

# Juvenile Justice Basic Advocacy Training

Dependent/  
Dependency

Juvenile  
Justice (JJ)

602/  
Delinquency

Dual Status

Key Terms

Custody  
Days

Petition

In Custody/  
Out of  
Custody

# Trauma and Juvenile Justice Involvement

- Justice-involved youth have experienced trauma and victimization at a significantly higher rate than their peers
  - 70-90% have experienced at least one trauma, with many experiencing polyvictimization
  - 99% of all justice-involved youth served by VFC have a history of prior CPS referrals
  - High rates of PTSD
- Complex trauma manifests in:
  - Difficulty regulating emotions and impulses
  - Engaging in risky behavior as an escape or to cope
  - Feelings of hopelessness and low self-worth
  - Tendency to distance themselves from others and dismiss pro-social values
- Studies have shown a strong relationship between complex trauma, justice-involvement, and recidivism

## Dependency

- Social Worker
- Children's Legal Services (CLS) Attorney
  - Guardian ad litem
- Parents are parties to the case and are assigned an attorney
- Detained at Polinsky Children's Center (PCC)
- Parent(s) are responsible for completing their case plan

## Probation

- Probation Officer
- Public Defender
- Parents are not assigned an attorney
- Detained at Juvenile Hall
- Youth responsible for completing their case plan
- More frequent hearings

# History

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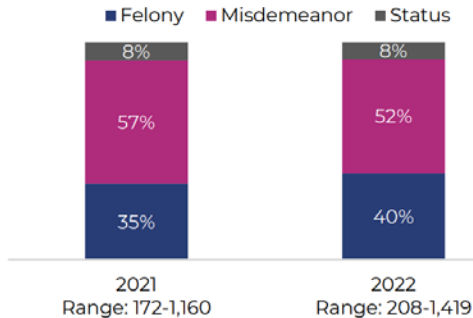
- Juvenile Court Act (1899)
  - Established first Juvenile Court in Cook County, Illinois
  - Early focus on rehabilitation and treatment
- Since then, the Juvenile Justice system has fluctuated between being punitive and being rehabilitative, based on crime in the community:
  - Dependent on public perception
  - Ex. 1980s gang violence, drug wars
  - Current system is more rehabilitative
- Juvenile Justice Youth Rights
  - Age-appropriate extracurricular enrichment and social activities
  - Family Visits

# 2022 San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) CJ Bulletin

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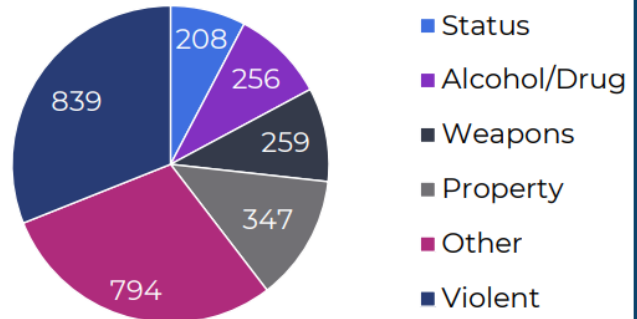
- “Other” = theft-related offenses, vandalism some traffic offenses, failure to appear in court, and other low-level offenses
- A **status offense** is one in which only a juvenile can be arrested for. Status offenses include truancy, running away from a court-ordered placement, and curfew violations.

Figure 2: Proportion of total arrests by charge level (2021-22)



Sources: SANDAG; ARJIS

Figure 4: Total arrests by offense category (2022)



Probation  
Officer  
(PO)

Public  
Defender  
(PD)

District  
Attorney  
(DA)

## Probation Officer (PO)

- Responsible for the care, custody and control of youth
- Recommendations & referrals for services
- Supervise youth compliance with probation conditions
- CASAs may work with different kinds of POs
  - Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) = case and field work assignments
  - Correctional Deputy Probation Officer (CDPO) = Institutions
  - Supervising Probation Officer (SPO)

CASAs are not there to inform POs of every instance of probation incompliance. Be discerning of the information you share with the PO, consider how it may be used and how it may impact the youth. Always consult with your supervisor and the Public Defender before disclosing information to the PO.



