Amended Youth Rehabilitation Act (YRA) of 2018

Emerging Adult Strategic Plan

2020-2025

November 2021

Prepared by: Justice Policy Institute

Letter of Introduction

Dear Mayor Bowser:

In May 2019, the District government commissioned the Justice Policy Institute (JPI) to assist in developing alternative methods for responding to legal-involved emerging adults, as required under the Amended Youth Rehabilitation Act of 2018 (YRA). For the purpose of this strategic plan, the term "emerging adults" refers to individuals from 18 to 24 years old. JPI was tasked to develop a strategic plan (Plan) to provide facilities, treatment, and services for developmentally appropriate care, custody, subsistence, education, workforce training, and protection of legal-involved emerging adults both in custody or care of the District, whether pretrial or post-conviction. JPI delivered a draft plan to the District on September 30, 2019.

The final Plan, developed in consultation with the DC Emerging Adult Justice Action Collaborative[1] (Collaborative) convened by JPI with the support of the Public Welfare Foundation, should serve as a guide for the District's implementation of the YRA by identifying:

1. Educational, workforce development, behavioral and physical health care, housing, family, and reentry needs of legal-involved emerging adults before commitment, while in District or federal care or custody. This should also include reentry planning for those emerging adults who are committed and community support.

2. A range of reentry services that are developmentally appropriate, culturally competent, centered on social and emotional wellbeing, unbiased, racially equitable, and community-based. These services should include restorative justice programming for at-risk youth, as well as legal-involved emerging adults, regardless of offense.

This strategic plan highlights current research and best practices relating to the unique needs of legal-involved emerging adults and provides recommendations to implement developmentally appropriate responses for emerging adults as required under the YRA. This plan is underpinned by the voices of impacted legal-involved emerging adults and a broad array of District stakeholders.[2]

The Collaborative further presents the District with two overarching goals - reclaiming control of the District's justice system functions and officially transferring jurisdiction of 18-24 year legal-involved individuals to the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) - in addition to three service-oriented goals for the next 3-year period:

[1] The Collaborative was comprised of those with lived justice system experience, local policymakers, justice system stakeholders, community service providers, advocates, and researchers. A list of membership can be found in Appendix B. The Collaborative was charged to finalize the strategic plan and identify priority areas for implementation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the launch and work of the Collaborative was delayed with the formal launch taking place in September 2020.

[2] A complete list of stakeholders can be found in Appendix B.

1. Increase the number of District agencies and community-based organizations providing services, supports, and opportunities that are developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed, healing-centered, and restorative.

2. Build a community-based Continuum of Care to respond to the needs of emerging adults.

3. Build a criminal legal system-based Continuum of Care to respond to the needs of emerging adults.

By operationalizing components from this Plan, District officials will be able to successfully fulfill the requirements under the YRA that is based on input from stakeholders and leading research. Understandably, the District's work in this area should be an ongoing and iterative process which regularly engages with the community to ensure that the city remains nimble and responsive to the unique needs of its emerging adult population. The Collaborative strongly recommends creating a staff position or agency within the Executive Office of the Mayor responsible for coordination and implementation of the YRA and a District-wide response to addressing the needs of all emerging adults.

This report draws heavily on prevailing research in the field of psychology indicating human brain development is not completed until a person's mid- to late-twenties. These findings question the legal system's arbitrary definition that adulthood begins at the age of 18 and suggest that the rehabilitation of offending emerging adults would be more effective at preventing crime and recidivism than incarceration. This report lays out a plan to do just that: to ensure public safety, to decrease recidivism, to improve the prospects of many vulnerable young people—especially young people of color, and to heal communities that have been disproportionately harmed, institutionalized, and victimized by systems that promised social and educational services, safety, and justice.

The experience of incarceration frequently negatively impacts the ability to access the very systems of support needed to prevent someone from returning to past behaviors; therefore, this plan includes specific recommendations to create a comprehensive continuum of care that can provide services in the areas of health, housing, education, workforce development, and many other social supports so that emerging adults who come into contact with DC's legal system can lead healthy and productive lives. Key recommendations include the expansion of juvenile jurisdiction to divert emerging adults from the carceral system, reevaluating the sentences of those who were convicted and incarcerated at a young age, and ensuring effective reentry planning for their return. Also highlighted within the Plan is the need to ensure individuals are returned to the DC Jail from the Federal Bureau of Prisons as well expanding the Second Look Act to provide automatic sentencing review for individuals who have served a maximum of ten years in prison.

The work of many people, indeed a collaborative, made this report possible. We would like to thank the many individuals and organizations that contributed to this strategic plan and gave us valuable counsel along the way. We would like to thank all our partner organizations in the DC Emerging Adult Justice Action Collaboration for their commitment to the development of this plan and their valuable insights. We would especially like to thank the many currently and formerly

incarcerated individuals who lent the wisdom of their personal experience to improve this report, in the hope that it might help the District ensure others avoid similar circumstances.

We are encouraged by the number of individuals and organizations committed to the work of justice, and by the District's recent commitment to justice reform.

Looking forward,

Marc Schindler
Executive Director
Justice Policy Institute

cc: Charles Allen, Chair, Chair, Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety, Council of the District of Columbia

Christopher Geldart, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice

Members, DC Emerging Adult Justice Action Collaborative

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Acknowledgments

The Justice Policy Institute (JPI) would like to thank the DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services and the Public Welfare Foundation for their support to produce this plan.

In addition, this report would not have been possible without significant contributions by Paul Ashton, Felisa Concepcion, and Jasmine Tyler, Laura Storrs, and Lindsey Lawson of Solidarity and Solutions, LLC.

JPI expresses its deepest gratitude to the individuals and organizations of the DC Emerging Adult Justice Action Collaborative (Collaborative) whose work, commitment, and vision for building age-appropriate responses to legal-system involved emerging adults made this plan possible.

JPI gives special thanks to the following members of the Collaborative for their feedback and contributions throughout the drafting process: Shannon Battle, Quincy Booth, Hilary Cairns, Joel Castón, Sarah Comeau, Kayvon Edwards, Seema Gajwani, Jameon Gray, Tara Libert, Paula Thompson, Jordan Toney, Tyrone Walker, and Craig Watson. Their generosity with their time and expertise was critical not only in the development of the plan but will be crucial in its implementation and the District's continued work to improve responses to serving emerging adults.

We also thank representatives from the Executive Office of the Mayor and the DC Council who generously shared their time and insight as we developed the plan.

Lastly, JPI would like to acknowledge staff and interns who contributed their time to support this project: Marc Schindler, Jeremy Kittredge, Ashley Wagstaff, Alejandro Ruiz, and Zoe Carrol.

What is the YRA?

The Youth Rehabilitation Act of 1985 (YRA) is a District law that provides young people "under the age of 22 convicted of, and sentenced for, a crime other than homicide are eligible to have their convictions 'set aside' [sealed] if they successfully complete their sentence."[3] The Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act of 2018 raised the age of eligibility from 22 to 24, and also adjusted the "set aside" provision to be applied after the end of a sentence instead of at conviction, thereby expanding the eligibility for young people to apply for this provision. The following offenses are ineligible under the YRA: first degree murder that constitutes an act of terrorism, second degree murder that constitutes an act of terrorism, first degree sexual abuse, second degree sexual abuse, and first-degree child sexual abuse.[4]

Sentencing provisions of the amended YRA include:[5]

1. If the court determines that a young person would be better served by probation instead of confinement, it may suspend the sentence and place the young person on probation

    a. As part of an order of probation, the court shall require the young person (15-to-24-years-old) to perform at least 90 hours of community service

2. If the offense for which a young person is convicted is punishable by imprisonment under applicable provisions of the law, the court may use its discretion to sentence the young person under the YRA allowing for:

    a. The court, at its discretion, to issue a sentence less than any mandatory-minimum term otherwise required by law

    b. The young person shall serve the court's sentence unless released sooner

3. If the court sentences a young person under the YRA, it shall make a written statement on the record of the reasons for its determination. In using its discretion in sentencing a young person under the YRA, the court shall consider

    a. Young person's age at the time of the offense

    b. Nature of the offense, including the extent of the young person's role and to what an extent another adult was involved

    c. Whether the young person has been previously sentenced under the YRA

[3] "The Latest on the Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act," Charles Allen DC Council Ward 6 website visited November 4, 2021. https://www.charlesallenward6.com/the_latest_on_the_youth_rehabilitation_amendment_act
[4] Code of the District of Columbia § 24–903. Sentencing alternatives. https://code.dccouncil.us/us/dc/council/code/sections/24-903
[5] Code of the District of Columbia § 24–903. Sentencing alternatives. https://code.dccouncil.us/us/dc/council/code/sections/24-903

d. Young person's compliance with the rules of the facility to which they have been committed, and with supervision and pretrial release, if applicable

e. Young person's current participation in rehabilitative District programs

f. Young person's previous contact with the juvenile and criminal justice system

g. Young person's family and community circumstances at the time of the offense, including any history of abuse, trauma, or involvement in the child welfare system

h. Young person's ability to appreciate risks and consequences for their conduct

i. Reports of any physical, mental, or psychiatric examinations of the young person

j. Young person's use of controlled substances that are unlawful under District law

k. Young person's capacity for rehabilitation

l. Any oral or written statements provided by the victim of the offense, or a family member of the victim if the victim is deceased

m. Any other information the court deems relevant to its decision

4. If the court does not sentence a young person under the YRA, it shall make a written statement on the record of the reasons for its determination and may sentence the young person under any other applicable penalty provision.

"Set aside" provisions of the amended YRA include:[6]

1. A young person, regardless of if they were originally sentenced under the YRA, may, after the completion of probation, sentence of incarceration, supervised release, or parole (whichever is later), file a motion to have their conviction set aside under the YRA. The court may, in its discretion, set aside the conviction.

2. In making the determination for a "set aside," the court shall consider the factors listed in DC Code §24-903(c)(2) – those conditions listed to be considered under the sentencing provisions of the YRA.

3. In any case where the conviction is set aside, the young person shall be issued a certificate to that effect.

[6] Code of the District of Columbia § 24–906. Unconditional discharge sets aside conviction. https://code.dccouncil.us/us/dc/council/code/sections/24-906

Background

"Incarceration is not a solution to issues of community health, safety, and violence."

-District Task Force on Jails & Justice[7]

1950-1984

The modern emerging adult legal movement relies on recent research, particularly advances in understanding the trajectory of brain development, although the criminal legal system has acknowledged the distinct nature of emerging adults for almost a century.[8]

Congress passed the Federal Youth Corrections Act (FYCA) in 1950, based upon the English Borstal system of corrections, developed in 1902 and designed to serve youth between 16 and 21.[9] Congress enacted the FYCA having concluded that the overrepresentation of young adults in the criminal legal system in both the United States and the United Kingdom was not coincidental, relying on the findings of social scientists that youth transitioning from "adolescence to manhood" were temporarily more susceptible to antisocial conduct.[10]

Young offenders were at risk of continued criminal conduct absent specialized rehabilitative services. Youth in the 18-to-26-year age group were easier to rehabilitate than adults but required unique sentencing procedures, as well as correctional facilities separate from the adult population.[11] Under the FYCA, youthful offenders who completed a program of rehabilitation would have their convictions set aside – sealed from public view – to eliminate the stigma associated with a criminal conviction.[12]

The FYCA was in effect from 1950 through 1984, at which time it was repealed as part of the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984.[13] Opponents of the FYCA asserted that youthful

[7] "Report of the Committee on Community Investments & Alternatives to the Criminal Justice System" (District Task Force on Jails & Justice, August 14, 2019), http://www.courtexcellence.org/uploads/publications/CommunityInvestments.pdf.
8For the purpose of this strategic plan, the term "emerging adults" refers to individuals between 18 to 24-years-old.
9 Fred C Zacharias, "The Uses and Abuses of Convictions Set Aside Under the Federal Youth Corrections Act," Duke Law Journal 477 (1981): 477–514.
10 Zacharias.
11 Zacharias.
12 Zacharias.
13 Sentencing Reform Act of 1984, H.R. 5773, 98th Cong. (1984). This Act set forth a new system of sentencing by eliminating all federal indeterminate sentencing and established the United States Sentencing Commission. This office was tasked with determining the sentencing structure for all federal and DC code offenders.

offenders recidivate at higher levels than expected and that segregation by age led to increased problems in prisons.

The Superior Court of the District of Columbia judiciary expressed concern about the repeal of the FYCA, an approach they favored and extensively utilized. Partly in response to the concerns by the Court's judiciary, the Council of the District of Columbia quickly enacted the Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act (YRA) of 1985, providing sentencing alternatives similar to those available under the repealed FYCA.[14] The YRA granted the Court flexibility when sentencing youthful offenders, separated youth from older and more mature offenders, authorized specialized rehabilitative programming, as well the opportunity for youth to have their sentence set aside, if conditions of the sentence were satisfied. These sentencing alternatives were made available to youth under 22 years of age, for any offense other than murder.[15]

"There was no 'R' in the YRA."

- Councilmember Charles Allen, Chair of the Council's Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety during a hearing on the YRA[16]

Progress Since 1985

There is a growing movement to create developmentally appropriate responses for emerging adults in the legal system, with the District of Columbia in the forefront of these efforts. In 2018 the DC Council passed the amended Youth Rehabilitation Act of 2018 (YRA), strengthening the existing law in a number of ways, including by raising the age of eligibility from age 22 to 24.[17] Both the original and amended YRA provide opportunities for emerging adults to receive more moderate sentences, access to age-appropriate rehabilitative programming, and the opportunity to have their sentence set aside for any offense except first- and second-degree murder, first and second-degree sexual abuse, and first-degree sexual abuse of a child.[18]

The FYCA and the YRA recognized the value in a transformative approach to legal-involved emerging adults. This strategic plan builds on emerging adult justice in DC in the context of the ongoing reforms of the juvenile legal system. Over-reliance on incarceration, inadequate and substandard conditions in facilities, and lack of community-based services culminated in the Jerry

[14] Youth Rehabilitation Act of 1985, D.C. Code §§ 24-901 – 24-941 (amended Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act of 1985, D.C. Law 6-69).
[15] Youth Rehabilitation Act of 1985, D.C. Code §§ 24-901 – 24-941 (amended Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act of 1985, D.C. Law 6-69).
[16] Marc Schindler, "Youth Rehabilitation in D.C.: From Controversy to Progress," *Washington Post*, January 11, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/youth-rehabilitation-in-dc-from-controversy-to-progress/2019/01/11/d2ea0be6-056a-11e9-b5df-5d3874f1ac36_story.html.
[17] Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act of 2018, D.C. Law 22-197.
[18] Per the Youth Rehabilitation Act of 2018, emerging adults for this plan refer to those 18 to under 25. Furthermore, because of the common use of both terms' young adult and emerging adult, for the purposes of this plan they may be used interchangeably.

