



Plumas County

Juvenile Justice Plan

April 2025



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Executive Summary

This juvenile justice plan begins by first reviewing the legislation and requirements associated with the State's funding of juvenile justice efforts in California (primarily Assembly Bill 1913, known as the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act, and Senate Bill 81, known as the Youthful Offender Block Grant).

The report provides some demographic data for Plumas County and highlights key recent trends in juvenile justice. Referrals to the Probation Department for youth reached record lows in 2021, in line with what the rest of California has been experiencing over the past decade. A review of the Probation Department risk and needs assessments indicates that the primary criminogenic needs for Plumas County youth are leisure/recreation and anti-social behavior.

The report goes on to reflect input from several stakeholders in the community who participated in telephone interviews to gather a range of perspectives. After this section, the report then articulates the three strategies that were developed as a result of this analysis and will be deployed to develop programming for youth and families involved in juvenile justice:

- 1) Invest in prevention, intervention, and aftercare services when resources allow for it
- 2) Provide parents with the best possible tools to address their children's behaviors
- 3) Utilize evidence-based practices whenever feasible

The next segment of the report discusses the challenges confronting the juvenile justice system in Plumas County. These include the impact of SB 823, the hiring and retention of staff and a variety of complex social issues such as domestic violence, drug addiction and housing scarcity, that impact the community to a significant degree. It also covers the opportunity that comes with these challenges. New funding will allow Plumas to invest in needed programs

The report concludes with a listing of the program recommendations that Plumas County will make with both Youthful Offender Block Grant and Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act grants.

California Juvenile Justice Grants

The State of California supports the efforts of its 58 counties to address juvenile delinquency primarily through the funding offered under two non-competitive grants. The history and required process for these two grants, known as the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act and Youthful Offender Block Grant, are explained below.

In 2000, the California Legislature enacted Assembly Bill 1913, also known as the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA). This legislation provided the first source of substantial, non-competitive funding for counties to deliver local services to youth and families either involved in or at risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system. Eligibility for these funds requires compliance with two important requirements. The first is the creation of a “juvenile justice coordinating council,” which has the responsibility to develop, monitor and approve a “comprehensive multi-agency juvenile justice plan” annually. The second requirement is the annual completion and submission of two reports; one discusses the plans for the programs and initiatives to be funded by this grant in the upcoming fiscal year, due to the State each year by May 1st, ¹ and the other is primarily a fiscal report disclosing how the funds were utilized, and what outcomes were achieved, and is due October 1st of every year.

In accordance with 749.22 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) is comprised of a minimum of individuals representing the following agencies:

- Chief Probation Officer as Chair
- Sheriff
- District Attorney
- Public Defender
- City Police Department
- County Office of Education/School District
- Social Services
- Mental Health
- Community-based Drug and Alcohol Treatment Provide
- Board of Supervisors
- Non-profit CBOs providing services to youth
- At large community member

The JJCC is responsible for developing a “comprehensive multiagency juvenile justice plan,” which shall include the following components, per Government Code Section 30061(b)(4)(A):²

¹ In 2020, the State of California extended the due date for this report to May 30th per Executive Order N-40-20

²https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=GOV&division=3.&title=3.&part=&chapter=6.7.&article=

- i) An assessment of existing law enforcement, probation, education, mental health, health, social services, drug and alcohol, and youth services resources that specifically target at-risk juveniles, juvenile offenders, and their families.
- ii) An identification and prioritization of the neighborhoods, schools, and other areas in the community that face a significant public safety risk from juvenile crime, such as gang activity, daylight burglary, late-night robbery, vandalism, truancy, controlled substances sales, firearm-related violence, and juvenile substance abuse and alcohol use.
- iii) A local juvenile justice action strategy that provides for a continuum of responses to juvenile crime and delinquency and demonstrates a collaborative and integrated approach for implementing a system of swift, certain, and graduated responses for at-risk youth and juvenile offenders.
- iv) A description of the programs, strategies, or system enhancements that are proposed to be funded pursuant to this subparagraph.

JJCJA funds can be “used for programs and approaches that have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing delinquency and addressing juvenile crime for any elements of response to juvenile crime and delinquency, including prevention, intervention, suppression, and incapacitation.”³

In 2007, the State enacted Senate Bill 81, also known as Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG). The purpose of this grant was to “realign” services for some youth who had been under the supervision of the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to local probation departments. 1951(b) of the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) states that YOBG funds “...shall be used to enhance the capacity of county probation, mental health, drug and alcohol, and other county departments to provide appropriate rehabilitative and supervision services to youthful offenders...”⁴ Unlike JJCJA, programs supported through YOBG funds are not subject to review of the JJCC. Per Welfare & Institutions Code Section 1961(a), the State requires the following to be conducted in order to be in compliance with this funding:

- (a) On or before May 1 of each year, each county shall prepare and submit to the Board of State and Community Corrections a Juvenile Justice Development Plan on its proposed programs, strategies, and system enhancements for the next fiscal year from the Youthful Offender Block Grant Fund described in Section 1951. The plan shall include all of the following:

³ http://www.bscc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/JJCJA-YOBG-FAQs_FINAL.pdf

⁴ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=1951.&lawCode=WIC

- (1) A description of the programs, placements, services, strategies, and system enhancements to be funded by the block grant allocation pursuant to this chapter, including, but not limited to, the programs, tools, and strategies outlined in Section 1960.
- (2) A description of how the plan relates to or supports the county's overall strategy for dealing with youthful offenders who have not committed an offense described in subdivision (b) of Section 707, and who are no longer eligible for commitment to the Division of Juvenile Facilities under Section 733 as of September 1, 2007.
- (3) A description of any regional agreements or arrangements to be supported by the block grant allocation pursuant to this chapter.
- (4) A description of how the programs, placements, services, or strategies identified in the plan coordinate with multi-agency juvenile justice plans and programs under paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 30061 of the Government Code.

In 2016, Assembly Bill 1988 combined the process of submitting these two reports (the "Comprehensive Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan" and the "Juvenile Justice Development Plan") and allow for a single consolidated plan as long as it meets all of the required components of both grants. This report fulfills the requirements of both of these funding streams.

The process for preparing this report involved a review of data associated with Plumas County juvenile justice and demographics, along with stakeholder interviews.

Plumas County Demographics

Plumas County is located in the northeastern part of California, at the meeting point between the Sierra Nevada and Cascade ranges. Plumas County's population has remained steady in recent years, due in large part to the fact that nearly 70% of the jurisdiction is controlled by the U.S. Forest Service. With less than eight residents per square mile, and an average elevation of 5,125 feet, this County is a paradise for people seeking solitude, recreation and opportunities to enjoy nature. Some of the spectacular sights of Plumas County include Feather River Canyon, Lake Almanor, and views of Mount Lassen, which lies just north of the border with Shasta County.

As of July 1, 2021, the population of Plumas County is estimated to be 19,915, and the age distribution of that population is as follows⁵:

Plumas County Population Age Distribution		
<i>Age</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Number</i>
Under 18	17.3%	3,445
18-64	52.4%	10,435
65 and over	30.3%	6,035

49.8% of the County is female. Plumas County's ethnic diversity is as follows⁶:

Plumas County Population Ethnicity Distribution		
<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Number</i>
White	82.1%	16,350
Hispanic/Latino	10.3%	2,051
All Others	7.6%	1,514

According to recent statistics from California's Employment Development Department, just under 63% of the paid jobs in Plumas County were in the private sector, and 37% were in government.⁷ Seventy-eight percent of those private sector jobs are in the service industry.⁸ The following table reflects that Plumas County has had a significantly higher

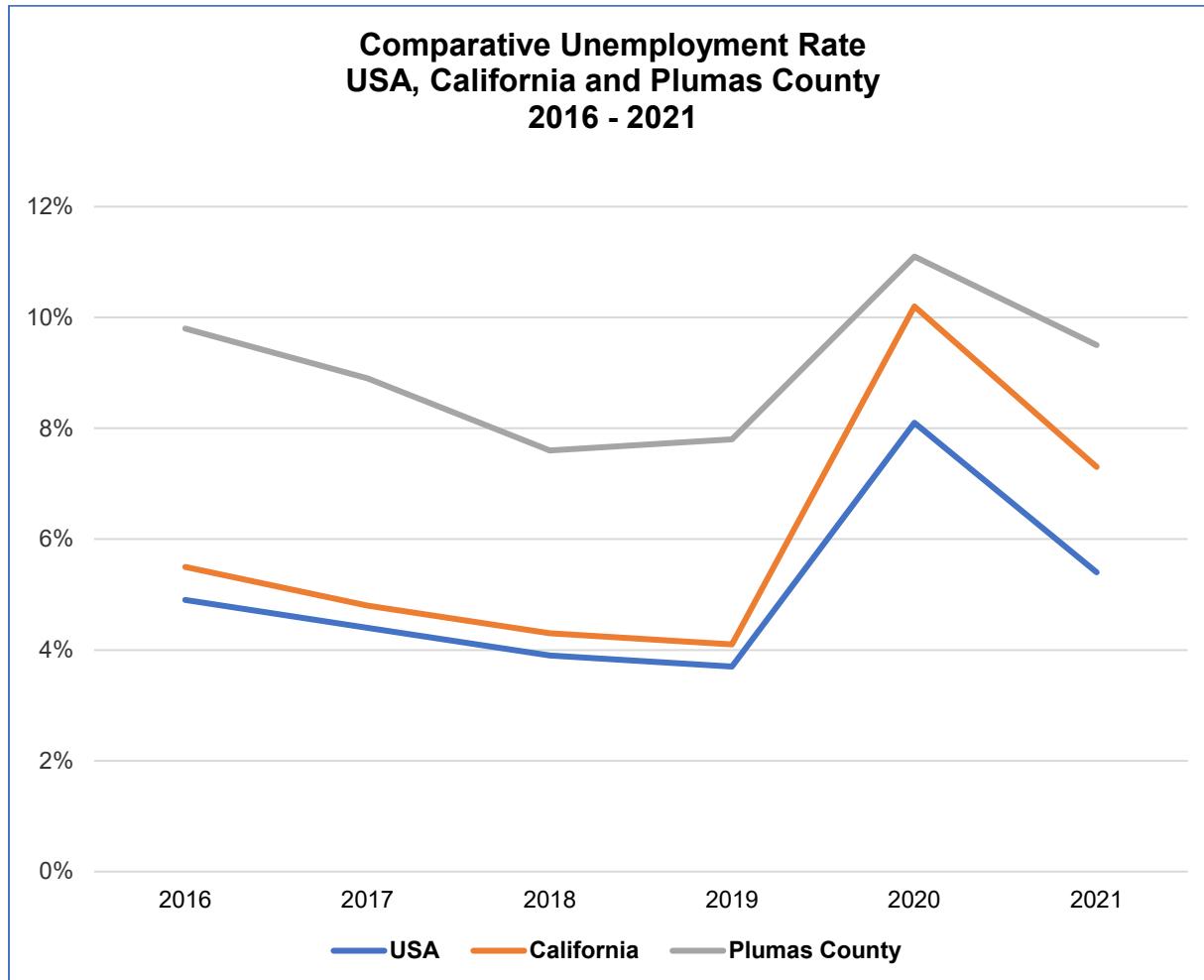
⁵ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/plumascountycalifornia/PST045221>

⁶ ibid

⁷ [Plumas County, California](#)

⁸ ibid

rate of unemployment, even prior to the beginning of the 2020 COVID pandemic, when compared to both California and the country as a whole.⁹



