

**Iowa Girls Justice Initiative
Meeting Summary
October 7, 2016
10:00am – 2:00 pm
Polk County River Place – Room 3A
2309 Euclid Ave.
Des Moines, IA**



Working Group Members

Ashley Artzer, *Juvenile Court Services*
Terri Bailey, *Achieving Maximum Potential*
Kristen Corey, *Iowa Department of Human Rights*
LaTasha DeLoach, *Johnson County Social Services*
Ruth Frush, *Juvenile Court Services*
Stephanie Hernandez, *Family Resources, Inc.*
Jeremy Kaiser, *Scott County Detention*
Nathan Kirstein, *Disability Rights Iowa*
Julie Martin, *Juvenile Court Services*
Steve Michael, *Iowa Department of Human Rights, Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning*
Kristie Oliver, *The Coalition for Family and Children Services in Iowa*
Lori Rinehart, *Juvenile Court Services*
Jennifer Tibbetts, *ITFYW Chair and Catherine McAuley Center*
Patti Wachtendorf, *Iowa Correctional Institution for Women*
Julie Walton, *Scott County Attorney's Office*

Guests

Jen Sievert

Staff

Gracie Brandsgard, *SPPG*
Arlinda McKeen, *SPPG*
Kathy Nesteby, *Iowa Department of Human Rights, Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning*

Opening Comments

Meeting began at 10:08 a.m. The day's agenda consists only of reviewing the draft agenda. McKeen provided context around the development of the first draft of the plan. Minimal and direct as possible while also including the critical information.

Preface

- Will there be noting that there was some dissent with parts of the plan? We'll describe the consensus process. We're not going to list dissenting opinions on every recommendation. There will be an explanation that some members dissented on some items.

- Add that we received multiple opinions and perspectives as we considered the report’s content. Diverse perspectives are important.
- There are inconsistencies in how members representing Juvenile Court Services are listed.
- The title – “deep end girls” – some of our readers won’t know what that term means. Even though it is defined later in the report, we may need to change the title so they understand what they are about to read
 - “Serious, violent, chronic girls” captures the progression of girls in the juvenile justice system; that we’re not talking about all girls in the juvenile justice system
 - What about changing the title to “Addressing the Crisis of Girls in Iowa”
 - Discussion of whether or not the title should be more descriptive and formal, or catchy.
 - “Addressing the Crisis for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Girls”
 - But the state training school eligibility requirement includes girls that are not defined as serious, violent, and chronic. A judge is only going to look at the criteria in the statute.
 - The report is not about the Code.
 - Discussion of the impact of the report’s recommendations without a change in the Iowa Code on state training school eligibility.
 - Other states have narrowed their Codes, so there are examples we could look at.
 - If, as a group, we feel like the Code is antiquated and needs to be looked at, then we have a responsibility to make those changes. We shouldn’t be passing it off to another study group.
 - The Code piece is beyond what our focus has been, and that’s beyond our scope of work.
- Though the report is focused on deep end girls, our system recommendations affect all girls in the juvenile justice system

Introduction

- In the gap analysis section, many of the first bullets list services as the “most difficult” is confusing – there should only be one “most”.
- Add narrative on rural vs. urban in the contextual piece.
 - Any service is difficult for these high-end girls to get, even in Des Moines. So urban vs. rural doesn’t matter as much.
 - There are more off-ramps available in urban areas.
- Can we add charts or other visual pieces to the gap analysis?
 - Could include the gap analysis as an attachment
- Shorten the list of bullets from the gap analysis survey to decrease length and add weight to our most significant findings.
 - Can we pull out comments about gaps that our report addresses? Here’s a reported gap and here’s our solution

The Iowa Context

- The cost avoidance is in a different system and in the future.
- Will readers be confused that we talk about cost savings, yet we’re asking for additional funding?
 - There is a need for investment now.
 - Money saved should be reinvested back into services for girls – this is budget neutral.

- Or do we leave off the cost avoidance piece? Or move it from the first part of the section?
 - The focus should be that investment in girls is important. And the equity piece.
 - The cost avoidance is a bonus, the cherry on top.
- Point out the equity issue – there are no dollars appropriated to girls right now.
- Cost of sending a girl out of state vs. creating a female-responsive placement in state.
 - Per diems may be the same, but time and travel makes it much more expensive.
- We shouldn't focus too much on funding because the cheapest thing would be to put the girls in jail, but that's not what's best for them.
- Don't like the term "placement of last resort."
 - I don't like it, but it's true. That's what it is.
 - Two main components: secure and employs a no eject, no reject policy.
 - Do we need to add a definition of "placement of last resort"
 - What about "most intensive placement"?
 - "We have exhausted all other options" – use this in a definition of "placement of last resort".
- Change "gender specific" to "female responsive".
 - Add "what once was referred to as gender specific is now female responsive" to give a nod to the historical context and progression of terminology.
- Add additional narrative to sentence "Without that specialized Iowa service available, girls are either sent out of the state or waived to adult court."
 - We should make it clear that this is happening now, this is the crisis we're trying to address.
- Iowa is very diligent about its oversight of its in-state placements, we do not have guarantees of oversight for out-of-state placements. Give the example of Wisconsin.
- Peer contagion and DMC for waivers to adult court.
 - We need additional context around DMC, perhaps its own paragraph.
- Is 12-15 beds too little or too much?
 - We did have more beds at the Iowa Juvenile Home (IJH) that we we're not billing.
 - 12-15 girls is probably pretty close.
 - How many girls, in the last five years, would fit our definition of deep end girls?
 - Should show the data if we're going to advocate for a smaller number of beds than IJH.
 - Nervous to look at the last five years because we off-ramped a lot of these girls inappropriately so we may not get a more accurate number.
 - Change the dates to when IJH was open.
 - If that data is going to be too time intensive, can we look at IJH usage?
 - Look at percentage of total adjudications, because JCS's adjudications are decreasing so likely going to see a decrease in total numbers, percentages would be a more accurate prediction of future demand.
 - Look at what parts of the state training school eligibility requirement.
- Eliminate the "if the excess beds are available, they are likely to be filled with girls who do not need the highest level of service". Juvenile Court Services tries very hard to prevent placement, so including that in the report is offensive.
- Single gender environment: eliminate "boys should be placed in this placement of last resort" because it's redundant. Add "which means there should be no other male residents on the same campus or building."