M. lawsuit and subsequent consent decree,[19] leading to major reform efforts in 2005 including the creation of the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS), a new cabinet level juvenile justice agency. In addition to transforming its secure care from a correctional and punitive approach to focus on rehabilitative and empowering programs within DYRS's secure facilities, the District invested in evidence-based, community-based services to reduce the use of secure confinement.[20]

Beginning in 2005, DYRS developed an approach based on the principles of Positive Youth Development (PYD), which is grounded in the philosophy that youth are assets and resources to the community, who, with appropriate services, supports, and opportunities, can develop to their fullest potential. PYD leverages youth strengths and promotes resilience.[21] DYRS commissioned John Jay College's Dr. Jeffrey Butts to provide research supporting its early PYD efforts, resulting in Dr. Butts' seminal work creating the Positive Youth Justice framework (PYJ).[22] PYJ derived from a broad body of developmental research for young people, focusing on the specific developmental needs of youth involved in the juvenile legal system. The PYJ approach, developed for DYRS, was adopted by many agencies in the juvenile legal field and focused on six core developmental domains, providing a framework for transforming theory into practice in juvenile legal systems. The six core developmental domains are:

- **Work:** work experience, apprenticeships, employment readiness, income and independence;
- **Education:** literacy, credentials, learning skills and career planning;
- **Relationships:** communication skills, conflict resolution, family systems, intimacy, and support;
- **Community:** civic engagement, community leadership, services and responsibility;
- **Health:** physical activity, diet and nutrition, behavioral health, lifestyle, and sexuality; and
- **Creativity:** personal expression, visual arts, performing arts and language arts.[23]

[19] Government of the District of Columbia, "Consent Decree," Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, accessed June 30, 2021, https://dyrs.dc.gov/page/consent-decree.
[20] Government of the District of Columbia, "Consent Decree," Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, accessed June 30, 2021, https://dyrs.dc.gov/page/consent-decree.
[21] Government of the District of Columbia, "Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services 2018 Annual Report" (Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, 2018), https://dyrs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dyrs/page_content/attachments/DYRS2018_AnnualReport_WEB.pdf.
[22] Jeffrey A Butts, Gordon Bazemore, and Aundra Saa Meroe, "Positive Youth Justice: Framing Justice Interventions Using the Concepts of Positive Youth Development" (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2010), https://positiveyouthjustice.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/pyj2010.pdf.
[23] Jeffrey A Butts, Gordon Bazemore, and Aundra Saa Meroe, "Positive Youth Justice: Framing Justice Interventions Using the Concepts of Positive Youth Development" (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2010): 19, https://positiveyouthjustice.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/pyj2010.pdf.

The District's approach and philosophy towards juvenile justice has continued to evolve. Since implementing strategies between 2005-2010 based on the PYJ framework, DC continued to build on that progress by integrating the latest research and best practices in the field. The District often serves as an innovator when implementing trauma informed practices,[24] and, more recently, healing-centered and restorative practices.[25]

In addition, the District is engaged in a number of legal reform activities relating to YRA strategic plan efforts, including:

- **Neighborhood Engagement Achieves Results (NEAR) Act of 2016:** In 2016 the NEAR Act was passed by the Council in response to increasing homicides in 2015. The NEAR Act emphasizes a public health approach to violence intervention and prevention, making efforts to improve relationships between communities and the MPD.[26]

- **Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (ONSE) Pathways Program:** The ONSE Pathways Program is a transitional employment program for legal-involved individuals between the ages of 20 to 35-years-old, as well as individuals who have been identified as at-risk of being a victim of violent crime or participating in violent crime. The program provides life and job skills training, subsidized employment for six months, and support services to facilitate a successful transition to unsubsidized employment.[27]

- **Emerging Adult Justice Learning Community (EAJLC):** The District of Columbia participated in the national EAJLC hosted by Columbia University's Justice Lab. From 2017-2020, the EAJLC convened researchers, policymakers, practitioners and advocates biannually to share research and ideas on innovative and effective approaches for working with the emerging adult population. The learning community included representatives from six jurisdictions, including DC.[28]

- **Young Men Emerging Unit (YME):** In February 2018, the DC Department of Corrections (DOC) implemented the District's first ever specially designed treatment unit for emerging adults between the ages of 18-25.[29] The YME creates a therapeutic, nurturing, and positive environment for young people on the unit, with committed older individuals serving life

[24] Shawn Ginwright, "The Future of Healing: Shifting from Trauma Informed Care to Healing Centered Engagement," Trauma Informed LA, 2018, https://traumainformedla.org/resources/more-resources/books/news-media-articles/the-future-of-healing-shifting-from-trauma-informed-care-to-healing-centered-engagement/.
[25] Government of the District of Columbia, "Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services 2019 Annual Report" (Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, 2019): 11, https://dyrs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dyrs/page_content/attachments/AnnualReportFY2019Web.pdf.
[26] Brent J. Cohen, "Implementing the NEAR Act to Reduce Violence in D.C.," D.C. Policy Center, May 25, 2017, https://www.dcpolicycenter.org/publications/implementing-near-act-reduce-violence-d-c/.
[27] Government of the District of Columbia, "Pathways Program," Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, accessed July 1, 2021, https://onse.dc.gov/service/pathways-program.
[28] Columbia University Justice Lab, "Learning Community," Emerging Adult Justice Project, accessed July 1, 2021, https://www.eajustice.org/learning-community. Other participants include: The Bay Area in California; Chicago; Connecticut; Massachusetts; and New York City. The District's delegation includes Kevin Donahue (Deputy Mayor for Public Safety), Quincy Booth (Director of the Department of Corrections), and Marc Schindler (Executive Director of JPI and former Director of DC's juvenile justice agency).
[29] Modeled in part on a similar unit for young adult in the Cheshire Prison in Connecticut.

sentences and living on the unit acting as mentors to the young adults, known as "mentees" rather than "inmates."[30]

- **District Task Force on Jails and Justice:** The District's Task Force on Jails and Justice is an independent advisory board dedicated to improving and redefining the District's approach to corrections. The Task Force is made up of legal-impacted individuals, organizations that serve the legal-involved population, government leaders, research and policy experts, and judges working to ensure that the jail is a just and equitable system.[31]

- **Second Look Amendment Act of 2019:** Passed in December 2020, this legislation raised the age from 18 to 25 years old for a "second look" opportunity for people who have served long sentences (i.e., at least 15 years) based on research demonstrating adolescent brain development continues to the mid-twenties and that people tend to age out of crime.[32]

- **Police Reform Commission:** In response to the national protest movement after the murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis Police, the District of Columbia Police Reform Commission was established in 2020 "to examine policing practices in the District and provide evidence-based recommendations for reforming and revisioning policing in the District."[33]

These recent developments and the required YRA strategic plan, are evidence of DC's commitment to an evidence-based, data-driven, 21st Century model of legal reform that is responsive to adolescent and emerging adult brain development science, while providing thoughtful, evidence-based services and interventions at each stage of child and adolescent development.

[30] In September 2019, DOC opened a second YME unit, located in the Central Detention Facility (CDF). The longer-term goal is to engage with the Federal Bureau of Prisons to negotiate an agreement to retain 18 to 25-year-olds in D.C. DOC facilities for the duration of their sentence. This would create an opportunity to retain young adults in D.C.'s criminal justice system who are statistically most at-risk of post-release recidivism and provide them with critical programming and family reunification services. For more information on the YME, see Joel Castón and Michael Woody, "A DC Jail Unit Challenges the 'Warehouse' Approach to Corrections," The Crime Report, June 11, 2019, https://thecrimereport.org/2019/06/11/a-dc-jail-unit-challenges-the-warehouse-approach-to-corrections/.

[31] "District Task Force on Jails & Justice," Council for Court Excellence, accessed July 1, 2021, http://www.courtexcellence.org/task-force.

[32] "B23-0127 Second Look Amendment Act of 2019," DC Legislation Information Management System, accessed July 1, 2021, https://lims.dccouncil.us/Legislation/B23-0127.

[33] Robert Bobb and Christy Lopez, "Decentering Police to Improve Public Safety" (D.C. Police Reform Commission, April 1, 2021): 9, https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/dd0059be-3e43-42c6-a3df-ec87ac0ab3b3/DC%20Police%20Reform%20Commission%20-%20Full%20Report.pdf.

Research Supports Emerging Adult Legal Reform

The American legal system has acknowledged that youth and adults are fundamentally different since the first juvenile court was created in 1899. Unlike the adult criminal legal system, which primarily focused on punishment, the juvenile legal system, serving the majority of youth under the age of 18, attempts to focus on education, personal development, and rehabilitation. The juvenile system acknowledged that young people have a less developed sense of right and wrong, reduced impulse control, and a different level of culpability for their actions.[34]

Who are "emerging adults"?

"The term "emerging adults," first coined in 2000 by psychologist Jeffrey Arnett, aptly invokes this critical developmental period: the transition from a child who is dependent on parents or guardians for supervision and guidance (as well as emotional and financial support) into a fully mature, independent adult who engages as a productive and healthy member of society. While there is no universal definition of "emerging adults," in the context of criminal justice we define it as individuals transitioning from childhood to adulthood, from the age of 18 to 25."

-Selen Siringil Perker and Lael Chester[35]

The cutoff age of 18 for the juvenile system is arbitrary and subject to state specific statutes,[36] while research in neurobiology and psychology indicates that the cognitive skills and emotional intelligence associated with mature adults continues developing into the mid-20s.[37] Specifically, the prefrontal cortex, the area of the brain primarily responsible for logical thinking, decision-making and emotion and behavior regulation, commonly referred to as impulse control, remains under development at this time.[38] As a result, emerging adults from 18-25 years of age are more prone to impulsive behavior, more sensitive to immediate rewards and less future-oriented, more

[34] "Rethinking Approaches to Over Incarceration of Black Young Adults in Maryland," Justice Policy Institute, November 6, 2019, https://justicepolicy.org/research/policy-briefs-2019-rethinking-approaches-to-over-incarceration-of-black-young-adults-in-maryland/.
[35] Selen Siringil Perker and Lael Chester, "Emerging Adults: A Distinct Population That Calls for an Age-Appropriate Approach by the Justice System," Emerging Adult Justice in Massachusetts (Harvard Kennedy School Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy, June 2017): 1, https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/selenperker/files/emerging_adult_justice_issue_brief_final.pdf.
[28] Each state does retain discretionary and mandatory mechanisms to transfer youth into adult court for specific crimes defined by statute (e.g. Title 16 youth in The District)
[37] Perker and Chester, "Emerging Adults: A Distinct Population That Calls for an Age-Appropriate Approach by the Justice System."
[38] Vincent Schiraldi, Bruce Western, and Kendra Bradner, "Community-Based Responses to Justice-Involved Young Adults," New Thinking in Community Corrections (Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice, September 2015): 3, https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/248900.pdf.

volatile in emotionally charged settings, and highly susceptible to peer and other outside influences.[39]

In addition, neuroscience indicates that exposure to trauma can lead to emotional and behavioral dysregulation interfering with other processes of the prefrontal cortex, like logical decision making.[40] This is an important consideration especially for legal-involved young people, as not only is their brain still under maturation, but exposure to trauma, including that of the legal system and systematic racism, may lead to dysregulation and further delays in maturation.[41]

In the District, about 9% of youth have been a victim of, or witness to, neighborhood violence.[42] Nationally, often youth of color face racially biased excessive policing and victimization at the hands of law enforcement, in addition to high levels of community violence, causing further trauma.[43] Fear of potential unjustified use of force by law enforcement compounds the presence of community violence since Black Americans are two-and-a-half times more likely to experience the threat of, or use of, non-lethal force by police.[44]

Criminologists observed that individuals become less likely to engage in criminal activity as individuals move through different life stages which enhance prosocial bonds, such as employment, marriage, and childrearing. This is known as the life course desistance theory or the age-crime curve, demonstrating that people age out of crime, consistent with neurologic findings.[45]

Consistent with these findings, according to researchers at Columbia University, "sociological research also reveals that key milestones bridging youth to adulthood, such as completing education, employment, and marriage, come later in an individual's life course now compared to previous generations."[46] According to data by the U.S. Census Bureau, the median age at first marriage has increased by approximately 8 years for both men and women from 1960 to 2020.[47]

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[39] Lael Chester and Vincent Schiraldi, "Public Safety and Emerging Adults in Connecticut: Providing Effective and Developmentally Appropriate Responses for Youth Under Age 21" (Harvard Kennedy School Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy, December 2016), https://www.hks.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/centers/wiener/programs/pcj/files/public_safety_and_emerging_adults_in_connecticut.pdf.

[40] Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, "Enhancing the District's Response to Trauma" (Trauma Training Institute 2019, Washington, D.C., September 9, 2019).

[41] Leila Morsy and Richard Rothstein, "Toxic Stress and Children's Outcomes" (Economic Policy Institute, May 1, 2019), https://www.epi.org/publication/toxic-stress-and-childrens-outcomes-african-american-children-growing-up-poor-are-at-greater-risk-of-disrupted-physiological-functioning-and-depressed-academic-achievement/.

[42] Yunsoo Park, "When Students Don't Feel Safe in the Neighborhood: How Can Schools Help?," D.C. Policy Center, March 3, 2020, https://www.dcpolicycenter.org/publications/mental-health-supports/.

[43] Eva Frazer et al., "The Violence Epidemic in the African American Community: A Call by the National Medical Association for Comprehensive Reform," *Journal of the National Medical Association*, 2017, https://www.congress.gov/116/meeting/house/110968/documents/HHRG-116-IF14-20191003-SD002.pdf.

[44] Frazer et al.

[45] Robert J Sampson and John H Laub, "Life-Course Desisters? Trajectories of Crime Among Delinquent Boys Followed to Age 70," *Criminology* 41, no. 3 (2003): 301–39.

[46] Perker and Chester, "Emerging Adults: A Distinct Population That Calls for an Age-Appropriate Approach by the Justice System." 1.

[47] "Median Age at First Marriage: 1890 to Present" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020), https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/visualizations/time-series/demo/families-and-households/ms-2.pdf.

These milestones significantly decrease one's likelihood of engaging in risky behavior. Now that the normal maturation pattern goes well-beyond the emerging adult years, the influence of peers is heightened as the brain continues to develop.

Although not well-understood scientifically until recently, society has long recognized emerging adults' propensity towards risk-taking behaviors reflected in policies such as the issuance of driver's licenses, military draft eligibility, and voting rights. Using actuarial assumptions, insurance companies have long charged higher premiums to drivers under 25 years of age and in many states, people are unable to rent a car prior to 25 years old without a 'young renters fee' due to higher rates of risky behavior by emerging adults.[48] More information on this area of research can be found in Appendix A.

[48] Vincent Schiraldi, "Testimony of Vincent Schiraldi, Senior Research Fellow, Harvard Kennedy School's Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management before the Vermont Senate Committee on Judiciary," (2016).

2020-2025 Strategic Plan

Process Used to Develop the Strategic Plan

To develop this 5-year strategic plan, the Justice Policy Institute conducted literature reviews covering a range of topics, including, but not limited to: neurobiology and developmental psychology, criminology, national and international research and best practices related to emerging adults, diversion, restorative justice, specialized correctional units, courts, and probation, and community-based services. Over the first two years of the plan, JPI conducted a series of meetings to discuss the strategic plan and solicited input from a variety of stakeholders, including government agencies, community service providers, advocates, and impacted individuals.[49]

In addition to these activities throughout 2020-2021, JPI staff attended and participated in the Columbia Justice Lab's International Emerging Adult Justice Summit held in New York City from June 10-12, 2019, as well as the DC Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants' "Trauma Training Institute: Enhancing the District's Response to Trauma" held in the District from September 9-10, 2019. These two conference-style convenings provided JPI the opportunity to engage with subject matter experts covering a range of topics from emerging adult justice to trauma-informed care and resilience building. JPI convened the DC Emerging Adult Justice Action Collaborative while also reviewing data from District agencies as it relates to emerging adults and legal system involvement and assisted in the drafting and release of this report.

Introduction

In the United States, emerging adults make up nine percent of the general population, yet account for approximately a quarter of arrests and 21% of state prison admissions.[50] Consistent with this data, emerging adults constitute a disproportionate proportion of the legal-involved population in the District. According to most recent data, emerging adults make up approximately 9% percent of the District's population[51] but account for 25% of the total legal-involved population: 24% of all arrests, 18% of those under community supervision, and 26% of the average daily population in the DC Jail.[52]

Furthermore, emerging adults of color are overrepresented amongst legal-involved emerging adults. The District's current response to Black and Brown emerging adults coming in contact with the criminal legal system is frequent incarceration. According to MPD data, approximately 72% of people stopped by police were Black, even though Black people only account for 46.5% of the

[49] For a complete list of those interviewed please refer to the Appendix B.
[50] Karen Lindell and Katrina Goodjoint, "Rethinking Justice for Emerging Adults: Spotlight on the Great Lakes Region" (Juvenile Law Center, 2020), https://jlc.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2020-09/JLC-Emerging-Adults-9-2.pdf.
[51] "2021 Demographics: District of Columbia," DC Health Matters, accessed July 2, 2021, https://www.dchealthmatters.org/demographicdata.
[52] Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, "FY 2020 Budget Request, Summary Statement, and Frequently Asked Questions," March 18, 2019, https://www.csosa.gov/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2019/03/CSOSA-FY-2020-CBJ-Summary-Statement-FAQs-3-18-2019.pdf.

