

Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board

Board Meeting

June 24, 2021
2:00pm – 4:00pm

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Approval of March meeting minutes
3. OCA/Board Member Updates
4. COVID-19 Report Update & Discussion
5. Subcommittee Work Updates

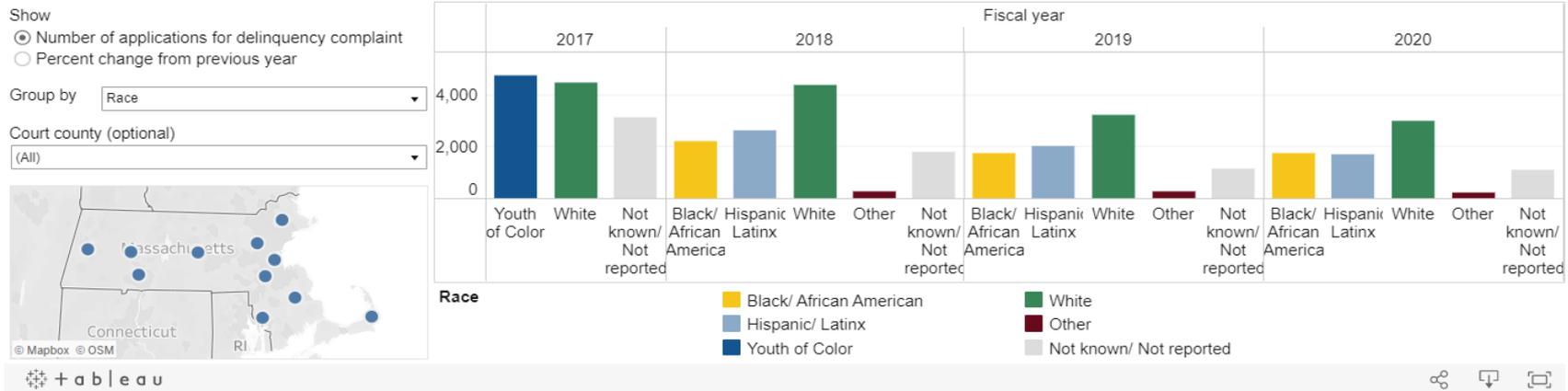
Legislative Update

- Gov, House and Senate budgets all included sufficient funding in OCA line item to fully fund Diversion pilot in FY22
- \$1 million included in Senate budget to establish Center on Child Wellness & Trauma (2020 CTTF Recommendation)

Juvenile Justice Data Website Updates

- Updated data to FY20 for most pages
- New visualizations displaying demographics by geography
- New pages coming soon: Pretrial, CRA

Demographics of applications for delinquency complaint, statewide and by court county



The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Delinquency and our Juvenile Justice System

JJPAD Board COVID-19 Impact Report: Background

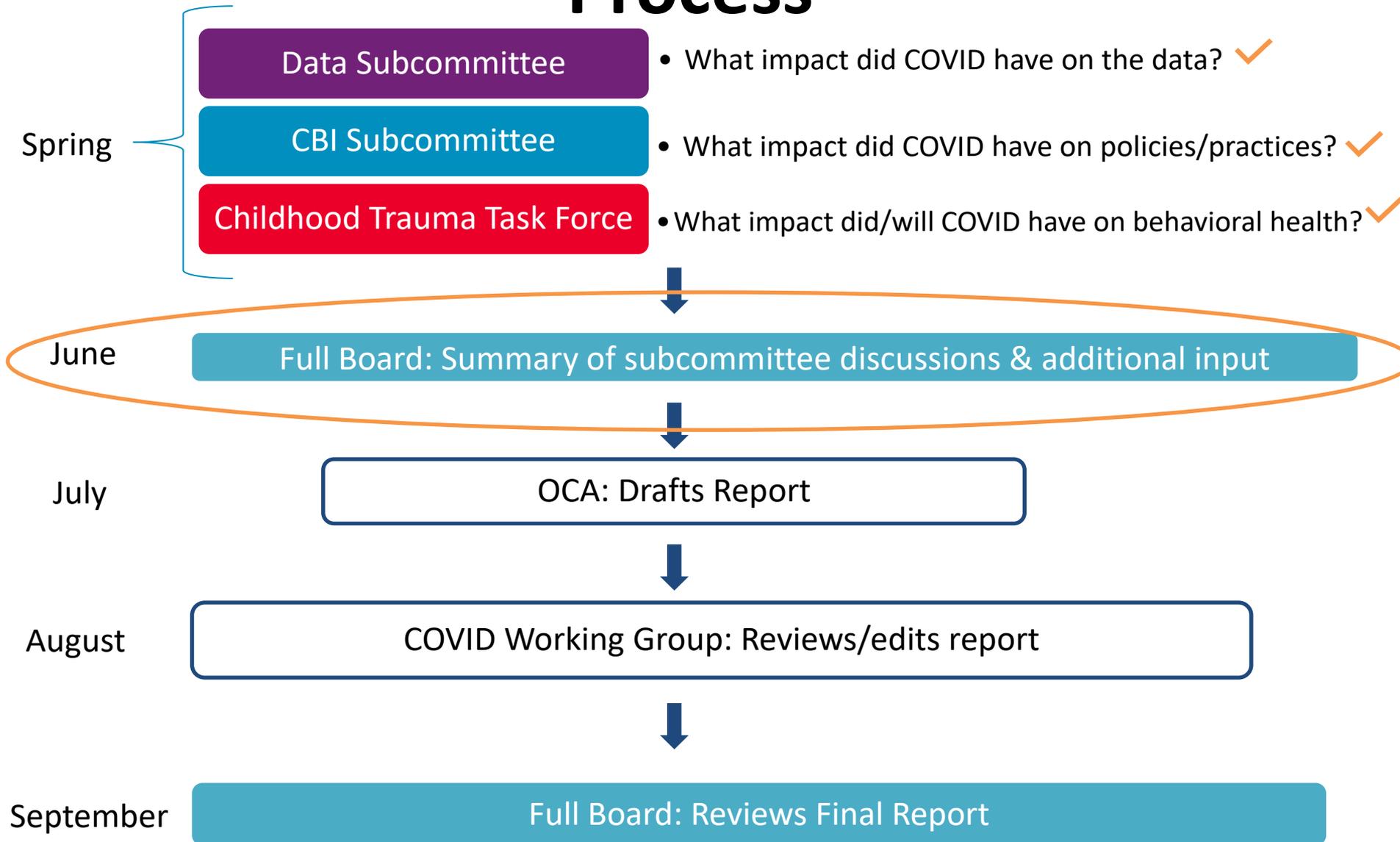
Goal:

- Track the on-going impact of COVID-19 on the juvenile justice system
- Identify pandemic-related trends that may have a future impact on delinquency and the juvenile justice system
- Provide recommendations for future policy/practice

How we got here:

- CTF 2020 Report: *Protecting Our Children's Well-Being During COVID-19*
- JJPAD 2020 *Annual Report*: Section of the report highlighting JJPAD member agencies' policy and practice responses to the pandemic, and impacts on youth and their families

JJPAD Board COVID-19 Impact Report: Process



Report Key Themes

1. Reduced Juvenile Justice System Utilization During Pandemic

- *Potentially* reduced delinquency (esp during first ~6 months)
- Concerted effort across systems to reduce youth contact with congregate settings (ONA, Detention, DYS Placement Decisions)
- Court process delays (e.g. focus on emergency hearings; jury trials) may mean spikes at various process points or other unusual data patterns forthcoming

