

(2024-2025) Annual Plan

Date: 4/30/2024

County Name: Ventura

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Instructions:

Government Code Section 30061(b)(4) and Welfare & Institution Code Section 1961(b) call for consolidation of the annual plans required for JJCPA and YOBG.

Please submit your most up-to-date consolidated plan. The following is a standardized template for a consolidated county plan. If you find it helpful to use this template, please do so. Each field must be completed before submitting your plan to the BSCC. If you have nothing to report for a field, please indicate 'N/A'. At the end of the template please press the 'Submit' button to be recorded with the BSCC. Your work will be saved each time you log in, if you need to make any edits.

Your Submission will be posted, as submitted, to the BSCC website.chris.modica@ventura.org

If you have any questions on completing your annual plan, or wish to use your own plan, please email:

JJCPA-YOBG@bscc.ca.gov

Juvenile Justice Plan

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Part I. Service Needs, Priorities & Strategy (Government Code Section 30061(b)(4)(A))

A. Assessment of Existing Services

Include here 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.

The JJCC previously established a subcommittee, the JJCC Program Review and Development Committee. This committee is comprised of members from various county departments and community-based organizations. The JJCC previously approved a contract with Applied Survey Research to help with the development of the Juvenile Justice Master Plan (JJMP). The plan identified five priority areas in the county:

- 1) Emotional and Behavioral Wellbeing
- 2) Prevention and Early Intervention
- 3) Coordinated Systems Approach
- 4) Family Support
- 5) Prosocial and Skill Building Opportunities

Within each priority area are sub-priorities, each with specific methods for addressing the need and the likely outcomes if action is taken. The recommendations for services are evidence based and specifically target at-risk youth, youthful offenders and their families.

Additionally, there have always been strong collaborative relationships that exist among the Juvenile Delinquency Court and other county agencies, such as Children and Family Services, Public Health, and Behavioral Health. These collaboratives explore the implementation of effective intervention services for youth and families at risk of contact with the justice system or already involved. Probation also works with county and local law enforcement, including the District Attorney and Interface, to coordinate diversion efforts. With that said, efforts are underway to evaluate other diversion opportunities in the community, to expand on what is currently being offered. A Request for Information (RFI) was published and the submissions are being reviewed.

Furthermore, probation is investigating in-house therapeutic opportunities, to compliment the array of services afforded inside the juvenile probation offices. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was published in the hopes of bringing in a local provider or CBO who can provide therapeutic services to youth and their families. This has been an ongoing need for the youth population and one that has been very difficult to address due to a variety of factors.

Describe what approach will be used to facilitate collaboration among the organizations listed above and support the integration of services.

In Ventura County, the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) was developed to strengthen partnerships in the community and make recommendations for services to the Board of Supervisors, the juvenile court and other stakeholders. The collaboration amongst our stakeholders has always been strong and there is a serious commitment to provide services and support which will improve the outcomes and lives of the youth and their families. The JJCC uses the JJMP as a roadmap which helps guide programmatic changes and determine future funding for new programming and services.

Furthermore, Ventura County developed an Interagency Leadership Team (ILT), consisting of high functioning county leadership members. The purpose of the ILT is to align and integrate public systems and community providers for a Child and Family Wellness System. The work is partially guided by parent/resident voices and are reflected in a comprehensive continuum of prevention.

Ventura County utilizes the Interagency Case Management Council (ICMC) to address and determine a course of action and management for the most difficult cases. This interactive process brings all partners together to assure the youth and family are provided needed services and interventions. This assures all resources are explored and all efforts are made to address the youth at the earliest and lowest level possible.

The JJCC also approved funding to contract with a CBO, to evaluate all JJCPA funded programming (Quality Assurance), to capacity build, to conduct focus groups with justice involved youth and families, to identify further gaps in services and to make recommendations to the JJCC based on their findings. Among many things, this will ensure there are no duplication of services, that the needs of the community are being met and any programs/services promised are being provided with fidelity.

B. Identifying and Prioritizing Focus Areas

Identify and prioritize the neighborhoods, schools, and other areas of the county that face the most significant public safety risk from juvenile crime.