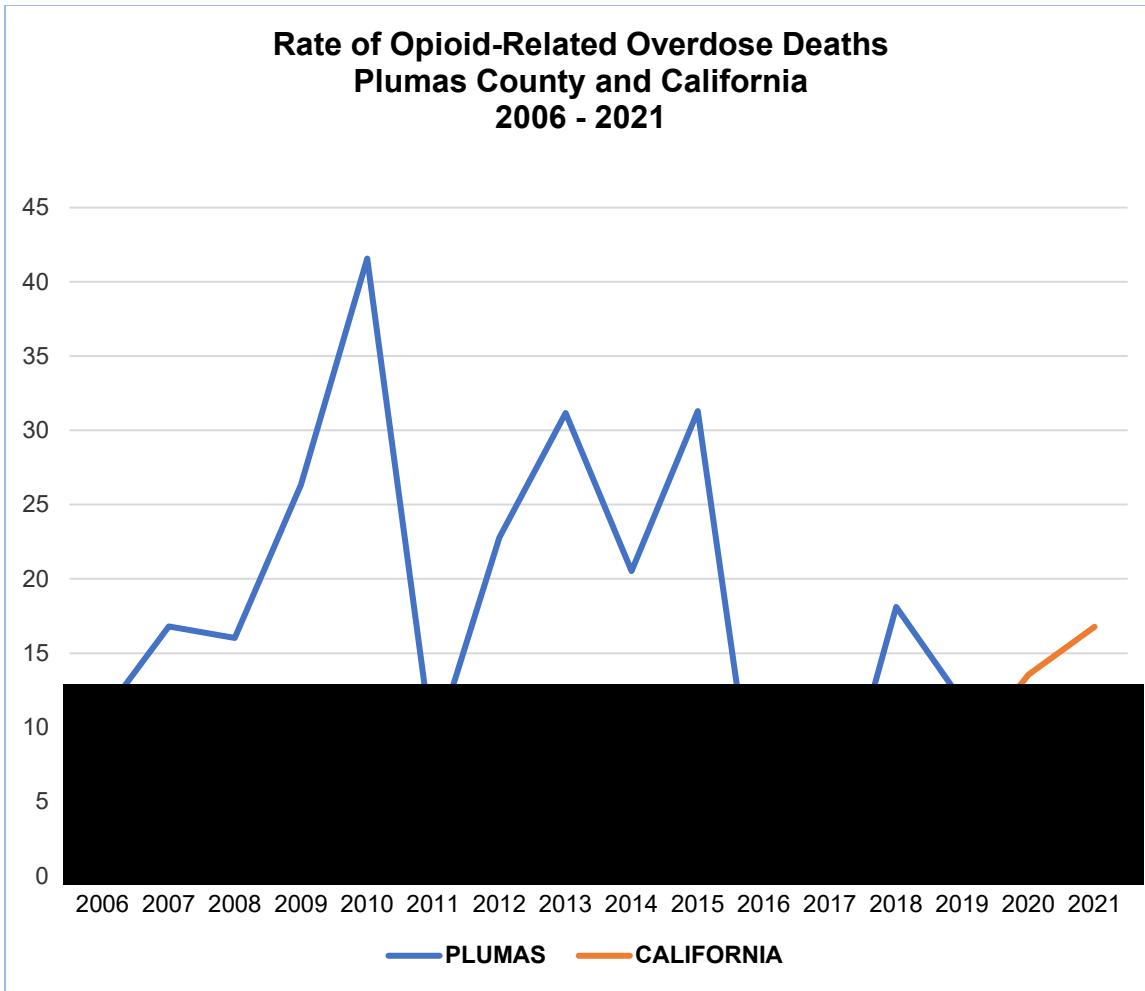
Plumas County's poverty rate of 13.5% compares to 12.3% of the population in the entire state of California.

Before focusing more on demographic information specifically related to youth in Plumas County, it is important to discuss two social issues that are likely to have an impact on the youth living in this area: opiate abuse and domestic violence.

Although the numbers of opioid-related deaths in Plumas County have dropped significantly since 2015, the mortality rate has exceeded that of the rest of California most every year since 2006.¹⁰

⁹ [Local Area Unemployment Statistics \(LAUS\) for California Areas: Annual Average | EDD Data Library](#)

¹⁰ [CA Overdose Dashboard](#)



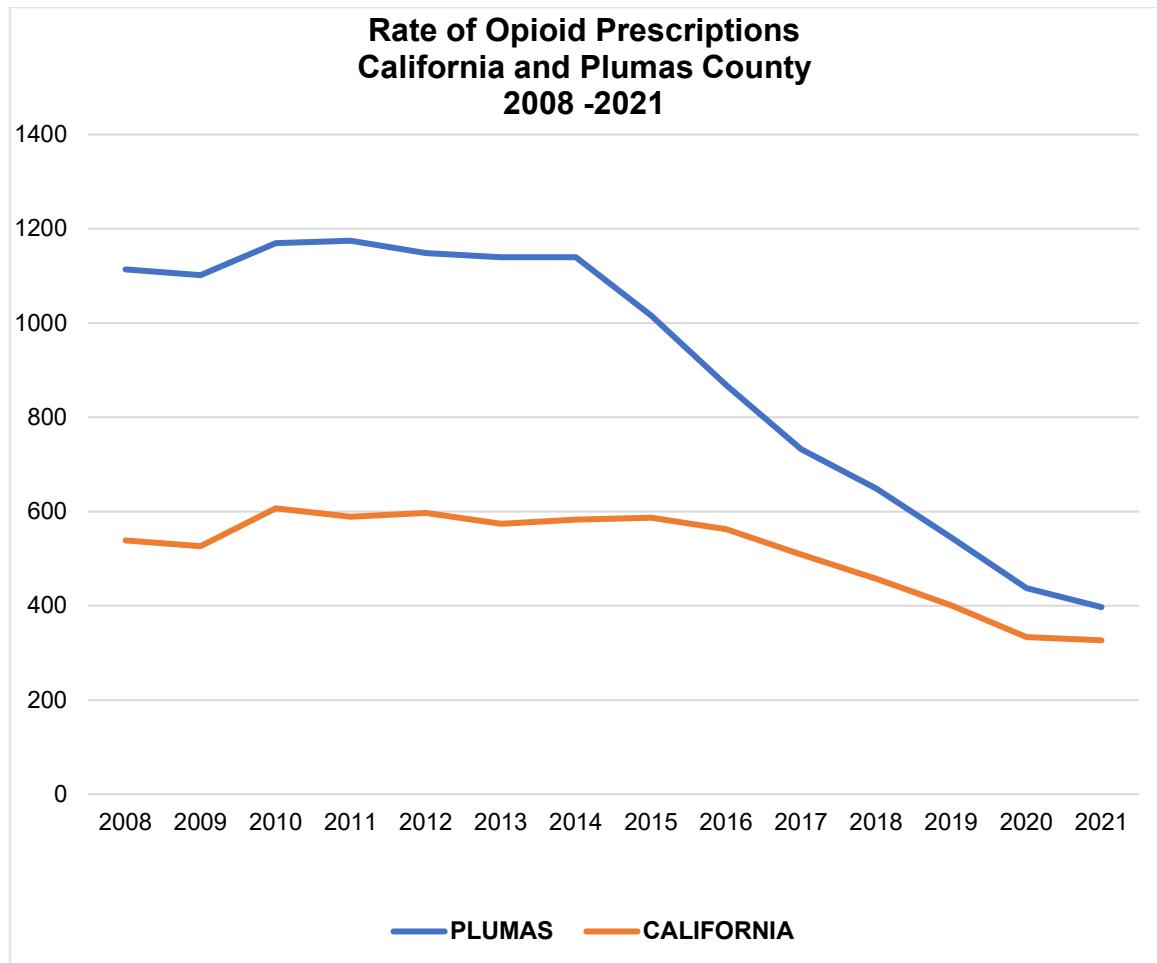
The impact of opiate use is often the reflection of a host of other ills afflicting a community. California's website for the Department of Public Health best captures this when it states:

"The opioid epidemic continues to evolve and impose a serious threat to the health of all individuals throughout the state. In order to effectively address the opioid epidemic, it is important to recognize that opioid abuse and overdose is closely tied to other trends in the state. As California has seen rising rates of social inequities, homelessness, mental illness, and despair, the state also has seen an increase in opioid abuse, addiction, and overdose deaths, especially among those most marginalized in our society."¹¹

While Plumas County has seen an improvement in this area, the specter of opiates and the havoc they can raise will continue to exist if the rate of prescriptions for opiates in Plumas County exceeds that of the rest of California.¹²

¹¹ [Opioids \(ca.gov\)](https://ca.gov/programs-and-initiatives/health-and-well-being/overdose-prevention-and-recovery/opioids)

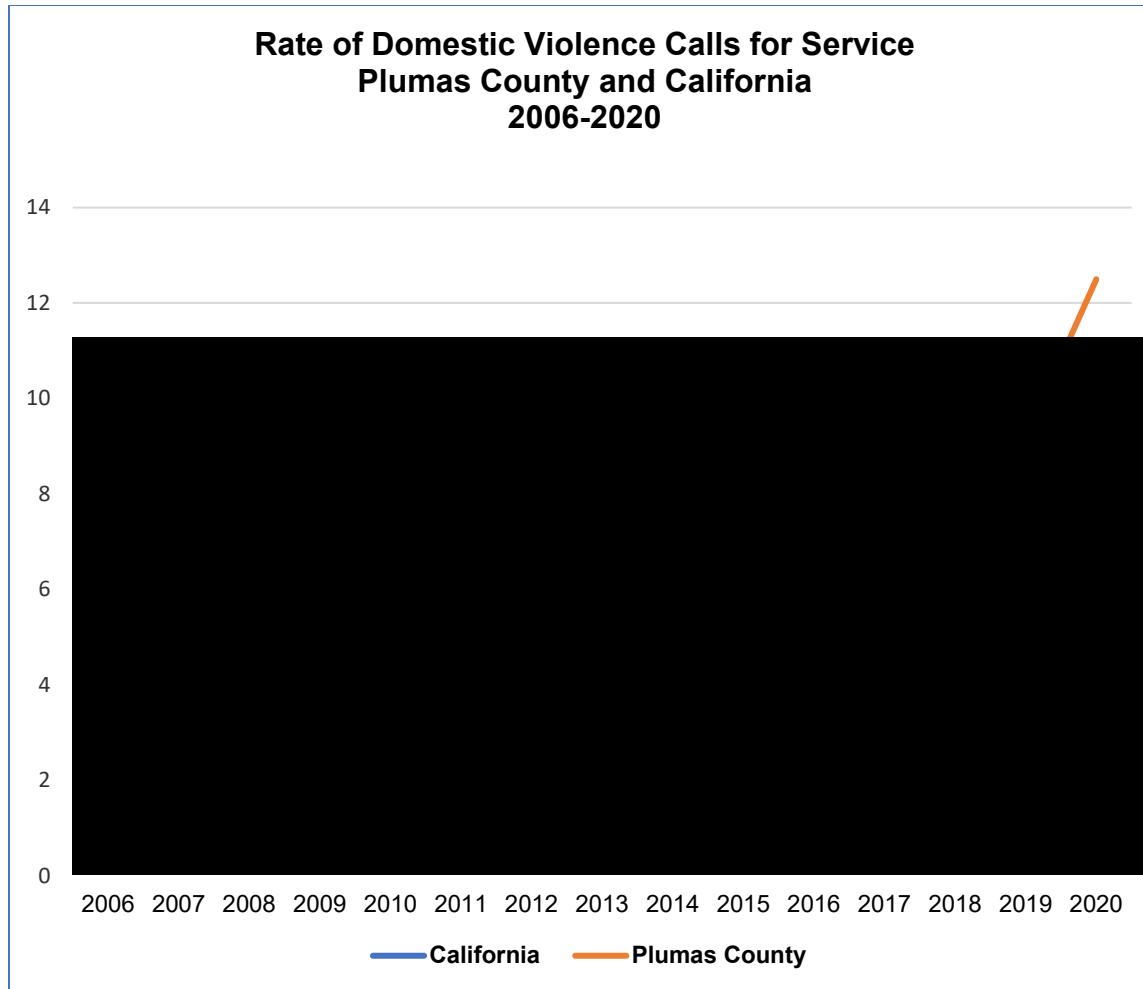
¹² [CA Overdose Dashboard](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/ODS/CA-Overdose-Dashboard)



Compounding the problems created by the epidemic of opiates has been an increase in instances of domestic violence. The rate of domestic violence calls in Plumas County for service increased dramatically starting in 2015, while in the rest of California, they have remained relatively steady.¹³

