunity to learn more about human trafficking Sunday afternoon at Grace United Methodist Church. The movie "Priceless: Inspired by True Stories," was shown to a crowd which gathered to watch the program. Rev. Brenda Ulrich, youth and young adult pastor, said the program was one to help the community be more aware of human trafficking. "We wanted to help people be more aware of what's going on and let them know how to help those affected by human trafficking." [Read more](#)

Mental Health

Assessments Often Miss Mental Health Issues for Youth on Probation

An assessment tool used by many jurisdictions within the juvenile justice system that is intended to help recognize the effects of adversity and trauma in children's lives is not the best means of evaluating mental health problems faced by at-risk youth, according to new study by a University at Buffalo social work researcher. [Read more](#)

Developmental Reform in Juvenile Justice: Translating the Science of Adolescent Development to Sustainable Best Practice

The goals, practices, policies, outcomes, and operations of the juvenile justice system and its affiliated youth-serving partners should be informed by the growing body of research and knowledge about adolescent development. This brief lays out a set of research-based best practices and approaches that are fundamental to a state or local jurisdiction's efforts to maximize the likelihood for improved and sustainable youth outcomes and system performance consistent with the research on adolescent development. [Read more](#)

Annie E. Casey Foundation

What's Standing in the Way of the Spread of Evidence-based Programs?

This research project analyzes 46 purveyor organizations which support 46 EBPs in child welfare and juvenile justice. The researchers found that most EBPs do, in essence, remain stuck on the shelf. While most purveyors are working to ensure their EBPs are effective and replicable, most are not working to expand their reach. Purveyors identified a lack of growth efforts as the biggest challenge for the spread of EBPs. Three particular things are standing in the way: lack of resources, lack of expertise, and lack of incentive to expand the reach of their EBPs. Researchers also found that when EBPs do spread significantly it is mainly driven by external forces that created a demand. [Read the report](#)

Juvenile Justice Information Exchange

Reliance on Detention for Juvenile Justice a Lazy, Uninformed Habit That Must Be Broken

Most juvenile justice experts can agree on the measured need for safe and secure juvenile detention facilities, when reserved solely for those youth who present significant risk to public safety, when used on a short-term basis and only while cases proceed through adjudication to disposition (sentencing). Yet, it is the system practitioners' cumulative use of this most costly resource that provokes the need for system reform and for an institutionalized scrutiny of every admission. Its focus should include the "mover" of detention (the practitioner recommending detention), the reason for detention, current and projected length of stay, and an expedited release plan. [Read more . . .](#)

Healing, Not Metal Detectors, Will Dismantle the School-to-Prison Pipeline for Good

Schools can be places of healing or they can be places of harm. There is no in-between. I came to learn this through my work as an attorney working at the intersections of youth justice and education equity. I worked in Philadelphia fighting to keep marginalized youth in schools, and to ensure that for the youth who were pushed into juvenile prisons, those prisons were held accountable for providing education. [Read more . . .](#)

We Must Work to Bend Our Democracy Toward Justice Half a Century After MLK's Dream

Fifty years ago, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life was tragically taken in Memphis, Tennessee. As we celebrate his birthday and commit ourselves to engage, give back and continue the fight for racial and social justice, I am saddened by how much of his dream has gone deferred, especially with regard to our children. [Read more . . .](#)

New Laws Affecting Kids Should Be Vetted By Body of Experts to Avoid Unintended Consequences

By Judge Steven Teske

It is a natural human emotion to be scared of what we don't understand. And sometimes the fear is too great and we check our brains at the door. The "superpredator" scare of the '90s is a great example of checking our brains at the cloakroom. When Jerome Miller shuttered the youth prisons in Massachusetts, the '90s outcry that a wave of "superpredator" kids would rape and pillage homes and families as if Armageddon was upon us shuttered the movement to shutter youth prisons. But the evidence shows that he was on the right path. [Read more . . .](#)

Change the Narrative about Youth of Color These 3 Ways

In cities across the country we've seen regressive youth justice and education policies that are supported — and even driven by — media narratives that criminalize black and brown youth. These narratives, which are sometimes overt and sometimes hidden, all result in serious, ongoing harm to our youth. The good news is that there are simple things that all of us who care about the fair treatment of youth of color can do to change the way the story is told. [Read more . . .](#)

John Legend Plays Backup at Panel on Mass Incarceration

"We have allowed our most vulnerable children to be thrown away, to be traumatized, to be locked up in these jails and prisons and we have got to change this narrative that some children aren't children," [Equal Justice Initiative](#) founder Bryan Stevenson told a crowd of several hundred. "The way we show our commitment to children is not the way we treat privileged children but the way we treat poor children."