## Public Defender (PD)

- Will advocate for youth's wishes, regardless of youth's best interest.
  - Different than CLS attorney who is their *guardian ad litem*
  - Contact with youth will vary, may only speak right before hearings
  - Go-to contact for concerns about youth
- Usually assigned through SD County Public Defender's Office, unless that office has a conflict

CASAs should still discuss any concerns about the youth, including probation violations with the Public Defender and your supervisor prior to disclosing any concerning information the PO.

## District Attorney (DA)

- Also known as the “prosecutor”
- Represents “the people” as well as the victim
  - Mission is to protect public safety
  - Up to disposition (sentencing), victim has the right to speak at hearings and address the Court
- Decides whether to bring forth petition
- Once youth is adjudicated, can make recommendations as to whether to keep youth on probation or terminate

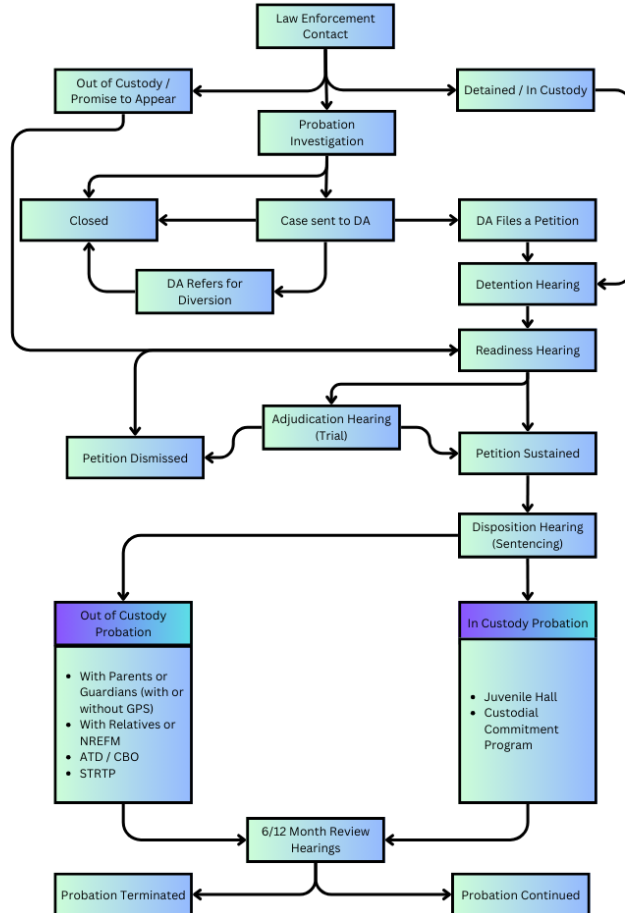
CASA's should not be talking with the DA. The Public Defender will communicate with the DA as needed as it relates to their client and the case.