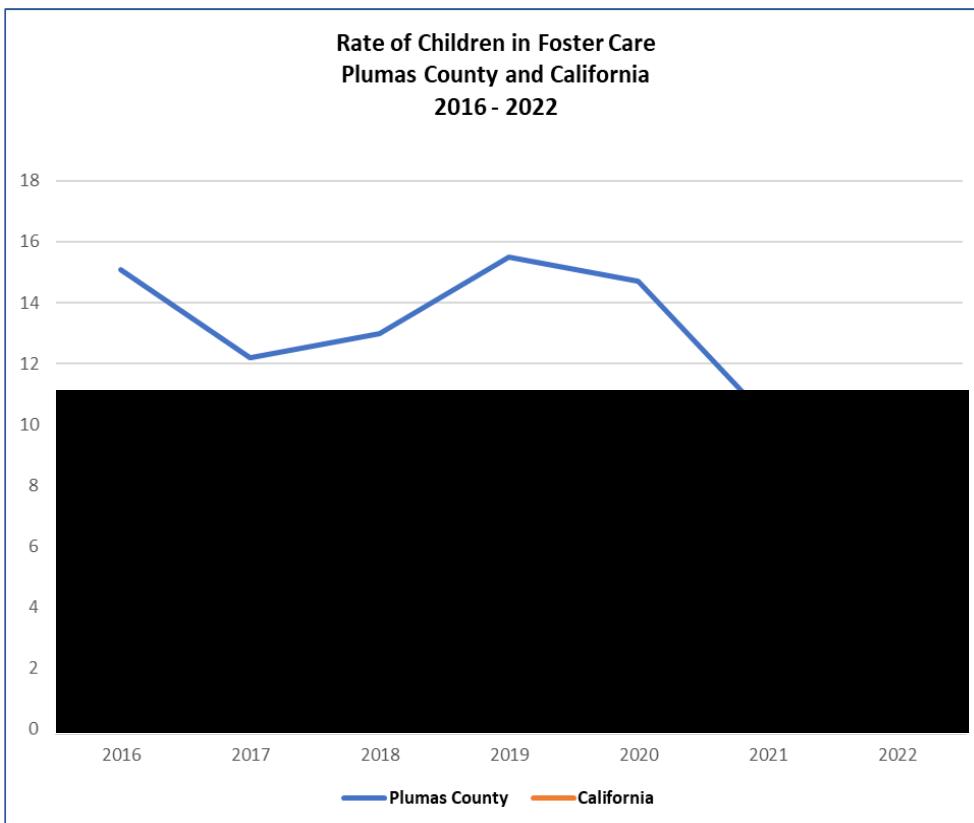
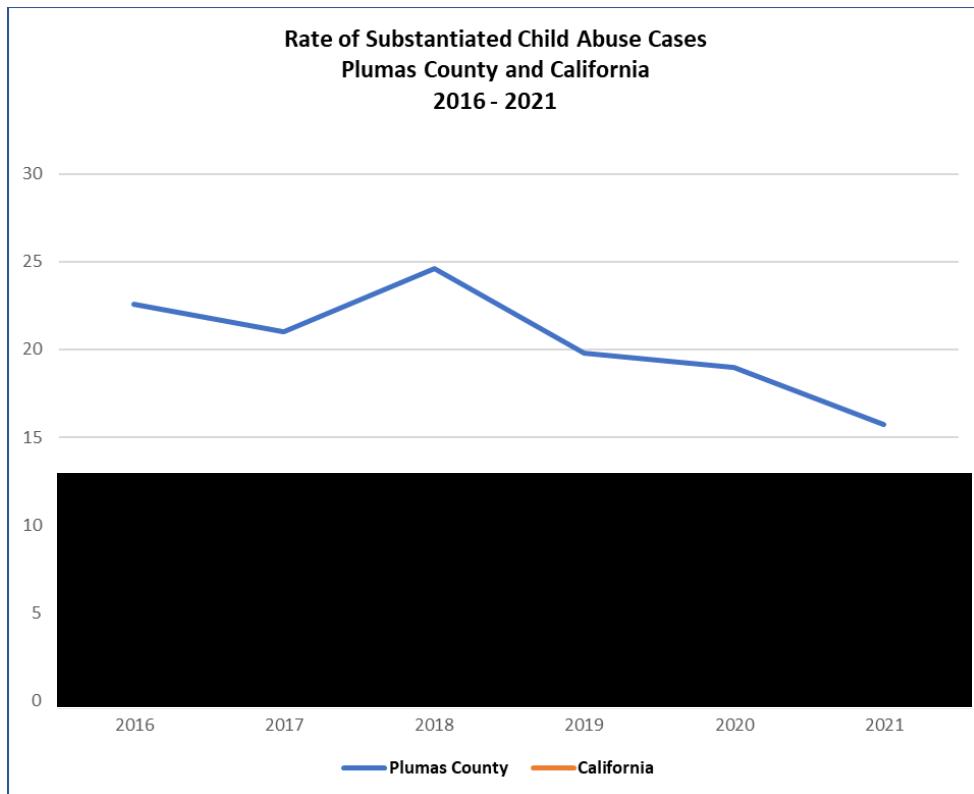
¹³ [Domestic Violence Calls for Assistance - Kidsdata.org](#)

It is important to note that this source only has data through 2020. Plumas County's total number of calls for service due to domestic violence reduced from 140 in 2021 to 92 in 2021, which is a 34% reduction. Assuming the rate is reduced by the same amount, it still results in Plumas County's rate being higher than the rest of the state of California.

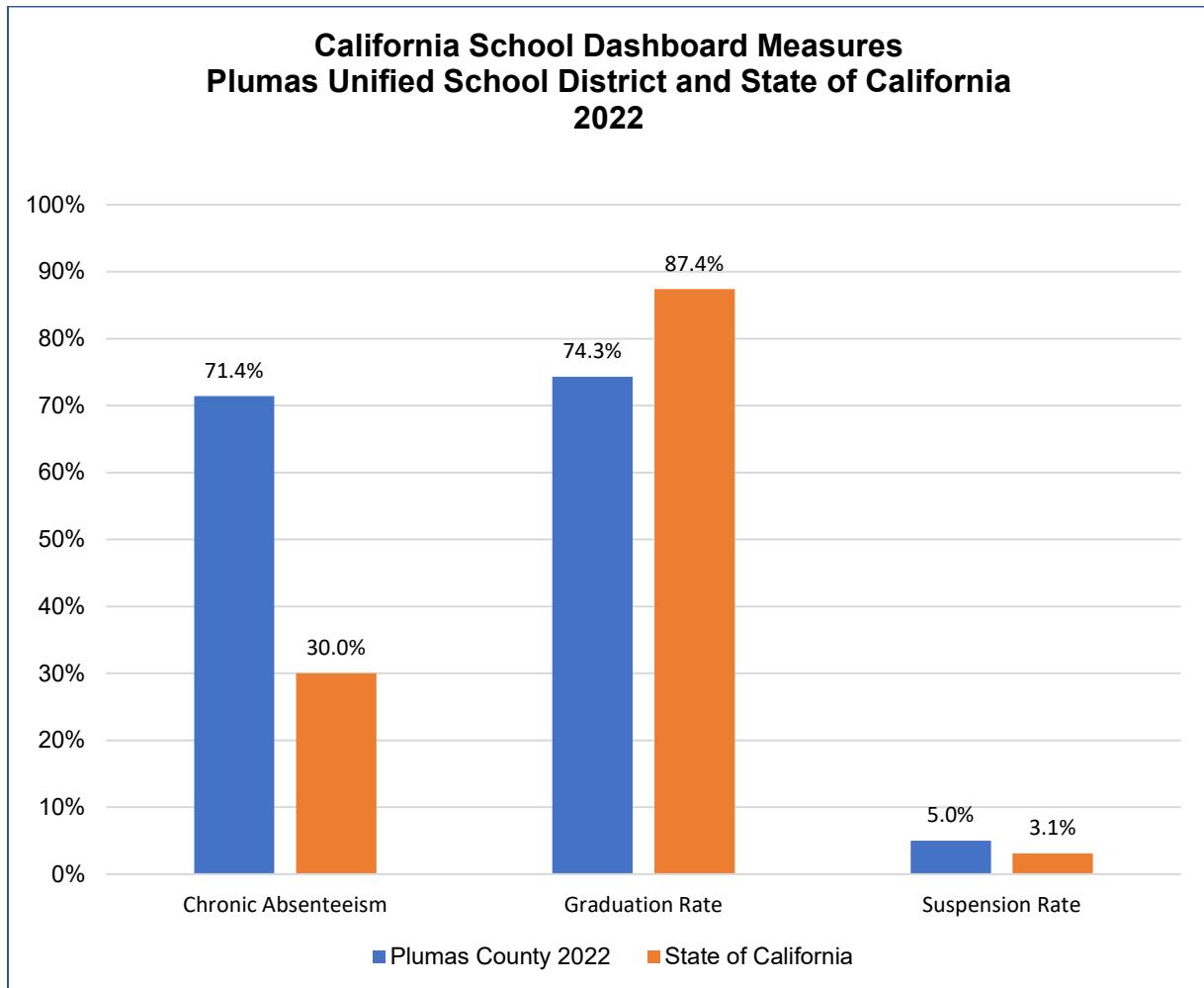


As indicated earlier in this report, there are 3,445 minors residing in Plumas County. Of the under-18 population in Plumas County, there are several important social indicators that have connections to juvenile delinquency. The rate of involvement with the child welfare system is often a reflection of the same issues that drive incidents of juvenile delinquency. The next two charts compare rates of substantiated cases of child abuse and children in foster care (this is only children placed into foster care through the child welfare system, not juvenile justice) for Plumas County and the State of California.¹⁴

¹⁴ [Report Index - California Child Welfare Indicators Project \(CCWIP\) \(berkeley.edu\)](http://Report Index - California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP) (berkeley.edu))



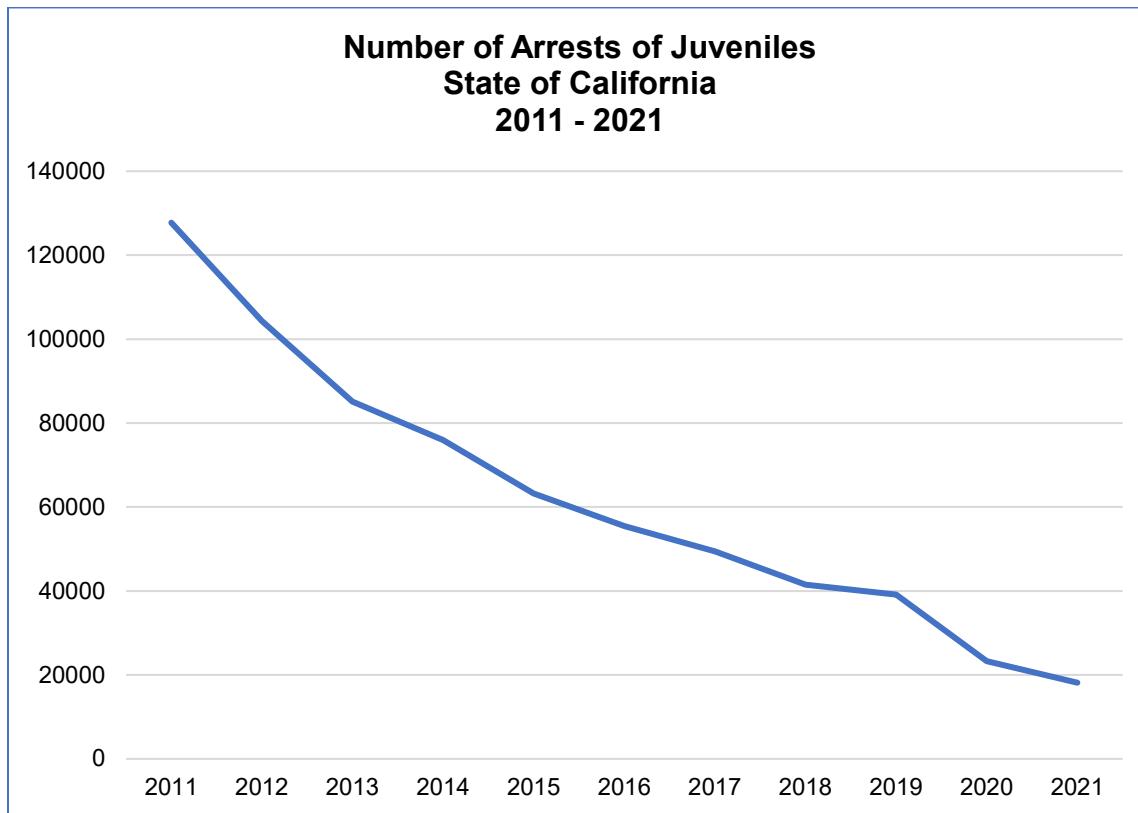
Although rates of both of these measures are improving in Plumas County, they remain higher than in the rest of the State. While there is no evidence referenced in this report that these measures are correlated to delinquency, it is reasonable to hypothesize that a relationship might exist. A similar relationship can be construed to exist between school performance and the juvenile justice system. According to the 2022 results from the “California School Dashboard,” the Plumas Unified School District has higher rates of chronic absenteeism and suspension, and a lower rate of school graduation, than in the rest of California.¹⁵ In 2024, Plumas County’s Chronic Absenteeism rate had decreased to 32.6%, the Graduation Rate increased to 80%, and the Suspension Rate increased to 7.4%.



