



CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL



The next **Child Welfare Council Annual Report** covering the period **from July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024**, will feature highlights on the work of the Council and its committees. Please use this template to write your committee report and submit it to Sarah.Saria@jud.ca.gov no later than **October 3, 2024**.

Readers may not be familiar with acronyms and abbreviations. Please fully write out acronyms and abbreviations the first time you use them and be consistent in using the same acronym or abbreviation throughout the rest of the report.

Readers may not be familiar with policies, organizations, or programs that are well known to your committee. Please consider including brief explanations so readers can better understand your report.

July 2023 through June 2024 Activities and Accomplishments: Please briefly list major activities and accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2023-24.

Concerns or Challenges: Describe any issues that you feel need the Council’s attention in order to maximize opportunities to address barriers to the work of the Council.

2024 – 2025 Goals & Objectives: Indicate your committee’s goals and objectives for the coming year.

Committee/ Task Force Name	Youth Justice Committee (acronym YJC)
Purpose	To address issues that impact justice-involved families, children and youth.
July 2023 through June 2024 Activities and Accomplishments	<p>At the September 13, 2023 YJC meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education and Vocational Training: The committee discussed the Forward Change Education Report, which was developed as a tool to continue to have policy aligned with the best outcomes for youth in a carceral setting. • Step Downs and Alternatives to Incarceration: The committee discussed University of California, Los Angeles’s (acronym UCLA) research brief on practice guidelines for treating the behavioral health needs of youth both in Secure Youth Treatment Facility (acronym SYTF) care, led by Will Lightbourne (Special Consultant, Office of Youth and Community Restoration, acronym OYCR)) and researchers from UCLA’s school of social welfare. • Juvenile Titles 15 and 24 Regulations Revision Update: OYCR

Director Katherine Lucero provided the committee updates on the review of the regulations by the Executive Steering Committee and the SYTF Subcommittee.

- Community Based Organizations (acronym CBO) Capacity Development Update: Marcia Rincon-Gallardo (OYCR Systems Change and Equity Division Chief) shared an update on the workgroup focused on the CBO capacity development initiative, including the focus on selecting on vendor.
- Education and SYTFs: Dr. Michael Massa (OYCR Consultant) shared an update on OYCR’s Education Advisory Committee, which include the California Department of Education and the State Board of Education. He also informed the committee about educational challenges statewide, including the barriers to collecting data on system-involved youth due to silos at the state and county level between education and juvenile justice stakeholders

At the December 6, 2023 YJC meeting:

- Ombuds Updates: Ahmed Nemr (Chief of the Ombuds Division) provided information about the following ongoing work of their office:
 - Onboarding of new staff and reiterating role of ombuds staff to be impartial, honor rights of confidentiality, be independent and credible
 - An overview of the complaints process and an update on current complaints and casework data
- The committee discussed the relationship between Probation Chiefs and the Ombuds office and ongoing efforts to collect and document outcomes in reference to complaints resolved, defining what resolution looks like without breaching confidentiality.
- Neurodivergent Disorders: Dr. Juan Carlos Arguello (OYCR Health Policy Division Chief), Dr. Kenneth Lyons Jones (University of California, San Diego Department of Pediatrics) and Sid Garner (President of Children and Family Futures) shared with the committee OYCR’s Vision and Mission on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (acronym FASD), information about Neurobehavioral Disorders Associated with Prenatal Alcohol Exposure and crucial information about screenings and diagnoses. They also shared information about a project to examine the effectiveness of a diagnostic protocol for FASD in probation and child welfare facilities.
- CBO Capacity Development Update: Marcia Rincon-Gallardo (OYCR Systems Change and Equity Division Chief) shared an update on the workgroup focused on the CBO capacity development initiative, including the selection of a vendor. Matt Cervantes (Sierra Health Foundation) presented on the alliance and partnership of the three entities involved and how they collaborated to construct an intentional proposal to lead the work of this urgent initiative emphasizing the unique expertise of Sierra Health, National Center for Youth Law, and the Public Works Alliance.