2. Silver Linings: Policy and Practice Innovation and Learning

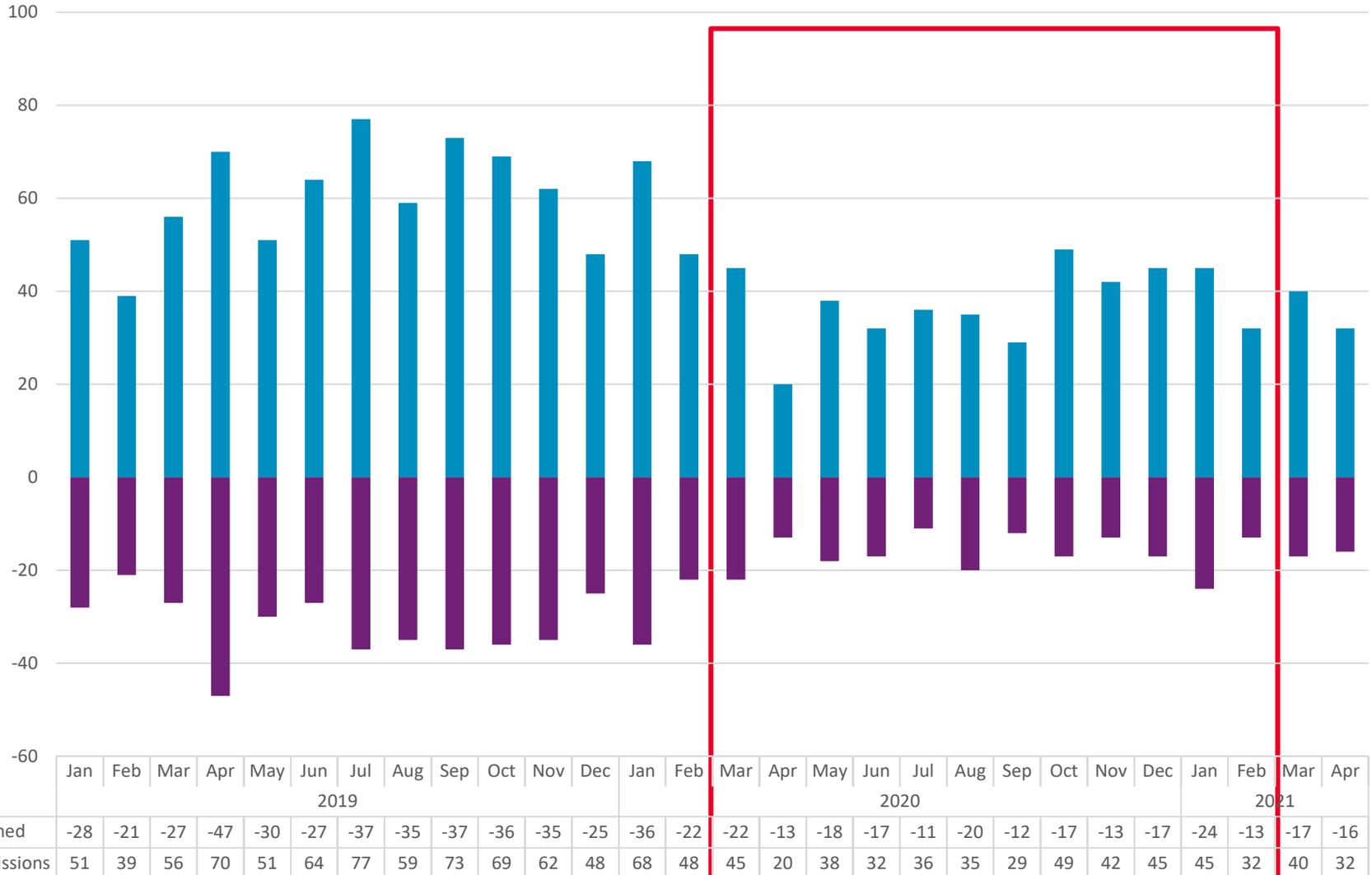
- Some changes were positive and should be maintained

3. Pandemic Created Increased Risk of Future Delinquency

- Pandemic created conditions that likely increased future risk of delinquency
 - Both those without current justice involvement and those currently in system
- Policy/practice shifts and targeted funding are necessary to mitigate pandemic impacts, prevent delinquency and support well-being of youth

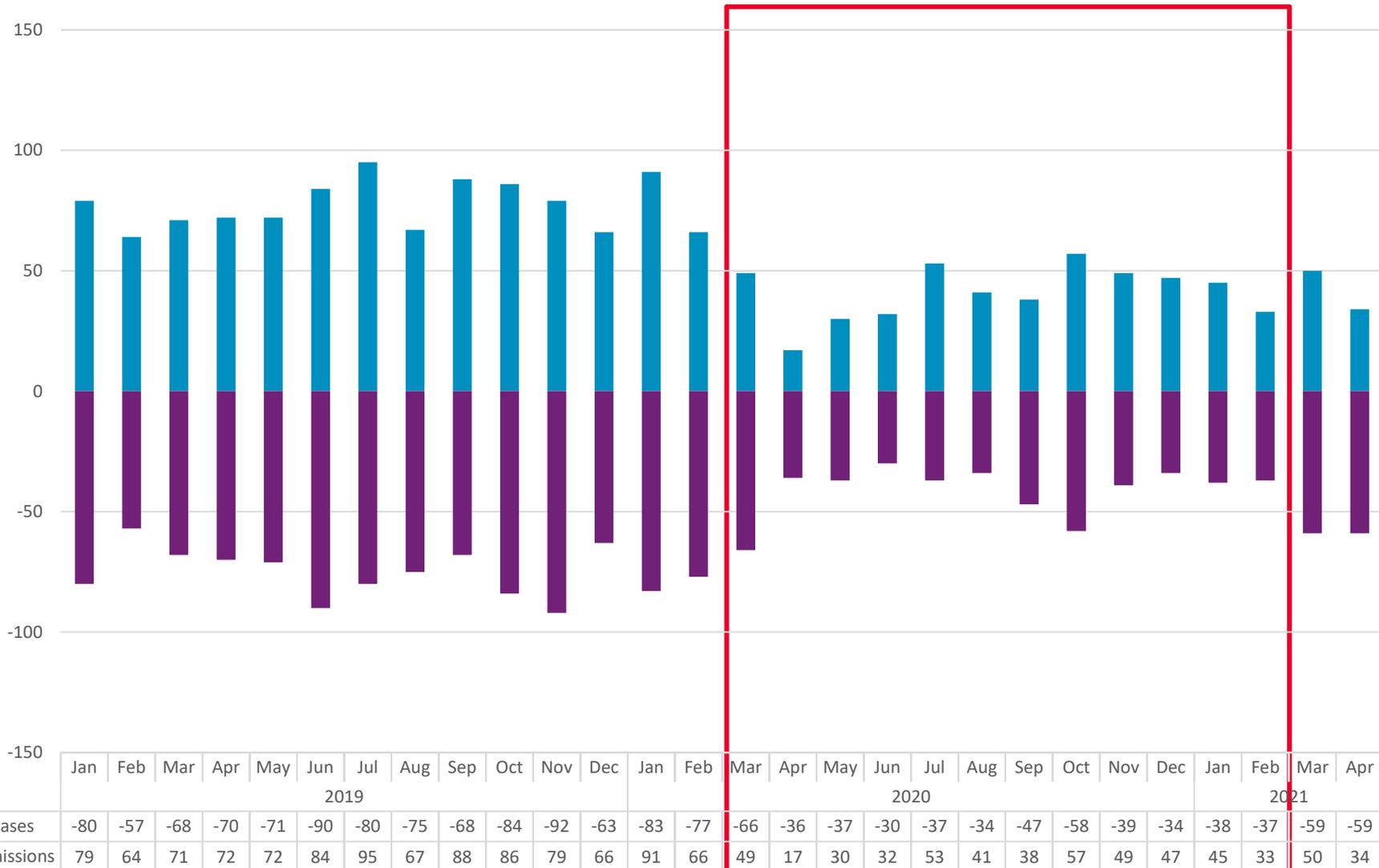
1. REDUCED JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM UTILIZATION DURING PANDEMIC

40% decrease in average monthly ONA admissions during first year of pandemic (March 2020-February 2021)