¹⁵ [Plumas Unified Summary | California School Dashboard \(CA Dept of Education\) \(caschooldashboard.org\)](https://caschooldashboard.org)

Juvenile Justice Data Trends

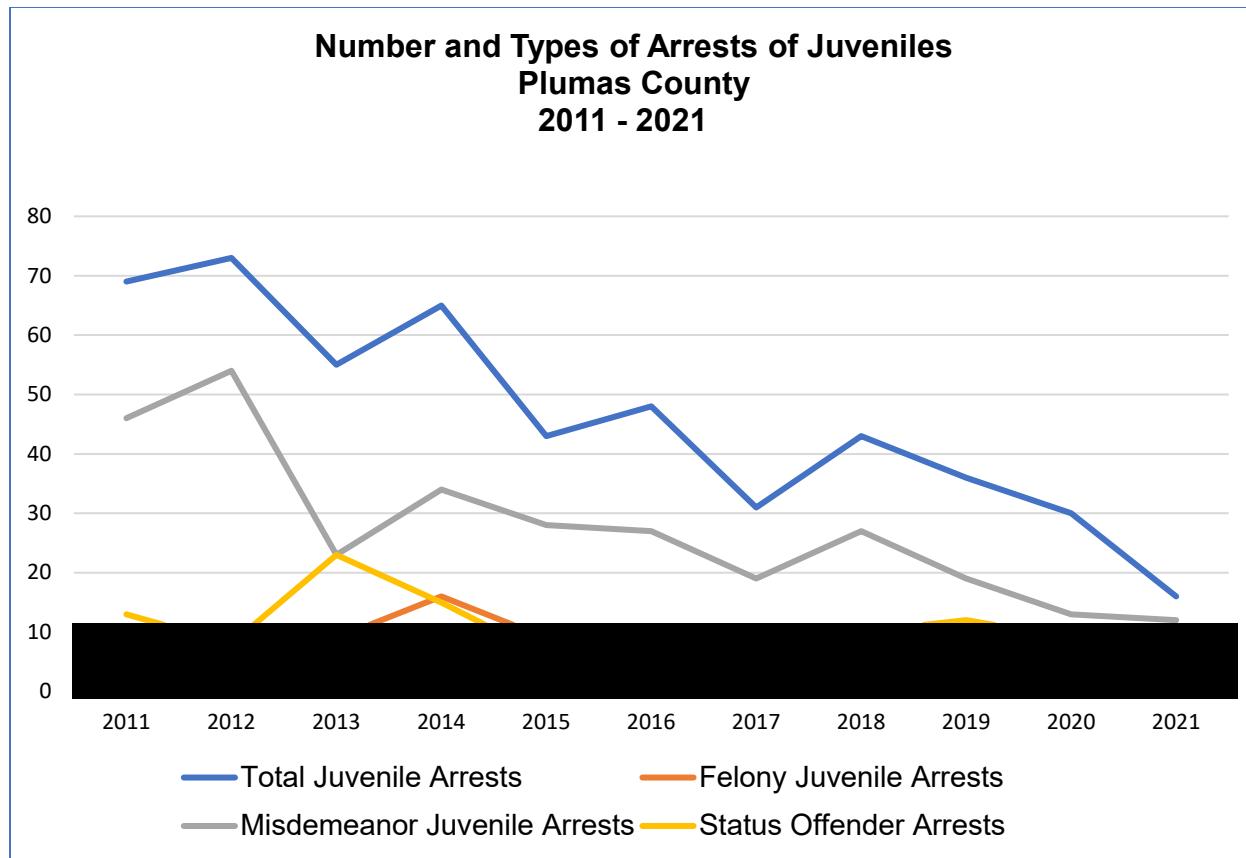
Before looking specifically at juvenile crime data in Plumas County, it is helpful to get an idea about the numbers of statewide juvenile arrests to understand what is happening in juvenile justice jurisdictions across the state. The following chart reflects the dramatic reduction in number of juveniles arrested in California in the period from 2011 to 2021.¹⁶



The 86% decline reflected above is similar to the 77% reduction experienced in Plumas County over the same time period.¹⁷

¹⁶ [State of California Department of Justice - OpenJustice](#)

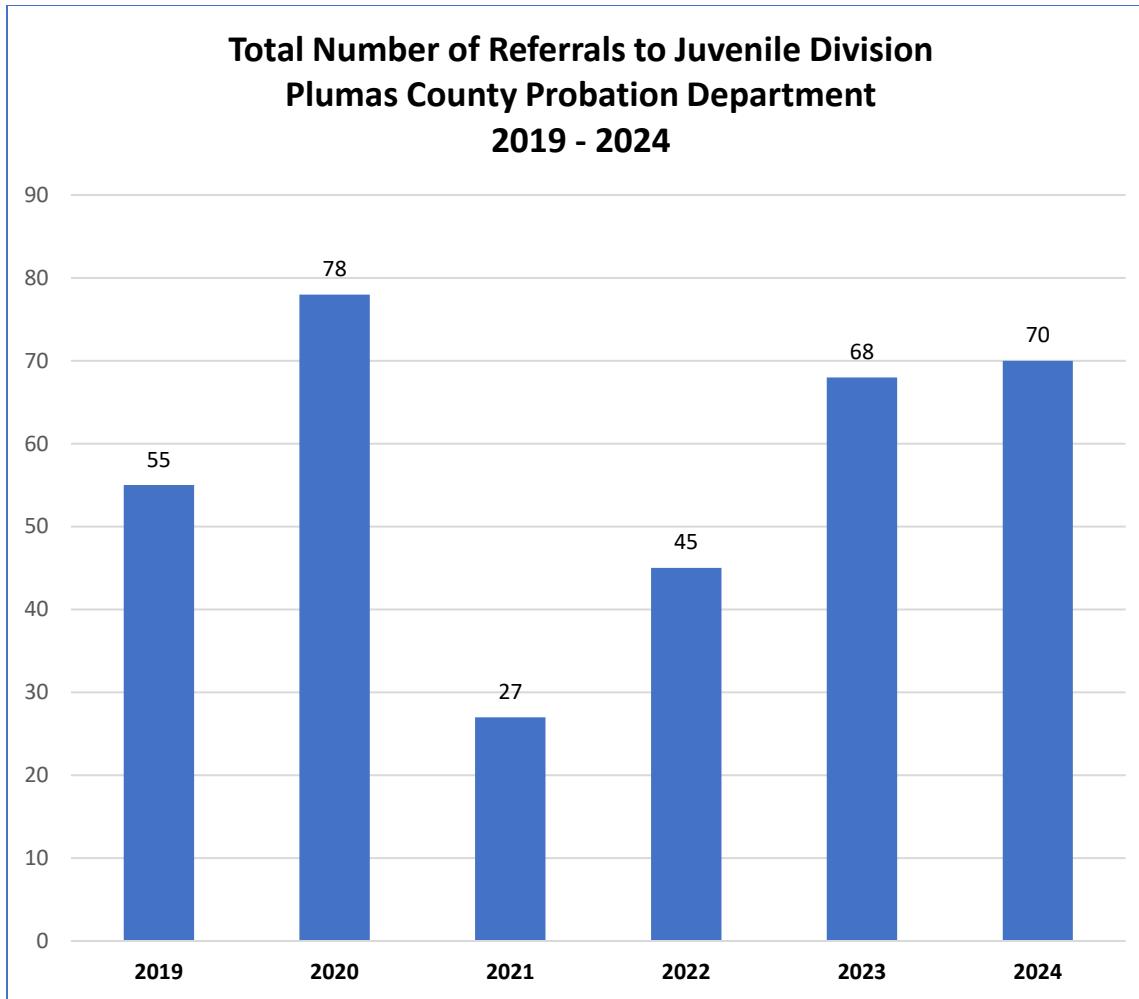
¹⁷ ibid



The vast majority of arrests of juveniles result in a referral to the county probation department.¹⁸ This report will now shift its focus first to the referrals recorded by the Plumas County Probation Department, and after that to the youth associated with those referrals.

The following chart reflects the trend in referrals over the past six years. As one might expect with the dramatic reductions in arrests of juveniles occurring all across the State, referrals to Plumas County's Juvenile Division also dropped substantially from 2020 to 2021; however, since 2021 referrals have increased to levels similar to 2020 and previous years.

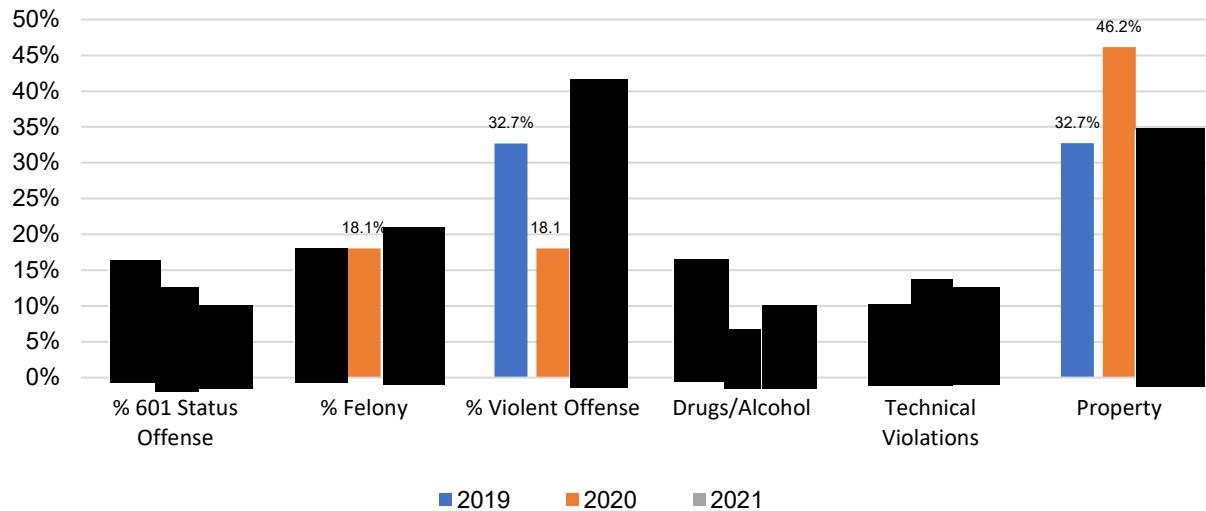
¹⁸ Careful readers of this report will notice a discrepancy between the number of arrests reported to the California Office of the Attorney General and the number of referrals to the Juvenile Division of the Plumas County Probation Department. The statistics reported to the Attorney General's Office do not include infractions and arrests originating outside of Plumas County. In addition, not all of the status offenses referred to California probation departments are reported to the Attorney General.