Ventura County invokes a countywide strategy to target high need populations and high-risk areas in the county. In addition, data related to the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiatives (JDAI) continues to assist in highlighting specific areas of the county, using zip codes, that have the highest rate of arrest and admissions to our juvenile facility. This information, in addition to the JJMP, has been used to identify gaps in services and resources needed. Male Latino youth are the highest represented population on probation and in custody at the juvenile facilities. Furthermore, a significant portion of the youth on probation reside in the Oxnard and Port Hueneme area (zip codes 93030, 93033 and 93036). This population and their communities face significant challenges and risk factors that may increase the likelihood to become justice involved. The JJMP highlights other indicators, such as economic and demographic, which offers continued guidance related to future infusion of programming and services.

As part of the Ventura County Comprehensive Prevention Plan, the ILT developed a plan to maximize prevention revenue including federal Block grant funds from Family First Prevention Services. A Guaranteed Income Pilot (GIP) targeting the most system involved youth is being created. GIP programs show that in addition to spending cash on food and home goods, parents who can spend more money on children's needs (including childcare) have reduced levels of stress.

The evidence gathered through pilots tells the story of those struggling to achieve economic security and helps inform guaranteed income policy, which if data informed, must be distributed from a trusted source and must be provided with no strings attached as to how the money may be spent. It is anticipated that unconditional cash will have a range of important benefits for participants in the Kamala/McKinna neighborhood, including improved health, income security and employment. And while the economic benefits are most obvious, positive impacts on well-being, belonging, and self-worth are also anticipated outcomes of the guaranteed income pilot. Specifics of the pilot, such as eligibility, number of families to be included, cash amount and duration are still being worked out. However, the zip codes mentioned above will be targeted for the GIP.

Although not necessarily a neighborhood or school, targeted interventions and programming will be provided to Transitional Aged Youth. These are youth on adult grants of supervision, under age 25, and supervised in the juvenile field division. These are the young adults, who due to an underdeveloped pre-frontal cortex, still behave and act like a teenager (poor decision making, poor impulse control, no real understanding of consequences). A contract is pending with the

Auditor/Controllers Office to collaborate with the Partnership for Safe Families and Communities, who operate and maintain a Navigation System, to better ensure the needs of the youth and their families are being met. This resource will also be afforded to juvenile grants of probation, who have a moderate to high risk to recidivate.

C. Juvenile Justice Action Strategy

Describe your county's juvenile justice action strategy. Include an explanation of your county's continuum of responses to juvenile crime and delinquency as well as a description of the approach used to ensure a collaborative and integrated approach for implementing a system of swift, certain, and graduated responses for at-risk youth and juvenile offenders.

The Juvenile Justice Master Plan serves as an action strategy for responding to juvenile crime and delinquency. It allows the JJCC to make informed decisions regarding use of resources and community need. Ventura County uses the following approach with at risk youth and youthful offenders.

Prevention: Contracting services to keep youth from entering the juvenile justice system; advocating for the most suitable intervention and service when youth step foot into our system; and utilizing a variety of diversion programs within the community to divert youth from further exposure in the justice system.

Intervention: Provide appropriate and necessary services to reduce recidivism for youth already in the system; Continuously evaluate existing services and make needed programmatic changes to improve delivery and outcomes; Develop new programs to address identified gaps within the continuum of services.

Supervision: Utilize a risk and needs assessment to determine the appropriate level of supervision and services; Create individualized case plans with the youth and family; Refer to evidence based programming to drive youth behavior change; Use a graduated response matrix to aid in determining the appropriate level of response to violations and use appropriate treatment referrals and resources.

Custody: Utilize a risk and needs assessment to develop individualized case plans with the youth and family; Utilize evidence-based programming in custody to drive youth behavior change; Monitor youth's progress throughout their commitment and develop release plans that include collaboration with the youth, parents/guardian, the supervising probation officer, treatment providers, public health, behavioral health, schools and other necessary stakeholders.

D.Comprehensive Plan RevisionsDescribe how your Plan has been updated for this year.

This year, efforts to overhaul some of the diversion and mental health options are a high priority. Funding has already been secured from the JJCC to address the latter, however, there are few, if any, interested and/or qualified candidates. Diversion and preventative efforts are a high priority too, as noted by the Guaranteed Income Pilot, Wellness System/Community Pathway and by the RFI published for diversion options. A 4th Evening Reporting Center was co-funded with JJCPA funds, in the western part of the county (Ventura). This shows an intentional effort to divert and prevent youth from coming into the system and a more holistic approach to prevention efforts.