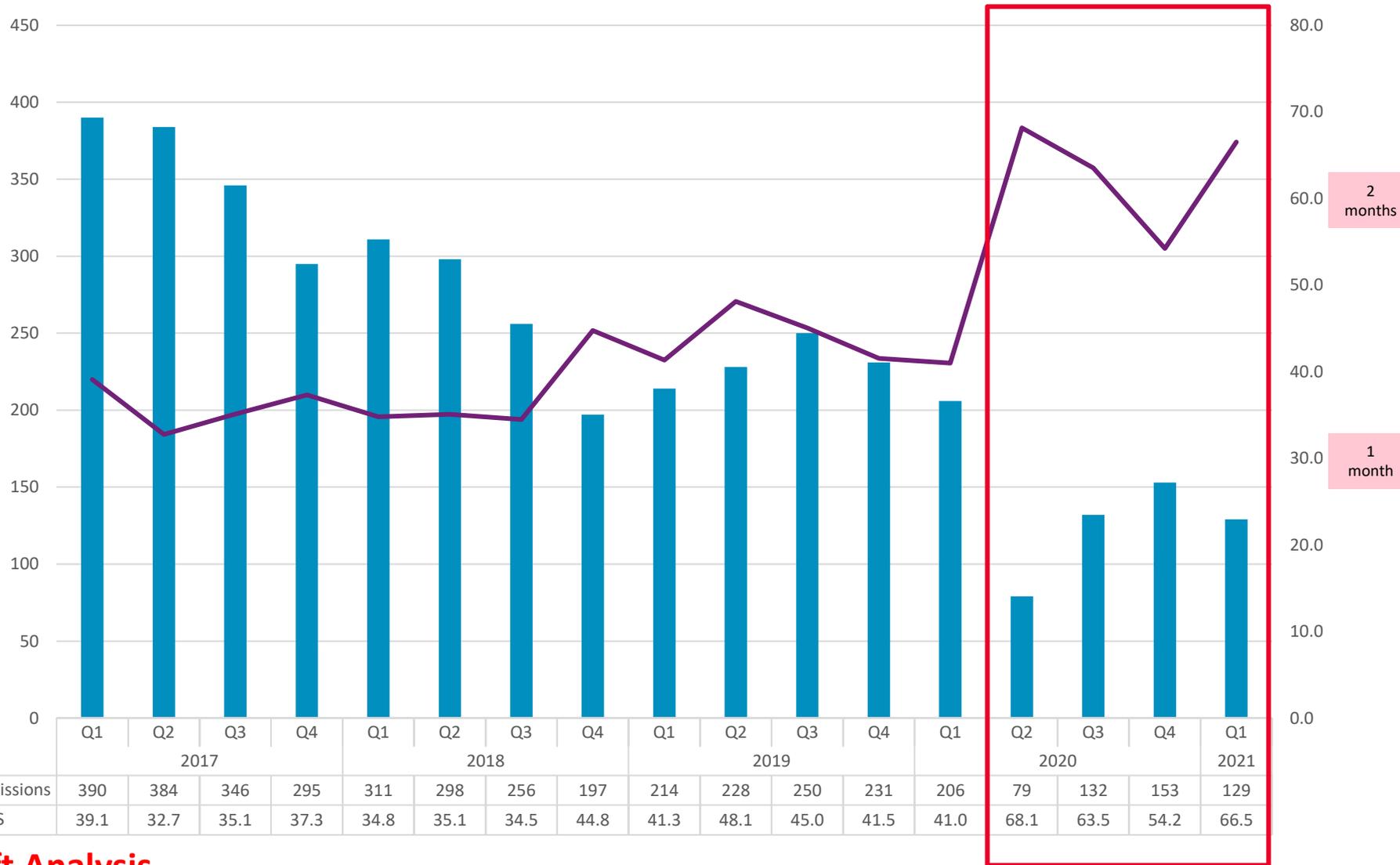
Draft Analysis

48% decrease in average monthly detention admissions during first year of the pandemic



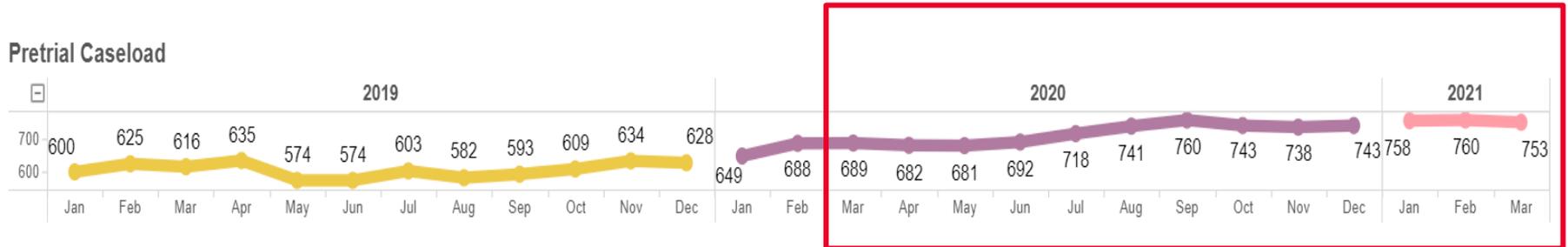
On average, youth remained in detention 20 days longer than the average length of pre-pandemic detention stays

Note this data is only for youth subsequently released



Draft Analysis

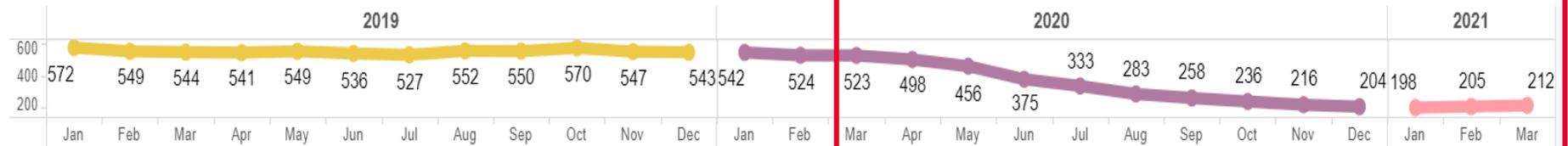
Pretrial supervision caseload increased 9% during first year of pandemic



Risk/Need Probation and Administrative Probation cases decreased 60% and 42% respectively