In addition to the volume of referrals, it is also important to review the types of referrals being made. The following chart indicates the distribution of referrals involving status offenses, felony charges, any incidents alleging violence, drugs and alcohol, technical violations of probation and property.¹⁹

¹⁹ These percentages will not total 100% for any given year because a referral can have more than one of these types of offenses included

Distribution of Offenses to Juvenile Division
Plumas County Probation Department
2019 - 2021



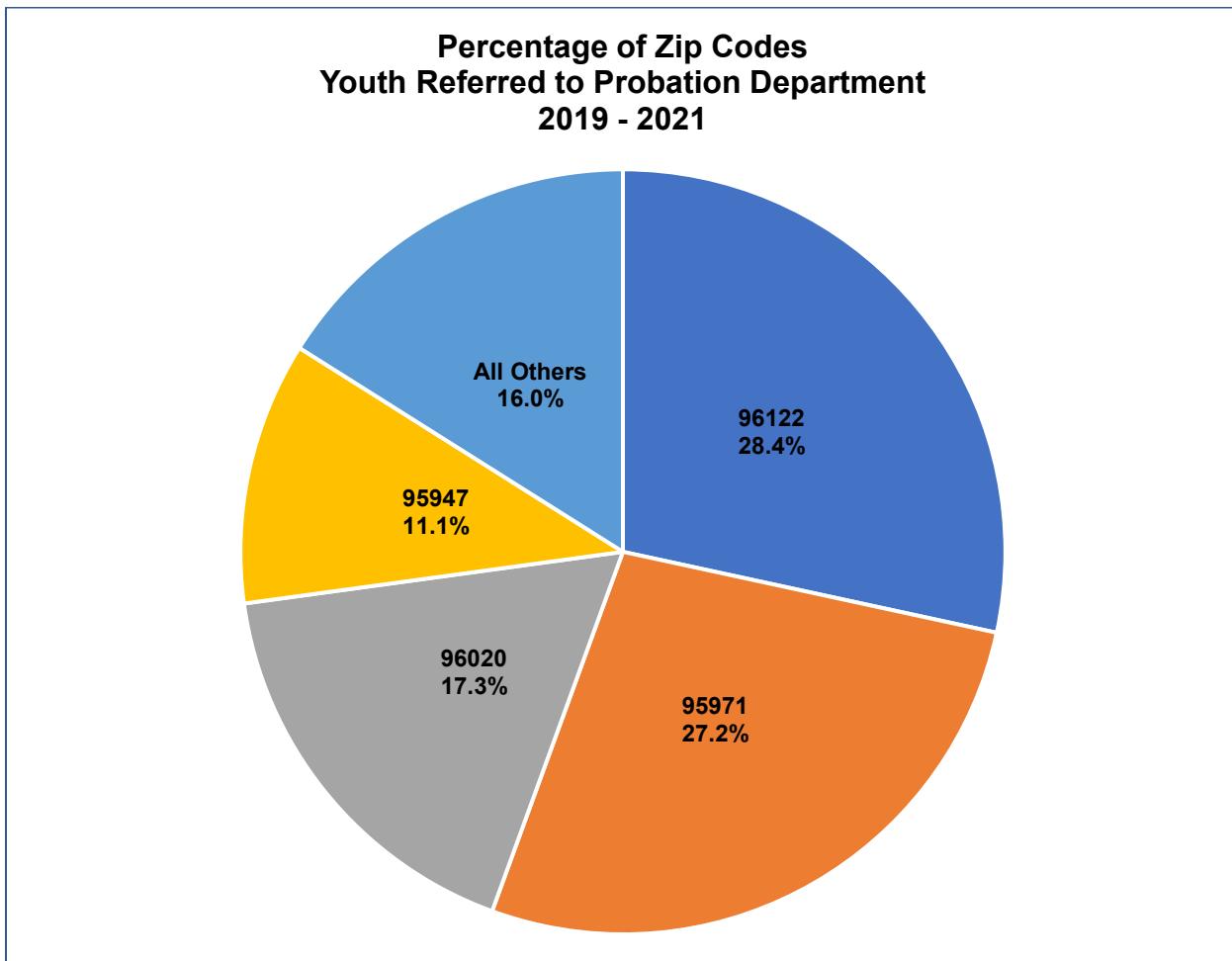
The following trends can be seen in this chart:

- The percentage of referrals that relate only to a status offense (usually meaning “beyond control of the parent” or truant from school) has gone down each of the last two years
- Property offenses and allegations involving violence are the main drivers of referrals to the Probation Department
- The percentage of referrals that include drug and alcohol violations has dropped substantially between 2019 and 2021

While the number and types of offenses referred to the Probation Department provide insight to what is occurring in Plumas County juvenile justice, perhaps the most important data points to consider are those that describe the youth associated with those referrals. By describing the characteristics and issues these youth possess, it becomes easier to envision interventions to assist in reducing their propensity to engage in delinquency. Because of the relatively small numbers involved in a jurisdiction like Plumas County, this analysis will aggregate the number of youths who comprised the referrals to the Probation Department over the three-year period 2019 through 2021. There was a total of 160 referrals over this period, and a group of 93 youth were responsible for these referrals (meaning that some were referred multiple times). Some basic demographic information of this group is as follows:

Average Age	14.8
% Boys	71.7%
% Girls	28.3%
% White	81%
% Other Ethnicities	19%

More than 55% of the youth for whom the zip code of their primary residence was indicated live in either 96122 or 95971 (these zip codes reflect the cities of Portola and Quincy, respectively).



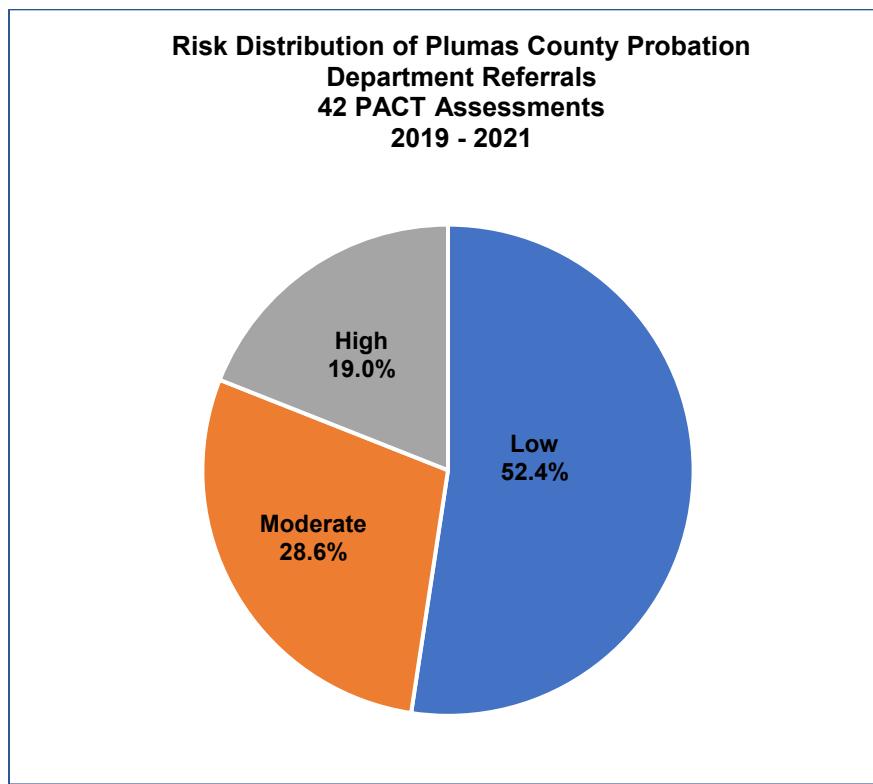
According to mental health assessments performed by the Probation Department, a high percentage of youth referred to the juvenile justice system in Plumas during this period have experienced a significant level of childhood trauma. According to the Center for Disease Control, approximately 16% of all adults will have experienced four or more traumatic experiences.²⁰ In Plumas County, 64% of the youth surveyed had four or more such experiences; this is four times the amount seen in the general population. The

²⁰ [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) | Vital Signs | CDC](#)

correlation between trauma and juvenile delinquency has been clearly established through multiple research studies.²¹

As part of its investigations of youth referred to the Juvenile Division, the Plumas County Probation Department staff assess a probationer's need for services using the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT). The PACT instrument provides two critical pieces of information for the Department to utilize. The first is that assesses a child's likelihood to recidivate, rated as either "low," "moderate" or "high." This determination plays a role in how much intervention the justice system ought to deploy in a given situation. The PACT risk assessment tool also identifies the primary criminogenic needs²² (among the eight that exist) that require attention in order to reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

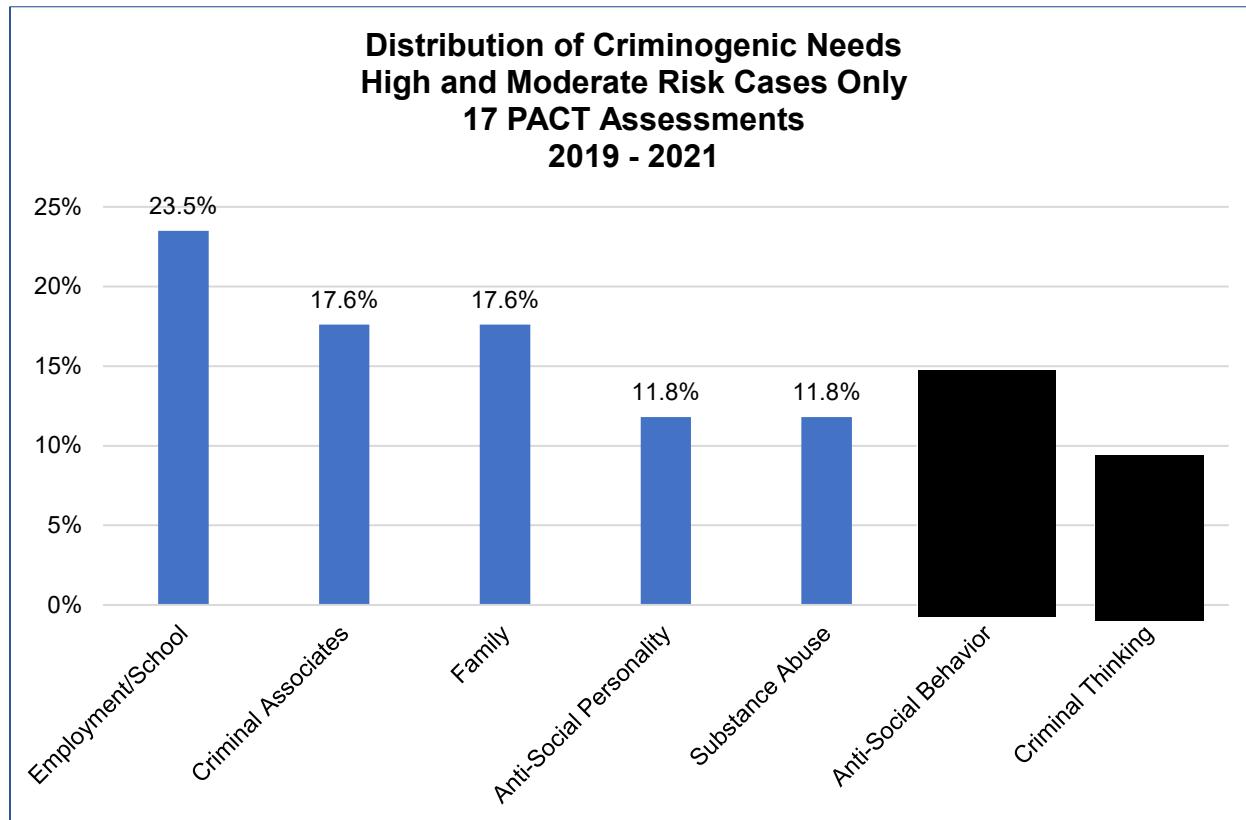
According to data from the Probation Department, more than half of the assessments indicated that the youth in question were at low risk for recidivism. This is very positive, as best practices in community corrections suggest that low risk youth require very little in terms of intervention and are unlikely to recidivate, regardless of whether an intervention is deployed or not. In 2024, risk levels changed to 12.5% High, 50% Moderate, and 37.5% low.