Recognizing the science behind brain development, the Juvenile Field Division took on adult probation grants, specifically if the client was between the ages of 18-24. This brought three caseloads into the division, with access to many services afforded to those on a juvenile probation grant. More specifically, a collaboration was made through the Partnership for Safe Families and Communities, to bring their Care/Community Navigation Program into the Juvenile Field Division. Partial funding was obtained through the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) so that those on adult grants of supervision could be eligible to receive the service. This partnership will become more and more crucial as this Agency, and many across the state, deal with sworn vacancies that could affect the level of care and services to clients we serve.

If your Plan has not been updated this year, explain why no changes to your plan are necessary.

N/A

**Part II. Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA)
(Government Code Section 30061(b)(4))**

A. Information Sharing and Data Describe your information systems and their ability to facilitate the sharing of data across agencies within your county. Describe the data obtained through these systems and how those data are used to measure the success of juvenile justice programs and strategies.

Probation is part of the Ventura County Integrated Justice Information System (VCJIS). VCJIS is an electronic database that allows for limited sharing of case and court information among the Courts, Probation, District Attorney, Public Defender and the Sheriff's Department. In addition, Probation has an independent data system, Probation Records Information System Management (PRISM). This system allows Probation to utilize data to enhance caseload management and supervision of youth. This system contains demographic information, client assessments, case management information, client related documents and information related to our youth.

Notwithstanding the above integrated system, there is not established data sharing with other partner agencies. Data sharing is recognized as a key component for building a child and family wellbeing system. However, information from respective public entities is shared via the Essential for Childhood-Ventura County (E4C-VC) collaborative forum, now consolidated into the Wellness System Collaborative (WSC) and the Wellness System Planning Committee (WSPC). The forum was initially established to better understand and target common areas of needs and to work towards coordinating community interventions, and community pathways. The WSC and WSPC, using AB 2083 as the impetus for cross-system collaboration, is meeting regularly. In addition, a data workgroup was established to work exclusively on the barriers of cross-system data sharing, and provide solutions to the WSPC, who will make recommendations to the ILT.

Probation has integrated performance measures and associated data outcomes in service contracts with community-based organizations providing services to youth. This data is invaluable and guides the Agency in making informed decisions about programming and case management.

B. Juvenile Justice Coordinating Councils

Does your county have a fully constituted Juvenile Justice Council (JJCC) as prescribed by Welfare & Institutions Code 749.22?

yes

If no, please list the current vacancies that exist on your JJCC, when those vacancies occurred, and your plan for filling them.

N/A

C. Funded Programs, Strategies and/or System Enhancements

JJCPA Funded Program(s), Strategy and/or System Enhancement

Below are JJCPA funded programs reported by the county.

Program Name:

United Parents Educational Advocate

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

In 2022, over 30% of youth on probation supervision in Ventura County had a reported/documented learning disability or were on a current IEP. Many of those youth were being represented by probation officers during educational proceedings. It was learned there was only one educational advocate employed by United Parents to serve the entire County. Through JJCPA funding, a second advocate was hired, one of which works directly out of the juvenile field probation offices primarily focused on probation youth and families.

Description:

The educational advocates are individuals who have navigated Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and the school system. They will assist parents with children ages two through twenty-two obtain the resources their child needs by using a non-adversarial approach that enables parents to work more effectively with school personnel. The goal is to ensure that the youth and families benefit from the many supports and services available to their child and achieve a meaningful educational plan that is just right for addressing their child's disabilities.

Program Name:

Truancy Habits Reduced Increases Vital Education (THRIVE)

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

The California Attorney General's 4th annual report on California's Elementary School Truancy and Absenteeism Crisis was issued in 2016, setting forth the importance of eliminating school truancy and making it a top priority of the California Department of Justice to keep children in school and out of the criminal justice system. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, approximately 57% of violent crimes are committed by juveniles while they are truant. Studies conducted across the country have shown that excessive absenteeism in school increases the risk of falling behind academically, dropping out of school and becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

Description:

THRIVE is a collaborative effort between the Ventura County District Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Probation Agency, Public Health, and the School Attendance Review Boards (SARB). THRIVE provides truancy interventions for students from 12 Ventura County school districts which include over 20 individual school/district sites. THRIVE aims to help all children between the ages of 6 and 18 with chronic absenteeism, offering appropriate remedial and community referral services during SARB meetings, based on the youth's needs (i.e. homelessness, mental health, medical, transportation, etc). THRIVE utilizes the services of 4 Public Health Nurses which assist in determining whether there are medical reasons for the youth's truancy. The program also provides a Public Health Nurse to youth identified as high risk for commercial and sexual exploitation (CSEC). Nurses attend Child and Family Team Meetings for these cases, provide health information, and services to CSEC youth to prevent truancy and further involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Program Name:

Repeat Offender Prevention Program (ROPP)

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Based on the state of California ROPP Demonstration projects in California, probation targets youth who have risk factors associated with chronic recidivism. Youth are provided enhanced case management, received therapeutic services, are assigned and advocate and attend pro social events. These interventions have been demonstrated to be beneficial and impact the success of youth in the program.