At the March 6, 2024 YJC meeting:

- UCLA/OYCR Briefs: Will Lightbourne (Special Consultant, OYCR) provided context on the ongoing partnership with the School of Social Work at UCLA to develop issue briefs related to the Stepping Home Model. He highlighted three newly released briefs for the committee, focused on Restorative Justice, Positive Youth Development in the Justice System, and Less Restrictive Programs and opened the floor for questions and comments from the committee.
- Co-chair discussion: The committee discussed moving to a three-person chair, with one person from probation or corrections and someone from the advocate community, in addition to OYCR Director Lucero. Potential co-chair candidates were identified and the committee opted to table the vote until the next quarterly meeting.
- Ombuds Division updates: Ahmed Nemr (Chief of the Ombuds Division) provided information about the following ongoing work of their office:
 - The development of a Youth Bill of Rights
 - Requirements pertaining to annual Site Visits and County Contact
 - Staffing updates, including the addition of two new team members bringing the total number of County Liaisons to three
 - An update on the number of complaints and open cases.
- Additional OYCR updates provided to the committee:
 - An AB 102 Data presentation
 - A Youth Advisory Board Update
 - An Update on the Sierra Health CBO Capacity Building Initiative
 - An Update on the Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant (acronym JJRBG) Funding Formula Revision

At the June 5, 2024 YJC meeting:

- Ombuds Division Updates: Alisa Hartz (OYCR Ombudsperson) provided updates on the distribution of the Youth Bill of Rights and an update on complaints and casework data.
- Trauma-Informed Care and Reentry: Will Lightbourne (Special Consultant, OYCR), along with team from the UCLA School of Social Welfare, Laura Abrams, Dr. Elizabeth Barnert, and Cassandra Angel led discussion about new briefs on trauma-informed care and reentry. The committee provided comments and guidance on suggested changes, including an emphasis on the need for training on trauma-informed practices for probation staff and the care needed to address youth who have experienced and may not want to revisit their trauma.
- AB 102 Update: Krystle Englehart shared with the committee updates on the AB 102 report, which marked the first statewide snapshot of data on the progress of SB 823 realignment, identifying

	<p>who is being sent to SYTFs and any evidence of statewide net widening. The committee discussed the report and discussed the need for further definition of Less Restrictive Programs (acronym LRP), additional data collection to better understand the patterns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBO Capacity Development Update: Marcia Rincon-Gallardo (OYCR Systems Change and Equity Division Chief) and Abraham Medina (Sierra Health Foundation) outlined the \$24.1 million investment initiative to transform youth justice in CA through three intersecting initiative pillars including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CBO capacity building initiative (acronym CBI), which will encompass eight organizations, launching after July 2024 still in the planning phase. ○ Ending Girls Incarceration (acronym EGI) initiative, partnerships with the Vera Institute and OYCR, throughout four counties. ○ Justice Servicing Network (acronym JSN) development initiative, encompassing 20 organizations. • Less Restrictive Programs Update: Will Lightbourne (Special Consultant, OYCR) shared additional insight about the definition of LRPs in statute and shared information about OYCR’s LRP initiative with 11 county probation departments who had committed to a strategy that includes youth leaving the detention setting and provides funds to a community setting. • Department of Rehabilitation (acronym DOR)-OYCR Workforce Initiative update: Will Lightbourne (Special Consultant, OYCR) shared information with the committee about the DOR-OYCR initiative. The workforce initiative aims to partner with counties to support youth in overcoming workforce barriers that come as a result of visible or invisible disabilities.
<p>Concerns or Challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative challenge – having a consistent space with reliable technology that can accommodate our large in person and virtual meeting attendance.
<p>2024 - 2025 Goals/Objectives</p>	<p>Continue working on YJC priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Educational Health – Release second Secure Youth Treatment Facility (acronym SYTF) higher education report 2) Less Restrictive Programs – Ongoing review and discussion of the 11 LRP grant funded counties quarterly reports for best practices and information sharing statewide. 3) Community Based Organization Capacity Building – continue to expand CBO capacity through the Sierra Health Foundation Contract and outcomes for best practices and information sharing statewide.