Monthly Report of Probation Activity: Juvenile Court Department

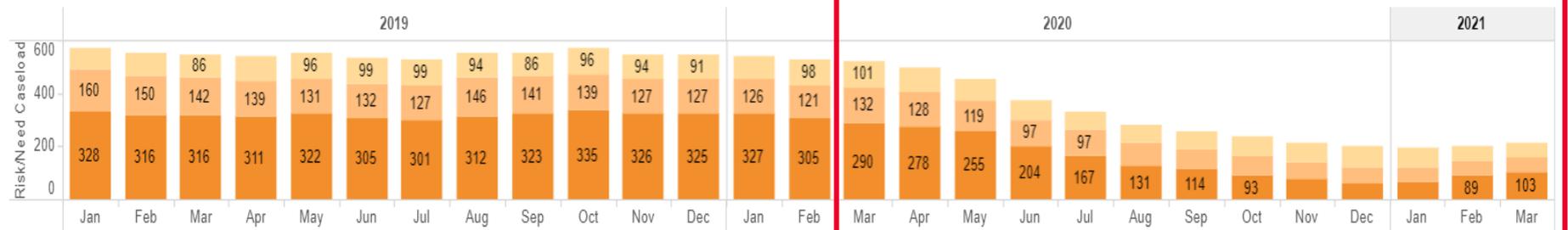
Risk/Need Caseload



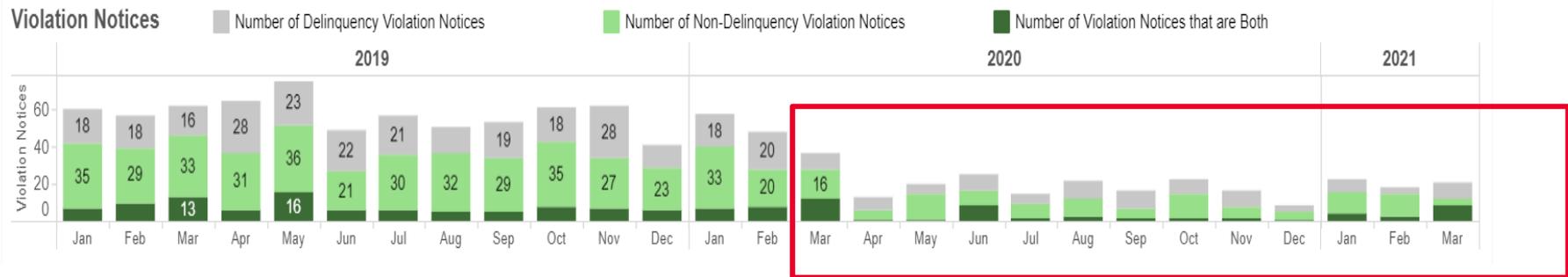
Administrative Caseload



Level of Risk/Need Supervision

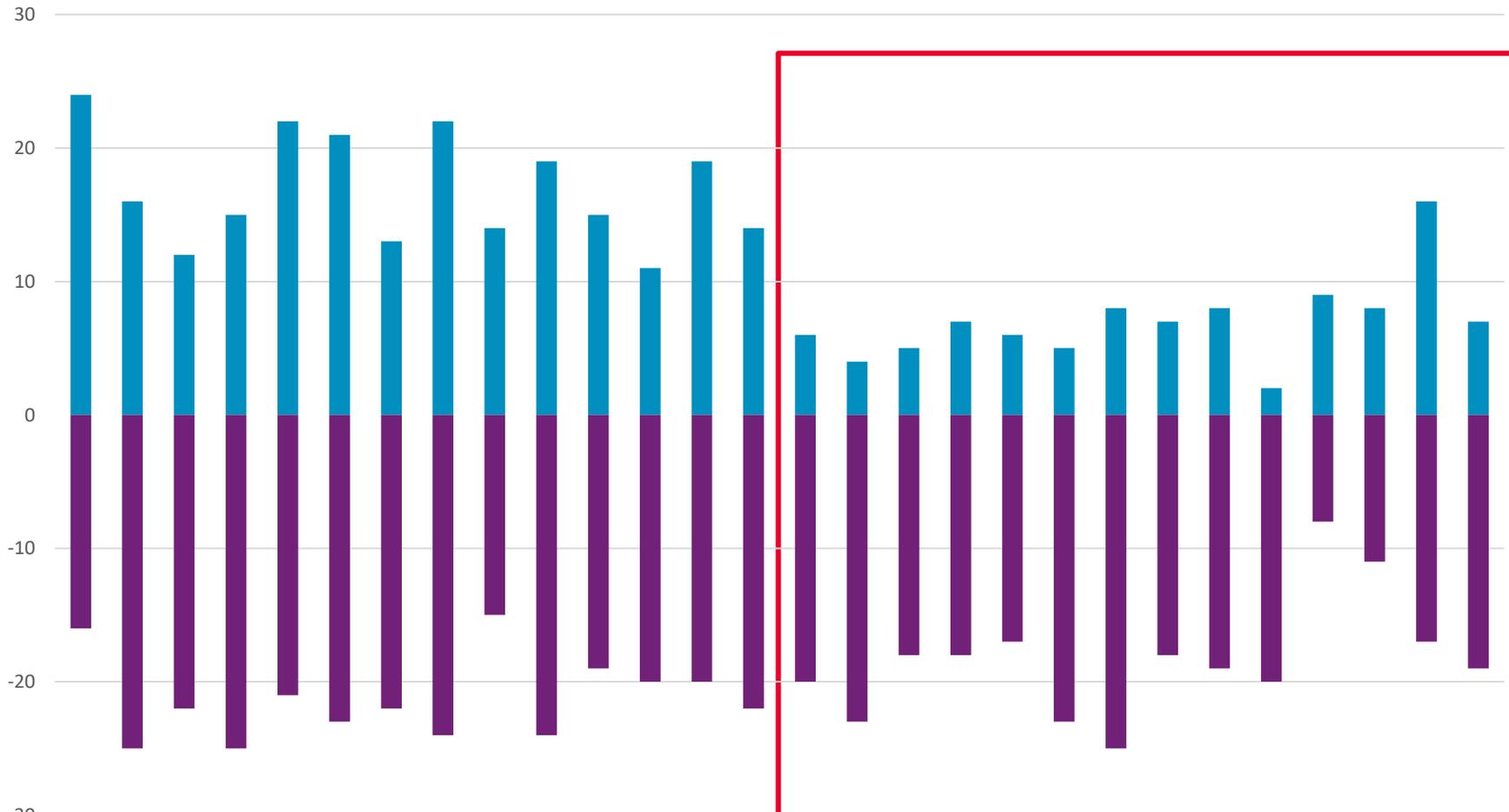


Average monthly VOP notices dropped by 65% during the pandemic



	March 2019-Feb. 2020 Monthly Average	March 2020-Feb. 2021 Monthly Average	% Change
Delinquency VOP	20	7	-65%
Non-delinquency VOP	29	9	-69%
VOPs with Both Delinquent & Non- delinquent	8	4	-50%
Total VOP	57	20	-65%

62% decrease in average monthly new DYS commitments during first year of the pandemic



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
	2019												2020												2021			
Age Outs	-16	-25	-22	-25	-21	-23	-22	-24	-15	-24	-19	-20	-20	-22	-20	-23	-18	-18	-17	-23	-25	-18	-19	-20	-8	-11	-17	-19
New Commitments	24	16	12	15	22	21	13	22	14	19	15	11	19	14	6	4	5	7	6	5	8	7	8	2	9	8	16	7

2. SILVER LININGS & LESSONS LEARNED

Juvenile Justice System Response

Silver Linings

Remote Technology Innovation

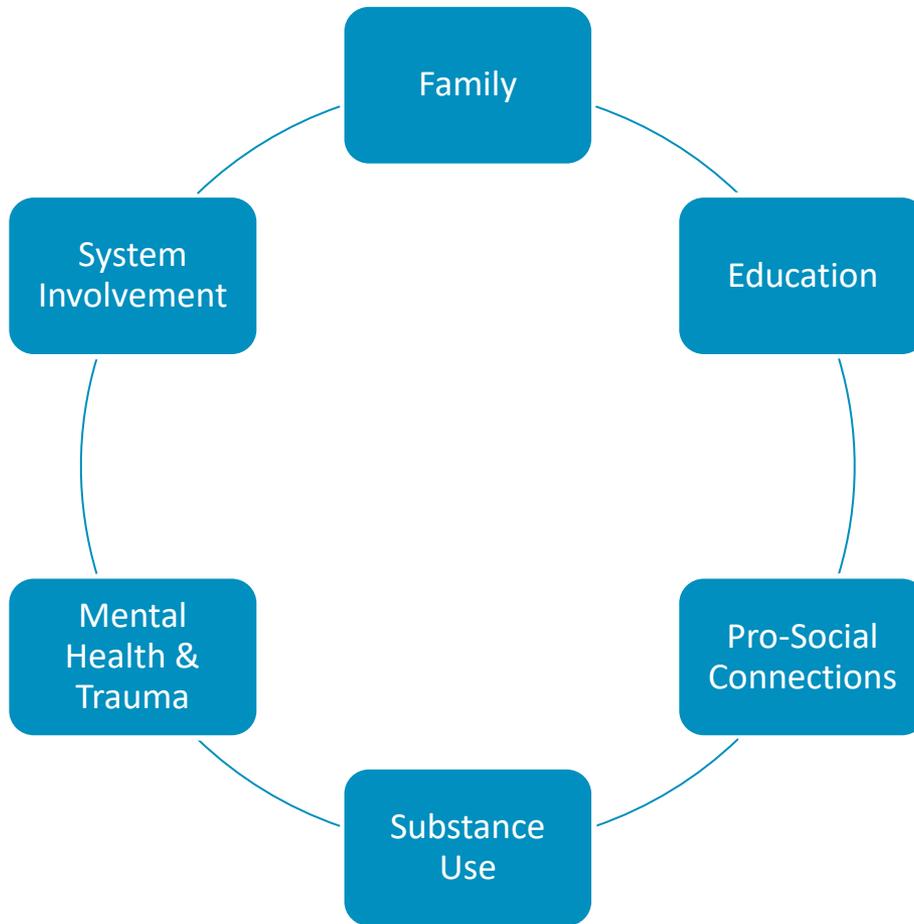
- Telehealth
- DYS video visitation
- Use of video visitation generally for low-risk kids (e.g. probation)
- Remote cross agency meetings (e.g. case conferencing)
- Virtual Court Hearings: pros and cons, but in some situations has significant benefits for kids/families