Description:

ROPP is an intensive, comprehensive, multidisciplinary program that provides services to first time formal wards, informal probationers, and DEJ youth who are 16.5 or younger at the time they are placed on supervision, and who demonstrate at least 3 to 4 risk factors associated with chronic delinquency. The ROPP team is comprised of 3 deputy probation officers, 1 marriage and family therapist, and 3 youth advocates. The program is guided by the evidence-based practices and the ROPP team meets biweekly to discuss the cases. The primary objective of ROPP is to provide early identification and services to eligible youth. ROPPs broadly defined objectives include breaking the pattern of delinquency, antisocial behavior and domestic violence, by providing services before the youth become entrenched in the juvenile justice system. The target population is known as the "8%". These are youth who are identified as having specific characteristics which make them a high risk for reoffending. Many of the chronic recidivists are an 8% group with the following characteristics:

1. 16.5 years of age or younger at the time of their initial case disposition
2. Declared wards of the Court at their initial system referral
3. Found to have significantly more problems in 4 composite areas:
 - A. Significant family problems such as domestic violence, child abuse and family criminality
 - B. School attendance or performance problems
 - C. Drug and or alcohol use
 - D. Pre delinquent behaviors such as runaway, theft, and gang involvement

It was found that chronic juvenile offenders have a significantly higher rate of incarceration and recidivism. More than half of the families of high-risk youth have significant problems impeding their ability to provide adequate supervision, structure or support to their children. Youth are reviewed periodically throughout the time spent in the program. The length of the program is

open-ended and based on the stability of the family and the sufficiency to which the identified risk factors have been addressed.

Program Name:

Early Intervention and Prevention Services

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

This program combines prevention and intervention services through an evidence-based programs, practices and strategies for youth who are not currently wards of the court. The community-based organizations assess youth and families to determine services needed, provide case management and utilize cognitive behavioral interventions.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with Interface Children and Family Services for this program. This program provides specialized early intervention services to youth and their families. Their early intervention services are intended to divert youth from further juvenile justice involvement. Services are brief and focus on assessment, case management, family mediation, skill building, and counseling with a cognitive behavioral intervention framework. Services are provided to youth under the age of 18 who reside in Ventura County who are first and sometimes second time youthful offenders who commit 601 WIC offences, miscellaneous misdemeanors, and lower-level felony offenses. The provider will respond to all referrals within 24 hours, provide a referral disposition within 30 days, and conduct a service assessment with youth and family to determine the most appropriate intervention. Staff will provide interventions for up to 90 days, then if needed facilitate appropriate linkage to community partners as well as other counseling services. Modality of services will include weekly skill building group, conflict resolution, anger management, healthy relationship skills and other topics.

Program Name:

Commercially and Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Mentoring and Case Management

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Preventing the exploitation of children is achieved through multi-pronged efforts including safety awareness, awareness training, and addressing demand. Case management and mentoring are the key components of the program. Mentoring research supports that these relationships 1) increase the social emotional development of children and adolescents and challenge the negative views youth hold onto themselves; 2) improve cognitive developmental and thinking skills; and 3) facilitate identity development. Mentoring and training are trauma informed.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with Forever Found to work with this identified population. This program builds supportive relationships with high-risk youth, current victims, and recovering survivors ages 12 to 21. It aims to provide support and a mentor team to vulnerable youth who have a history of abusive and dysfunctional relationships. Mentors provide social and emotional support and focus on modeling wholesome relationships, encouraging a positive self-identity, teaching life skills, and introducing healthy choices. Each youth is assigned a case manager and may participate in both individual and group sessions.

Program Name:

Juvenile Justice Treatment for Sexually Abusive Youth

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Services are based on the California Coalition on Sexual Offending's guidelines for the assessment and treatment of sexually abusive youth and the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers Adolescent Practice Guidelines 2017. The program is a cognitive behavioral multimodal program drawing on several disciplines to inform best practices and evidence-based interventions.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with Anew Therapeutic (Anew) to provide treatment to those youth who have been court ordered into treatment for sexually abusive behavior. Anew integrates treatment of the youth's trauma symptoms and response as well as their characterological strengths and deficits. Anew focuses on a risk, needs, and responsivity approach to identifying risks. Anew offers individual, group, and family therapy that complies with the California Coalition on Sexual Offending's guidelines for the assessment and treatment of sexually abusive youth.