## Your Youth!

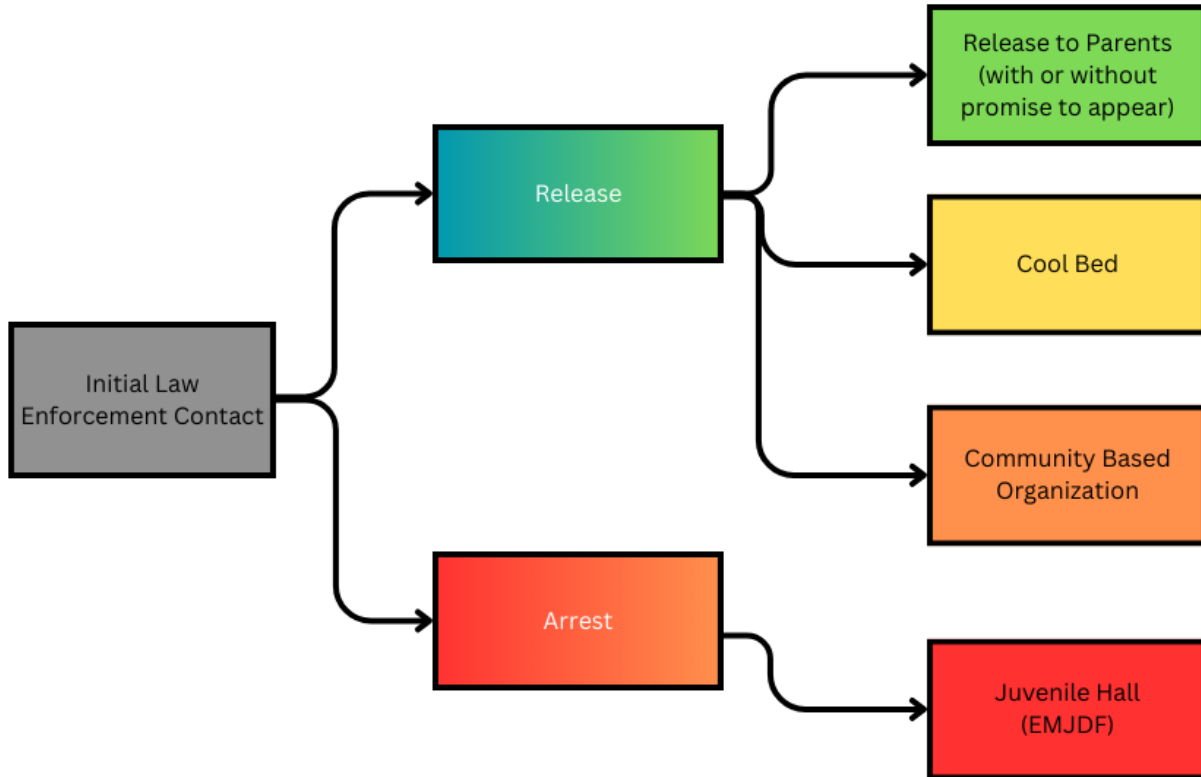
- While you are not there to “tell” on your youth, you are still a mandated reporter and must report if the youth poses a credible danger to themselves or others.
- Interactions with youth should remain positive and encouraging.
- Set healthy boundaries for topics of conversation, redirect if necessary.

CASA's should never discuss any charges with their youth, especially pending charges, as anything they say to you can be used against them in Court. Do not discuss the incidents that led to their arrest, but you can discuss their feelings regarding the incident.

# Juvenile Justice Timeline



# Initial Law Enforcement Contact



\*Dependent youth with pending or active 602 petitions cannot be detained at Polinsky Children's Center (PCC)

# Juvenile Justice Timeline

## Diversion Screening

Probation will screen the case to decide whether to forward case to the District Attorney's (DA) office for the filing of a petition.

The DA reviews reports submitted by law enforcement agencies to determine if a crime occurred, and if so, what charges should be filed.

The DA screens all cases for participation in the Juvenile Diversion Initiative (JDI).

If the DA decides to file charges, they submit a petition to the Court, and the court proceedings begin.



# Juvenile Justice Timeline

## If a Petition is Filed

DA has up to one year to file charges. The petition may include any law enforcement contact within the last year



A youth may hold multiple petitions at once



New petition will “restart” process with new custody days added and potentially new conditions added