Reducing the Number of Youth in Custody

- Effort to reduce custodial arrests/ONA and use summons process
- Collaboration between DYS, Juvenile Court, CPCS & DAOs to reduce the detention and residential commitment population
- (Cont'd) reduction in use of VOP notices for technical violations

3. PANDEMIC CREATED INCREASED RISK OF FUTURE DELINQUENCY

Addressing Risk of Future Delinquency: The Pandemic's Impact on Key Domains



For Each Domain,
Report Will:

- Explain link to risk of delinquency/protective factors
- Document pandemic impact to extent possible

Pro-Social Connections: Pandemic Impacts

- Not easily measured, but worries about youth disconnection was the strongest theme in subcommittee conversations:
 - Disconnection from schools
 - Disconnection from pro-social supports (adults + peers) and positive youth development opportunities
 - Disconnection from existing MH supports
- Disconnection & isolation strongly connected to other areas of worry (mental health, education, substance use)
- If disconnection from pro-social and positive youth development opportunities persist, creates environment for increased risk of delinquency

Mental Health: National Pediatric Medical Claims Data

Mental Health Medical Claims Increased Significant Evenly as Overall Medical Claims Decreased

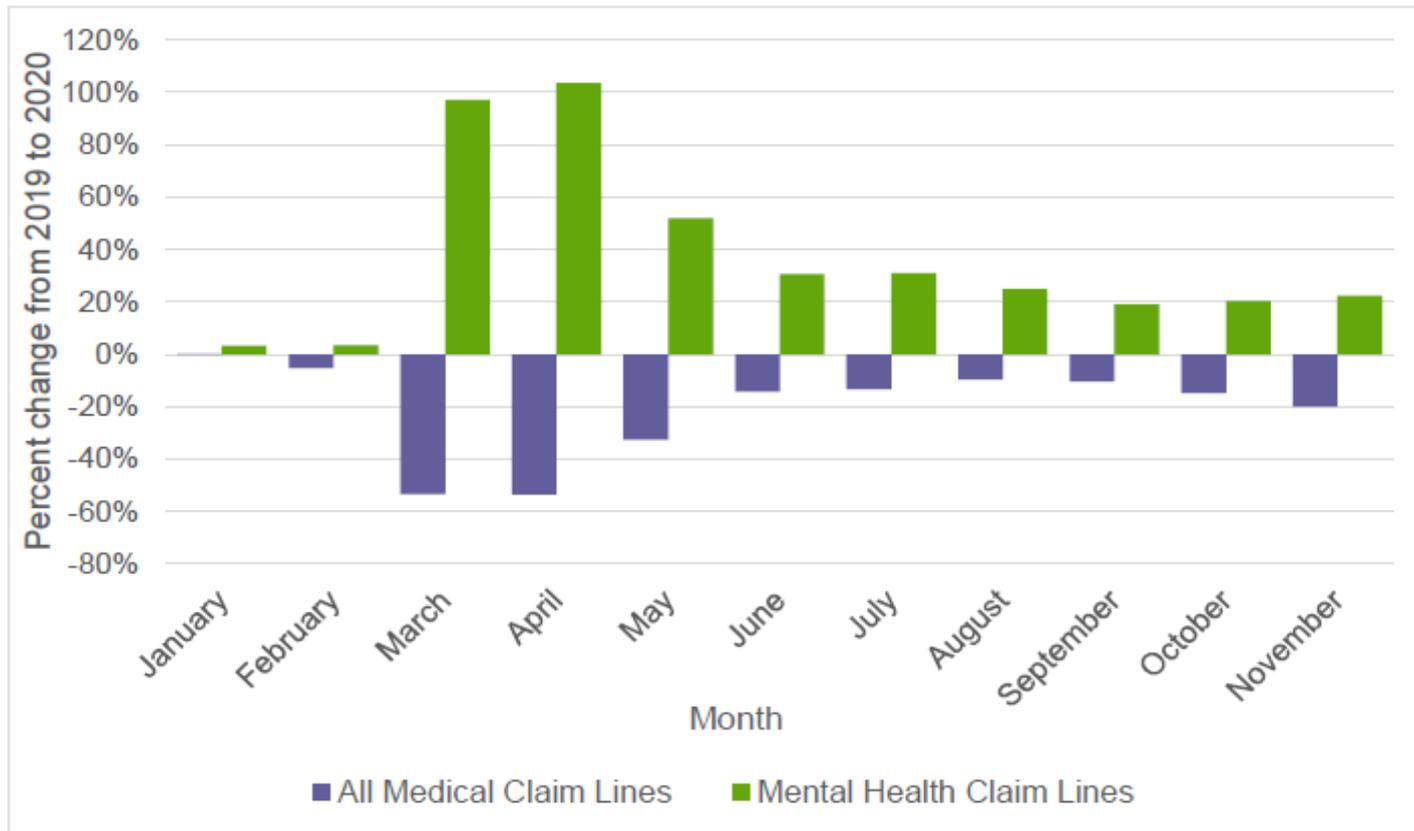
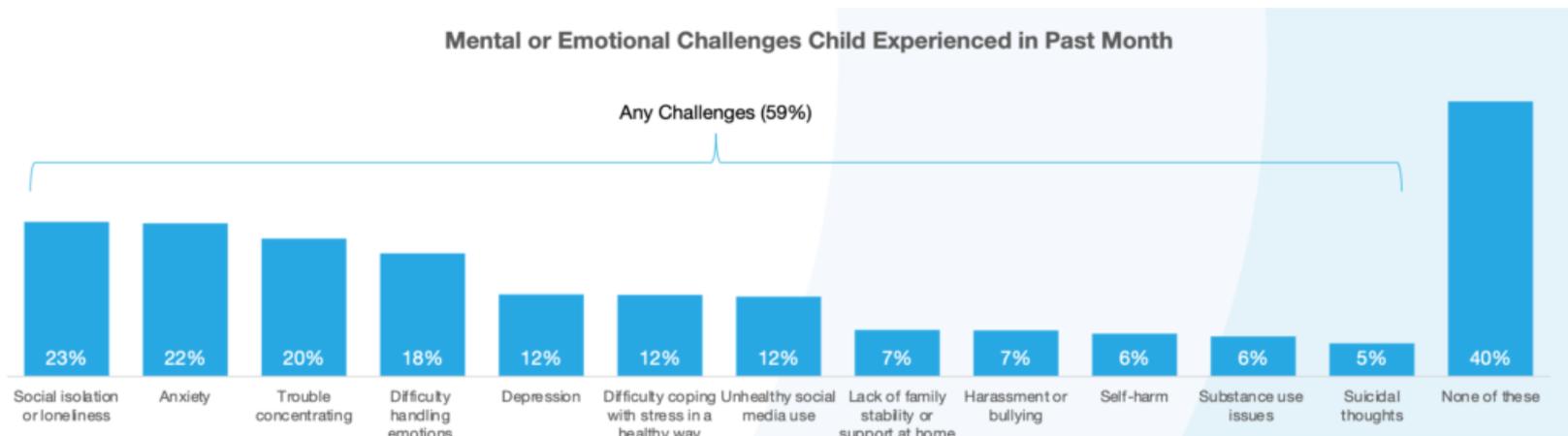


Figure 1. Percent change from January-November 2019 to January-November 2020 in mental health claim lines and all medical claim lines, age group 13-18 years

Mental Health: National Parent Survey Data

Significant Increase in Parents Reporting Increased Mental/Emotional Challenges for their Child