Program Name:

Youth Advisory Council (YAC)

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Youth Advisory Councils are a youth engagement strategy used by programs and organizations to positively incorporate youth voices and help build the capacity of youth participants.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with One step A La Vez to coordinate and oversee the YAC. YAC facilitates regular meetings and members are eligible to come from the 4 ERCs to assure representation from multiple areas of the county. Participants are provided leadership, leadership training and mentorship with the goal that those formerly involved in the justice system should advise and make recommendations for services to youth who are currently or at risk for becoming involved with the justice system. One Step A La Vez received technical assistance and coaching from the Burns Institute in prior years to assure they are meeting the goals of the program and that the YAC is positively impacting the work being completed with at risk or justice involved youth. One Step A La Vez also collaborates with the DEI Youth Equity team, to help strengthen youth voices and leadership in the County.

Program Name:

Program Development, Service Coordination, and Quality Assurance (JJQA)

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

With nearly 20 JJCPA funded contracts in the juvenile field division, assuring service levels and programming promised was difficult to monitor. Furthermore, aggressively addressing or identifying gaps in services, either through the JJMP or other means, required a dedicated resource. JJCC approved the JJQA position to address those concerns and to ensure quality.

Description:

The JJQA will address and further identify gaps in programming and services for youth documented in the VCPA Juvenile Justice Plan 2022-2025 and the Evaluation of JJCPA Funded Programming and Services; Research and develop RFPs targeting gaps in treatment and services using an evidence-based approach and continuum of care model; Participate in RFP grading panels; Assist when needed, in the development of contracts or MOUs supporting programs and services targeting identified gaps; Facilitate focus groups with youth, parents, stakeholders, and persons with lived experience to further target gaps in program, services, and treatment; Conduct and evaluate pre/post surveys as needed; Report out to the JJCC executive committee and subcommittee as needed; Review, modify and update contracts and MOUs in conjunction with the Agency Contracts Manager and Probation supervisors; Participate in collaborate stakeholder meetings to include cross-system community wellness groups ; Provide support, feedback, capacity building and fidelity monitoring for juvenile services/programs ; Review program reports quarterly or as needed to evaluate effectiveness of juvenile justice programming and services; Engage the community and stakeholders with the promotion of juvenile justice programming and services, along with other community outreach efforts; and Coordinate efforts with community stakeholder and community-based organizations to ensure there is no duplication of services

Program Name:

Evening Reporting Centers

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Evening reporting centers (ERCs) were implemented throughout the County as an alternative to detention, to reduce the number of youth coming into the juvenile justice system, and to reduce racial and ethnic disparities for juvenile arrests and bookings. Referrals come from probation, community-based organizations, schools and law enforcement. ERCs provide programming grounded in evidence-based practices for positive youth development and empowerment. Each ERC is noted below:

The Boys and Girls Club (BGC) of America offers tested, proven and nationally recognized programs, such as Project Learn and Summer Advantage USA, that closely align with the development needs of all young people. The BGC prioritizes programming related to three focus areas; academic success, good character and citizenship and healthy lifestyles.

One Step a la Vez utilizes evidence-based programming to increase positive personal development and professional skills among participants. Some of the programs include, Moral Reconation Therapy, Way of Council and Restorative Justice.

Big Brothers Big Sisters offers one-on-one mentoring to youth and research supports that these relationships 1) increase the social-emotional development of children and adolescents and challenge the negative views youth hold on themselves; 2) Improve cognitive development and thinking skills; and 3) facilitate identity development.

Description:

The ERCs provide community-based alternatives to detention and assist in the reduction of youth of color admissions into the Juvenile Facilities. There are currently 4 ERCs in the County of Ventura: The Boys and Girls Club in Oxnard; One Step a La Vez in Fillmore; Big Brothers. Big Sisters in Ventura; and The Big Brothers Big Sisters in Simi Valley. The ERC serve youth ages 12 ½ to 18 who reside in the designated areas of the county. The ERCs utilize evidence-based programming for youth that strive to build positive personal, developmental and professional skills among participants (i.e., positive self-identity, hope about one 's future, reduce recidivism, educational, vocational, social, emotional, and community and civic involvement, etc.). The programmatic goals include reduced recidivism; promote and implement positive youth development; track youth who successfully complete the program and continue to attend the

ERCs; Enhance public safety; and promote an increase academic success, character, citizenship, and healthy lifestyles. The centers are socially and environmentally safe facilities for youth to attend. The programs are based upon physical, emotional, cultural, and social needs of youth and offered in a non-competitive environment that encourages skill development, self-esteem and acceptance. It also reinforces positive social values that benefit the community.

