

Office of the Child Advocate
Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board
Data Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 11, 2023
1-2pm
Meeting held virtually

Subcommittee Members or Designees Present:

- Laura Lempicki (MPS)
- Joe Mulhern (CPCS)
- Nancy Brody (DCF)
- Dana Bernson (DPH)
- David Chandler (DYS)
- Sana Fadel (CfJJ)
- Michael Ames (CLM)
- Kim Occhiuti (DCF)

OCA Staff:

- Kristi Polizzano
- Arianna Turner

Other Attendees:

- Lindsey Sagasta (DPH)
- Patricia Bergin (EOPSS)
- Daniel Rosenthal (DYS)
- Kathleen Bitetti (OSA)
- Joshua Dankoff (CfJJ)
- Linda Lundquist (OGR)
- Audrey Herrmann (Rep. Livingstone)
- Omar Irizarry (DMH)
- Noor Toraif (UPenn)
- Members of the public

Meeting Commenced: 1:03 PM

Welcome and Introductions:

Ms. Polizzano welcomed the attendees to the Data Subcommittee meeting. Members and attendees introduced themselves.

Approval of June Meeting Minutes

Ms. Polizzano asked if anyone had any questions or feedback regarding the June 29, 2023, meeting minutes. The group did not offer any feedback or objections. Dana Bernson, Sana Fadel, Nancy Brody, Joe Mulhern, Laura Lempicki, and Kim Occhiuti all voted in the affirmative. David Chandler abstained. No one voted against the meeting minutes.

The June meeting minutes were approved.

Dually Involved Youth: FY23 Data Discussion

Ms. Polizzano reviewed the guiding questions and goals of the project and explained the research methods informing the board's findings/recommendations. She explained that this group will focus on case file review and data deep dive. She then turned to the data on dually involved youth to date.

Ms. Polizzano presented Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 pretrial detention admissions data broken down by DCF-involvement at the time of a youth's detention admission. There was an increase in detention admissions in FY23 compared to FY22, driven by an increase in admissions for youth with DCF involvement.

Members discussed whether the increase in detentions is being *driven* by youth with DCF involvement, with some indicating that is what the data seems to indicate.

One member asked how DCF involvement is being defined. Ms. Polizzano stated that DCF involvement is defined as having *current* involvement, meaning an open DCF case at the time of admission (anything past—and including—the 51B process).

Ms. Polizzano presented on FY23 pretrial detention data for youth with DCF involvement broken down by:

- age,
- gender and LGBTQ+ status,
- race,
- bail amounts,
- and reasons youth are held without bail.

Members discussed DCF's policy of not paying bail; members pointed out that because of this policy, youth with DCF involvement who had their bail set in fact remained detained. Ms. Polizzano explained that the data presented is for admissions and not detention releases, so we don't know who *ultimately* gets bailed out of detention in this data set. Members discussed the opportunity for policy change that would allow DCF to pay bail and the desire to further examine data about DCF youth who had bail paid for them. Members discussed studying other states' policies on child welfare agencies paying bail.

Members discussed additional information to examine in this data project, including race/ethnicity breakdowns for bail amounts and DCF involvement, as well as education data.

Ms. Polizzano presented data on youth detained pretrial who have DCF involvement broken down by alleged offense severity and type.

Members discussed the data showing the overall increases in detention admissions have been driven by lower-level offenses. Members observed that in this category, the difference between youth with DCF involvement and those without involvement seemed significant. Ms. Polizzano explained that most DCF involved youth were detained for grid 1 and 2 offenses. One member suggested looking at this data broken down by DCF placement type.

Ms. Polizzano welcomed questions and comments on the data she presented.

Members raised additional data points to look at, including *where* youth with DCF involvement are coming from prior to their detention (foster care, residential, etc.), and what are the long-term implications and outcomes for youth who are DCF involved and are not bailed out.

Members discussed how long youth are detained. Ms. Polizzano shared that the average length of stay for all youth detained in FY22 was around 63 days. Members shared that when compared to youth not involved with DCF, youth involved with DCF have shorter detention stays.

Dually Involved Youth Data Deep Dive Project Discussion

Ms. Polizzano presented on the case file review project that the OCA is conducting with DCF and DYS in order to inform the JJPAD Board's research on this topic. She presented the guiding questions, key terms, and matched data sample that will inform this work. She presented on DCF and DYS data categories the OCA plans on requesting.

She then turned to the case file review portion of the project and shared that clinical specialists at the OCA will be reviewing the cases of youth with both DCF and DYS involvement in order to supplement the data elements provided in structured/administrative data. The case file review process will aim to answer questions regarding the delinquency allegation(s), as well as questions regarding services and interventions in a youth's life one year prior to a detention admission. Members suggested police reports should be included in these reviews.

Ms. Polizzano concluded this part of the presentation after reviewing the plan for the OCA case file review process. She shared that the OCA will regularly meet to discuss trends and bring them back to this group. Ms. Polizzano welcomed questions and comments from the group.

Members discussed the difference between youth who are dually involved and youth who are struggling in their DCF environments but are not detained. Members hoped that the work on this current project will help inform strategies for addressing youth who do not end up with juvenile justice system involvement.

Members made suggestions about improvements to methodology including interviewing stakeholders before and after the case file review.

Concluding remarks:

Ms. Polizzano reminded everyone to fill out their availability for the two remaining meetings for the year. Ms. Polizzano thanked everyone for their work and adjourned the meeting.

Adjournment: 2:03PM