DC population.[53] This racial disparity holds amongst young people, as 88.6% of all stops of individuals under the age of 18 were of Black children.[54] Black boys were 12.5 times more likely to be stopped by police than White boys, and Black minors were over five times more likely than White minors to be frisked during a stop.[55] Likewise, Black residents comprise 86% of all arrests in the District: a rate 10 times that of White residents.[56] Consequently, implementing developmentally appropriate approaches to serve emerging adults, outside of the legal system, will have an outsized impact on community strength and safety, especially in communities of color.

Young people of color are disproportionately victimized by serious violent crimes. This age group perpetuates more crime that involves other young people. An analysis of 2019 data showed that out of 166 homicides in the District, 153 victims (92%) were Black and 144 of whom (87%) were Black men.[57] Thus, it is clear that emerging adults of color are disproportionately affected by homicide, not only as the offenders, but also as victims. Since most crime occurs within one's community, the individual committing the offense and the victim are usually the same race or ethnicity.[58]

To address the rise in homicide rates in DC, Mayor Bowser instituted a gun violence prevention initiative called Building Blocks DC in 2021.[59] The program seeks to prevent violence by funneling services towards neighborhoods with the highest rates of gun violence and directing strategic interventions for individuals experiencing multiple risk factors for becoming involved in gun violence. The Gun Violence Prevention Emergency Operations Center (EOC), located in Ward 8, coordinates the distribution of resources such as mental health services, housing, job readiness, and other social services through government and non-profit agencies.[60]

Youth of color also face racially biased excessive policing and victimization at the hands of law enforcement, in addition to community violence, further causing trauma. Fear of potential unjustified use of force by law enforcement compounds the presence of community violence since Black Americans are two-and-a-half times more likely than the average American to experience

[53] "Racial Disparities in Stops by the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department: Review of Five Months of Data" (ACLU-DC, June 16, 2020), https://www.acludc.org/sites/default/files/2020_06_15_aclu_stops_report_final.pdf.
[54] "Racial Disparities in Stops by the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department: Review of Five Months of Data."
[55] "Racial Disparities in Stops by the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department: Review of Five Months of Data."
[56] "Racial Disparities in D.C. Policing: Descriptive Evidence from 2013–2017" (ACLU of DC, July 31, 2019), https://www.acludc.org/en/publications/racial-disparities-dc-policing-descriptive-evidence-2013-2017.
[57] Metropolitan Police Department of Washington, D.C., "2019 Annual Report," 2019, https://mpdc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mpdc/publication/attachments/MPD%20Annual%20Report%202019_lowres.pdf.
[58] Kara McCarthy, "Victims and Offenders Were of the Same Race or of Hispanic Origin in Half of Violent Crimes from 2012 to 2015" (Bureau of Justice Statistics, October 19, 2017), https://www.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh241/files/archives/pressreleases/2017/ojp-news-10192017.pdf.
[59] "Building Blocks DC," Office of the City Administrator, Government of the District of Columbia, accessed July 12, 2021, https://oca.dc.gov/page/building-blocks-dc.
[60] Colleen Grablick, "Bowser Declares Gun Violence Public Health Crisis, Creates Emergency Response Center," DCist, accessed July 12, 2021, https://dcist.com/story/21/02/17/bowser-gun-violence-prevention-builidng-blocks-dc/.

use of force by police.[61] While Black citizens comprise less than 50% of the D.C. population, they were the subjects of approximately 90% of all use of force incidents in the District each year from 2013 to 2017.[62]

The DC Police Reform Commission recommended a harm reductionist approach to policing, rather than the existing "warrior cop" mentality, suggesting that police should be guided by what they should do, rather than what they can do in a given circumstance.[63] Current policing focuses on the symptoms of violence, not the root causes. Directing resources to improving services provided to emerging adults involved in the criminal legal system will ensure progress towards crime reduction and public safety.

The District must build on the best features and principles of the YRA while improving its approach to meeting the needs of emerging adults. To achieve broad public safety policy goals, the District must implement this evidence-based strategic plan and provide sufficient funding to meet the objectives.

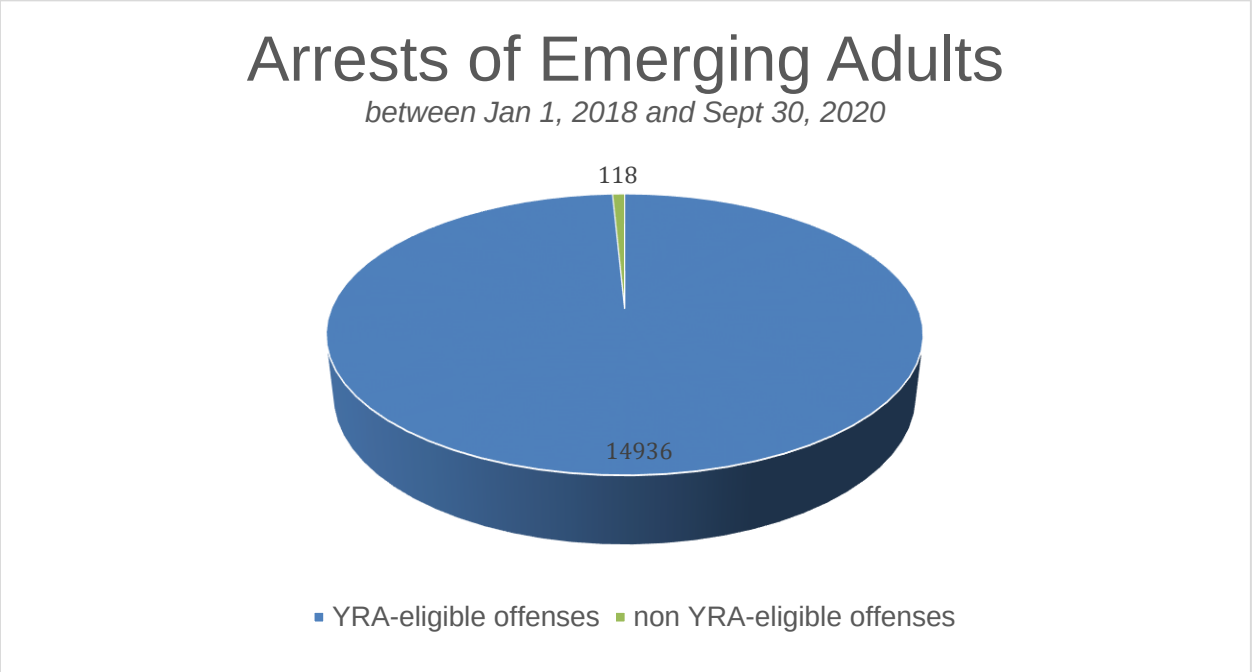

Figure 1. Number of Emerging Adult Arrests Relative to YRA Eligibility.

[61] Timothy Williams, "Study Supports Suspicion That Police Are More Likely to Use Force on Blacks," *The New York Times*, July 7, 2016, sec. U.S., https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/08/us/study-supports-suspicion-that-police-use-of-force-is-more-likely-for-blacks.html.
[62] "Report on Use of Force by the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, Fiscal Year 2017" (Office of Police Complaints, Government of the District of Columbia), accessed July 12, 2021, https://apps.washingtonpost.com/g/documents/local/use-of-force-by-dc-police/2718/.
[63] Bobb and Lopez, "Decentering Police to Improve Public Safety," 20.

Figure 1 demonstrates that over 99% of the crimes for which emerging adults are arrested are YRA-eligible offenses.[64] The disproportionate representation of emerging adults within the legal system, combined with the majority of their offenses being YRA eligible, underscores the outsized impact that improving approaches to engaging this population can have, not only on their life trajectory, but on broader public safety in the District.

Framework for DC's Approach to Emerging Adults

Following a 2017 study by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), community advocacy, a Council-convened workgroup, and a public hearing that included extensive testimony, the Amended YRA was passed.[65] The Act raised the age of eligibility to 24 or younger, consistent with research demonstrating that adolescence and corresponding brain development continues into the mid-twenties. Importantly, the study leading to the amended legislation revealed a lack of developmentally appropriate programming available for legal-involved emerging adults in the District.[66]

"On the individual level, violence is driven by shame, isolation, exposure to violence, and an inability to meet one's economic needs – factors that are also the core features of imprisonment. This means that the core national violence prevention strategy relies on a tool that has at its basis the central drivers of violence."

- Daniel Sered, Until We Reckon: Violence, Mass Incarceration and a Road to Repair[67]

The work on this strategic plan occurs parallel to a larger conversation in the District on criminal legal reform. Specifically, the District Task Force on Jails and Justice, of which JPI is a member, has been engaged in work advancing guiding principles for the city's comprehensive approach to justice.

The District Task Force on Jails and Justice (The Task Force) envisions "a humane, equitable approach to criminal justice in the District that prioritizes prevention and care and reimagines corrections and accountability through a restorative and rehabilitative lens, with the goal of

[64] "MPD Adult Arrests (2013-2020)," Metropolitan Policy Department, accessed September 6, 2021, https://mpdc.dc.gov/node/1379551.
[65] Ellen P. McCann, "The District's Youth Rehabilitation Act: An Analysis" (Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, September 8, 2017), https://cjcc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/cjcc/page_content/attachments/District%27s%20YRA-An%20Analysis.pdf.
[66] McCann.
[67] Sered, Danielle, "Until We Reckon: Violence, Mass Incarceration, and a Road to Repair," The New Press, New York, (2019).

creating safe and thriving communities."[68] To align ongoing legal reform work in the District, and considering the shared philosophical approaches of the Task Force and the views leading to amendment of the YRA, it makes sense to adopt the core values laid out by the Task Force as part of the philosophical approach of YRA implementation. The Core Values as outlined by the Task Force are:

- **Urgency**: We are compelled to create change now, to re-envision and plan an innovative public health approach to community safety and incarceration.

- **Accountability**: We believe that the District's criminal legal system shall be transparent, guided by evidence-based practices, results-oriented, and accountable to the public. We promise to conduct the business of this Task Force using these same values of accountability.

- **Equity**: We believe that justice shall be administered fairly and with attention to acknowledging and addressing the harms of past policies and practices rooted in racism and other systems of oppression.

- **Compassion**: We are motivated by love for every human being and recognize that the criminal legal system often draws false dichotomies between victims and offenders. We believe that no matter how a person comes into contact with the system, they must be treated with dignity, given the opportunity to engage in restorative practices, and offered trauma-informed, healing-centered care.[69]

In addition, the following enumerated principles crafted by select Task Force Committees must guide decision-making and recommendations for the YRA strategic plan:

Committee on Community Investments & Alternatives to the Criminal Legal System[70]

- Systemic racism and discriminatory policies must be acknowledged and addressed.

- Strategies and responses must take a trauma-informed and healing-centered approach.

- Investments must be community-driven.

- Investments must build high quality, accessible services, into a continuum of care.

[68] "Jails & Justice: A Framework for Change" (District Task Force on Jails & Justice, October 2019), http://www.courtexcellence.org/uploads/publications/FrameworkForChange.pdf.
[69] "Jails & Justice: A Framework for Change."
[70] "Report of the Committee on Community Investments & Alternatives to the Criminal Justice System" (District Task Force on Jails & Justice, August 14, 2019), http://www.courtexcellence.org/uploads/publications/CommunityInvestments.pdf.

Committee on Decarceration[71]

- Incarceration must only be used when an individual poses an imminent risk of violence that no community-based resources may mitigate.

- Investments must be made in sustainable services and supports that reduce criminal legal involvement and obviate the need for arrest, detention, and incarceration.

- A coordinated public health approach to safety and justice that includes community-driven strategies must be embraced and fully resourced.

Building a holistic approach to serving legal-involved emerging adults requires significant leadership and investments by committed city leaders, agency directors, service providers, and community members. This work should be grounded in the community and informed by those directly impacted by the legal system. District leaders need to be bold and innovative when rethinking community investments and services, as well as reconsider how systems intersect with young people. Stakeholders emphasized the need to apply the District's evolving healing-centered and restorative approach in the juvenile legal system to the needs of emerging adults in convenings related to this effort. Therefore, the broader framework for legal-involved emerging adults in DC must be:

- **Trauma-Informed** – acknowledging the harm trauma causes on a person's mental, physical and behavioral health and requiring comprehensive support and treatment, rather than focusing only on treating individual symptoms and behaviors.

- **Healing-Centered** – promoting a holistic view of healing from traumatic experiences and environments by advancing strategies focused on culture, spirituality, civic action and collective healing.

- **Restorative** – creating and supporting decision-making processes that involve those most directly impacted by a given harm in identifying the pathway towards repair and then carrying out the actions to get there.

"The District's priority should be 'NO ENTRY', instead of reentry."

-Joel Castón, co-founding mentor of the Young Men Emerging Unit, District of Columbia Department of Corrections[72]

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[71] "Report of the Committee on Decarceration" (Washington, D.C.: District Task Force on Jails & Justice, August 14, 2019), http://www.courtexcellence.org/uploads/publications/Decarceration.pdf.
[72] DC Emerging Adult Justice Action Collaborative Quarterly Meeting, March 24, 2021.

Goals and Objectives

First, before outlining specific goals and objectives to move the District toward building robust continuums of care to respond to the needs of emerging adults, there are a number of District-wide recommendations the Mayor's Office and the DC Council must take under consideration to enhance the implementation and effectiveness of the YRA strategic plan, including:

- **Inform the District about implementation of the YRA:** The Executive Office of the Mayor should inform District and federal agencies, providers, and the community about the YRA Strategic Plan and improvement initiatives enhancing programming, supports and services for legal-involved emerging adults.

- **Re-establish local control of all legal system functions**: With the passage of the 1997 DC Revitalization Act, a number of adult criminal legal functions were transferred to the control of the federal government, including prison sentences, parole, and community supervision. Emerging adults in DC are subject to the adult criminal court jurisdiction and are subject to the requirements under the DC Revitalization Act as it pertains to serving their prison sentence, parole and community supervision under federal jurisdiction. This hybrid approach to justice limits the District's ability to implement reforms addressing the unique needs of legal-involved emerging adults. With no ability to direct programmatic action within the Federal Bureau of Prisons or Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), the District may only enact a disjointed approach to serving legal-involved emerging adults. The District must reestablish full local control of its legal system while building a comprehensive approach to emerging adult legal services.[73]

  At a minimum, CSOSA should reestablish the Young Adult Unit; this program focused on the development of the individual, emphasizing education, job readiness, and skills training. CSOSA currently utilizes high intensity probation supervision which focuses on impulsive behaviors, criminal thinking, and antisocial behaviors while failing to consider the unique needs of emerging adults. For example, legal-involved emerging adults have higher rates of foster care placements, mental health issues, parental incarceration, poverty, and substance misuse disorders and these factors should be taken into consideration when fashioning a successful supervision plan.

  Probation should operate in conjunction with community-based organizations serving individuals ages 18 to 24 years of age. By providing age-appropriate, individualized treatment with community partners, probation can prioritize educational, social, or vocational services to those who missed such markers into adulthood while incarcerated, potentially paving the way to a shorter and more successful period of supervision.