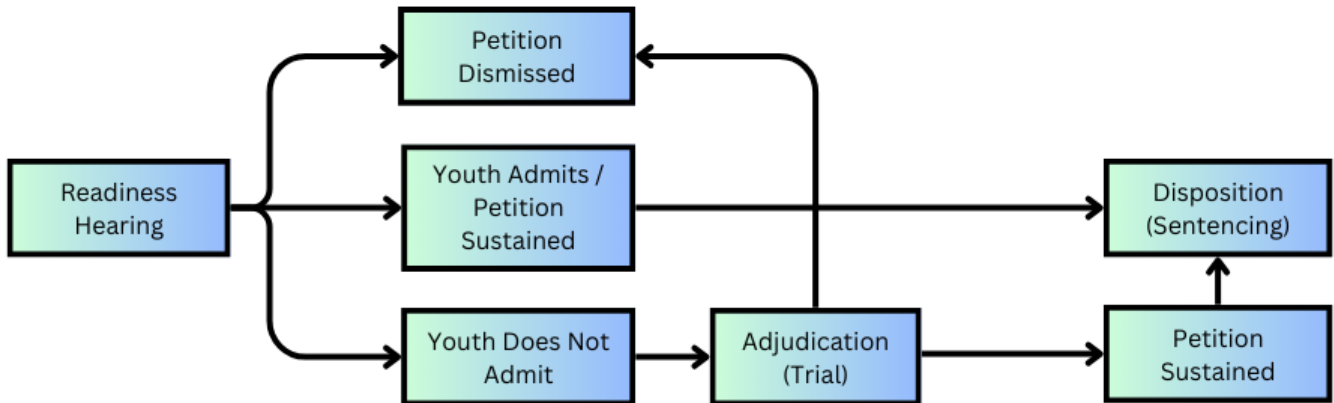
Probation violations do not mean that a new petition was filed.





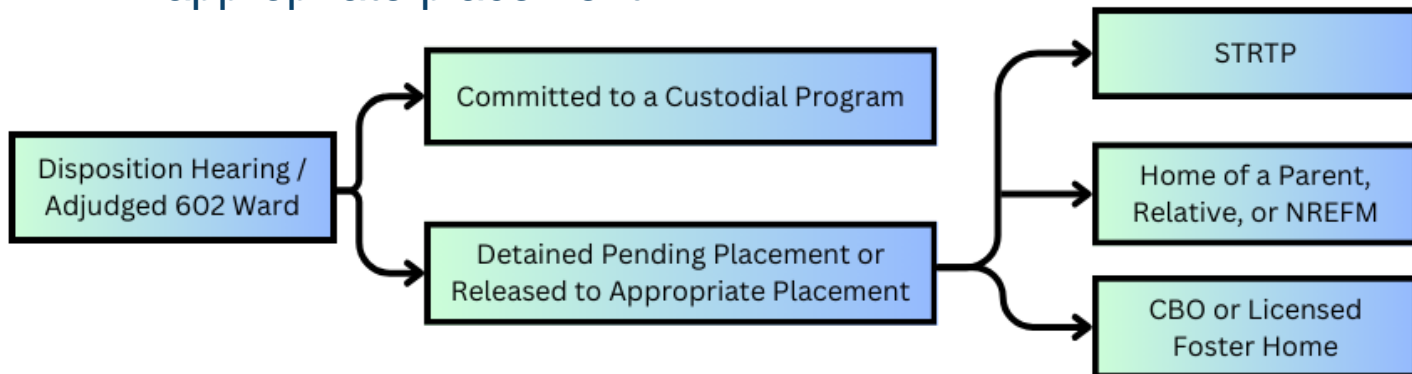
# Readiness Hearing

- Takes place 10 days after filing of petition
  - Youth may admit to one or more of the charges, or youth may set for trial
  - If youth admits to specific charges, the balance of the charges may be dismissed (usually with a Harvey Waiver)



# Dispositional Hearing

- Youth can be adjudged a 602 ward at this hearing
- Probation Conditions Determined
  - Terms set forth by the probation officer and agreed upon by DA, PD, and Judge, that determine what the youth must do to complete probation successfully.
- Youth can be committed to a custodial program at the Youth Transition Campus (YTC) or released to an appropriate placement



# Juvenile Collaborative Courts

## Dual Court

- Youth involved in both dependency and juvenile justice court systems
- Have a PO and SW
- Have CLS dependency attorney and public defender