²¹ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25703485/>

²² Criminogenic needs are issues, risk factors, characteristics and/or problems that relate to a person's likelihood of reoffending or recidivism. See <https://csgjusticecenter.org/jr/in-brief-understanding-risk-and-needs-assessment/> for a further explanation of how instruments such as PACT are utilized in justice systems. See <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R44087.pdf> for an explanation of the theories on how to address criminogenic needs

Best practices in community corrections require that agencies focus their resources on those youth determined to be at high and moderate risk for recidivism. Research has shown that not only is there more impact on reducing recidivism when agencies follow this principle, engaging with low-risk youth can actually *increase* recidivism. As a result, it makes sense to focus on the criminogenic needs only of those youth who are assessed to be at high or moderate risk. The chart that follows illustrates the distribution of the types of criminogenic needs demonstrated in these assessments.²³



In summary, during the period from 2019 through 2021, the majority of youth referred to the Plumas County Probation Department had the following characteristics:

- Approximately 15 years old
- Male
- White
- From the cities of either Quincy or Portola
- Have experienced a significant number of adverse childhood experiences
- At low or moderate risk for recidivism
- Were referred for either a violent or property related offense
- The majority of high and moderate risk youth have as primary criminogenic needs employment/school, criminal associates, or family issues

²³ These figures represent only the most recent completed risk assessments for individual youth

Juvenile Justice Perspectives, Strategies and Resources

I. Perspectives

In order to reflect a broad view of the issues related to juvenile justice in Plumas County, this report includes summaries of conversations with key stakeholders. People were asked to reflect on the greatest strengths and issues of the County's juvenile justice system).

Bill Powers

*Chair of Plumas County Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission
and Member of Plumas County Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council*

Mr. Powers is a lifelong resident of Plumas County, and he has had a distinguished career in a variety of roles that have intersected with the justice system. Those roles include public administration (serving as a member of the County Board of Supervisors and Mayor of the City of Portola), education (working as a high school teacher of continuation school youth), private sector (as the owner of a small business) and justice (appointed to the California Corrections Standards Authority), among many others.

When asked about the strengths in Plumas County's juvenile justice system, Mr. Powers expressed appreciation for three specific leaders in the community. He said that both of the Superior Court judges, and the Chief of the Probation Department, all are compassionate individuals who understand the needs of the youth and families. He commented that there is a good working relationship between the County Sheriff Department and the schools; deputies are welcomed on school campuses and are able to coordinate well with staff. He also reported that as far as he can see, youth relate well to the Probation Department staff they work with, and that Chief Allred has done a good job hiring people who are effective in this role.

In terms of the challenges facing Plumas County, Mr. Powers began by describing a daunting set of conditions for many families in this community. Poverty, lack of employment opportunities sufficient to support a family, domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse and a lack of affordable housing are all prevalent circumstances that overlay the family situations of many youth referred to the justice system. He also eloquently articulated the difficulties presented with simply living in a rural environment. Extremely cold weather in the winter, long distances between residents and services all year round, and the demands of having to commute for hours in some cases to jobs with sufficient wages, all exact a toll on people in the community. For those in the community with the means to bear these challenges, living in Plumas County can be not only tolerable but also enjoyable; these people can enjoy the solitude, nature and recreation opportunities available in Plumas County. For those facing challenges that arise from both society and nature, it can be overwhelming.

Mr. Powers described some of the youth that he interacted with while working as a high school teacher at Jim Beckwourth High School, which was the continuation school where some of the students were involved with the justice system. Mr. Powers said that while few of them were involved in very serious criminal offenses, they were nearly all vulnerable to the pull of delinquency. They were prone to engage in drinking and alcohol and/or using drugs, they often came from families with parents who were struggling with their own issues (many of them justice involved themselves), and some had a cavalier attitude captured by the saying "why shouldn't I?" Mr. Powers explained this when he recalled

[REDACTED] Not all youth with this attitude were so fortunate.

When asked what he would like to see changed in Plumas County in order to improve outcomes for youth and families, Mr. Powers made two suggestions. First, he recommends returning the county continuation school to the model in effect when he was still working as a teacher. At that time, there was a separate campus, staff and culture that gave expelled students a chance for a new beginning. According to Mr. Powers, today the continuation school operates as a sub-program on the same campus and lacks the distinction from the mainstream school to provide these youth with the opportunity, services and support they need to make changes in their lives. His second idea was in having more actors in the system (teachers, police, deputy probation officers, treatment staff, etc.) seek to collaborate and align themselves with both the youth and their parents, instead of creating adversarial relationships that hinder behavior change. He gave as an example the hypothetical situation of a child who is referred for truancy. Instead of approaching the parents with blame, he suggests trying to engage with them in a way where they feel supported, and involved, and are more likely to become a part of the solution for their child.

*David Hollister
Plumas County District Attorney*

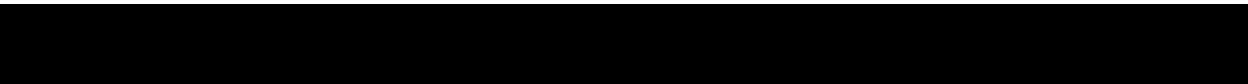
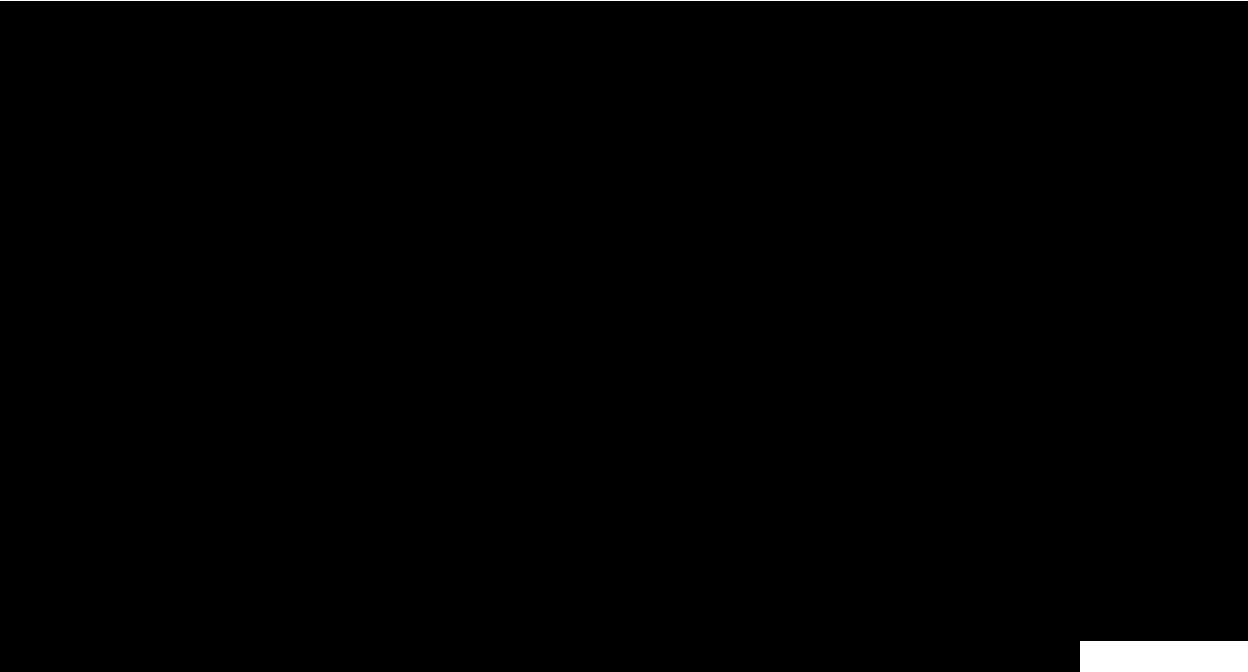
Mr. Hollister began his work as a prosecutor with the Plumas County District Attorney office in 2003 and has served as the District Attorney since 2011. When asked about strengths of the County's juvenile justice system, he said that the County does not have a significant number of serious cases of juvenile delinquency, so there are sufficient resources for the court calendar to be manageable. He said that the Probation Department does an excellent job of administering that calendar, and in particular he described Deputy Probation Officer Sarah McFadden as an asset for the County.

In terms of what he would like to see changed, Mr. Hollister mentioned three areas. First, he would like to see more resources attached to the County's truancy program. His office has an investigator assigned to this role and that person works with a School District staff person who works to address cases of truancy. Despite the statewide move towards reducing probation department influence with truancy prevention efforts, Mr. Hollister believes the Plumas County Probation Department still has an important role to play in that effort.

A second area of concern for Mr. Hollister is the lack of mental health services available for youth and families in the area. He described this as a statewide issue, and also as one that not only affects people in the juvenile justice system but also in the general population as a whole. If more funds could be made to provide that service, it would be beneficial in the effort to address delinquency.

Finally, Mr. Hollister talked about the County's successful treatment court known as the "Community Justice Court." This program has had success in supporting the efforts of its participants to make changes in their lives, however it lacks sufficient resources to also support the youth and family members of those participants. Mr. Hollister would like to see additional funding provided to address this gap in services for this particular program.

[REDACTED]
Parent





*Sarah McFadden
Deputy Probation Officer, Plumas County*

Ms. McFadden has worked for the Plumas County Probation Department for seven years. Although she is not from Plumas originally, she has had a lifetime connection to the area as her family would vacation in the community regularly while she was growing up. She is the sole sworn staff person working on juvenile justice matters for the Department, which means that she must perform a variety of complex roles. These include conducting investigations of new referrals, supervising a caseload of youth on probation in the community, serving as a Court Officer in Juvenile Court, and managing youth who are placed in foster care through the Delinquency Court system. Each of these roles carries with them a great deal of responsibility, and larger probation departments routinely have staff assigned to only one of them due to the demands of learning the laws and practices associated with them.

Ms. McFadden reported that she very much enjoys working in the Probation Department and has good relationships with her co-workers and colleagues in other departments. She said that she knows that the people she works with always have the child's best interests in mind. She also says they are effective despite the few resources they have to assist youth and families, as the recidivism rate for probationers is very low.

In terms of the primary issues that she sees for the youth she works with, Ms. McFadden said there were two that stand out more than others. The first is poor performance in school. While truancy and inappropriate behavior are problems for some of the youth on probation, the more prevalent issue is simply the lack of motivation in progressing through high school. The second most common issue for young people in her caseload is family dysfunction and conflict. She said that most of her more challenging cases have had a history with the child welfare system, and that their parents often lack basic parenting skills. Some of these situations reach the level of assault between child and parent.

Ms. McFadden reported that she has limited access to community-based services. They will utilize Behavioral Health when possible, and occasionally are able to refer families to

Plumas Rural Services (PRS) for counseling. Her Department utilizes actuarial risk assessments to assist in decision making around supervision levels and detention, and to develop case plans for addressing criminogenic needs. They use journaling, which is an evidence-based practice to assist youth in addressing their delinquent behavior. It has been a challenge for the Probation Department to implement other cognitive-behavioral interventions such as Aggression Replacement Training (ART) because these are group-based programs. Convening groups is a challenge due to the low number of probation youth and minimal access to transportation for most families. As a result, Ms. McFadden reported, she realizes she is often “the intervention” for most of the youth she supervises.

When asked what she thinks would most benefit the youth and families she serves, she would like to have access to more services for parents. The County offers parenting classes, but it is often difficult to get the parents who most need the class to attend. She also suggests developing more access to community-based services; it is unfortunate that it becomes necessary to have a child enter foster care in order to access the level of treatment they need (usually in a short-term residential therapeutic program, or STRTP). Having a counseling and/or treatment program based in Plumas might help to avoid the need for an order from the Court for a child to enter foster care and instances of detention in juvenile hall. Finally, Ms. McFadden suggested

developing more local foster home options, particularly for those youth identified as in need of “intensive support services.”