- **Raise the Age of Juvenile Justice Jurisdiction**: The District must enact legislation raising the age of juvenile justice jurisdiction to under 25,[74] thereby allowing the District to retain

[73] "Jails & Justice: Our Transformation Starts Today" (District Task Force on Jails & Justice, February 2021), http://www.courtexcellence.org/uploads/publications/TransformationStartsToday.pdf.

[74] Although the Distrist Task Force on Jails & Justice report (above citation) recommends expanding juvenile jurisdiction until age 21, some in the criminal justice community, such as retired California superior court judge

control over legal involved emerging adults, without reenacting full local control, by moving the authority for prosecution, detention, and supervision to District agencies instead of the current District-Federal hybrid. This would ensure that the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) would have jurisdiction over these matters.

In recent years, a number of jurisdictions have sought to raise the age beyond 18 recognizing the unique needs of emerging adults. Vermont passed legislation in 2018 that will raise the age to 20 by 2022, and Massachusetts and Connecticut are debating legislative proposals to raise the age to 21. Such bold action by the District would not only serve to seamlessly move emerging adults under the jurisdiction of the District's family court and related agencies and its existing community-based continuum of care, but would cement DC as a national leader in emerging adult justice. In addition, the District should establish 12 years of age as the minimum age of juvenile legal liability while decriminalizing status offenses.[75]

- **Some residents incarcerated in the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) should be transferred to the DC Jail:** Most District residents convicted of serious crimes are incarcerated in a BOP facility, often hundreds, if not thousands of miles from their homes and families in DC. Further, despite significant research suggesting that emerging adults have a high propensity for change and would benefit from tailored programming, adult facilities rarely accommodate those unique needs - this is especially evident in the federal prison system.[76]

  Emerging adults with special education needs who are in federal prison for DC Code violations must be provided those services by the District and not the BOP, according to a lawsuit.[77] To easily comply with this decision, these young people should be held in the District, not the BOP.

- **Create a staff position or agency within the Executive Office of the Mayor responsible for coordination and implementation of the YRA and District-wide response to addressing the needs of emerging adults:** A District-wide strategy is necessary to provide community-based support and programming for all emerging adults. This is consistent with the NEAR Act goal of taking a public health approach to public safety by using community programming, to prevent legal-system involvement for emerging adults.[78] A position or agency within the Mayor's Office could help to break down any existing barriers to service or agency cooperative actions needed to enhance District-wide outcomes for emerging

Leonard Edwards, have advocated that this jurisdiction be expanded even further. See Leonard Edwards, "Opinion: Why Juvenile Court Jurisdiction Should Be Expanded to Age 25," *The Mercury News*, December 3, 2019, https://www.mercurynews.com/2019/12/03/opinion-why-juvenile-court-jurisdiction-should-be-expanded-to-age-25.

[75] Bobb and Lopez, "Decentering Police to Improve Public Safety."

[76] "Jails & Justice: Our Transformation Starts Today."

[77] *Charles H. v. District of Columbia*, No. 1:21-cv-00997 (CJN) (D.D.C. 2021).

[78] American Civil Liberties Union, "The NEAR Act: An Evidence-Based Program to Promote Public Safety in the District," accessed July 2, 2021, https://www.acludc.org/sites/default/files/aclu_nearact_sheet_v3.pdf.

adults. Such a position or agency would also provide a singular point of contact, evaluation, and oversight as it relates to the implementation of amended YRA.

- **Expand the Second Look Act to provide automatic sentencing review for individuals who have served a maximum of ten years in prison.** While current law allows individuals who committed an offense under the age of 25 and have served at least 15 years to petition for a sentencing review, this should be expanded to allow any person who has served at least ten years to petition for resentencing and require an automatic sentencing review by the DC Superior Court for those who have served 20 years.[79]

Goal One: Increase Trauma-Informed, Healing-Centered, and Restorative Services

Increase in District agencies providing services that are developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed, and healing-centered and restorative when providing services to residents, particularly emerging adults. Just as the Mayor's Office has prioritized a focus on racial equity in government practices and systems through the creation of the new Office on Racial Equity, the Mayor's office should prioritize this through the creation of a new office or new position to provide government services that are trauma-informed, restorative, and centered on healing. By formally adopting these approaches, the District can develop a holistic response system addressing trauma and healing and restoring communities, thereby creating a safer DC overall.

Objective 1: The District's Mayor's Office must engage in a process to develop District-wide guiding principles that are trauma-informed, healing-centered, restorative, and address racial disparities.

Objective 2: District Agencies must adopt the guiding principles within six months.

- District agencies should include plans for implementation of the guiding principles to improve their quality of services, as well as work culture, in their annual Performance Plans.

- District agencies should include accomplishments and progress in adopting the guiding principles into the end of the year Performance Accountability Reports.

- The Mayor's Office should provide technical assistance and support to agencies during implementation of the guiding principles into their work culture and services.

Objective 3: The Mayor's Office must provide guidance and support to District agencies – beyond the youth and criminal legal system actors for all executive functions - and partners to develop initiatives, programs, and responses to ensure compliance of the YRA.

[79] "Jails & Justice: Our Transformation Starts Today."

Goal Two: Build a Community-Based Continuum of Care

"We need a YME in the community that includes mentors, housing, and a community/drop-in center."

-Focus Group Participant from Young Men Emerging Unit

The Youth Rehabilitation Act of 2018 requires the establishment of a continuum of developmentally appropriate community-based services for emerging adults covering the areas of education, workforce development, behavioral and physical health care, housing, family, and reentry needs.

Incarceration is not the solution to addressing crime, public safety or community violence and should not be the presumptive response to those issues. Community interventions, programming, and treatment provide opportunities to address issues of accountability, rehabilitation, and affect lasting positive change for all legal system involved individuals, including emerging adults. Community-based programming is less expensive and has better outcomes than incarceration.[80] **Secure confinement must be used as a last resort to maintain public safety.**

The District must invest in a robust community-based continuum of care to effectively address accountability, safety and rehabilitation in the community. This continuum of services, supports and opportunities must encourage collaboration, and data sharing across agencies and providers to ensure holistic care for clients and cohesive services.

Under the YRA, community-based programming should incorporate a strength- and asset-based approach, emphasizing access to prosocial activities in the community. Programming should be accessible and available to any emerging adult residing in either the DC Jail or the Federal Bureau of Prisons. This may require programmatic adaptation to the environment of the young person, but access to the core programming elements is a key component of services provided under the continuum. Additionally, continuity between programming within a facility and in the community upon release provides a stable reentry environment, thereby reducing the likelihood of recidivism and increasing community connection.[81]

[80] Micah W. Kubic and Taylor Pendergrass, "Diversion Programs Are Cheaper and More Effective Than Incarceration. Prosecutors Should Embrace Them.," American Civil Liberties Union, December 6, 2017, https://www.aclu.org/blog/smart-justice/diversion-programs-are-cheaper-and-more-effective-incarceration-prosecutors.

[81] Grant Duwe, "The Use and Impact of Correctional Programming for Inmates on Pre- and Post-Release Outcomes" (National Institute of Justice, June 2017), https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/250476.pdf.

Objective 1: Build Diversion Programming and Opportunities for Emerging Adults

The District currently has two diversion options which provide opportunities for individuals to have their charges dismissed if program requirements are fulfilled:

- **Deferred Prosecution Agreement:** A voluntary agreement between the prosecutor and the defendant whereby the government offers to dismiss charges upon the defendant's satisfactory fulfillment of certain requirements (e.g., performing a certain number of community service hours).

- **Deferred Sentencing Agreement:** A voluntary agreement between the prosecutor and the defendant whereby the defendant enters a guilty plea and sentencing is set for a later date. The individual must complete certain requirements set out in the agreement (e.g., performing a certain number of community service hours). If the individual successfully completes all requirements, the guilty plea is withdrawn and the case is dismissed.

For either type of agreement, the Pretrial Services Agency (PSA) performs the initial screening of eligibility for placement in a particular diversion program, but final approval is granted by the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) or DC's Office of the Attorney General (OAG).[82]

Diversion

Intervention programs that "seek to offer individuals who have entered the criminal justice system, such as through arrest, an opportunity to avoid prosecution or sentencing by taking part in treatment, education, community service or other pro-social activities."[83]

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)

- Formalized cooperative agreements between diversion program and key stakeholders ensuring program consistency and continuity.[84]
- Broad, equitable, and objective eligibility criteria, applied consistently at multiple points of case processing.[85]
- Exclusionary criteria and costs on program participants must be limited.[86]

[82] "Diversion Opportunities," Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia, accessed July 2, 2021, https://www.psa.gov/?q=programs/diversion_opportunities.
[83] "Diversion and Deflection in The District of Columbia" (Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, 2017), https://cjcc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/cjcc/page_content/attachments/DIVERSION%20AND%20DEFLECTION%20IN%20THE%20DISTRICT%20OF%20COLUMBIA.pdf.
[84] Spurgeon Kennedy et al., "Promising Practices in Pretrial Diversion" (Bureau of Justice Assistance), accessed July 2, 2021, https://netforumpro.com/public/temp/ClientImages/NAPSA/20b9d126-60bd-421a-bcbf-1d12da015947.pdf.
[85] Kennedy et al.
[86] "Promising Practices in Prosecutor-Led Diversion" (Fair and Just Prosecution), accessed July 2, 2021, https://fairandjustprosecution.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/FJPBrief.Diversion.9.26.pdf.

- Uniform needs assessments should be used to determine the most appropriate and least restrictive levels of supervision and identify service needs.[87]
- Intervention plans must be tailored to the individual participants needs and developed with participant's input.[88]
- Programming must be strength-based and use rewards instead of graduated sanctions in response to participant behavior.
- Avoid or greatly limit contact with the criminal legal system, by relying on clinical staff to run programs.[89]
- Programming should happen in the community, with community participation.
- Staff must receive robust and routine training to ensure knowledge of rules, regulations, and best practices.
- Programs must be independently monitored and evaluated.[90]

Existing Diversion Programs and Identified Gaps/Needs in the District:

For youth, the Alternatives to the Court Experience (ACE) Diversion Program is a program under the Department of Human Services (DHS), in collaboration with community-based service providers, the Court Social Services Division (CSSD), the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH), the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), and Office of the Attorney General (OAG). Under certain circumstances, OAG declines to prosecute youth charged with status offenses and/or low-level delinquency offenses. Instead, the youth's needs are assessed, and the youth and their families are connected with appropriate services to address the underlying issues causing the negative behavior while providing the opportunity to avoid a juvenile record.[91]

Family Court operates a Juvenile Behavioral Diversion Program that provides intensive case management for juvenile legal system involved youth with serious mental health concerns.[92] OAG's Restorative Justice Program, provides alternatives to prosecution such as Restorative Justice Conferencing.[93]

For adults, the Pre-Arrest Diversion Program was launched in April 2018 as a collaboration between the DBH, DHS, and MPD. This program provides deflection for individuals with mental illness and/or substance misuse disorders to avoid arrest for minor criminal offenses and instead

[87] Kennedy et al., "Promising Practices in Pretrial Diversion."
[88] Kennedy et al.
[89] "Promising Practices in Prosecutor-Led Diversion."
[90] Kennedy et al., "Promising Practices in Pretrial Diversion."
[91] "Alternatives to the Court Experience (ACE) Diversion Program," Department of Human Services, Government of the District of Columbia, accessed July 2, 2021, https://dhs.dc.gov/page/alternatives-court-experience-ace-diversion-program.
[92] Superior Court of the District of Columbia Court, "Juvenile Behavioral Diversion Program," December 3, 2014, https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/divisionspdfs/committee%20on%20admissions%20pdf/JBDP_Brochure.pdf.
[93] "Restorative DC," Restorative DC, accessed July 2, 2021, http://www.restorativedc.org/.

provides referrals to supportive services. Individual services provided under the program focus on harm reduction, peer support, community engagement, and service system navigation support.[94]

The Drug Intervention Program (Drug Court) handles non-violent misdemeanor and felony charges involving individuals with substance misuse disorder and provides supervision, drug testing, treatment services, and immediate sanctions and incentives.[95] The Mental Health and Community Court (MHCC) is a voluntary treatment court for individuals charged with certain misdemeanors and low-level felony offenses with a diagnosis of a serious and persistent mental illness.[96] Finally, the East of the River Community Court adjudicates misdemeanor cases not involving domestic violence in the Sixth and Seventh MPD Police Districts, allowing individuals with misdemeanor offenses to be diverted and avoid a conviction.[97]

Current programming focuses on misdemeanor offenses, with emphasis on juvenile programming. Programming specifically designed to engage emerging adults who are 18-24 in a developmentally tailored and appropriate way should be developed and diversion opportunities for more serious offenses should be implemented.

Status offenses should be decriminalized, as well as low-level criminal offenses, and crimes of survival that have no impact on public safety but result from poverty.[98]

Recommendations:

- The Mayor's Office, OAG, and the United States Attorney's Office (USAO) must coordinate to expand diversion programming to serve the unique needs of emerging adults. This must include expanding existing juvenile diversion programs, such as OAG's Restorative Justice Program to serve emerging adults and include long-term planning to address violence.

- The Mayor's Office, OAG, USAO, CSSD, and MPD must coordinate to expand the ACE Diversion Program to include diversion services for 18-to-24-year-olds. This should address misdemeanor offenses and include long-term planning to address felony offenses up to and including violence.

- Diversion programming available for adults should prioritize emerging adults and decline to prosecute or dismiss the charges of emerging adults who fulfill determined requirements (e.g., community service).

- The Mayor's Office must establish cooperative agreements between diversion programs and key stakeholders to ensure program consistency and diversion of emerging adults.

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[94] "Mental Health, Mental Health Courts and the Criminal Legal System" (District of Columbia Advisory Committee, September 2020), https://www.usccr.gov/files/2020-09-21-Mental-Health-in-DC.pdf.
[95] "Drug Court," District of Columbia Courts, accessed July 2, 2021, https://www.dccourts.gov/superior-court/criminal-division/drug-branch.
[96] "Drug Court."
[97] "Drug Court."
[98] Bobb and Lopez, "Decentering Police to Improve Public Safety." 22, 61.

- MPD must develop and implement a police and community-led diversion program for emerging adults. Such a pre-arrest diversion/deflection program must be rooted in reparative justice and launched as pilot program with an evaluation period. The Mayor's Office should provide guidance for program development and instruct MPD on best practices to divert emerging adults (e.g., Crisis Intervention Training.)

- The District must invest in violence interruption programs. Several existing and effective programs should be evaluated, possibly consolidated, and adequately funded. OAG operates Cure the Streets, while the Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (ONSE) has violence interrupters active in over 20 sites. Sites where violence interruption exists have noted a 7% decrease in gun homicides contrasted with an overall increase in gun homicides in the rest of the District.[99]

- The Mayor's Office should provide guidance to ONSE, prioritizing serving emerging adults that are at high risk of participating in, or being victims of, violent crimes. ONSE should deflect emerging adults from the legal system by providing immediate community-based wrap-around services. To help enhance the service delivery of ONSE, the Mayor and the DC Council should increase funding to ensure the program has adequate resources to serve an increased number of District residents, including expanded service delivery targeted at emerging adults.

- Juvenile offenses, as well as low-level offenses and crimes of survival should be decriminalized.

The District must explore promising programs from other jurisdictions, such as Common Justice (Brooklyn, New York) and Project Re-direct (Brooklyn, New York) to learn about promising diversion practices and initiatives and identify programs/models that could be adopted by the District. More information on these programs can be found in **Appendix C.**

Objective 2: Build Restorative Justice Programming and Opportunities for Emerging Adults

Restorative Justice is an alternative approach focusing on healing and rehabilitation, providing opportunities for the person who committed the offense, the impacted person/people, and other affected individuals harmed by the action to determine the process of justice. Restorative Justice practices also provide opportunities for healing to those harmed by the action. The approach views crime as more than law breaking, instead viewing crime as an action that causes harm to people, relationships, and communities.[100]

[99] Bobb and Lopez. The ONSE initiative launched with all 20 sites in 2018. Cure the Streets started earlier with two sites, then added four more in December 2019.
[100] "Restorative Community Conferences (RCC)," Community Works, accessed July 2, 2021, http://communityworkswest.org/program/rcc/.