Program Name:

Restorative Justice Conferencing (RJC)

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Extensive research indicates that the use of restorative practices to deal with crime and wrongdoing are recognized as evidence-based practices. Literature states that grounding offenders in their communities and building social networks are critical to success and address this component of the risk and needs responsivity assessment.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with Interface Children and Family Services to provide RJC. RJC is a program that diverts youth away from the juvenile justice system by offering the opportunity to participate in a restorative justice conference and be connected to needed services. Restorative justice conferencing seeks justice by bringing together the youth and the victim to discuss the harm caused and, together, create a plan to move forward. In addition, RJC can be utilized as a graduated response for those on probation supervision and with youth in the Juvenile Facilities.

Program Name:

Care Navigation System

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Traditionally, care navigators are utilized in the medical fields, to help coordinate healthcare for the patient. The same concepts are being utilized in the juvenile justice arena, to ensure clients and families follow through and have access to consistent supports.

Description:

The Care Navigation Program is operated through the Partnership for Safe Families and Communities. This program accepts referrals from probation officers, social workers, educators, pediatricians, physicians, community members, and community agencies. The Care Navigation Program serves youth and families that need resources during a difficult time in their lives. Their objective is to link, lift, and leverage their community resources to help a youth and family in need. Once a referral is received, the Care Coordinator creates a team of Care Navigators to gather needed information and offer support in the form of knowledge from lived experience and concrete resources. Probation will work collaboratively with the Care Navigation Team for alternatives to incarceration, community-based connections, and tracking of supports and services through a structured and deliberately organized program. These supports and services will hold youth accountable, treat youth fairly, and prevent recidivism. Each officer will have access to a Community Navigator or a team of Community Navigators to identify needed services and supports and to track the outcomes of those services and supports

**Part III. Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG)
(Welfare & Institutions Code Section 1961(a))**

A. Strategy for Non-707(b) Offenders

Describe your county's overall strategy for dealing with non-707(b) youthful offenders who are not eligible for commitment to the Division of Juvenile Justice. Explain how this Plan relates to or supports that strategy.

Ventura County utilizes the juvenile justice strategy outlined in Part 1 Section C for all youth. Below is a more comprehensive outline of the programs and services provided to youth while they are in custody. YOBG supports some of these programs and services. Youth under our care are provided the following programs and services within the facility, during their re-entry into the community or while on supervision.

Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE):

- Providence Court school
- Individual academic counseling
- Reading and math assessments
- English learner support
- Special education
- High school equivalency test
- College and Career Readiness classes
- Providence Scholars' program
- College mentor program
- Automotive Care and Agriculture vocational training
- Transition back to home school of residence
- Educational Transition Specialist

Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH):

VCBH provides risk assessments, crisis intervention, treatment planning, psychiatry, medication support, and release planning with care coordination to youth at the facility. They also administer individual, group, and family therapy sessions.

- Moral Reconation Therapy
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
- Word on the Street
- Reins of H.O.P.E
- Substance Use Treatment Services
- Co-parenting
- Co-occurring substance abuse and mental health treatment
- Educationally related social emotional services

Human Services Agency (HSA):

- Specialized Training and Employment Program for Success – Youth

Community Based Organization Services:

- Alpha Leadership program
- ARISE Gang Intervention Program
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Sex Offender Treatment program
- Comprehensive California Healthy Youth Act compliant sex education
- Ventura County Arts Council
- Boys and Girls Club of Greater Oxnard and Port Hueneme
- Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) case management and mentoring
- Mentorship program using community members with lived experience
- Transitional Housing/Step Down for SYTF youth
- Facility Transformation to Campus Lifestyle
- Gender specific Re-Entry Services
- Dating Matters
- Youth Advocates
- Moral Reconation Therapy
- 2nd Chance Re-Entry Grant
- Girls Grant
- Restorative Justice Conferencing

Programming Facilitated by Institutional Staff members:

- Interactive Journaling packets
- Carey Guides
- New Beginnings
- Fitness Program
- JF Library Book Club program
- Music N' Society
- Futsal and basketball
- Screen printing
- Paxton-Patterson
- American Prison Data Systems (APDS) tablets

Volunteers in Probation:

- Religious services

Ventura County plans to leverage and enhance existing practices and programming and create new practices and policies that promote healthy adolescent development through a strength-based, culturally proficient, trauma informed, diversified, equitable and inclusive lens.

