



**CALIFORNIA
CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL
Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR)
Committee**

DATE: May 2, 2022
TO: OYCR Committee Members
FROM: Katherine Lucero, Committee Chair and Director of OYCR
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM 6: Selecting priority topics for the OYCR Committee

Summary

This agenda item asks for Committee Member input on priority topics that the Committee will focus on through the period of its statutorily mandated work (through June 2023). At the Committee Meeting on March 29, 2022, Director Lucero asked committee members to propose concrete, meaningful areas where this committee can use its diverse, collective knowledge, experience, and expertise to advise OYCR productively during that period.

Background

In creating OYCR and enacting SB 823, the Legislature stated its intent as follows:

It is the intent of the Legislature and the administration for counties to use evidence-based and promising practices and programs that improve the outcomes of youth and public safety, reduce the transfer of youth into the adult criminal justice system, ensure that dispositions are in the least restrictive appropriate environment, reduce and then eliminate racial and ethnic disparities, and reduce the use of confinement in the juvenile justice system by utilizing community-based responses and interventions.

The same bill established the OYCR Committee of the Child Welfare Council to advise the new office, with the specific goals defined in the statute: “(a) Until July 1, 2023, the committee established pursuant to Section 12824 of the Government Code shall be responsible for advising and providing **recommendations related to policies, programs, and approaches that improve youth outcomes, reduce youth detention, and reduce recidivism** for the population in subdivision (b) of Section 1990.” (Welfare and Institutions Code section 2201.)

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At the March 29, 2022, meeting of the OYCR Committee, in response to a request for topics that the OYCR Committee could productively focus on between that date and July 1, 2023, all the topics below were raised as productive areas of focus:

- Facilities
 - Alternatives to juvenile halls for Secure Youth Treatment Facility placements
 - Alternatives to traditional facilities
 - New paradigms for housing youth
- Step Downs/Alternatives to incarceration
 - Alternatives to incarceration for serious crimes, in California and nationally/internationally
 - Less restrictive confinement approaches
 - Model, robust step-down programs
- Sources of local support
 - What federal, state, local funding is available to counties
 - How can counties maximize impact of existing funds
 - State and federal health resources and funds
- Community-based organizations
 - Supporting counties that lack community-based organizations
 - Supporting CBOs in developing promising practices and demonstrating they are evidence based
 - Alternative funding schemes for CBOs that are not reimbursement based and allow for a viable organization
- Conflict resolution in facilities
 - De-escalation methods
 - Conflict resolution
 - Mediation
 - Training for custody officers
- Eliminating racial and ethnic disparities
- Higher Education/Job training
 - Partnerships with community colleges and local universities, e.g. San Marcos program targeting foster youth
 - Training for jobs with livable wages (e.g. DJJ computer coding/technology)
- Reentry
 - Housing support
 - College and vocational training
 - Supporting families to help with youth with reentry
- Mentoring /credible messengers
 - Increasing pools of mentors
 - Reducing barriers for credible messengers to access facilities

All of topics fall within the statutory mandate of the Committee, with some of the topics falling within multiple categories, as shown in the chart below.

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Improve Youth Outcomes	Decrease Secure Detention	Decrease Recidivism
Step Downs/Alternatives to incarceration	Step Downs/Alternatives to incarceration	Step Downs/Alternatives to incarceration
Sources of local support- \$\$\$\$		
Community-based organizations	Community-based organizations	Community-based organizations
Conflict resolution in facilities		Conflict resolution in facilities
Eliminating racial and ethnic disparities	Eliminating racial and ethnic disparities	Eliminating racial and ethnic disparities
Higher Education/Job training		Higher Education/Job training
Reentry		Reentry
Mentoring /credible messengers	Mentoring /credible messengers	Mentoring /credible messengers
Facilities	Facilities	Facilities

Committee members will be asked to select their top three topics that they would like to discuss going forward. At least one committee meeting will be devoted to each of the three topics. Additionally, at the meeting devoted to each topic, members will discuss what work product they think should result in relation to the topic, such as, for example, a policy paper, focus groups with a report on results, a template protocol for agencies to work together to improve youth outcomes, or a “10 principles” document (for example, the 10 key principles for STYF Reentry, the 10 Guidelines for a Therapeutic Facility (with a technical assistance brief), or mentoring youth eligible for the STYF).

Additionally, and separately from these topics, at each Committee Meeting, Members will be presented with information on OYCR’s units (county coordination unit, health policy unit, research/data unit, ombudsperson unit) and will be asked for any feedback, input, or suggestions.

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Recommendation/Action Needed:

Each member may vote for three of the following topics:

1. Facilities
2. Step Downs/Alternatives to incarceration
3. Sources of local support
4. Community-based organizations
5. Conflict resolution in facilities
6. Eliminating racial and ethnic disparities
7. Higher Education/Job training
8. Reentry
9. Mentoring /credible messengers