Restorative Justice is practiced in a variety of ways, including through community conferences, victim-offender dialogues, family group conferences, and restorative circles.[101] The approach is more successful than traditional prosecution at rehabilitating individuals, increasing victim satisfaction, lowering costs, and reducing recidivism, while also improving family connectedness and reducing racial and ethnic disparities within legal involved emerging adults.[102]

The community-based approach is commonly practiced in schools and was most early associated with the juvenile justice setting.[103] The OAG is already exploring the possibility of expanding the restorative justice program for juvenile misdemeanor cases to include emerging adults through age 24.[104] The District also provides training on restorative justice through the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSER) and Restorative DC for organizations and schools.

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice engages a community in building relationships and repairing harm through mutual, inclusive dialogue, understanding, and cooperation.[105] This approach emphasizes that justice lies in problem solving and healing between the person who was responsible for harming others and those affected by the harm, as opposed to punitive punishment and isolation.[106]

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)[107]

Stages of Restorative Justice

1. Preparation occurs before the conference meeting. Trained facilitators separately prepare all of the people directly impacted to explore the cause and/or impacts of the harm. Facilitators build rapport and establish participants' willingness to be part of the process. The person who was harmed may participate in part of the process or designate a surrogate to participate on their behalf. The facilitator also meets with families and friends who may be present for the conference meeting with the responsible individual to understand their concerns.
2. The conference meeting is the meeting between parties and involves the responsible individual, the person harmed, their families, and support system to discuss the causes

[101] DC Alliance for Restorative Practices, "Policy Platform on Restorative Practices for Youth," accessed July 2, 2021, https://dcallianceforrestorativepractices.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/2014-03-11-dcarp-restorative-practices-policy-platform.pdf.
[102] Sujatha Baliga, Sia Henry, and Georgia Valentine, "Restorative Community Conferencing: A Study of Community Works West's Restorative Justice Youth Diversion Program in Alameda County" (Impact Justice), accessed July 2, 2021, https://impactjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/CWW_RJreport.pdf.
[103] Bailey Maryfield, Roger Przybylski, and Mark Myrent, "Research on Restorative Justice Practices," *Justice Research and Statistics Association*, December 2020.
[104] Keith Hasan-Towery and Kristy Love, "Restorative Justice in the District of Columbia" (Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, July 2019): 18.
[105] "Restorative Justice Trainings and Resources," Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Government of the District of Columbia, accessed July 2, 2021, https://osse.dc.gov/page/restorative-justice-trainings-and-resources.
[106] DC Alliance for Restorative Practices, "Policy Platform on Restorative Practices for Youth."
[107] "A Diversion Toolkit for Communities," Restorative Justice Project, accessed July 2, 2021, https://rjdtoolkit.impactjustice.org/.

and impacts of the harm, ask questions of one another, and collectively create a plan meeting the needs of all in attendance.

3. A plan is developed with both parties identifying actions to be completed to address the harm caused. If additional support or changes to the plan are necessary, the facilitator(s) manages that process and connect the parties with support for plan completion. Upon completion, all participants are notified, no charges are filed, and the case is closed.

Other Key Ingredients

- Schools, organizations, and police departments must be informed about options to divert emerging adults to restorative justice programs, while ensuring opportunities for restorative justice are provided to individuals and communities most in need.
- Facilitators must approach their meetings with the perspective of getting to know the individuals, their skills, the qualities they are proud of, their environment and other strengths. A strength-based approach allows those involved to enact change by capitalizing on their strength for healing and resiliency.
- All participants in the restorative justice process must maintain strict confidentiality.
- The success of restorative justice practices requires buy-in from the impacted person/people, the responsible party, their families, communities, and staff involved in the process. Ideas for buy-in include: providing information on restorative justice and success stories, involving staff/facilitators/community members in the development of policies and protocols, and soliciting feedback through the process.[108] In addition, facilitation of restorative justice should be done by community members who are familiar with the neighborhoods and have shared experiences.
- Community mediation can be used for individuals returning from incarceration to address any conflicts with families or partners to facilitate a successful return to the community. During the mediation other components of reentry are discussed, such as the strengths, supports, and needs of the individual. As needs and resources are identified, every person in the mediation shares responsibilities for supporting the individual, not just the case worker, although the case worker is ultimately responsible for connection to services.

Existing Restorative Justice Programs in the District and Identified Gaps/Needs:

Existing restorative justice programming includes the DC Peace Team which provides training in nonviolent skills and facilitates restorative Circles.[109] Restorative DC is a collaborative that

[108] Yolanda Anyon, "Taking Restorative Practices School-Wide: Insights from Three Schools in Denver" (Advancement Project), accessed July 2, 2021, https://advancementproject.org/resources/taking-restorative-practices-school-wide/.
[109] "Restorative Justice Offerings," DC Peace Team, accessed July 2, 2021, https://dcpeaceteam.com/our-work/restorative-justice/.

supports DC Public Schools and public charter schools by providing training and Restorative Justice Practices, as well as offering Restorative Justice Conferencing as an alternative to juvenile prosecutions.[110] OAG has discretion to offer juveniles the opportunity to participate in the Restorative Justice and Victim Services Section restorative justice process. In addition, DYRS, ONSE, and Young Men Emerging Unit all have restorative justice elements.

The District needs restorative justice programming specifically designed for, and developmentally tailored to, emerging adults (18-24) to address a range of offenses from non-violent to violent offenses, as well as addressing community violence, trauma, healing, and community service. Referrals should be made from schools, community programs, and MPD and all criminal legal system actors, and restorative justice programming should be the default solution to prevent emerging adults from having an arrest record. Education is necessary to inform communities about the benefits and positive outcomes of restorative justice. Finally, emerging adults should be engaged to be leaders in a restorative justice movement.

Recommendations:

- The OAG should seek to establish a cooperative agreement with the United States Attorney's Office (USAO) to expand their existing restorative justice programming to serving emerging adults under the jurisdiction of the USAO and tailor these programs to serve the unique needs of this population. The Mayor and the Council must ensure that the OAG has appropriate levels of funding to support this expansion.

- The Mayor's Office should establish cooperative agreements between restorative justice programs and key stakeholders to ensure program consistency and services for emerging adults.

- The Mayor's Office must provide guidance to agencies (e.g. DYRS, OAG, ONSE, etc.) prioritizing service of emerging adults that are at high risk of participating in, or being victims of, violent crimes. These agencies should focus on deflecting emerging adults from further engagement in the legal system by providing restorative justice programs and practices to determine the needs of participants to be addressed through community-based services and interventions.

- The Mayor's Office must engage in outreach with programs and schools (e.g., Latin American Youth Center, Maya Angelou Young Adult Learning Center) serving emerging adults to expand restorative justice entry points/referrals for all emerging adults, not just emerging adults that come in contact with the legal system. The District can develop a network of responses addressing issues while strengthening communities and limiting legal system involvement by expanding restorative justice opportunities to all emerging adults.

- The MPD must develop a police and community partner-led diversion program for emerging adults. This program should be rooted in restorative justice and launched as an

[110] "Restorative Practices: Building and Repairing Communities of Care," Restorative DC, 2021, http://www.restorativedc.org/restorativepractices/.

initial pilot program with an evaluation period to ensure compliance and effectiveness. The Mayor's Office must provide guidance for program development and inform MPD on best practices to divert emerging adults (e.g., Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)).

- Existing community-based restorative justice programs should receive increased funding to expand their offerings, and if needed, receive technical assistance and training to ensure their model can effectively serve an emerging adult population.

- The District must explore promising programs, such as Restorative Justice Mediation Program (California) and Common Justice (New York) to be informed about promising restorative justice practices in other jurisdictions. More information on these programs can be found in **Appendix C.**

Objective 3: Build Housing Programming and Opportunities for Emerging Adults

Stable and affordable housing is a key ingredient to stability and overall success for any person.[111] Affordable housing options are a significant challenge impacting all age demographics in the District.[112] This situation has only been exacerbated by the additional challenges brought on by COVID-19. As part of a point-in-time survey on January 27, 2021 there were 5,111 unhoused individuals in the District, including 681 persons who were unsheltered.[113] In 2021, DC had 4,679 in emergency shelters, and 1,234 in transitional housing programs.[114] For those that are able to secure housing, it is often an unsustainable burden, as over 28,000 households identified their situation as a 'cost-burden,' spending half of their salary on rent.[115]

In 2021, there were 502 unhoused emerging adults in the District.[116] Another report shows that 91% of emerging adults experiencing homelessness are African American and 70% were unemployed at the time of the survey.[117]

In many cases, these emerging adults have also previously been impacted by the criminal legal system. The Coalition for Juvenile Justice found that, of the 1 in 10 emerging adults experiencing

[111] "The Importance of Housing Affordability and Stability for Preventing and Ending Homelessness" (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, May 2019), https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Housing-Affordability-and-Stablility-Brief.pdf.
[112] "Housing Needs by State: District of Columbia," National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2019, https://nlihc.org/housing-needs-by-state/district-columbia.
[113] "Homelessness In DC," The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness, accessed September 6, 2021, https://community-partnership.org/homelessness-in-dc/.
[114] "Homelessness In DC."
[115] "Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in the Past 12 Months," United States Census Bureau, accessed September 6, 2021, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=district%20of%20columbia%20AND%20rent&y=2019&tid=ACSDT1Y2019.B25070&hidePreview=true.
[116] "District of Columbia Homelessness Statistics."
[117] "Youth Homelessness Issue Brief" (DC Alliance of Youth Advocates), accessed July 2, 2021, https://188iuo20axjt1xnin64et15o-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2017/11/DCAYA-Youth-Homelessness-Issue-Brief-.pdf.

homelessness, nearly half had been incarcerated at some point.[118] Lack of stable housing also impacts returning citizens' reentry. An Ohio-based study showed that participants with suitable and stable housing were 40% less likely to be rearrested.[119]

In Washington, DC, there have been initiatives to reduce homelessness, including earmarked funds to provide services for unaccompanied youth and emerging adults experiencing homelessness in the District's 2022 budget. The budget includes $95 million "to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring, including 2,545 new Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) units for singles and 602 new PSH units for families," as well as $97 million to expand and renovate permanent and temporary supporting housing and shelter services for vulnerable populations.[120] Furthermore, with the enactment of the Fair Criminal Record Screening for Housing Act of 2016, applications for housing and programs are no longer subject to denial based on previous legal involvement.

Housing

Stable affordable housing is a key ingredient to stability and overall success for any person. In the District of Columbia, affordable housing options are still a significant challenge impacting all age demographics.

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)

- Individualized programming including behavioral change, money management and credit counseling, independent living skills, education, workforce development, connections to family, dealing with past and current trauma.
- Early development of reentry plans to have a pathway out of homelessness.
- Ideal housing programs must be proactive and serve emerging adults who are unhoused or at risk of experiencing homelessness, rather than delaying intervention until after legal involvement.
- A variety of services to meet needs, including long-term housing solutions, as well as shorter-term stays, are critical to success.
- Provide financial resources through a stipend program.
- Ensure that policies do not lead people experiencing homelessness to be arrested or charged for crimes of survival[121] that do not impact public safety, such as trespassing and other low-level incidents, including drug possession or sex work.

[118] Lisa Pilnik, "Implementing Change: Addressing the Intersections Juvenile Justice and Youth Homelessness for Young Adults" (Coalition for Juvenile Justice), accessed July 4, 2021, http://www.juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/Implementing%20Change%20-%20Juvenile%20Justice%20and%20Youth%20Homelessness.pdf.
[119] Jocelyn Fontaine et al., "Supportive Housing for Returning Prisoners: Outcomes and Impacts of the Returning Home-Ohio Pilot Project" (The Urban Institute, August 2012), https://doi.org/10.1037/e527702013-001.
[120] DC Office of the Chief Financial Officer, "FY2022 Approved Budget and Financial Plan Volume 1: Executive Summary," accessed November 2, 2021, https://dcgov.app.box.com/s/5sz8y3wequcgtxqjfxsquqam8bpivy5m.
[121] Bobb and Lopez, "Decentering Police to Improve Public Safety." 62, 64.

- Ensure that young people are diverted from the criminal legal system whenever possible, and that programs and services are specifically tailored for the population experiencing homelessness.
- Avoid restricting housing placement policies based on past legal system involvement.
- Provide related programs and services to bolster a young person's transition to long-term stable housing.

Existing Housing Programs in the District and Identified Gaps/Needs:

While there have been clear, and significant investments into DC's housing issues, there are opportunities to take lessons learned from across the country to improve DC's response to emerging adults. Existing housing programs include DHS's Youth HOPE which provides short term interventions and Community-Based Drop-in Centers that provide a place for youth to go during the daytime.[122] Youth Connect provides street outreach engagement youth who are runaways, experiencing homeless, or at-risk of experiencing homelessness.[123] Project Reconnect is a shelter diversion and rapid exit program for young adults.[124] Friendship Place and DC Doors provide housing services. The Wanda Alston Foundation and SMYAL serve housing needs of LGBTQ young people, including emerging adults. The Housing Choice Voucher Program, Housing Production Trust Fund, and Local Rent Supplement Program exist to serve the community but are underfunded and unable to meet the demands for housing.

The District needs programming specifically designed to engage emerging adults since existing opportunities are fundamentally the same for all returning citizens. Increased funding is necessary to reach a larger population. There should be access to community-based programming and services that emphasize self-sufficiency and housing ownership (i.e. rent-to-own opportunities); phased programs for independent living (i.e. starting off in a group environment with skills building to create stability for independence); skills building programming for independent living (i.e. cooking, cleaning, budgeting); mix-use living spaces that create community environments for living and working, and connecting family with resources/supports to increase family housing stability.

Recommendations:

- The Mayor's Office must expand housing programming to serve the unique needs of emerging adults, including expanding existing housing programming, such as DHS Youth Hope, to serve emerging adults, as well as offering funding opportunities to develop community-based supportive programming.

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[122] "Youth Homeless Services," Department of Human Services, Government of the District of Columbia, accessed July 4, 2021, https://dhs.dc.gov/page/youth-homeless-services.
[123] "Youth & Young Adults," Friendship Place, accessed July 4, 2021, https://friendshipplace.org/programs-outreach/youth-young-adults/.
[124] DC Department of Human Services, "Project Reconnect," accessed July 4, 2021, https://ich.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ich/event_content/attachments/Project%20Reconnect%20One%20Pager%20.pdf.

- The Mayor's Office must provide guidance to existing programs to prioritize serving emerging adults that are at high risk of participating in, or being victims of, violent crimes, particularly coordinating among agencies and programs providing housing resources in the in the District.

- The Mayor's Office must also develop and implement an emerging adult housing program to provide services that are restorative, trauma-informed, and healing centered. The program should also provide education, vocation, and wrap around services and connect participants with peer navigators to provide support throughout the process. A Deputy Mayor or staff position of Emerging Adults within the Executive Office of the Mayor should be established to oversee these programs, the implementation of the YRA, and to provide technical assistance and guidance for the development of the program(s), as well as inform program providers on best practices to serve emerging adults (e.g., trauma informed training).