## Resiliency is Strength and Empowerment (RISE)

Address youth with a history of or who are at risk for commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC)

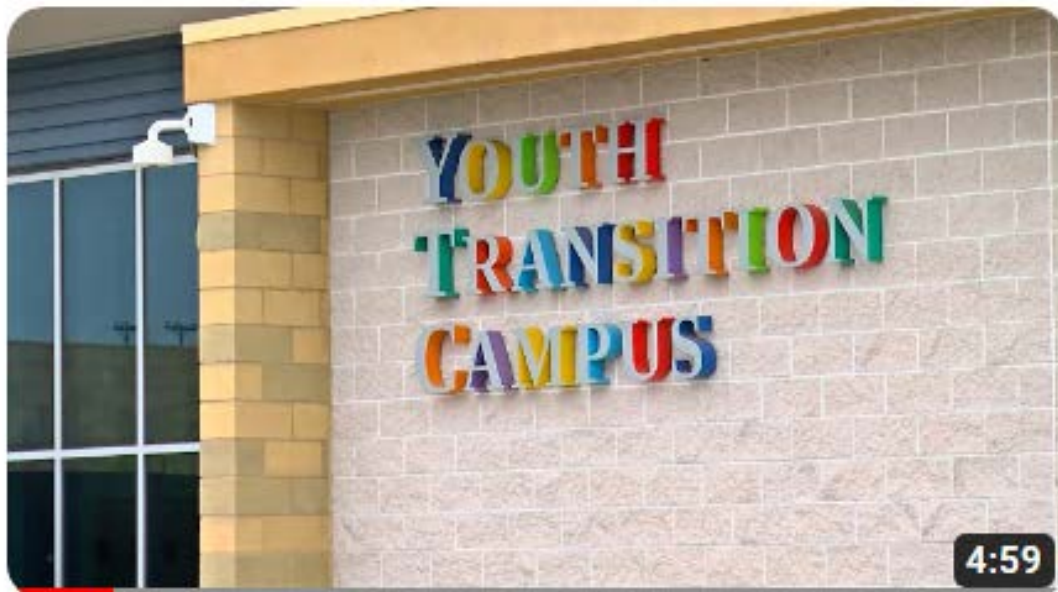
## Behavior Health Court (BHC)

Designed to support recovery for mentally ill youth by providing access to individualized treatment and strengthening family stability

# In-Custody Advocacy

Detention Facilities  
and Custodial Programs

# Youth Transition Campus





Pre-Adjudication Facility

Custodial Commitment Facility

# YTC Pre-Adjudication Facility

- Referred to as “Juvenile Hall”
- Holding facility while case is pre-adjudication and/or until appropriate placement or custodial program can be identified
  - Not used as a punishment
  - Custody days are limited



# YTC Custodial Programs

## Urban Camp

- For girls and boys
- Commitments range from 85 to 250 days

## HOPE

- Healing Opportunities for Personal Empowerment
- For boys only, not to exceed 480 days

## Y.O.U

- Youthful Offenders Unit
- For girls only, not to exceed 480 days



# YTC Prosocial Activities

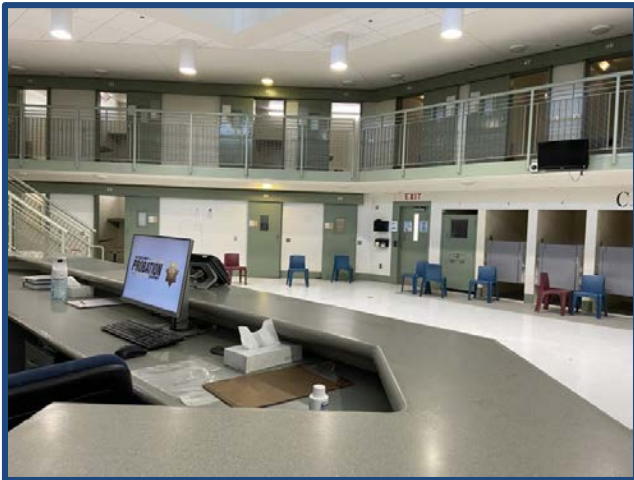
- Running Club
- Coffee Cart
- Internship & Job Training Opportunities
- David's HARP
- Garden