[Read more and watch video . . .](#)

How to Teach the Most Challenging Youth to Problem Solve & Reduce Staff Injuries

Restrictive therapeutic facilities — inpatient psychiatry units, residential facilities, group homes and juvenile detention facilities — serve the most challenging youth in society. Before admission, these children and adolescents have often been on the receiving end of countless detentions, suspensions, expulsions, restraints, seclusions and corporal punishment. Many have significant trauma histories. [Read more . . .](#)

Book Excerpt: Their Former Offense Keeps Blocking Them from Moving Ahead

This is an excerpt from a new book [Trapped in a Vice: The Consequences of Confinement for Young People](#), which explores the consequences of a juvenile justice system that is aimed at promoting change in the lives of young people, yet ultimately relies upon tools and strategies that enmesh them in a system that they struggle to move beyond. The system, rather than the crimes themselves, is the vice. [Trapped in a Vice](#) explores the lives of the young people and adults in the criminal justice system, revealing the ways that they struggle to manage the expectations of that system; these stories from the ground level of the justice system demonstrate the complex exchange of policy and practice.

Vera Institute of Justice

Graduation Instead of Incarceration

The Choice is Yours (TCY) is a felony diversion program in Philadelphia that channels young people arrested for drug possession with intent to distribute away from jail and into education and job training services. Derek Riker, former ADA in the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, and Byron Cotter, from the Defender Association of Philadelphia, discuss how poverty and systemic oppression play a role in someone's justice system involvement—and how TCY works to build success for its participants. [Watch video . . .](#)

Can Mentoring Take the Place of Punishing?

The Choice is Yours (TCY) is a felony diversion program in Philadelphia that channels young people arrested for drug possession with intent to distribute away from jail and into education and job training services. Nigel Bowe, program director, and Miguel, program participant, discuss how TCY mentors young adults who have grown up distrusting the criminal justice system. [Watch video . . .](#)

National News

D.C. Youth Detention Emerges as Model of Improvement, but Struggles Persist

System still wrongly punishes girls, faces challenge of juveniles who abscond

Marques left home at age 13. He was transported from the only city he knew, Washington, D.C., to Savannah, Ga., in handcuffs, he says. His crime? He got into fights a lot at school, he says. For that (at least in part), he was sent to a residential treatment facility (RTF) called Coastal Harbor more than 500 miles from his home. Until recently, transporting kids to another state for treatment was much more common for boys and girls caught in the detention system. [Read more . . .](#)

What Do Asthma, Heart Disease And Cancer Have In Common? Maybe Childhood Trauma

"Trauma" is a heavy and haunting word. For many Americans, it conjures images of troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The emotional toll from those wars made headlines and forced a healthcare reckoning at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, a pediatrician, would like to see a similar reckoning in every doctor's office, health clinic and classroom in America — for children who have experienced trauma much closer to home. Burke Harris is the founder and CEO of the Center for Youth Wellness in San Francisco. She's spent much [Read more . . .](#)

We Need to Stop Incarcerating Children for Status Offenses and Nonviolent Misdemeanors

Raiya, a 17-year-old high school senior, was brutally gang raped just a few short months after moving to Washington, D.C. Like many victims of trauma, she started "acting up" at home. She began associating with the "wrong crowd" at school and was told she would have to repeat her senior year due to failing grades. She eventually ran away from home. Fed up with her niece's emotional outbursts and truancy, Raiya's guardian called the police. The judge at the juvenile delinquency proceeding ultimately charged Raiya with a "status offense" for running away. [Read more . . .](#)

Crucial Improvements Needed for the State of Youth Justice

JUVENILE JUSTICE INFORMATION EXCHANGE - OPINION

Tuesday is President Donald Trump's first State of the Union address. As he prepares to address the nation and outline his priorities for the year, we thought it fruitful to write our own State of Youth Justice address.

The first year of the Trump administration saw opportunities for progress as well as setbacks for our nation's justice-involved youth. At a time when youth arrests and incarceration are at a 40-year low, there are great opportunities for the administration to promote public safety while supporting vulnerable youth by signing a reauthorized Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) into law. The JJDP is [Read more . . .](#)

Department of Juvenile Justice Forum Builds Understanding between Police, Young Girls

The Department of Juvenile Justice moderated a discussion between law enforcement and youth Friday to address shortfalls in police-community relations. The event, the first of its kind in the area, allowed students from the PACE Center for Girls to speak with Pensacola Police Department officers and Escambia County Sheriff's Office deputies about issues that divide the two groups. Moderator Verla Lawson-Grady, the statewide community engagement coordinator with the Department of Juvenile Justice, said the intent was to address key issues and promote understanding that often stifles police or creates distrust within neighborhoods. [Read more . . .](#)