The District must explore promising programs, such as Ujamaa Place (Minnesota), Reset Foundation (California), Independent Living Program (California), and Y2Y Harvard Square (Massachusetts). More information on these programs can be found in **Appendix C.**

Objective 4: Build Physical, Mental, and Social Health Programming & Opportunities for Emerging Adults

Physical, mental, and social health are essential to a person's overall well-being. Exposure to trauma,[125] residing in a food desert,[126] lack of access to quality mental and physical healthcare,[127] and lack of education can have lasting impacts on a person and increase their potential for legal system involvement.[128] Compared with the general population, people experiencing mental illness, substance misuse disorder, in addition to food or housing insecurity, disproportionately come into contact with the legal system.[129] For example, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has found that, between 2007-2009, 64.2% of incarcerated individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 met the DSM-IV criteria for a substance misuse disorder.[130] Oftentimes the symptoms of individuals'

[125] Eduardo Ferrer, "Transformation Through Accommodation: Reforming Juvenile Justice by Recognizing and Responding to Trauma," *American Criminal Law Review* 53 (2016): 549–93.
[126] "Food Access in DC: A Focus on Retail Grocery Access" (D.C. Policy Center, 2018), https://www.dcpolicycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Food-ACCESS-in-DC.pdf.
[127] Jennifer Doleac, "New Evidence That Access to Health Care Reduces Crime" (Brookings Institute, January 3, 2018), https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2018/01/03/new-evidence-that-access-to-health-care-reduces-crime/.
[128] Leila Morsey and Richard Rothstein, "Mass Incarceration and Children's Outcomes: Criminal Justice Policy Is Education Policy" (Economic Policy Institute, December 15, 2016), https://www.epi.org/publication/mass-incarceration-and-childrens-outcomes/.
[129] Sue Pfefferle et al., "Approaches to Early Jail Diversion: Collaborations and Innovations" (Depart of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, July 23, 2019), https://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/approaches-early-jail-diversion-collaborations-and-innovations.
[130] Jennifer Bronson et al., "Drug Use, Dependence, and Abuse Among State Prisoners and Jail Inmates, 2007-2009" (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, June 2017).

behavioral, mental and physical struggles drive involvement with the legal system, leading to cycling between treatment or recovery and the legal system, without continuity in services.

Exposure to trauma at home or in the community increases risk of developing a behavioral or mental health disorder which can lead to legal system involvement.[131] The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente examined the relationship between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), defined as potentially traumatic events occurring in childhood, and adult risk behavior, health status, and disease.[132] Researchers found that more ACEs increased the risk for negative outcomes.[133]

This is particularly relevant as it pertains to emerging adults, whose brains, especially the prefrontal cortex, are still undergoing development through their mid-20's.[134] The prefrontal cortex is the area of the brain that is primarily responsible for logical thinking, decision-making, emotion and behavior regulation. Exposure to trauma may lead to the deregulation of these functions and possibly delay maturation. Trauma is inherently an experience of disconnection, mistreatment, and disempowerment. Therefore, community-based services and the legal system that serve people who have experienced trauma must work to build connection, treatment, and empowerment.

Health

Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, beyond the mere absence of disease or infirmity.[135] Physical, mental, and social health are inextricably linked. The quality of each depends on the others.

Physical health refers to the condition of one's body, and the bodily processes that allow a person to function and participate in the activities of life. Someone with optimal physical health will not have a disease or illness, will be physically active multiple times a week, will have access to clean water and air, will get adequate sleep, and will have a sufficiently sizable and nutritious diet. Physical health also includes avoiding hazards and dangerous situations, maintaining personal hygiene, and engaging in health maintenance and disease prevention practices, such as regular check-ups.[136] Many also consider having reliable housing and weather-appropriate clothing to be pillars of optimal physical health.[137]

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[131] Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (US), *Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services*, vol. 57, SAMHSA/CSAT Treatment Improvement Protocols (Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US), 2014), http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207201/.
[132] Vincent J Felitti et al., "Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 14, no. 4 (May 1998): 245–58, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0749-3797(98)00017-8.
[133] Felitti et al.
[134] "Trauma Training Institute - July 12 -13, 2017," Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, Government of the District of Columbia, accessed July 4, 2021, https://ovsjg.dc.gov/page/trauma-training-institute-july-12-13-2017.
[135] World Health Organization, "Constitution of the World Health Organization," accessed July 12, 2021, https://www.who.int/governance/eb/who_constitution_en.pdf.
[136] "What Is Health?," Medical News Today, April 20, 2020, https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/150999.
[137] "DC Healthy Housing Collaborative," Institute for Public Health Innovation, accessed July 12, 2021, https://www.institutephi.org/our-work-in-action/policy-health-systems-improvement/dc-healthy-housing-collaborative/.

Mental health refers to one's emotional and psychological well-being.[138] It includes cognitive functioning, mood, impulse control, etc.[139] Someone with poor mental health may have or develop a psychiatric disorder inhibiting their ability to think, feel and operate as they normally would.[140] Poor mental health often interferes with a person's social health.

Social health refers to the quality of one's interpersonal relationships and connections to the broader community and the institutions of society.[141] A socially healthy person will have many supportive personal relationships, will follow the rules and mores of society, and will be in good standing with social institutions. Someone with strong social health will likely also have strong mental and physical health since the capacity to maintain positive relationships with other individuals and society at large depends upon on a person's physical and psychological ability to navigate the social world.

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)

- Mental health treatment is most successful when it is concentrated on the individual and focused on the individual's strengths.[142]
- Emerging adults' benefit from programs that amplify their self-reliance, through tasks such as honing life skills and securing reliable employment.[143]
- Programs must be inviting and engaging for emerging adults to process trauma with professional and compassionate counsel while learning cognitive-behavioral tools to manage emotions and give emerging adults the space and skills necessary to interrupt the influence of their past on their ongoing behavior.[144]
- Providing people in emerging adults' immediate environments (family, friends, community) with the knowledge and resources to help them get appropriate and accessible physical, mental, and social health support is integral to sustained and successful interventions.[145]
- Community-based programs must be very familiar with the cultures and experiences of the communities they are working with, including age group-related needs and safe physical space that supports healing and treatment.[146] Programs

[138] "Mental Health," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, December 12, 2018, https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm.
[139] "What Is Mental Health?," MentalHealth.gov, May 28, 2020, https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/what-is-mental-health.
[140] "What Is Mental Health?"
[141] Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, "Creating a Healthier Life: A Step-by-Step Guide to Wellness," n.d., https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma16-4958.pdf.
[142] Maryann Davis, Ashli Sheidow, and Michael McCart, "Multisystemic Therapy for Emerging Adults: Treating Emerging Adult Offenders Who Have Mental Health Conditions" (University of Massachusetts Medical School), accessed July 4, 2021, https://www.umassmed.edu/contentassets/15113f8a672840fca8b783ca95a800af/multisystemic.pdf.
[143] Stacey Wiggall and Alicia Boccellari, eds., *The UC San Francisco Trauma Recovery Center Manual: A Model for Removing Barriers to Care and Transforming Services for Survivors of Violent Crime* (San Francisco, CA: Promise of the Sun Press, 2017), http://traumarecoverycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/TRC-Manual.pdf.
[144] Wiggall and Boccellari.
[145] Wiggall and Boccellari.
[146] Wiggall and Boccellari.

must also include system navigators or peer mentors to guide participants through to successful completion and provide follow-up and accountability support for their client's overall wellbeing and progress.[147]

Existing Health Programs in the District and Identified Gaps/Needs:

Existing mental health (or behavioral health) programming designed to engage emerging adults in the District is limited. The District needs to increase community-based programming and services with an emphasis on trauma therapy and resilience building, crisis intervention and continuity of care, community access to nutrition education and sports/recreation, marijuana education/etiquette, and positive peer groups. The District lacks comprehensive strategies for preventing issues that lead to the deterioration of mental, social, and physical health in emerging adulthood. Currently the only physical health programs that address emerging adults are provided by Capital Area Food Bank, DC Central Kitchen, DC Healthy Families, DC Hunger Solutions, Green Spaces for DC, Hypothermia Watches (DHS), La Casa Transitional Rehabilitation Program, Thrive DC, and Whitman Walker Health. While there are several existing behavioral and mental health programs, investment in expansion of services is critical. Some of the existing programs in the District offer mindfulness/meditation, psychoeducational groups, supportive counseling services provided by Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment Expansion Program, Break the Cycle, Crisis Intervention Officer, Community Connections DC, DBH Community Response Team, DC Behavioral Health Association, DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence, DC Pre-Arrest Diversion Pilot Program, Fresh Start Therapy, National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI) DC, Potomac Programs, and UPO Comprehensive Treatment Center.

The DC Pre-arrest Diversion Pilot Program provides an opportunity for adults with mental illnesses to receive support services as an alternative to arrest when they come into contact with MPD for minor offenses.[148] This collaboration between the DBH and MPD utilizes Crisis Intervention Officers who strive to divert nonviolent, mentally ill individuals away from the legal system using specialized training to reduce response time and identify appropriate behavioral health services.[149] The DBH Community Response Team (CRT) is available 24/7 at multiple sites and promotes service engagement. The team offers assessments, referrals, and short-term care, with follow ups, in addition to doing community education and neighborhood outreach. The FY 2022 Budget and Financial Plan of the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants includes nearly $2.4 million to provide trauma-informed mental health services for victims of crime and to prevent violent crime.[150]

[147] Wiggall and Boccellari.
[148] "Report of the Committee on Community Investments & Alternatives to the Criminal Justice System."
[149] "Report of the Committee on Community Investments & Alternatives to the Criminal Justice System."
[150] DC Office of the Chief Financial Officer, "Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants - FY 2022 Approved ," accessed November 2, 2021, https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/fo_vsjg_chapter_2022s.pdf.

Recommendations:

- The Mayor's Office should expand existing programming to serve the unique needs of emerging adults. This work must include expanding the Department of Behavioral Health Children Youth and Family Services to serve emerging adults in need of their services.

- Behavioral and mental health programs available for adults must prioritize emerging adults and increase access to developmentally appropriate services.

- The Mayor's Office must provide guidance to behavioral and mental health programs prioritizing emerging adults that are at high risk of participating in, or being victims of, violent crimes. In addition, the Office must inform programs of best practices to serve emerging adults and legal-involved emerging adults. These efforts should deflect emerging adults from the legal system by providing immediate community-based wrap-around services.

The District must explore promising programs, such as MST-EA (Connecticut), Lone Star Justice Alliance (Texas), ROCA (Massachusetts and Baltimore), Mental Health First Aid (national), Multidimensional Family Therapy (Florida), Connecticut's TRUE program, YOUTH Alive (California), and the UCSF Trauma Recovery Center (California). More information on these programs can be found in **Appendix C.**

Objective 5: Build Educational Programming and Opportunities for Emerging Adults

The disparities in educational outcomes between Americans of different races has persisted for decades. In spite of being one of the most educated cities in the country, DC also has a significant achievement gap between its Black and Hispanic/Latino residents and its White residents. **Figure 2** shows that White DC residents have nearly a 100% graduation rate, while Black residents have a graduation rate that is 13 percentage points lower and Hispanic/Latino residents have a graduation rate that is 25 percentage points lower.[151] These racial disparities in educational outcomes are exacerbated by the criminal carceral system.

[151] DC Health Matters, "Educational Attainment in District of Columbia," accessed September 6, 2021, https://www.dchealthmatters.org/indicators/index/indicatorsearch?module=indicators&controller=index&action=indicatorsearch&doSearch=1&i=341&l=130951&primaryTopicOnly=&b%5B%5D=100&subgrouping=2&card=0&handpicked=1&resultsPerPage=150&showComparisons=1&showOnlySelectedComparisons=&showOnlySelectedComparisons=1&grouping=1&ordering=1&sortcomp=0&sortcompIncludeMissing=.

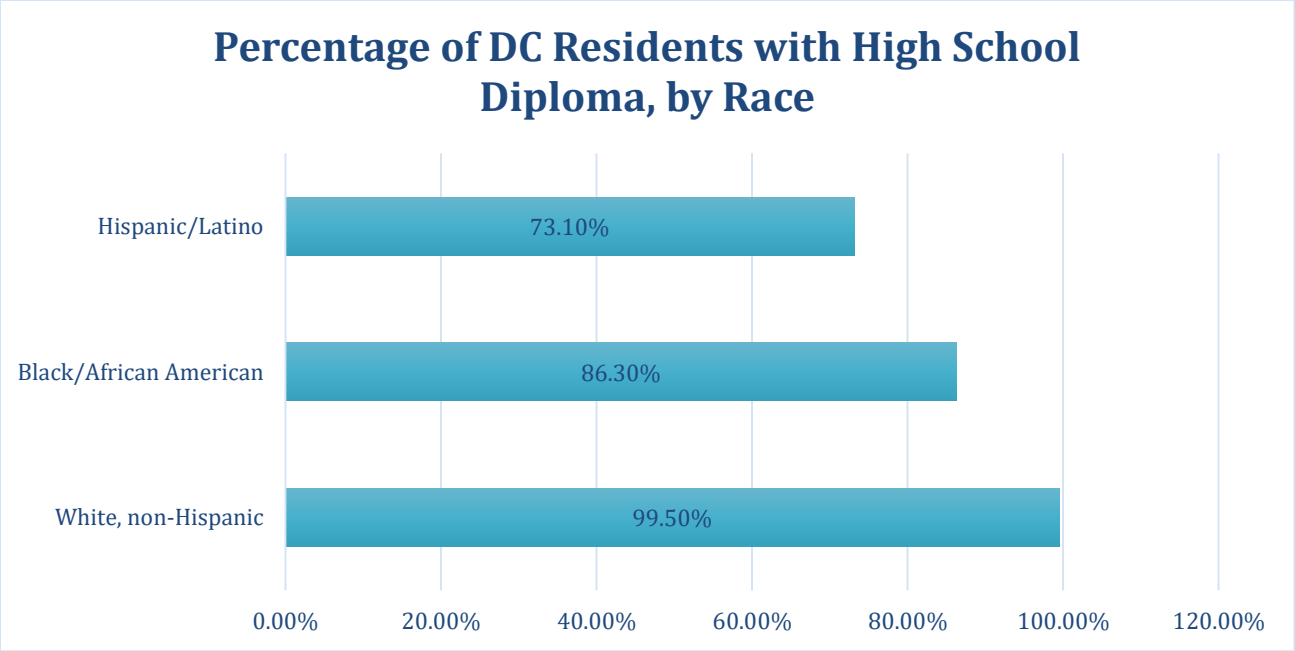

Figure 2. Percentage of DC Residents with High School Diploma, by Race (2015-2020)

Researchers have known for some time now that harsh school discipline policies lead to involvement in the criminal legal system where youth of color are overrepresented.[152] Repeated school disciplinary contacts increase the likelihood of academic failure, juvenile legal involvement, and ultimately, criminal legal involvement.[153] Lower levels of educational attainment is tied to lower lifetime earnings, an increased likelihood of legal system involvement, and an increased chance of recidivism.[154] Incarcerated youth have worse results with six out of 10 school-aged legal system-involved youth failing to re-enroll into school upon release; few obtain a high school diploma or GED.[155] Outcomes are even more dismal for young people with special education needs, as those young people are disproportionately involved in the legal system.[156] It is estimated that as many as 30-60% of youths incarcerated in juvenile correctional facilities are eligible for special education services.[157] In DC, that ratio is even greater: in 2017, the Department