# East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility (EMJDF)



- Secure Track/Youth Development Academy (YDA)
- Prosocial activities available:
  - David's HARP Music Program
  - CrossFit-style physical training & track
  - Holiday events & celebrations



# In-Custody Advocacy

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**Visitation**

**Education**

**Mental  
Health**

**Meetings**

# Visitation

- CASAs should make efforts to visit their detained youth in person as often as they can
- Do not discuss any pending charges with your youth, redirect to PD
- Visits can be a break from youth's day, something to look forward to
  - Games (YTC)
  - Cannot gift anything but paper/books (no metal)
- CASAs may be their youth's only visitor
- When you cannot visit your youth in person:
  - Virtual Visits (Skype)
  - Phone Calls
  - Snail mail



- Detained youth attend SOAR Academy and must attend school
- Contact teachers and counselors to gain insight into grades and behavior
- Youth enrolled at Juvenile Court Community Schools (JCCS) online transcript request
  - Available on SDCOE website
  - Includes immunization records
- Help plan for school enrollment upon release
  - Obtain school transcripts, IEPs and other documents needed for enrollment.
  - Placement must be determined before school options can be discussed

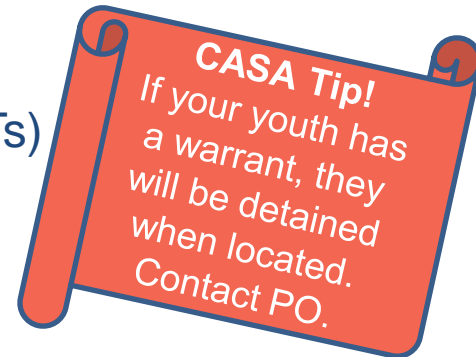


- Correctional Healthcare Partners (CHP)
  - Crisis intervention
  - Counseling
  - Psychiatric care and medication management
- CASAs may contact youth's counselor for updates on therapeutic goals and progress
  - Mental health professionals will not share specifics about what youth has said in therapy, but general goals and progress is accessible to CASAs
  - If your youth is at YTC or EMJDF, you can ask your supervisor to request this info via YTC/EMJDF liaison