- Add language on having male staff?
- Add that to the recommendations regarding single gender environment and training.
- Change “high need girls” to “high risk, delinquent girls” or “high risk/need”. When I think of “high need” I think of CINA cases. Add the term “delinquent” to clarify that we are not talking about CINA cases.
 - Adding risk and need is more accurate of the girls we’re talking about. Risk gets at the public safety piece as well.
 - Additional clarifier that this placement is not meant for CINA cases, and is not meant to be a PMIC either.

Recommendations

Intro

- Add “target criminogenic risk factors”.
 - Criminogenic risk factors: identifying the actions that brought the kid to their current placement.
 - Julie Martin will provide a definition.
- Is switching between girl and young women okay?
 - Yes, readers may have a preference for one or another, so we should use both.
 - If we want to keep them out of the adult system, “girl” may be strategic.
 - What image do we want to create with the wording?
 - The nicer wording we use, the more positive image the reader will have about investing in girls.
 - What do our youth members prefer?
 - Define the age range of “girls”.
- Take out “minimal”.
 - Concern that legislators will settle on the minimum done and won’t make efforts to put innovative pieces to work.
 - Remove initiation and innovation labels from the bullet points.
- In statement on the residential setting could be in one location or in multiple locations. Make it clear that we cannot mix deep end girls with lower risk girls.
- Put the Girls Academy from Paula Schaefer’s presentation as a separate piece of the recommendations and call that the truly innovative piece.

Education

- Are assessments automatic when they come to a placement?
 - To assess educational abilities and school settings.
- Recommendation: set up trauma-informed schools. Is being designed in other states, could use those as models.
- Add that girls have access to public education or extra-curriculars, off campus to the local school district, as a part of their transition plan.
 - Boys have access to extra-curriculars.

Access and Eligibility

- To innovation piece, add, “To ensure that only girls who are serious public safety risk will be in the secure placement.”
 - Define that as serious, violent, and chronic.

- Change innovation to “convene a study group to draft language” so that we add the actual action item, and convey the urgency.
 - “create language to narrow the eligibility requirement.”
- In the rationale piece, note that practice has been using a more narrow eligibility than Code.

Mental Health

- List out the innovation items that get referenced in the initiation piece. Repeat the services again so it can stand alone.
- The innovative piece is not innovative. It’s already happening at the boy’s state training school.
- Innovative is a full-time psychiatrist. Or, all of the staff are licensed mental health professionals.
 - You can more easily recruit mental health professionals than a psychiatrist.
 - We don’t want this to become a PMIC.
- Add “24/7 access for crisis needs”.
- Do we want to add a description of what the stabilization unit should look like?
 - Do we want there to be an onsite acute mental health unit? That could cross the line to a PMIC?
 - Does that beg a need for a psychiatric unit in a hospital to cover staffing units and resource needs.
 - Can this placement be built near a stabilization unit at a hospital and have an agreement with that unit about guaranteed availability?
 - Change to access to emergency mental health crises.
 - Can we add “contract to hospital” in front of the stabilization unit.

Oversight and Security

- ACA accreditation is very lax.
- Will remove language on accreditation.
- If a placement has locking measures, those at the placement fall into the inmate category under Medicaid.
- DHS had oversight of the Iowa Juvenile Home, and the boy’s state training school has DHS oversight as well.
- Number of hours in education, number of treatment hours (individual and group), hours in isolation or seclusion, should also be included in oversight report.

Family Engagement

- Include other supports in addition to “families”. We should not be defining family so narrowly.
 - Include whoever is established in the treatment plan.
- Add stronger language that youth will be more involved in their treatment and transition plans.
- In the rationale we’re missing the larger part that females are relational and those supports are necessary for them to succeed through their challenges; that’s why we want family engagement. If females don’t have positive support systems, they’re less likely to succeed.

Funding

- Discussion of equality versus equity.
 - This is addressed in the rationale.
- Move the funding structure away from a per diem to an annual set budget to allow for funding stability.
- Include language about equity in programming and extra opportunities (vocational programs).

Assessment

- Change “give preference to” to “Utilize tools that are”.
 - Most assessment tools do not meet all four requirements, so an assessment tool like that does not exist.
 - If we need to use multiple tools in order to hit all of those requirements, than that’s necessary.

Treatment Environment

- How much do we want to dictate about what treatment should go on in the placement?
- The treatment should be individualized.
- Should there be a separation between the treatment programming and the treatment environment?
 - Change title to “Treatment and Therapeutic Environment”.
- SPEG – way of quantifying program success.

Professional Training

- Include education requirements for staff in this section as well.
 - We are assuming all of the staff are state employees.

Family Foster Care

- Foster homes should be located near placement to be used as visitation homes for families visiting.
- Adult foster parents should have no children of their own in the home.
- Trained respite providers should be trained for that position.
- Should we not put too many restrictions on the foster homes because they are so hard to find already.

Closing Comments

SPPG will host a conference call very soon to review the System Recommendations. McKeen will send out options for times and dates. Comments back on the system recommendations should be turned into Arlinda by end of the day Wednesday prior to the call. The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.