B. Regional Agreements

Describe any regional agreements or arrangements to be supported with YOBG funds.

N/A

YOBG Funded Program(s), Placement, Service, Strategy and/or System Enhancement

Below are YOBG funded programs reported by the county.

Program Name:

Educational Transition Specialist

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

The goal is to assist youth in their transition from a custodial setting back to the community and their home school. A smooth transition will reduce the risk of truancy, drop out and increase overall school success. School success is linked to reduced juvenile justice involvement.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with the Ventura County Office of Education to provide the above service. A Transition Specialist will obtain transcripts, manage the credit Accountability System, maintain the Accelerated Reader Program, issue school identification cards, coordinate high school equivalent testing, participate in release plan meetings and exit interviews, assist with graduations, and coordinate state testing.

Program Name:

Medical Care for Youth in Custody

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

A majority of youth in custody have unmet health needs. Over two-thirds of youth in one survey of juvenile justice residential facilities reported a health care need, including injury, problems with vision or hearing, or other illness. A number of national and regional surveys of youth in detention have consistently found high rates of traumatic injury, tuberculosis, dental problems, and sexually transmitted disease.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with the California Forensic Medical Group, ie. Wellpath. Wellpath provides comprehensive medical care to youth in custody 24/7, 365 days of the year. Services include the following:

EXAMINATIONS - Contractor shall give inmates physical examinations and any subsequent periodic examinations as may be required by County or applicable law.

SICK CALL - Provision of sick call five (5) days a week.

ASSESSMENTS & SCREENINGS - Provision of all health assessments and communicable disease screenings for all inmates.

EMERGENCY TREATMENT - Contractor shall render emergency treatment to the inmates when such services are required.

VISION - Evaluation and treatment of vision conditions which, based on the length of incarceration, are medically necessary.

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL SERVICES - Contractor shall perform or subcontract for any medical and surgical services that may be necessary to treat the inmates for injuries, diseases and illnesses.

DENTAL CARE-Contractor provides essential dental care.

TATTOO REMOVAL-Voluntary program

MAINTENANCE OF INDIVIDUAL, COMPLETE, DATED HEALTH RECORDS

Program Name:

Housing and Supervision

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

A safe and supportive custodial setting can have a positive impact on the emotional and psychological well-being of incarcerated youth. Research suggests that providing a nurturing and structured environment can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression among young people in custody. This, in turn, can contribute to improved behavior and mental health outcomes. The development of close relationships with parents and other role models who provide encouragement, healthy beliefs, and clear standards of behavior offer protection from negative environmental influences. In general, healthy youth have resources in their families and communities that help them control their behavior and provide them with the skills and opportunities to be successful, often referred to as protective factors.

Description:

To maintain the safety and security of youth housed in the Juvenile Facility, probation endeavors to hire only the most qualified and suitable officers as staff. These officers are responsible for direct supervision, crisis response, and programming for youth in their charge. Additionally, youth are provided with clothing, hygiene items, and incentives. To foster strong familial relationships, probation provides telephone access to all youth at no cost through Securas. Also, youth are able to earn video visits as a behavior incentive.

Program Name:

Tablet Program

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

In line with GC 30061, specifically in response to juvenile crime and delinquency, which includes prevention and intervention.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with American Prison Data Systems. Residents engage in educational and rehabilitative programs on secure tablets. Programs include: TOPUCU (evidence-based), The Master Plan, Work and Money Essentials, CBT worksheets (Carey Guides, evidence-based), and inspirational videos (TED Talks).

Program Name:

Specialized Training and Employment Program for Success-Youth (STEPS-Y)

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Youth transitioning from incarceration to the community need support in order to be successful and mitigate recidivism. Employment-centered programs that focus on the needs of the youth returning to the community and result in employment are a critical stabilizing factor, reduce recidivism and increase community safety.

Description:

The Agency has an MOU with our county Human Services Agency to provide this program. The goal of STEPS-Y is to assist youth between the ages of 16-21 with the following: comprehensive job search techniques, vocational assessment and training, career exploration, work readiness instruction, direct job placement, and follow up services for youth placed into subsidized jobs in order to help ensure job retention.