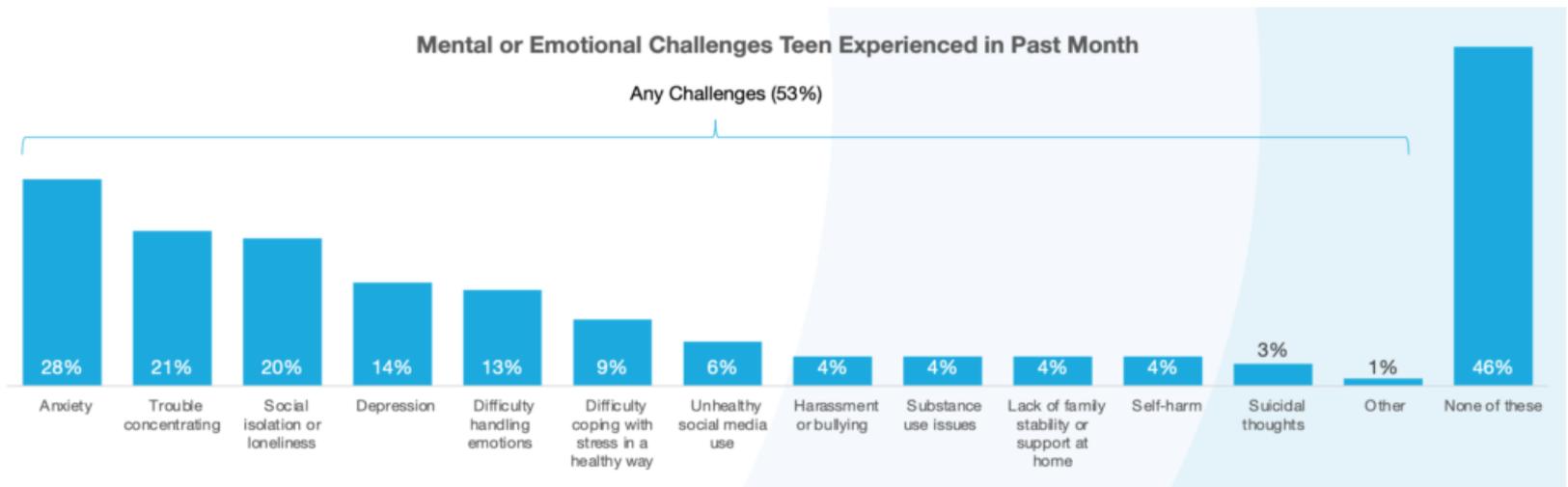
Child's Current Emotional/Mental Health Compared to Before the COVID-19 Outbreak



*Respondents: parents of children ages 2-18

Mental Health: National Teen Survey Data

Teens Also Reporting High Rates of Mental/Emotional Challenges



*Respondents: teens ages 13-18

Mental Health: MA Specific Data

- **Almost half of all youth in MA (48%) reported feeling sad or hopeless almost everyday for 2 weeks or more in a row.** This is nearly double 2017 YRBS self-reports. (DPH Community Survey)
- **Initial Reduction in ED Visits, But Increased Acuity:** Between March & September 2020: there were 3,200 fewer pediatric behavioral patients who had an ED visit compared to same period in 2019, but 7% more resulted in boarding, demonstrating the acuity of children's mental health crises.
- **Disconnection from Services:** About one in four pediatric patients who stopped therapy in March 2020 had not resumed by end of June 2020. This was especially the case for boys and younger children
- **Current Status:** More recent data not yet available (*that we know of*), but anecdotal reports suggest substantial increase in ED visits/boarding for pediatric behavioral patients in recent months.

LGBQA youth, youth of trans experience, and youth with disabilities are experiencing the greatest inequities when it comes to mental health concerns during the pandemic

Mental Health: New Adolescent Research Data

- Harvard Psychology researcher Katie McLaughlin found in her lab of ~200 youth that rates of **adolescent depression doubled during the pandemic, and behavioral problems increased 3x's**.
- Adolescents were more impacted by pandemic-related stressors than younger children.
- Research on impact of natural disasters and other past stressful events has found that 25-30% of kids develop **new symptoms of mental health problems that remain elevated over time (2-3 years later)**.

Mental Health: Adolescent Research Data

- Harvard Psychology researcher Katie McLaughlin on **how to help children recover:**

*"One of the things that we've been focused on in our research is trying to identify **factors that promote resilience, things that any family might have access to.** So, of course we can talk about things like mental health treatment and interventions. But during the pandemic, most families didn't have access to those types of interventions, or they looked very different than they might have looked otherwise. So we were focused on **simple factors that were low cost and easily accessible.***

*For example, we found that kids who were **getting more routine exercise** — some type of physical activity on more days of the week — were less likely to develop mental health problems. Also children who had a **structured routine**, those children were less likely to develop behavior problems. We also found that we all have spent more time on screens and we were interested in **passive use of screens** [such as scrolling and watching videos]. What we found is that children who engaged in more of that passive use were more likely to develop mental health problems."*

Family: Parental Mental Health

- **CDC National Survey (Dec 2020 + Feb/March 2021):**
 - **70% of caregivers reported adverse MH symptoms**
Caregivers were **five times more likely to report adverse MH symptoms** than non-caregivers
- **DPH MA Community Survey (Fall 2020):**
 - Persistent poor mental health among adults has tripled during the pandemic
 - 34% of parents report poor mental health (15+ days of poor mental health in last 30 days)
 - Parents who are concerned about expenses or childcare are significantly more likely to report poor mental health



Particularly the case for parents of children with special healthcare needs, non-binary, transgender and queer parents, AI/AN and multiracial parents w/ income under 35K and parents under the age of

45

Family: Parental Substance Use

- **CDC Survey (June 2020)**
 - 13% of Americans reported starting or **increasing substance use** as a way of coping with stress or emotions related to COVID-19
- **DPH MA Community Survey (Fall 2020)**
 - 2 out of 5 MA adults using substances reported increasing their substance use compared to prior to February 2020.
 - Parents and especially parents of persons/children with special needs were more likely to report increased substance use
- **DPH Opioid Report**
 - 2020 had the highest rate of opioid-related overdose deaths in the state since 2016, with 2,104 deaths and estimated deaths

Education: Pandemic Impacts

“Unprecedented” levels of chronic absences – nationally and in MA

- March 2021 Boston Globe report: 40% of Boston juniors and seniors were chronically absent
- Rates higher among Black, Latino, ELL students and students with disabilities
- *OCA analysis of DESE absenteeism data ongoing*

• **Challenges in Remote School Access:**

- A little under 1/3 of households with school-age children in Gateway Cities lack internet access
- 54% of parents who did not speak English at home said their children participated in online classrooms at least a few times a week, compared to 72% of English-speaking households

- **Reduced Interaction with Teachers:** Only 1 in 5 parents surveyed in June 2020 reported that their child received any kind of personalized feedback from their teachers on a daily basis, while another 1 in 4 reported that this happened only once a week

- **Special Education:** Anecdotally, significant issues with access to special ed services

Substance Use: Pandemic Impacts

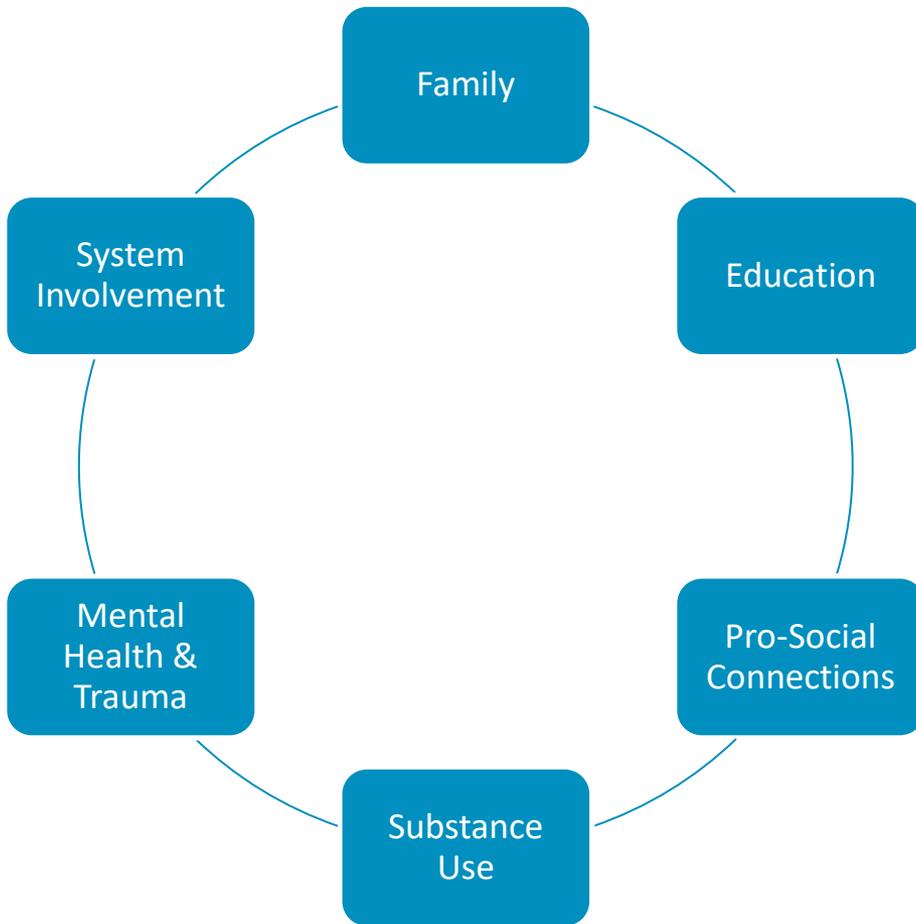
DPH MA Community Survey (Fall 2020)