[152] Jason P Nance, "Students, Police, and the School-to-Prison Pipeline," *Washington University Law Review* 93, no. 4 (2016): 942-5.
[153] Miner P Marchbanks and Jamilia J Blake, "Assessing the Role of School Discipline in Disproportionate Minority Contact with the Juvenile Justice System: Final Technical Report" (Texas A&M University, August 2018):8-9, https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/grants/252059.pdf.
[154] Lucius Couloute, "Getting Back on Course: Educational Exclusion and Attainment among Formerly Incarcerated People," Prison Policy Initiative, October 2018, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/education.html.
[155] Hailly T. N. Korman and Lisa Pilnik, "How Does Education in the Juvenile-Justice System Measure Up? It Doesn't.," Education Week, October 25, 2018, https://www.edweek.org/leadership/opinion-how-does-education-in-the-juvenile-justice-system-measure-up-it-doesnt/2018/10.
[156] Jackie Mader and Sarah Butrymowicz, "Pipeline to Prison: Special Education Too Often Leads to Jail for Thousands of American Children," The Hechinger Report, October 26, 2014, http://hechingerreport.org/pipeline-prison-special-education-often-leads-jail-thousands-american-children/.
[157] "Supporting Youth with Disabilities in Juvenile Corrections," *Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Blog, U.S. Department of Education* (blog), accessed July 7, 2021, https://sites.ed.gov/osers/2017/05/supporting-youth-with-disabilities-in-juvenile-corrections/.

of Youth Rehabilitation Services reported that over 90% of its committed population had special education needs.[158] Furthermore, educational inequality is inextricably linked with race. This is reflected in the District, where approximately 30% of Hispanic people aged 25 or older, and 15% of Black adults have less than a high school education, contrasted with less than 1% of White adults.[159]

While the District has made improvements in education over the years, more must be done to improve education for emerging adults involved in the legal system. This is especially important since historically the District has had the smallest share of jobs requiring less than a bachelor's degree than any other state in the country.[160] Projections estimated that by 2020 only 24% of District jobs would require a high school diploma or less, while nearly 60% of District jobs would require at least a college degree.[161] In reality, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an even more difficult job market for individuals without higher education in 2020. During the stay-at-home order in March and April, unemployment claims in DC increased eightfold, half of which were filed by Black residents.[162] Even prior to the pandemic, Black residents in the District were more likely to be out of work for longer continuous periods than White residents.[163] Furthermore, the District had the highest Black unemployment rate and the widest gap between White and Black unemployment rates compared to all U.S. states.[164] Emphasis on access to community-based educational and vocational training programs for emerging adults is necessary to ensure young people are well positioned for the changing workforce in the District. These services are especially critical for young people with disabilities who have even lower levels of educational attainment.[165]

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[158] Jessica Giles, "Students in the Care of the District of Columbia: Working Group Recommendations" (Students in the Care of the District of Columbia Working Group), accessed September 2, 2021, 20, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/528921fce4b089ab61d013d3/t/5b4f93a7aa4a990c172f8320/1531941800839/07182018+Students+in+the+Care+of+DC+Report_FINAL.pdf.

[159] "Educational Attainment in the District of Columbia," The Demographic Statistical Atlas of the United States, accessed July 12, 2021, https://statisticalatlas.com/state/District-of-Columbia/Educational-Attainment.

[160] According to 2013 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, approximately 44% of the jobs in the District of Columbia typically required at least a bachelor's degree. This was the highest percentage of any state, and approximately 15 percentage points higher than the next highest state. Conversely, only 56% of jobs in the District did not require a bachelor's degree. See Elka Torpey and Audrey Watson, "Education Level and Jobs: Opportunities by State," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2014, https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2014/article/education-level-and-jobs.htm.

[161] Anthony P. Carnevale, Nicole Smith, and Jeff Strohl, "Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020" (Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown Public Policy Institute, June 2013), https://1gyhoq479ufd3yna29x7ubjn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/StateProjections_6.1.15_agc_v2.pdf.

[162] "DC's Road to Recovery Must Prioritize Black Workers," *Policy Innovation Lab, McCourt School of Public Policy* (blog), March 9, 2021, https://mccourt.georgetown.edu/news/solidarity-series-4-dcs-road-to-recovery-must-prioritize-black-workers/.

[163] "DC's Road to Recovery Must Prioritize Black Workers."

[164] "DC's Road to Recovery Must Prioritize Black Workers."

[165] For example, in 2012, individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 24 were nearly two times more likely to have dropped out of school than their peers without disabilities. See Patrick Stark and Amber M. Noel, "Trends in High School Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States: 1972–2012" (National Center for Education Statistics, June 2015): 9, https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015015.pdf.

Education

Legal-involved emerging adults may obtain, and need support in, obtaining one or more of the following education options:

- *High School Diploma*: To receive a high school diploma, students are required to finish the District of Columbia's 5-A DCMR § 2203 academic requirements. The academic requirements include coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies, world language, music, physical education/health, and selected electives.[166] Students with special education needs may remain in high school, receiving services and working toward their diploma, until the semester in which they turn twenty-two.[167] Older students can enroll in DCPS' alternative high school programs through age 25. DC residents over 18 may also earn a high school diploma or its equivalent by through District charter schools that specialize in adult education.[168]
- *General Education Development (GED)*: The GED is a four-subject high school equivalency test administered by the District's General Education Development Program Office. The exam covers science, social studies, mathematical reasoning, and reasoning through language arts. This exam is available for DC residents age 18 or older who have not completed high school. Applicants under 18 must provide documentation of being withdrawn from school for at least six months, as well as consent from a guardian, government agency, or court.[169]
- *Vocational Certification*: Organized educational programs offer a sequence of courses which are directly related to the preparation of individuals employment in current or emerging occupations requiring other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree.[170]

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)

Strength-based Perspective

- Allow emerging adults to decide if they would like to pursue a diploma, GED, or vocational certification and provide diverse post-secondary options.
- Offer accommodations, including special education attorneys, to young people to assist in the decision-making process.

[166] "Graduation Requirements," Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Government of the District of Columbia, accessed July 7, 2021, https://osse.dc.gov/service/graduation-requirements.
[167] D.C. Mun. Reg. Tit. 5-E §3000.1.
[168] Rachel M. Cohen, "Where D.C. Has Failed on Adult Education, Charter Schools Fill the Void," *Washington City Paper*, July 13, 2017, http://washingtoncitypaper.com/article/190057/where-dc-has-failed-on-adult-education-charter-schools-fill-the-void/.
[169] "The GED Tests," Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Government of the District of Columbia, accessed July 7, 2021, https://osse.dc.gov/service/ged-tests.
[170] "What Is Vocational Education?," National Center for Education Statistics, accessed July 7, 2021, https://nces.ed.gov/pubs/web/95024-2.asp.

- Create education programs and resources with an awareness of the dehumanizing effect of incarceration and seek instead to recognize each individual's full selfhood.

Needs Assessment

- Personalize the educational path and supports to the emerging adult's learning level and ability.
- Educational and vocational matching must be conducted through an individualized approach.
- Comprehensive transcript analysis is necessary to ensure proper course placement and credit accrual so students can access a path to earning high school diploma and beyond.

Ongoing Educational Support

- Support, such as guidance counseling and special education attorneys as required by law, must be provided through enrollment to completion ensure success.
- Transcripts and qualifying transfer credits for returning emerging adults must be acquired rapidly.

Diverse Opportunities

- Provide emerging adults with opportunities to explore non-traditional career paths, including arts, coding, and music.
- Provide emerging adults with paid internships, technical training programs, 2- and 4-year college programs, and workforce development and training.

Include Higher Education in the Conversation

- Provide post-secondary school support such as information, services, and support for higher educational opportunities, including the application and financial aid process (e.g., grants, loans, scholarships, additional funding) and ensure access to accommodations and modifications the emerging adult may be entitled to pursuant to an individualized education plan (IEP).
- Create mentorships with emerging adults, local college students, and local employers to assist emerging adults in navigating post-secondary education, and workforce development opportunities.

Wraparound Services

- Assist emerging adults with outside needs that affect their education (e.g., housing, toiletries, counseling, substance use).

Requirement Flexibility

- Programs must ensure rules and requirements do not create barriers, including but not limited to attendance requirements that conflict with employment as well as entrance, course, and graduation evaluation tools.

Existing Education Programs in the District and Identified Gaps/Needs:

The District of Columbia has several organizations and school programs for legal-involved emerging adults that provide educational support to obtain a high school diploma, G.E.D, vocational certificate, and/or college credits, in addition to a myriad workforce development programs and certificate bearing technical training programs. As well as educational support, some organizations provide housing, counseling, social workers, employment training, and stipends for

participants. Currently, a number of organizations provide educational and vocational training to young people, including emerging adults, such as DC Central Kitchen, DC Public Schools' STAY Programs, Latin American Youth Center Career Academy, Maya Angelou Young Adult Learning Center, Office of the State Superintendent of Education DC Re-engagement Center (REC), Pathways for Young Adults Program, Run Hope Work, So Others Might Eat, and UDC Community College Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning Program.

To maximize success, continuity of support and services should be expanded beyond legal system involvement and a Continuum of Care Post Release should be developed to obtain transcripts or transfer credits for returning youth, including youth transitioning from the Georgetown Pivot Program to Georgetown University. The District must also increase access to community-based programs and services geared toward emerging adults emphasizing education rights (i.e., special education), as well as post-secondary education support such as school tours, application support, financial aid support, college or vocational school skills development, including so-called soft skills like time management, budgeting, cooking, etc. Finally, the District should ensure increased access to educational and vocational programming for all emerging adults, regardless of their legal status.

Recommendations:

- The Mayor's Office must provide guidance to educational programs and inform programs on best practices to serve emerging adults and legal involved emerging adults.

- The Mayor's Office must expand existing programming to serve the unique needs of emerging adults. Educational programs available for adults must prioritize emerging adults that are at high risk of participating in, or being victims of, violent crimes.

- The Mayor's Office must inform the DC Department of Corrections, especially participants in the Young Men Emerging (YME) Unit, about YRA implementation and the District's YRA initiatives to improve educational access and attainment for legal-involved emerging adults. The Office must provide guidance to ensure a continuity of programming and supports beyond legal system involvement, as well as the best practices to serve incarcerated emerging adults.

- As emerging adults return to their communities, they must have support obtaining transcripts and transferring credits so as to smoothly transition to their next educational program (e.g., Georgetown Pivot Program).

- Students with disabilities must be appointed a special education attorney to assist in securing special education services and supports, so that they may enroll in school and further their education.

- Short of re-establishing complete local control of all justice system functions or raising the age of jurisdiction, the Mayor's Office should work with federal partners to ensure availability and access for educational programs and services for all emerging adults serving their sentence under the jurisdiction of BOP or under local supervision of CSOSA.

The District must explore promising programs, such as Division of Juvenile Justice (California), ROCA (Massachusetts and Baltimore), and the Young Adult Justice Scholars/Justice Community Programs (New York). More information on these programs can be found in **Appendix C.**

Objective 6: Build Workforce Development Programming and Opportunities

Employment has a critical impact on how returning youth readjust to their community and maintain a livelihood. Employment provides income and housing stability, secures mental well-being, and reduces recidivism. In Washington DC, youth referrals to the justice system decrease as youth employment rates rise.[171] Of note, however, poverty in childhood affects employment in young adulthood. In the District, the wards with the lowest median household incomes also had the highest rates of unemployment and incarceration.[172] The District has sought to address poverty with the Fair Shot Minimum Wage Act of 2016 which raised the minimum wage to $15 per hour in 2020.

Legal system involvement, however, places systemic barriers in the way of obtaining employment. In addition to legal system involvement, returning youth lack prior work experience, leading to difficulty obtaining employment. These challenges illustrate the need for workforce development, as well as accessible job opportunities.[173]

Workforce Development

Workforce development strategies aim to strengthen skill sets and provide experience to meet the needs of potential employers. This can include hard and soft skill training, financial literacy, resume and cover letter development, interviewing skills, workplace etiquette, etc. Programs may also have a specific focus to develop skills for in-demand labor. Programmers shall work with participants to identify barriers to employment and assess proper strategy to overcome them to create attainable career goals.

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)

- If an emerging adult is incarcerated, programming shall begin as soon after admission as possible and increase significantly prior to release.[174]
- Programming should begin before and extend throughout the reentry process.
- Workforce training programs should be implemented in facilities.

[171] "Youth Employment and Workforce Development: How DYRS Is Helping People Get Jobs, Learn Job-Related Skills, and Prepare for Careers" (D.C. Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, Government of the District of Columbia, August 16, 2010), https://dyrs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dyrs/release_content/attachments/Juvenile%20Justice%20and%20Jobs.pdf.

[172] "Communities of Color and Low-Income Communities Disproportionately Affected by the Justice System in the Nation's Capitol," Justice Policy Institute, July 27, 2010, https://justicepolicy.org/press/communities-of-color-and-low-income-communities-disproportionately-affected-by-the-justice-system-in-the-nations-capitol/.

[173] Dominique Maria Bonessi, "D.C. Jails Report Finds Poor Conditions, Few Resources For Inmates," WAMU 88.5, American University Radio, November 5, 2019, https://wamu.org/story/19/11/05/d-c-jails-report-finds-poor-conditions-few-resources-for-inmates/.

[174] Maria Flynn, "Supporting Second Chances: 3 Priorities to Ease Prisoner Reentry," Jobs For the Future (JFF), July 30, 2015, https://www.jff.org/points-of-view/supporting-second-chances-3-priorities-ease-prisoner-reentry/.

- Prioritize credential programs to individuals based on their sentencing length and licensing requirements.
- Individualized Support, including
    - Intensive case management is required to support reentry, in addition to individualized services. Community and government collaboration are necessary.[175]
    - Advocates, direct service providers, government officials, etc., should provide input, share information, and hold each other accountable for ensuring program objectives are met.
- Alignment with Skills Sought by Local Employers
    - Participants should be supported in acquiring a range of training for various career paths. Participants should be focused on earning credentials that support direct entry into the workforce.[176]
- Follow-Up Support
    - Participants should receive ongoing support even after training is complete and employment is secure. Programming/services should always be accessible to ensure employment is retained.
- Focus on Quality and Outcomes
    - To ensure quality performance measurement, a target population should be defined, clear objectives must be crafted, and a data system must be developed to track those metrics.[177]

Existing Workforce Development Programs in the District and Identified Gaps/Needs:

DYRS and DOES offer workforce development programming from the time of pre-release to post employment. One program offered is Pathways for Young Adults which provides paid internships in the fields of health, administrative services, and information technology. The Mayor Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program targets emerging adults and provides them with paid placements in local DC offices and businesses. Community-based organizations, such as STRIVE DC and the Youth Cafe offer skill development programs mostly serving as unpaid opportunities, offering academic credit, or a small stipend.

The District's current workforce development programs serving emerging adults include the Civic Justice Corps, Guns to Roses, Internships/Apprenticeships (i.e. DYRS), The Maya Angelou Young Adult Learning Center (YALC), Mayor Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program, MORCA, Pathways Program, Project Empowerment, READY Center, STRIVE DC, YME, and Youth Café. Despite these providers' efforts, the District needs developmentally appropriate

[175] Liz Ryan and Marc Schindler, "Notorious to Notable: The Crucial Role of the Philanthropic Community in Transforming the Juvenile Justice System in Washington, D.C.," accessed July 7, 2021: 32, https://dyrs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dyrs/publication/attachments/Notorious%20to%20Notable.pdf.
[176] "Pre-Apprenticeship," Jobs For the Future (JFF), accessed July 8, 2021, https://www.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/center-for-apprenticeship-and-work-based-learning/pre-apprenticeship/.
[177] "Youth Workforce Development Issue Brief" (DC Alliance of Youth Advocates), accessed July 8, 2021, https://188iuo20axjt1xnin64et15o-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2017/11/DCAYA-Youth-Workforce-Development-Issue-Brief.pdf.

programming specifically designed to engage emerging adults, emphasizing access to technical/vocational trade training, creating space for teachable moments in the workplace (i.e., workplace mediations), customer service skills/training, financial literacy and money management training, and system navigators to provide ongoing job placement and readiness support, as well as other life and soft skills classes.

Recommendations:

- The Mayor's Office must support the development of new community-based led work/employment programs and provide guidance to workforce programs and inform programs on best practices to serve emerging adults and legal-involved emerging adults.