*Sharon Sousa
Interim Director, Plumas County Behavioral Health*

Ms. Sousa has worked for Plumas County Behavioral Health for 18 years. She began her career as a clinician, then was a unit supervisor, and has served as the Interim Director since May of 2022. When asked to reflect on her experience with the juvenile justice system, she reported that she enjoys working with staff from the Plumas County Probation Department, as they are very caring about the youth they serve.

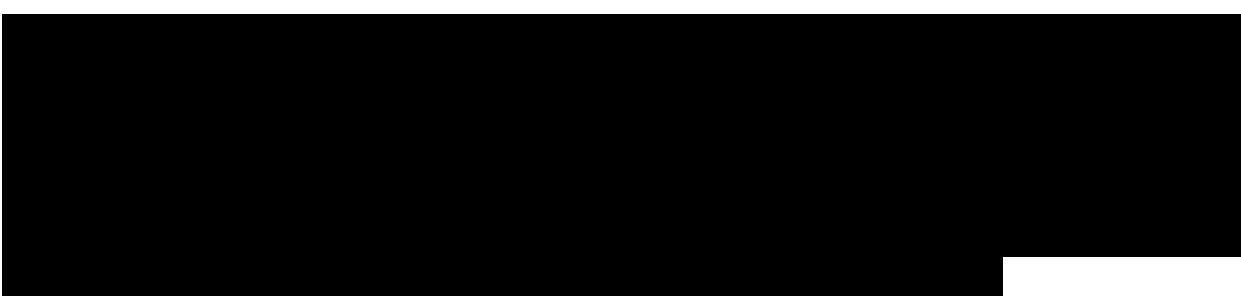
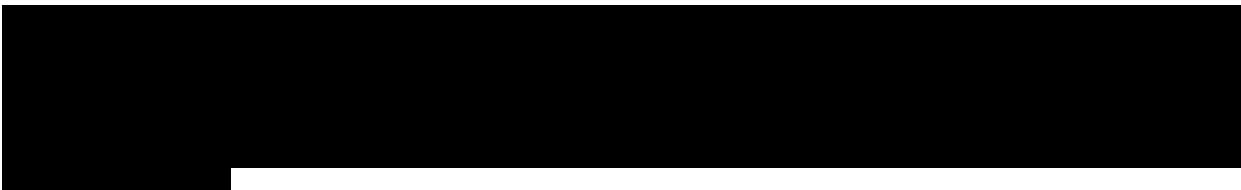
Ms. Sousa said that there have been some very difficult cases with youth experiencing co-occurring mental health and substance abuse issues. She said that some of these youth come from chaotic homes, which creates challenges for assisting them. The structural issues for Plumas County to even offer therapeutic services to youth and families compound this problem. The Behavioral Health Department has been unable to hire and maintain clinician staff due to the low wages offered through the County, and the lack of affordable housing makes the area difficult for people with the necessary qualifications for this position to decide to live there. Her Department has had open positions for 12 months and has not been able to even interview interested candidates, much less hire them. As a result of low staffing levels, Ms. Sousa’s agency can only offer services to families that are Medi-Cal eligible. The increasing mandates from the State have added administrative burdens that interfere with the capacity to offer direct, clinical

services also. Behavioral Health has lost therapists to other agencies offering better pay, benefits, and conditions. The private sector therapists are so full at this time that they cannot contract with them for services.

Up until 2021, Plumas had a transitional-aged youth (TAY) program that was very successful. It offered both clinical services and an opportunity for youth to experience their environment, as it had an outdoor component that engaged its participants. This program ended after the person who operated it had to leave the area due to the 2021 Dixie Fire which destroyed her home. Ms. Sousa said that her agency also used to contract with four therapists from Plumas Rural Services for counseling, but over time they lost staff as well and this contract was ended when the last therapist moved out of the county. She said that the school has a contract with Tiny Eye for tele-therapy services. Ms. Sousa said she hopes one day to be able to offer Behavioral Health services to youth and families beyond those who are Medi-Cal eligible, but she is not sure how or when that would happen.

When asked what she would like to see the Plumas County juvenile justice system offer, she remarked that prevention services that connect with youth before they have contact with law enforcement would be beneficial.

Former Probationer





*Judge Douglas Prouty
Superior Court, Plumas County*

Judge Prouty was appointed to the Plumas County Superior Court in 2018. Prior to that, he had worked as an attorney in the area since 2000. That work included being a member of the group of attorneys that were assigned to represent youth appearing in Juvenile Court for delinquency matters.

Judge Prouty said that the delinquency court in Plumas County works well, and that issues are handled always with the best interests of the juvenile in mind. He also stated that in the 20 years that he has been connected to the system, there has not been a single instance of a youth committing an offense so serious that they were considered for a trial in the adult system. Judge Prouty also specifically cited Deputy Probation Officer Sarah McFadden as being one of the strengths of the system. He described her as being an exceptional probation officer, and that she was very caring and willing to go the extra mile to support youth. Judge Prouty said he was sorry to hear that Sarah McFadden has recently announced she will be leaving her position and that her departure will be a loss for the Probation Department.

In terms of the challenges the local system faces, Judge Prouty discussed the issues that arise when a child has to be detained. Plumas County has never had a juvenile hall facility. Over the years, they have used facilities in Lassen and Nevada Counties. Up until

a few years ago, Plumas County utilized the juvenile hall facility in Butte County, which was closer to Plumas County, and which had excellent programming available for youth placed there. That arrangement has ended, and now youth who are detained are placed in Tehama County Juvenile Hall, which is a 2 or 3-hour trip away. This has caused a burden for families seeking to visit their children, attorneys wanting to meet with their clients, and the Court in scheduling appearances for juveniles appearing before it. While technology has been adopted to allow for remote appearances and meetings, the Court wants to provide youth with the opportunities for in-person appearances as much as possible. He also described how important services, such as interviews for psycho-social reports, have to be done remotely rather than in person. Judge Prouty described this as the reality of being in a small, rural county with limited resources.

*Neal Caiazzo
Director, Plumas County Dept. of Social Services*

Mr. Caiazzo has been with the Plumas County Department of Social Services for the past 20 years and he has served as the agency director since 2018. He described one of the strengths of the community's juvenile justice system as being the Probation Department's compassionate staff. He has known the Chief Keevin Allred since they were both line staff, and Mr. Caiazzo described Chief Allred as having a passion for the work with youth. Mr. Caiazzo also said that the Probation Department maintains good working relationships with staff from other agencies, including his own.

In terms of challenges, Mr. Caiazzo cited the lack of services available for youth in the area. Many agencies in the County are short-staffed due to the challenges in hiring, making it difficult to create programs to support young people. He said that Plumas County has very few organized, pro-social activities or programs for young people to participate in. Ideally, Mr. Caiazzo would like the county to offer some sort of wrap-around programming which could divert youth from the juvenile justice system. Programs that could offer counseling, recreational activities, and tutoring or general support around schooling, would be of benefit to Plumas County youth.

When discussing the difficulties in hiring, Mr. Caiazzo suggested considering partnering with area nonprofit agencies to develop programs. He said that often their minimum qualifications are not as rigorous as those of State and County agencies, meaning they would have a larger pool of candidates to select from for positions.

*William Roderick
Superintendent, Plumas Unified School District and County Office of Education*

William Roderick is the Superintendent of the Plumas Unified School District and County Office of Education. He has been in this position for seven months and moved to Plumas for this job from Lake County. Mr. Roderick said that he has seen that the Plumas County

Probation Department staff have good working relationships with other agencies; they relate well with school staff, students, and families. He also described the probation officers as being very open-minded.

When asked what he would like to see changed or improved with Plumas' juvenile justice system, Mr. Roderick said he would like Probation Department staff to be available as a regular presence on school campuses. At present, deputy probation officers come to the schools to meet with youth on probation, but Mr. Roderick believes they could fill a greater role. The Sheriff's Department staffing is so low that their deputies are not able to be on campus regularly, so the schools lack routine interaction with law enforcement. Mr. Roderick would like to have Probation Department staff available to engage with the general population of the schools, not just those on probation, to help support students to be successful, and to act as a preventative deterrent to make sure they do not get into the formal juvenile justice system. Mr. Roderick said that this was the agreement in Lake County, and that Probation Department staff were on campuses regularly, checking in with staff and students. This arrangement helped to create both a presence on campus that ensures safety and an opportunity to develop positive relationships.

*Carson Wingfield
Patrol Commander, Plumas County Sheriff's Department*

Commander Wingfield has worked for the Plumas County Sheriff's Department for 28 years. He is a graduate of Quincy High School and is raising his children in this community. Over the course of his career, he has watched as his Department's emphasis on juvenile delinquency has waned since early on in his career. At that time, deputies were encouraged to respond to incidents such as youth who were drinking, using drugs and getting into fights. That is no longer the case, as difficulty in hiring has forced the Department to prioritize how they assign their deputies, and there are more important issues than juvenile delinquency today. Responding to drug related crime, including heroin, fentanyl and methamphetamine, takes up most of the Department's manpower.

Commander Wingfield stated that Plumas County's juvenile justice system has the benefit of good working relationships among staff at the different agencies. The challenges for the system are significant, however, as the community is in a difficult situation. Over the course of his time in the area, he has watched as lifestyles in Plumas have been degraded; small businesses are struggling, and some people are not faring well as a result. The combination of lack of affordable housing, low paying jobs and devastating fires has taken a toll on Plumas County. His Department had been in discussion on returning to having school resource officers in the schools, however their hiring challenges are so great now they cannot consider that idea any longer.

In terms of what he would like to see in Plumas County for youth, Commander Wingfield said that he believes more resources should be made available to youth. He suggested the development of some sort of resource center for young people that could offer them

opportunities for both counseling and other social services, but also recreation. It needs to be a place where youth want to go, and it should provide consistent support to young people over time.

II. Strategies

As a result of the efforts of the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council to assess Plumas County's juvenile justice system, three strategies have been developed to guide programming for future services:

- I. *Invest in prevention, intervention and aftercare services when resources make that possible*
- II. *Empower and support parents*
- III. *Utilize evidence-based practices whenever feasible*

Invest in prevention, intervention and aftercare services

In an ideal world, communities would be able to provide services to youth and their families at a range of points along the juvenile justice continuum. Prevention services would be offered to youth before they make contact with law enforcement or school disciplinary staff, intervention services to those who are referred to Juvenile Probation, and aftercare to those who are aging out of the juvenile system. Most communities are not able to afford such a system and reserve their funding only for those children at the intervention point in the continuum, or while they are on probation.

As indicated in the Juvenile Justice Trends section of this report, the number of youths being referred to the Juvenile Division of the Plumas County Probation Department has declined significantly over the past ten years; however, referrals have increased considerably since 2021.. While this is an achievement well worth celebrating, it does not mean there is not more work to be done. Just because a child avoids being arrested is no guarantee that there are not unmet needs, or that this child is not at risk for engaging in delinquent behaviors. Plumas County Probation Department will seek to invest in prevention services whenever there are sufficient resources available to cover core services for youth on probation. This will help to ensure that the number of youths being referred to the Department remains manageable, and in the long term should seek to both improve general outcomes for youth and reduce the numbers of victims of delinquency in the community.

In addition, young people who are approaching or turning 18 years old are often seeing the end of services being made available to them. This is unfortunate, as this is often the period of time when a person is entering the height of their criminal activity, and a lapse of services may increase their propensity to move quickly from the juvenile justice system

to the adult one. As stated above, when resources allow for it, Plumas County will seek to support young people aging out of the probation system by providing referrals to appropriate agencies and programs that offer support to the transition-aged youth population.

Empower and Support Parents

At times, service systems can become overly consumed with programs they offer and lose sight of the most vital resource available to a child. As important as probation officers, teachers, and treatment staff are in the lives of youth, they all pale in terms of importance when compared to the impact of parents. Plumas County has adopted a strategy of ensuring that parents are provided with as many, and the best, resources and tools as possible to address the needs of their children. Empowered parents are the first line of defense in keeping young people from entering the juvenile justice system.