- 83% of youth under 18 did not report using substances in the past 30 days
- However, 44% of youth under 18 report *a lot or somewhat more* substance use during pandemic
- Youth living in rural areas were significantly more likely to report more substance use since the pandemic began, compared to youth living in urban areas

System Involvement: Pandemic Impacts

- Most youth who are detained already have MH/BH concerns (prevalence rates range from 50-80% of youth nationally)
- Pandemic resulted in significant increase in youth who experienced a period of isolation (due to need for social distancing/14 day quarantine periods)
- Harmful effects of prolonged isolation can include: anxiety, depression, decreased cognitive functioning, impaired memory, hallucinations and insomnia, and can cause neuropsychological delays in youth
- There are also a small but significant number of youth who have been (and continue to be) held in detention for longer periods of time due to trial delays

Potential Recommendations for Addressing Increased Risk of Delinquency



Addressing Risk Can Include:

- Addressing negative factors
- Promoting/bolstering protective factors

Pro-Social Connections: Potential Recommendations

- Support **increase in funding for youth programs that increase social connectedness** and relationships with pro-social adults
 - After-school programming
 - Mentoring programs
 - Community organizations (e.g. YMCAs/Boys & Girls Clubs)
 - Enrichment activities (arts programs; sport leagues; parks & rec)
- Make available **stipends to support “enrichment activity of child’s choosing”** available for targeted group of youths
 - Do Wonderfund (DCF) and/or One Can Help (Juv Court) have sufficient funding to support need?
 - If so, how can we get word out about these opportunities?
- Increase funding to expand DMH **Youth Access Centers**
- Are there opportunities to expand/better support **Peer Mentoring** programs?

Mental Health:

Potential Recommendations

- **Support on-going efforts to expand access to behavioral services** (EOHHS Behavioral Health Redesign)
- **Prepare for current and continued increase in youth needing behavioral health services** coming to court system by:
 - Emphasizing need to improve/smooth connections to CBHI Services for court- and justice-involved youth (e.g. MassHealth liaison at court)
 - Increasing capacity of the Juvenile Court Clinics to serve youth coming through the courts who require mental health support
- **Support continued use of telehealth** as an option for youth to supplement in-person availability of therapists/counselors

Family:

Potential Recommendations

- Support **expansion of Family Resource Centers**
 - Total number of FRCs
 - Expansion of core, mandated services at all FRCs
- **Highlight importance of policies/programs that support parents and caregivers** in a variety of ways:
 - Policies that increase financial/housing stability
 - Support with child care access and affordability
 - Adult mental health & substance use services
 - Respite support

Education:

Potential Recommendations

- **Support increased funding/support for school-based mental health services** (e.g. THRIVE Act)
- **Recommend significant focus on school re-engagement/truancy prevention efforts**
 - Recommend DESE issues a **model truancy policy to standardize the expectations of addressing school engagement concerns across the state**
 - Additional recs TBD
- **Highlight concerns re: increased behavioral health challenges and potential for increased use of school exclusion and arrests**

Substance Use: Potential Recommendations

- Continue **telehealth substance abuse** services to supplement in-person
- Determine if there is need for **expanded in- and out-patient substance use services for youth in rural areas** (e.g. Western Mass)

System Involvement: Potential Recommendations

- Continue **efforts to minimize use of custodial arrests, ONA, detention and commitments**
- Continue to expand opportunities for **youth diversion**, particularly those with mental health & behavioral health concerns
- Recommend judiciary conduct inclusive study process to determine **opportunities for continued use of virtual hearings for some juvenile cases**
- Determine if youth who experienced increased isolation/increased length of detention during pandemic may need particular additional/longer-term therapeutic support

COVID-19 Discussion Questions

- What other recommendations would support youth in the juvenile justice system and address risk of delinquency?
- What role would Board members like to have in reviewing/discussing report draft prior to September meeting?

Subcommittee Work Updates

2021 Subcommittee Projects



Trauma Screening & Referral: Study and develop recommendations to increase early identification of youth who have experienced trauma and referrals to appropriate services



Data & RED: Increase our ability to use data to drive system improvements, with a particular focus on reducing racial and ethnic disparities (RED) at early stages of the juvenile justice system



Crossover Youth: Deepen our understanding of factors driving youth to crossover from the child welfare and Child Requiring Assistance systems to the delinquency system, and identify more effective ways to intervene earlier

Childhood Trauma Task Force

Meetings to Date:

- **April:** Trauma Screening Fundamentals
- **May:** Trauma & BH Screening in Schools
- **June:** Positive Childhood Experiences (research on and screening for)
- **Where we're headed:** trauma screening in healthcare, emergency response situations and child welfare

Data Subcommittee

Relative Rate Index* (FY20)

Process Point	Sub-population	Hispanic/Latinx	Black/African American
Custodial Arrests	State	5.28	12.76
Overnight Arrest Admissions	State	8.17	13.10
Applications for Complaint	State	2.16	4.00
Delinquency Filings	Applications	1.34	1.26
Pretrial Supervision	Filings	1.36	0.99
Pretrial Detention Admissions	Filings	2.60	2.10
Post-Disposition Probation	Filings	0.94	0.77
First-time Commitments to DYS	Filings	2.34	1.58
DYS Commitments Snapshot	Filings	3.88	2.90

- Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) across process points

*Relative Rate Index (RRI): compares the rate of white youth to the rate for youth of color

Data Subcommittee

Relative Rate Index* (FY20)

Process Point	Sub-population	Hispanic/Latinx	Black/African American
Custodial Arrests	State	5.28	12.76
Overnight Arrest Admissions	State	8.17	13.10
Applications for Complaint	State	2.16	4.00
Delinquency Filings	Applications	1.34	1.26
Pretrial Supervision	Filings	1.36	0.99
Pretrial Detention Admissions	Filings	2.60	2.10
Post-Disposition Probation	Filings	0.94	0.77
First-time Commitments to DYS	Filings	2.34	1.58
DYS Commitments Snapshot	Filings	3.88	2.90

- Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) across process points

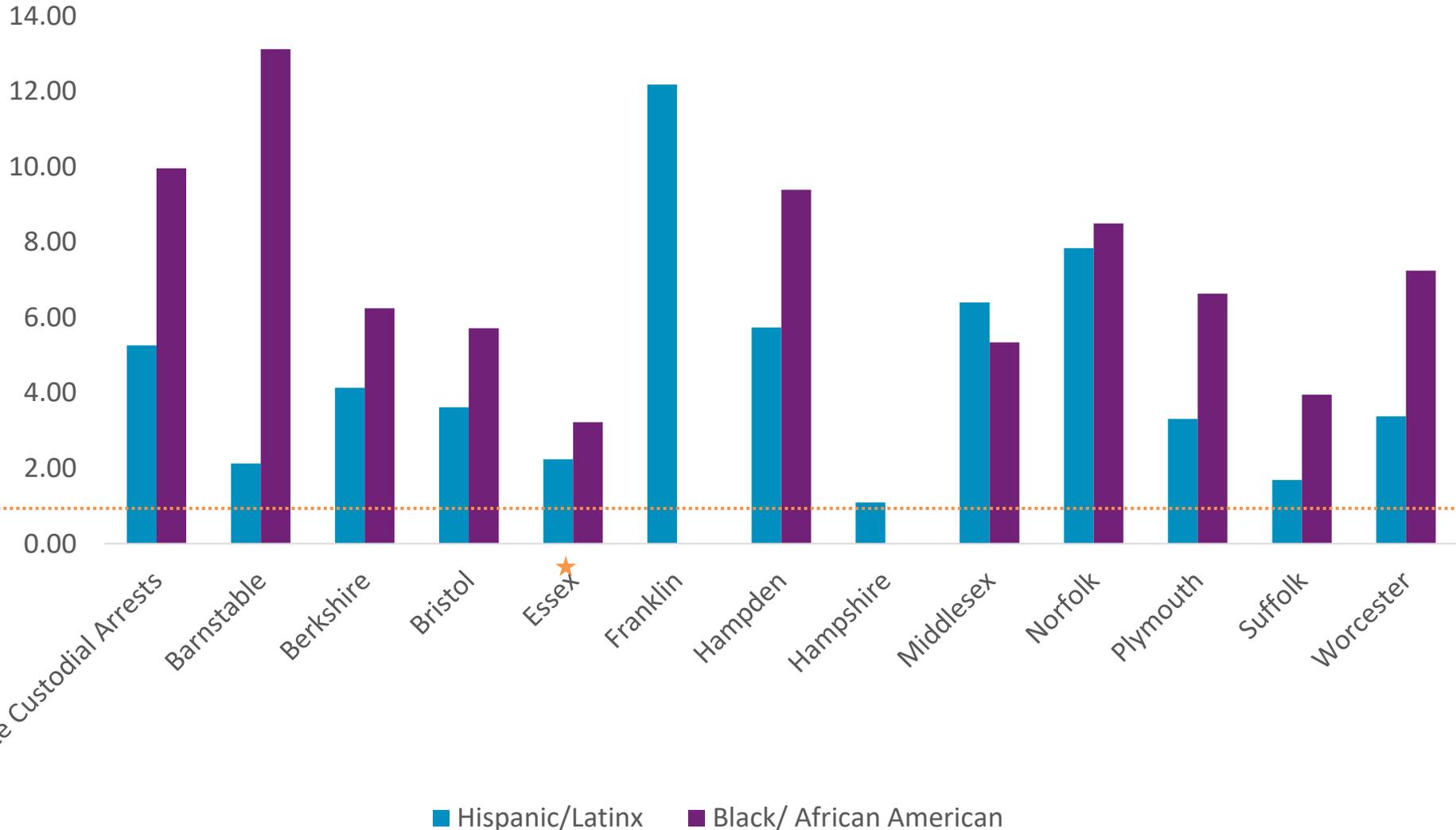
- **Where we're headed:**
 - ✓ RED at the “front door” of the system and recommendations for improvement

*Relative Rate Index (RRI): compares the rate of white youth to the rate for youth of color

Data Subcommittee

FY19 Custodial Arrests:

Relative Rate Index (RRI) by County & Race



Data Subcommittee

Data Availability Report Update: The purpose of this report is to update the Legislature on the Board's progress made and challenges that remain since its 2019 report.

- **Progress:** The JJPAD has improved annual data collection and reporting, improved alignment of data reporting across entities and developed a juvenile justice data website
- **Challenges remain:** There are key data missing in the JJPAD Board's Annual Report and aggregate level data limits the Board's ability to make policy informed decisions
- **Recommendations:** TBD
- **Where we're headed:**
 - ✓ FY21 Data Requests and Analysis

CBI Subcommittee

Meetings to Date:

- **April:** Child Requiring Assistance Process Fundamentals
 - CHINs to CRA Reforms
 - CRA Data
- **May:** CRA Alternatives
 - Family Resource Centers
 - MHAP for Kids
- **June:** Probation CRA Intake, Assessment & Case Management

OCA Interview Update

Conducted– 47 interviews (as of 6/24/21)

- DCF (current & former)-5
- Providers (current & former)-1
- Judges- 3
- Probation-8
- Clerk Magistrate-3
- Attorneys- 2
- Academic Researchers-2
- Other states-2
- FRCs-8
- Police-4
- Schools (current & former)- 2
- Juvenile Court Clinics (current & former)- 3
- Other EOHHS/Gov't-2
- Advocacy Orgs: 3

Upcoming/Planned

- DCF
- DMH
- Providers
- Probation
- Attorneys
- Advocacy & Parent Orgs
- Police
- Schools
- Juvenile Court Clinics
- MA LGBTQ Youth Commission
- Other States TBD
- Youth/Family Focus Groups

Family/Youth Focus Group

- OCA is contracting with an external research organization to conduct focus groups with youth and families who have been through CRA process
- Will work with a variety of orgs to support recruitment
- Focus groups to be held in fall
- July meeting focus: CBI Subcommittee feedback on topics to explore in focus groups

Emerging Themes from Initial Interviews

When do CRAs “work”?

- When process provides access to a higher level of assessment (juvenile clinic), case management (probation) and advocacy (CAFL attorney) support than youth/family may otherwise get
- When having a CRA grants access to DCF services (community-based and out of home) that youth/family may not otherwise be able to access (e.g. in areas where voluntary service requests are not accepted)
- When involvement of attorneys/court is able to spur action on a case (e.g. provision of a specific services; engagement of multiple agencies)

Could any of this happen sooner/in a lower-stakes setting?

Emerging Themes from Initial Interviews

What barriers exist to achieving better outcomes from CRA cases?

- Limited availability of evidence-based services for this population
- Limited availability of more intensive in-home services or short-term stabilization (e.g. CBAT)
- Concerns about adequacy/appropriateness of current out-of-home placement options (service type and placement matching)
- Disagreements over which agency (or school) can/should provide/pay for services
- Need a better approach to addressing issues re: youth who run from home/congregate care

How do we improve service availability/quality and eliminate unnecessary barriers to service connection?

Emerging Themes from Initial Interviews

Could more CRAs be diverted or avoided?

- Concerns over wide variation in referrals from clerks to FRCs from court to court
- Concerns over wide variation in when schools file (and what they do before filing)
- Myths about what courts can/cannot do as a result of CRA process (e.g. court cannot move a child up a wait list)
- Potential for inappropriate recommendations to parents to file CRA rather than pointing them toward non-court-based services
- Role of racial/ethnic disparities in all of above

How do we get families support earlier + limit CRAs to smaller group that truly need court involvement?

Emerging Themes from Initial Interviews

Could CRA process be improved?

- Could courtroom hearings in front of judge be limited?
- Could CRA case conferencing happen earlier in the process (including before CRA is filed)?
- Could timeframe between request to file CRA and connection to services be reduced?
- Could focus of process shift from what *child* needs to do in process rather than what *families* need to do/what support they needs to be successful?

Upcoming CBI Meeting Topics

- Truancy CRAs
- CRA case conferencing processes
- Deeper dive into CRA services (esp BH services)
- Challenges with Out of Home Placements/New DCF Congregate Care Model
- Inequities in CRA process
- Results of Youth/Family Focus Groups

Full Board

Year 3 Role: Oversight of subcommittees' work, implementation of legislation, and COVID-19's impact on youth in the Commonwealth

September 2021

- **COVID-19 Report Review**
- CJRB and Policing Bill Implementation Update
- Subcommittee Report Outs

November 2021

- **JJPAD FY21 Annual Report**
- Subcommittee Report outs

Next Meeting Dates:

(All meetings are virtual; WebEx information is in each calendar invitation)

Full Board:

September 2021

TBD (Doodle Poll Coming)

Subcommittee	Standing Time	Next Meeting
CTTF	1 st Mondays, 1:00pm-3:00pm	July 19, 2021* <i>(Rescheduled for July 4th holiday)</i>
Data	2 nd Thursdays, 10:30am-12pm	July 8, 2021
CBI	3 rd Thursdays, 1:00pm-2:30pm	July 15, 2021

Contact

Melissa Threadgill

Director of Juvenile Justice Initiatives

melissa.threadgill@mass.gov