Program Name:

Reins of H.O.P.E.

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Equine Assisted Programs Develop and Reinforce: healthy coping skills, responsibility, problem-solving, relationship skills, boundaries, communication, assertiveness, confidence, trust and respect. All exercises are conducted on the ground and involve interacting with horses through a variety of activities. No horse experience is necessary. The horses' direct and non-judgmental feedback allows youth to identify unproductive patterns, connect with strengths, and create change in the moment. This experiential work is generally considered a short-term modality due to its intensity and effectiveness.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with Reins of H.O.P.E. to provide an evidence-based equine-assisted psychotherapy program that enhances Behavioral Health's therapeutic program and is an alternative therapeutic modality found to assist residents in ways unique and often superior to more passive counseling modalities. These individuals will have the support of our expert mental health professionals to find relief from psychological pain, healthy coping skills and movement toward restoring mental health.

Program Name:

Financial Literacy

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

While this program has not been studied, Financial Literacy is key to helping young people manage money effectively so that they can become financially stable, build assets, and achieve personal goals. The strategy is to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors in the lives of at-risk youth.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with Women of Substance & Men of Honor to deliver the above course. Residents will learn about personal banking basics, predatory lending, credit/debt management, budgeting and saving for the future, and better money habits.

Program Name:

Independent Living Skills

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

While this program has not been studied, many youth who leave custody are underprepared for the transition relative to basic life skills. This is exacerbated by the fact that many will be adults at the age of release. The goal of this program is to assist youth in becoming independent. The strategy is to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors in the lives of at-risk youth.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with Women of Substance & Men of Honor to deliver the above course. Residents will learn about housekeeping, meal preparation, laundry and dressing, hygiene and grooming, financial health, job preparation, time management, technology, transportation, and mental health.

Program Name:

Arts and Recreation

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Youth will learn to play music, perform, and/or create art while at the same time emphasizing important life skills such as tolerance, cooperation, cultural authenticity, self-esteem, self-expression, and mutual respect through disciplined activity. The instruction is formatted into different sized modules to permit students to earn graduation credit, whenever possible, while presenting projects that are of value and interest to the short-term student as well. The modules will be presented one on one or in small groups.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with the Ventura County Arts Council (VCAC) to provide the above program. Residents in custody receive instruction on poetry, drawing, painting, guided art projects and mural art.

Program Name:

Dating Matters

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

Dating Matters is an evidence-based teen dating violence prevention model that includes prevention strategies for individuals, peers, families, schools, and neighborhoods. Dating Matters includes seven primary components that work together to reinforce protective factors and reduce risk factors for teen dating violence across the social ecology, at the individual, relationship, and community levels. These components also focus on preventing dating violence and promoting healthy relationships across the lifespan.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with the Coalition for Family Harmony. Dating Matters provides youth with the knowledge and skills they need to have healthy, safe relationships before and after they start dating. Focuses on healthy relationships with friends, family, or in context of dating; teaches social and emotional skills, such as identifying emotions and coping with feelings; promotes and builds healthy relationship skills, such as communication and conflict resolution; discusses ways to help and support friends in unhealthy relationships; increases focus on dating relationships and sexual violence; and addresses social norms about substance use.

Program Name:

Healthy Lifestyles

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

While this program has not yet been studied, there is evidence which supports that positive youth skill building, through mentoring, conflict resolution, and community service, can work to prevent or reduce juvenile delinquency and serious juvenile violence, especially when coordinated with broader community wide efforts. The strategy is to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors in the lives of at-risk youth.

Description:

Ventura County contract with Women of Substance & Men of Honor to deliver the above course. Residents learn about lifestyle regulation, healthy boundaries, diversity and respect, friendships, and role models.

Program Name:

Alpha Leadership

Evidence Upon Which It is Based:

While this program has not yet been studied, there is evidence which supports that positive youth skill building, through mentoring, conflict resolution, and community service, can work to prevent or reduce juvenile delinquency and serious juvenile violence, especially when coordinated with broader communitywide efforts. The strategy is to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors in the lives of at-risk youth.

Description:

Ventura County contracts with Women of Substance & Men of Honor to deliver the above course. Residents learn about prioritizing their future as an adult while identifying goals, leadership skills, resume writing, job interview skills, how to find housing, employment, and education, and connecting with community supports.