# Meetings

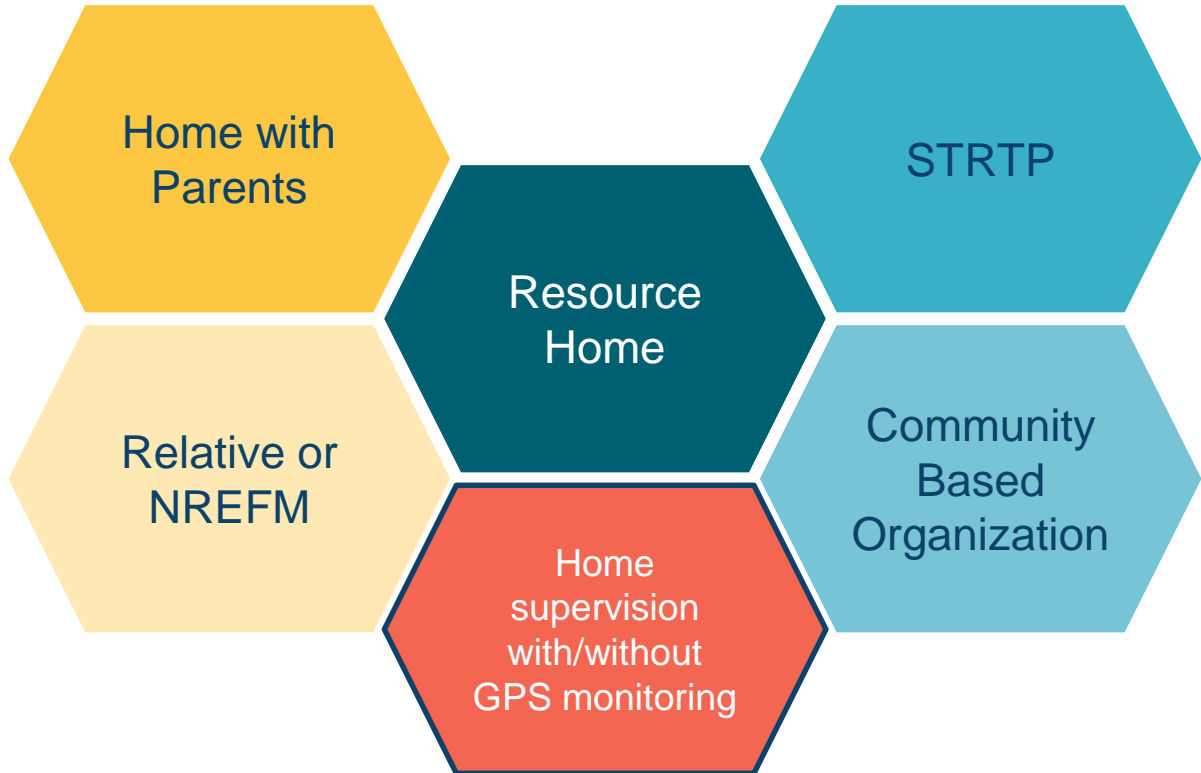
- CASAs will usually not be notified of these meetings before they occur. It is important to be proactive when your youth is detained and ask the PO & PD to be included in any meetings that come up.
  - Youth detained at the Youth Transition Campus (YTC) are assigned a **re-entry officer**. It is good practice to find out who the assigned re-entry officer is, and they will be able to inform you of upcoming meetings.
- School Meetings
- Multidisciplinary Team Meetings (MDTs)
- Orientation Meetings (YTC)
- Re-Entry Meetings (YTC)