Utilize evidence-based practices

Community corrections professionals are aware of the critical importance of adopting evidence-based practices and maintaining fidelity to them. It is incumbent to ensure that programs and interventions developed to support youth and families have some evidence to indicate their effectiveness. In addition, core best practices in probation such as the use of criminogenic risk assessments and application of the “risk principle” (in which youth who represent the most likelihood to recidivate receive the most intensive services) will be employed at all times.

III. Resources

Plumas County does possess several resources that will help to address many of the issues raised in this report. One of the most important resources will be the regular convening of Plumas County’s Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC). The existing members of this Council are committed, engaged and excited about the potential for improving services for youth and families in Plumas County. It is not only the collaboration and coordination that will result from these meetings that will assist in improving outcomes. It is expected that this group will be able to provide additional insight, experience and input that will undoubtedly improve the effectiveness of programming.

Another asset that will assist is the Plumas County Probation Department’s agreement for detention services with Tehama, Butte, Shasta, and recently added, Placer Counties. While detention is not an intervention that is often required in Plumas County, it is important to be able to access it when necessary. This is particularly critical with the introduction of SB 823 and the need to have access to “secure track” detention facilities (Tehama County would provide this service were it necessary). These are the only regional agreements that Plumas County has in effect.

The Plumas County Probation Department has another resource which is its data information system. They have contracted two different vendors to provide this vital service. “Enterprise Case Management” is responsible for tracking referrals, assignments, activities, programming, and progress through the court system. Noble Software, which includes the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT), is utilized to manage criminogenic risk and needs assessments and to develop case plans.

Another asset that will assist in this effort is the community of agencies that already exist and provide services to youth and families in Plumas County. Attachment C at the end of this report is a list of the agencies that will likely be engaged to some degree or another in this effort and it provides a brief description of the types of programs they offer. This does not represent a complete list of all the programs and services available in Plumas County but rather only those that are utilized by most of the youth and families who are either involved, or at risk of involvement, with the juvenile justice system.

A final set of resources that will play a role in this plan are the programs planned under additional funding opportunities from the State of California. SB 823, also known as the Division of Juvenile Justice Realignment, provides California counties with ongoing funding to develop programming to meet the needs of youth either in need of or at risk of entering what is called a “secure youth treatment facility.” Welfare and Institutions Code Sections 18220-18221 explain the Juvenile Probation Activities funding opportunity.²⁴ Both of these grants will be deployed in Plumas County to assist in the development of this plan. Attachments A and B to this report provide greater details of these program proposals.

²⁴[Chapter 3.2. Juvenile Probation Funding :: Welfare and Institutions Code :: 2010 California Code :: California Code :: US Codes and Statutes :: US Law :: Justia](#)

Future Challenges and Opportunities

Juvenile justice in California has undergone an unprecedented amount of change in the past ten years. SB 823, the realignment of state and county responsibilities regarding youth charged with the most serious offenses, is a significant and recent reflection of those changes. However, there is a myriad of other reforms to laws and practices that make this an almost unrecognizable system to juvenile justice practitioners of earlier eras. These dramatic changes will bring challenges, but also opportunities, for Plumas County's juvenile justice system.

The new law dictating how youth who commit the most serious offenses will be managed is one of the most daunting challenges to face Plumas, and all of the counties in California. While Plumas has not had any youth who required the services of intervention from the now defunct Division of Juvenile Justice, it would be imprudent to assume that will always be the case. Finding the balance between maintaining a sufficient reserve of funding to deal with the costs associated with a youth placed in secure track detention and investing those funds in effective programming will be critical to the success of this plan.

A second important challenge facing Plumas County is that of hiring and retaining quality staff. As expressed multiple times in the interviews with stakeholders in this report, finding and keeping staff is difficult, due to a variety of factors, including lack of adequate housing and benefits to attract candidates.

The third and final challenge is the host of complex social issues that were illustrated in the demographics portion of this report. Domestic violence, lack of housing, opiate addiction and economic vulnerability such as un- and under-employment are all major factors that impact a community and remain beyond the scope of a juvenile justice plan such as this one. Should any of those, or some other social issue, become or remain problematic, it will imperil the efforts of the programs envisioned in the report.

Along with the challenges that the new era of juvenile justice brings, there will be opportunities as well. For Plumas County, the most obvious opportunity is access to additional funding to provide services for youth and families. While a significant portion of the SB 823 grant funding will be held in reserve to meet the needs of any future youth requiring secure track detention, Plumas County will access a portion of the funds to implement new programming (described in Attachment A) to support the goal of this juvenile justice plan to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes of youth who enter the system.

Recommended Programs (YOBG)

PROGRAM
Evidence-Based Probation Services
DESCRIPTION
<p>The use of evidence-based probation services is critical to maintain positive outcomes for youth and families and to ensure community safety. YOBG funds will be applied to core Probation Department services such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic monitoring and Soberlink Alcohol Detection programs• Juvenile Division staffing• Contract for access to juvenile detention• Licensing fee for Noble automated criminogenic risk assessment instrument

Recommended Programs (JJCPA)

PROGRAM
Parent Education and Support Groups
DESCRIPTION
<p>Providing parents with the skills, tools and opportunities to experience success with adolescent children is an important component of maintaining an effective juvenile justice system. JJCPA funds will be applied in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of The Parent Project (Juvenile Courts and Probation – Parent Project provides sources indicating its effectiveness) • Providing participating parents with incentives such as gas cards and gift cards that promote healthy family activities • Providing parents who successfully complete the program with stipends to increase both participation and rates of completion • Travel costs of Parent Project facilitators • Family support, education, and engagement • Multiagency Truancy Prevention efforts <p>Access to this program would be extended to partner agencies, including schools which could require completion of program for parents facing school interventions.</p>
PROGRAM
Various Probation Department staffing, services and supplies
DESCRIPTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation Department staff salaries • Truancy program incentives • Drug testing • Psych evals • Weekly journaling groups
UPDATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In February 2025, the second 12-week session of Parent Project - Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior, began. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A contract has been developed with a community-based organization, Plumas Rural Services, for the facilitation of the classes and support services. Probation staff will be assisting with the classes. ○ Participation has been low due to lack of referrals from outside agencies. • Parent Project-Preparing Our Kids for Success 2.5-hour truancy intervention parent classes remain available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An MOU with the Plumas County Library/Literacy Program has been created for facilitation of the monthly classes. • Protocol has been developed to collect data and track the outcomes of these programs. • Weekly journaling groups are conducted for youth at the probation office. Topics include, but are not limited to; anger management, responsible behavior, relationships, substance abuse, and family.

ATTACHMENT A

PROGRAM	FUNDING SOURCE
Plumas County Re-Entry Program	SB 823
DESCRIPTION	
<p>The Plumas County Probation Department recently received a grant in the amount of \$47,086 from the State's Youth Programs and Facilities Grant Program. The purpose of those funds is to renovate a space located at 461 Main Street in Quincy which will provide a location for a variety of services for justice-involved youth and their families through the Dragonfly Café Education & Training Center. In collaboration with a community-based organization to be determined through an RFP process, the Probation Department will seek to have the following re-entry services at this center:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education support through coordination with Literacy Program https://www.plumascounty.us/635/Literacy-Program• Employment development, e.g., soft skills training (e.g., Soft Skills Training Workin' It Out (workinitout.com))• Housing assistance/Less Restrictive Placement• Access to a Mental Health Practitioner (when approved by Probation Department staff)• Probation Supervision services including cognitive behavioral interventions such as journaling (Change Companies) and interventions to address criminogenic needs (BITS) <p>Services will also include supporting youth who are detained in secure facilities (either short term or through Secure Youth Track) by ensuring academic continuity, arranging for ongoing visits from family members, and developing post-detention plans for re-entry. Services through this program will be prioritized for those determined to be most at risk for recidivism, and/or engaged in behavior that indicates a potential for a need for detention in a Secure Youth Treatment facility.</p>	

ATTACHMENT B

PROGRAM	FUNDING SOURCE
Quincy High School	Juvenile Probation Activities
DESCRIPTION	
<p>In collaboration with Plumas Unified School District staff and a community-based organization to be determined through an RFP process, the Probation Department staff will develop a pilot project to support students at Quincy High School who are experiencing difficulties at school, due to documented incidents of inappropriate behavior and/or truancy. This program would act as an alternative to suspension and/or referral to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB). Services to be made available through this program could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• one day per week when Probation Department staff and contractors are present on campus (assuming adequate space is provided to deliver proposed services)• Girls' Circle curriculum• Access to a Mental Health Practitioner (when approved by Probation Department staff)• Participation in evidence-based intervention programs such as cognitive journaling, brief intervention tools (BITS) to address delinquent behaviors• Recreational activities• Incentives to encourage participation• Employment development (e.g., https://www.workinitout.com/3-at-risk-youth)• Coordination with Literacy Program for tutoring <p>This program may be dependent on hiring additional positions and/or possible collaboration with a CBO to be determined through an RFP process. There will also be a maximum number of referrals of students allowed and preference will be given to students who have been referred to the Probation Department.</p>	

ATTACHMENT C (pg. 1)

AGENCY	YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Plumas County Literacy Program	A service offered through the County Library Department, the Literacy Program provides a wide range of programs including GED preparation, financial literacy, basic computer skills and assistance with academic topics such as grammar, reading comprehension and writing skills	Literacy Program Plumas County, CA - Official Website
Plumas County Probation Department Juvenile Division	The Juvenile Division of the Probation Department provides traditional community corrections services such as investigation of referrals and supervision of youth placed on probation. They use evidence-based practices such as criminogenic risk assessment instruments and engage youth using cognitive journaling offered through The Change Companies. The Probation Department has historically engaged with youth and families through efforts such as Girls Circle curriculum and offering movie nights in the community. Girls Circle was discontinued due to staffing issues and movie nights was not offered during the COVID pandemic, but the Department is considering resuming both of these services in the next fiscal year	Juvenile Division Plumas County, CA - Official Website Girls Circle / The Council Plumas County, CA - Official Website Family Outdoor Movie Night Plumas County, CA - Official Website
Plumas County District Attorney	The District Attorney's office operates a truancy program in collaboration with the local school district. Along with the Superior Court, they also administer the Community Justice Court program. Although this takes place in the adult court system, several of the participants are parents and their families include youth impacted by the juvenile justice and child welfare systems	Truancy Prevention Plumas County, CA - Official Website
Plumas County Behavioral Health	Behavioral Health offers a variety of mental health services, including assessment, diagnosis, and treatment to individuals both for mental health and substance abuse issues	Plumas County Behavioral Health Plumas County, CA - Official Website
Plumas County Children and Family Services	Plumas County CPS conducts its duty to protect a child's safety from neglect and abuse with an awareness of ensuring family preservation to the extent possible.	Children & Family Services Plumas County, CA - Official Website

ATTACHMENT C (pg. 2)

AGENCY	YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Plumas Crisis Intervention and Resource Center	PCIRC offers a wide variety of social services, including a 24/7 crisis support phone line, housing assistance, support for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, and grief recovery counseling	Plumas Crisis Intervention and Resource Center – When You Need A Hand Up, PCIRC Is Here For You
Alliance for Workforce Development	AFWD provides support to both employers and individuals looking for work. For job seekers, they offer resume writing workshops, support for youth looking to enter the workforce, and job training programs	Alliance for Workforce Development – Connecting Job Seekers and Employers (afwd.org)
Plumas Rural Services	PRS provides support services in a number of different areas. They offer counseling, anger management skill building, parent education classes, support for families and individuals living with any form of disability, and services related to trauma. PRS has compiled a comprehensive resource guide listing all services available in Plumas County https://plumasruralservices.org/files/galleries/PC_Resource_Guide.pdf	About Us (plumasruralservices.org)
Plumas County Unified School District	Oversees 12 schools in Plumas County, serving approximately 2,000 students across four communities.	About Our District and County - Miscellaneous - Plumas Unified School District (pcoe.k12.ca.us)
Rethink Industries	Provides substance abuse counseling and mental health treatment to families, adults and youth	Rethink Industries - Mental Health - Quincy, California