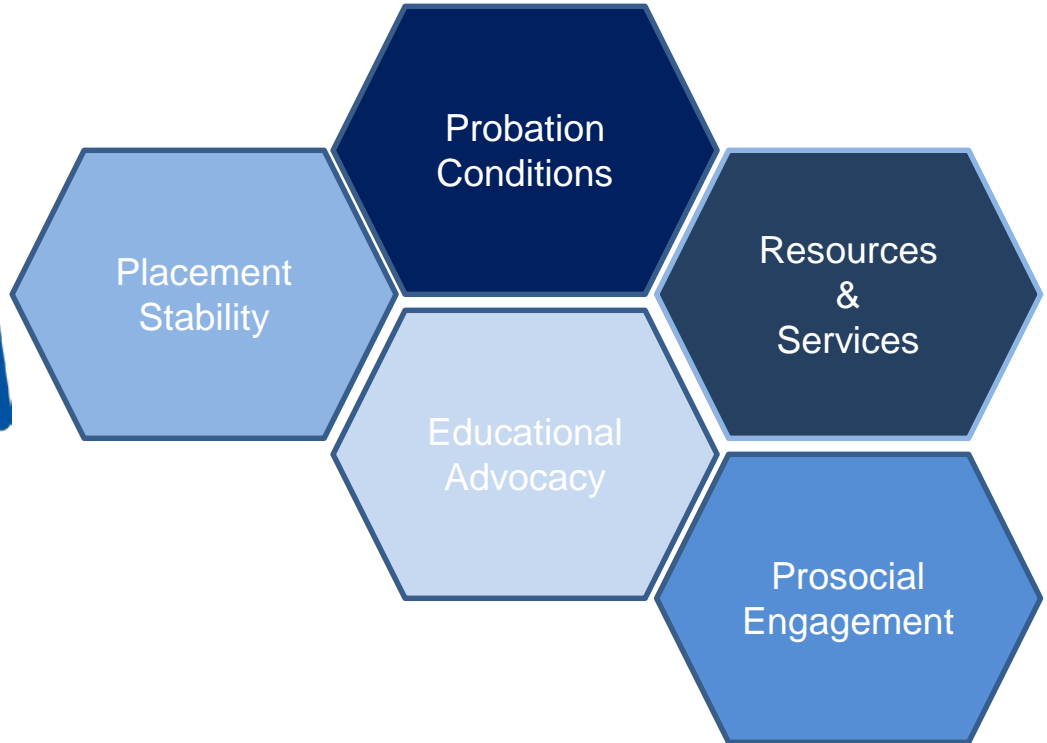


# Out-of-Custody Advocacy

# Placement Options



# Out-of-Custody Advocacy



CASAs can be instrumental in supporting their youth's transition back into the community

CASAs can advocate for placement preservation services

- Wraparound
- Family therapy
- Alternatives to Detention (ATD) cool beds





- Help identify most appropriate school environment
  - Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS)
- Communicate frequently with school staff and educational rights holder
- Identify barriers to school attendance
  - Transportation
  - Peer conflicts/influence
- Refer youth to tutoring or other special education supports
  - IEP & 504 plans

# Promote Access to Resources & Services

## Mental Health

- Therapy
- Alternatives:
  - Music Therapy
  - Equine Therapy

## Substance Abuse

- McAlister Institute
  - Inpatient & Outpatient
- Vista Hill
  - Outpatient

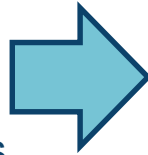
## Trauma-informed Services

- Comprehensive Assessment and Stabilization Services (CASS)
- Sexual Treatment Education Prevention Services (STEPS)

# Prosocial Activities

## Prosocial and extracurricular activities

- Mentoring programs
- Culture in Our Community
- Achievement Centers
- David's Harp Foundation



- Increased community connections
- Higher self-esteem
- Improved ability to problem solve/resolve conflict



## Support youth in identifying and completing probation requirements

- Community service
- Drug testing and/or substance abuse treatment
- Curfew
- Attending school
- Apology letter

## Identify and work to remove barriers to completing or complying with probation requirements

- Transportation challenges
- Placement not meeting youth's needs
- Duplication of services
- Overbooked schedule or conflicting appointments



# Supporting a Youth When Visits or Outings are Not Possible

- Maintain a healthy relationship with youth through phone calls, text messages, and virtual visits
- Maintain frequent contact with case professionals
- Provide educational oversight
- Ask about therapeutic support that is available to your youth



## Creative Ways to Engage

- Snail mail & care packages
- Media/books
- Online games

# Termination of Probation



## Successful Termination

- Probation satisfactorily completed
- In most cases, records are automatically sealed



## Unsuccessful / Termination without Comment

- Probation not completed satisfactorily
- Can petition to have records sealed

450 Transition – If your youth is in an out of home placement on their 18th birthday, and their court ordered underlying placement is considered an out of home placement, then they are eligible to participate in extended foster care (EFC) upon successful completion of probation.

# CASA Impact

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You make an impact by being there and showing up!

- Planting seeds
- Consistency through turmoil/unconditional support
- Case examples:
  - Martha & Damian (“Because you came to visit me.”)
  - Danielle & Joseph (In-Court advocacy)
  - Robert & Caleb (Planting Seeds)



# Important Contacts

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- **Youth Transition Campus:**  
(858) 694-4500
- **East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility:** (619) 671-4400
- **Public Defender's Officer:**  
(858) 974-5757
- **Juvenile Probation Department:** (858) 694-4600
- **SOAR Academy:**  
(858) 298-6857 (YTC)  
(619) 671-6560 (EMJDF)

# Q & A