- The Mayor's Office must expand existing programming to serve the unique needs of emerging adults, such as Mayor Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment and Pathways Programs. In addition, workforce programs must prioritize emerging adults that are at high risk of participating in, or being victims of, violent crimes.

- The Mayor's Office should incentivize small businesses and companies to hire returning citizens by providing pipelines and compensated opportunities for emerging adults.

- The Mayor's Office must inform the DC Department of Corrections, especially participants in the YME, about the YRA implementation process, and the District's YRA initiatives to improve employment attainment and workforce training for both emerging adults and legal-involved emerging adults. The Office must provide guidance to ensure incarcerated emerging adults receive workforce training to improve chances of employment when returning to their communities. Upon release, emerging adults must receive case management support to create a smooth transition to society and ensure employment.

The District must explore promising programs, such as Project Return (Tennessee), Opportunity Works (national), Hope Partnership (national), Youth Build Offender Project (national), Right Turn Career-Focused Transition Initiative (national), Young Adult Justice Community Program (New York), UTEC (Massachusetts), Roca (Massachusetts), Reset Foundation (California), and Turnaround Tuesday (Maryland). More information on these programs can be found in **Appendix C.**

Objective 7: Build Family Support Programming and Opportunities for Emerging Adults

Emerging adults, who are convicted when they are 18 years old or older, are prosecuted in the adult criminal legal system. Consequently, their families are not afforded the same opportunities to participate in their pretrial placement, sentencing, or the creation of a treatment plan, the way the families of youth who enter the juvenile legal system are. The District of Columbia should explore ways to give emerging adults the option to have their family participate in the planning of their care, consistent with their developmental needs.

As heard at the November 21, 2019 stakeholder convening, the definition for "family" used in programming/services should reflect different types of familial structures beyond the traditional nuclear family unit including, but not limited to, families where grandparents, foster parents, or LGBTQ parents are the caregivers/heads of the household.

In Washington, DC the number of family support services that legal-involved emerging adults and their families may access is also limited and depends on age, placement, and program specific requirements. DYRS offers a number of family support services for youth placed in its care, including family counseling, family bonding opportunities, mentorship, peer support for parents, and visitation assistance for families. Outside of DYRS, there are also a number of privately-run programs and services that are specifically targeted at youth who have incarcerated parents in Washington, DC.

Family

Family Engagement Opportunities: Family engagement involves establishing a collaborative relationship in which families or caregivers are partners in both the treatment and in developing the policies, programs, and practices that are used within the system.[178] The following are key components of strong family engagement systems:

- Families have access to peer support.
- Families are treated with dignity and respect.
- Families have the opportunity to collaborate with service professionals.
- There is sustained family engagement.
- There is meaningful communication between parties.[179]

Family-Centered Services: Services generally for "incarcerated parents, their children, and families" include "parenting programs, family strengthening activities, nurturing of family relationships, community supports for families during incarceration and following release, and sexual orientation and gender spectrum-specific interventions."[180]

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)

- Programs must be based in communities most in need of services.

[178] This definition is modified to reflect family engagement in a broader justice involved population beyond the juvenile justice system. "Family Engagement in Juvenile Justice" (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Preevntion, February 2018), https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh176/files/media/document/family-engagement-in-juvenile-justice.pdf.
[179] "Family Engagement in Juvenile Justice."
[180] "Supporting Children and Families Affected by Parental Incarceration," Child Welfare Information Gateway, accessed July 8, 2021, https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/supporting/support-services/incarceration/.

- Programs must be government invested and community led.
- Services should address intergenerational trauma, using a holistic approach.
- Programs' goals must be to empower families and ensure they have options to choose the providers or programs from whom they receive services.
- Bilingual staff must be expanded to support non-English speakers in accessing equitable resources.

Parenting Supports:

- Supports must be evidence based and include evaluated curricula.
- Supports must be tailored to address the challenges of parenting while incarcerated or specifically designed for parents in the community.
- Programing must support and education parents on how to identify trauma and manage its effects.
- Childcare vouchers should be provided and have flexible hours to accommodate participants' work schedules.

Mentoring for children whose parents are incarcerated:

- High-quality pre-match training and continued agency support is necessary for mentors.
- Long-term sustained mentor-mentee relationships are the most beneficial.[181]
- It may be necessary to address the concerns that mentees and their caregiver may have about participating in a mentor program.

Existing Family Support Programs in the District and Identified Gaps/Needs:

Currently, there is a dearth of programming to support parents or caregivers of legal-involved emerging adults or to strengthen the relationship between this subset of emerging adults and their families. The city must address this lack of targeted programing since data indicates that over 50% of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 live with their parents.[182]

[181] Michael Garringer, "Mentoring for Children of Incarcerated Parents – National Mentoring Resource Center Review," The Chronicle of Evidence-Based Mentoring, February 14, 2016, https://www.evidencebasedmentoring.org/mentoring-for-children-of-incarcerated-parents-national-mentoring-resource-center-review/.
[182] "Historical Living Arrangements of Adults," The United States Census Bureau, December 2020, https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/families/adults.html.

Most family support programs offered in the District focus on improving incarcerated parents' parenting skills and relationship with their children and/or providing enrichment programs for their children. These programs do not specifically target emerging adults, nor do they address the relationship between legal-involved emerging adults and their parents or caregivers. The District must focus on engaging the parents or caregivers of emerging adults as well as engaging emerging adults as parents.

The District needs community-based programming and services that provide family support and services for emerging adults, emphasizing family trauma therapy and resilience building. Currently DYRS offers family cultural events, family counseling, family retreats, and visitation support through Anchored in Strength Family Support Group, Credible Messengers, DC YouthLink, Sasha Bruce Family Strengthening Families Program, DHS Family Centered Services consist of Parent and Adolescent Support (PASS), Strong Families Program, Teen Parent Assessment Program. Additionally, family-centered service providers are Hope House DC – The Hope House Family Group, Big Brother Big Sister Mentoring of the Nation's Capital, and the U.S. Dream Academy provide similar programming.

More family engagement opportunities for the parents of legal-involved emerging adults, while respecting emerging adults' autonomy, should be developed to improve outcomes for the District's families and communities. Programs developed to address this need must be designed to strengthen the relationship between emerging adults and their parents or family units (e.g., cognitive-behavioral parental education and/or therapeutic services for parents and children). This programming must be focused on connecting an emerging adult's family with resources and supports to strengthen the entire family unit. Additionally, it is imperative to expand parental education and parenting opportunities to develop parenting skills including childcare that is accessible, affordable, and flexible.

Recommendations:

- The Mayor's Office must provide guidance to family service programs, informing programs on best practices to serve emerging adults, legal-involved emerging adults, and their families/support system to promote broader public safety, the success of family units, and vitality of community.

- The Mayor's Office must expand existing programming to serve the unique needs of emerging adults, including possibly expanding existing programs, specifically those family services provided by DYRS, to serve emerging adults. DYRS expansion will be further discussed in Goal 3: Objective 3. In addition, family service programs available for adults should prioritize emerging adults that are at high risk of participating in, or being victims of, violent crimes.

The District must explore promising programs, such as Camp at FCI Cumberland (Maryland)**,** Family Unification Liaison Services (California)**,** Forever Family- Reentry Assistance, Parenting Inside Out (California)**,** Parenting with Love and Limits (NATIONAL), Project Avary (California), and The Up Center- Strengthening Fathers Program (Virginia). More information on these programs can be found in **Appendix C.**

Goal Three: Build a Criminal Legal System-Based Continuum of Care

Objective 1: Build Specialized Court Programming and Opportunities for Emerging Adults

The Criminal Division of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia is responsible for handling all local District criminal matters including felony, misdemeanor, DC code violations, and criminal traffic offenses.[183] While the Criminal Division is divided into four branches - Case Management, Special Proceedings, Quality Assurance, and Courtroom Support – it also oversees the operation of eight community problem solving courts.[184] The problem solving courts seek to bring together criminal legal system and community partners/resources to "respond to crime and safety issues, hold defendants accountable, address defendants' needs and the underlying causes of their behavior, improve the quality of life in communities, and administer justice."[185] These courts primarily address misdemeanor cases not involving domestic violence, and currently reside in each of the city's seven police districts.[186]

The Mental Health Community Court (MHCC), one of the eight community problem solving courts, works to integrate community resources to address the needs of people with mental illness involved in the court system. Participation in the MHCC is completely voluntary and only available to those who meet both the legal and clinical eligibility as screened by the US Attorney's Office and the DC Pretrial Supervision Agency.[187]

In addition to the community problem solving courts, the District has a Family Court Operations Division which receives and processes juvenile delinquency cases. However, Family Court Operations only handles cases for youth up to the age of 18 years old.

As the District of Columbia innovates its criminal legal system to address the needs of the emerging adult population, it should consider how to serve emerging adults through a developmentally appropriate specialty court or enhanced training to expand competency and tailored access among existing courts, as well as trauma-informed and healing-centered responses (i.e., restorative justice). The District should also consider the academic and public policy bodies of research identifying concerns with participant selection, violation of constitutional rights, and drivers of incarceration.[188]

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[183] "Criminal Division," District of Columbia Courts, accessed July 8, 2021, https://www.dccourts.gov/superior-court/criminal-division.
[184] "Criminal Division."
[185] "Community Courts and Problem Solving Courts," District of Columbia Courts, accessed July 8, 2021, https://www.dccourts.gov/services/criminal-matters/community-court-and-problem-solving-courts.
[186] "US Misdemeanor Community Courts," *District of Columbia Courts,* Accessed June 6, 2021. https://www.dccourts.gov/services/criminal-matters/community-court-and-problem-solving-courts.
[187] "Community Courts and Problem Solving Courts."
[188] John Collins, *Rethinking Drug Courts: International Experiences of a US Policy Export* (London: London School of Economics Press, 2019).

Specialty Courts

Problem-solving courts that "bring together criminal justice and community partners and corresponding resources to respond to crime and safety issues, hold defendants accountable, address defendants' needs and the underlying causes of their criminal behavior, improve the quality of life in communities, and administer justice."[189]

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)[190]

- Procedural Justice and Court Team Buy-in
    - A court including judges, attorneys, case managers/social workers, individuals awaiting trial, the victim, family members, friends, and other community members.
    - The court team must be provided with information regarding the format and intent of the court.
    - The decision-maker must be neutral, transparent, and convey trustworthy motives.
    - Emerging adults must be treated with dignity and given a voice during the process.
- Trained Court Team
    - Staff must be trained on the developmental needs of emerging adults, as well as trauma-informed and restorative justice trained.
- Evidence-based Social Interventions
    - Successful courts that serve emerging adults provide interventions instead of sanctions such as:
        - Assistance securing employment, education, and/or housing stability;
        - Substance misuse treatment; and
        - Mental health services, etc.
    - Interventions must be determined by a needs assessment, as opposed to any sanctions-based model.

[189] "Community Courts and Problem Solving Courts."
[190] "A Roadmap to Reform: Key Elements of Specialized Courts for Emerging Adults" (Emerging Adult Justice Project, April 2021), https://justicelab.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Key%20Elements%20of%20Specialized%20Courts%20for%20Emerging%20Adults.pdf.

- Participants must be provided with ongoing support by a case manager or social worker to help with immediate needs and monitor their ongoing progress.

- Graduation/Incentives

    - Upon the completion of programs/interventions, an emerging adult's charges must be dismissed or reduced, arrest expunged, and/or the term of probation is shortened.

    - Any information disclosed during the process may no longer be available once the individual completes the program and cannot be used as evidence in future cases.

Recommendations:

- The Mayor's Office must work with the judiciary to develop a specialty court or program focusing on serving emerging adults. This work must include expanding Family Court Operations to serve emerging adults, having existing specialty courts prioritize emerging adult cases, and ensuring Court staff are routinely trained in the latest developments in neurobiology, innovative justice programming practices related to this population, and well-versed on the YRA.

- The Mayor's office must ensure court officials, the Public Defender Service and other lawyers, and related actors receive education and training on the specific and unique needs, including related to special education, for working with emerging adults. Further, the Emerging Adult Court judges should have expanded educational authority.

The District must explore promising programs, such as Brooklyn Young Adult Court (New York), San Francisco Young Adult Court (California), Chicago (Lawndale) Restorative Justice Community Center (Illinois), and Second Chance Community Improvement Program (Texas). More information on these courts can be found in **Appendix C.**

Objective 2: Build Specialized Probation Programming and Opportunities for Emerging Adults

Some jurisdictions around the country have begun implementing alternative probation programs that consider emerging adult's natural neurological and emotional development. The National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 established CSOSA, which took charge of the District of Columbia's supervised release and probation functions: Community Supervision Programs (CSP) and the Pretrial Services Agency (PSA). CSP provides supervision

for citizens released on probation, parole, or supervised release. Approximately 15% of CSP's FY2020 total supervised population were aged 25 or younger.[191]

In 2013, CSP implemented a Young Adult Supervision Program wherein supervised teams used comprehensive case management strategies to customize supervision plans according to the material and developmental needs of the emerging adult.[192] As of 2019, this unique approach has been changed and moved under a "High Intensity Supervision Teams model," program which works with 18-to-35-year-olds.[193] The District should work with CSOSA to re-establish the young adult initiative to address the unique needs of the emerging adult population, including soft skills development such as communication and job readiness and tutoring for successful reentry to education.

Specialized Probation

Alternative probation programs that meet the particularized needs of specific communities that traditional probation programs do not adequately address, such as emerging adults, sex offenders, and women.

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)[194]

- Overarching theory of change shall drive programmatic development and individual practice.[195]
    - Allow flexible individualized service provision while ensuring most appropriate practices to best serve participants.
- Exercise prudence when sentencing emerging adults to probation to prevent unnecessarily involving low risk emerging adults in intervention programming.
- Caseloads must be limited to 15 or fewer clients to ensure probation officers have adequate time and energy to effectively engage with emerging adults in their care.[196]
- Acknowledge the varying developmental rates and unique factors affecting emerging adults and provide individualized approaches and service provisions.

[191] Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, "FY 2022 Budget Request: Summary Statement and Frequently Asked Questions," May 28, 2021, https://www.csosa.gov/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2021/05/CSOSA-FY2022-CBJ-Summary-Statement-FAQs-05282021.pdf.
[192] "FY 2019 Budget Request: Summary Statement & Frequently Asked Questions" (Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, February 12, 2018), https://www.csosa.gov/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2018/07/CSOSA-FY2019-CBJ-Summary-Statement-FAQs-1.pdf.
[193] "Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia: Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2018-2022," accessed July 16, 2021, 19, https://www.csosa.gov/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2019/02/CSOSA-Strategic-Plan-FY2018-2022.pdf.
[194] "A Roadmap to Reform: Key Elements of Specialized Probation for Emerging Adults" (Emerging Adult Justice Project, Columbia University, April 2021), https://issuu.com/ssm2234/docs/eajlc_specializedprobation-pages.
[195] "Transforming Juvenile Probation: A Vision for Getting It Right" (Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2018), https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-transformingjuvenileprobation-2018.pdf.
[196] "Transforming Juvenile Probation: A Vision for Getting It Right."

- Approaches must center around achieving articulated goals and positive reinforcement to promote long-term behavior change.
    - Goals must be SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely.[197]
- Approaches must build upon emerging adult's strengths by creating opportunities and fostering relationships in a variety of passions or interests.
- Approaches must identify the comprehensive needs and services that address the complex disadvantages legal involved women face, such as trauma, unhealthy relationships, substance misuse, educational deficits, and poverty.[198]
- Recognize that an emerging adult's progress is nonlinear, and mistakes and acts of noncompliance must be embraced as learning opportunities and building blocks.[199]
- Place probation programs within communities from where emerging adults originate and provide resources so as to nurture prosocial community connections.[200]
- Cultivate mentor relationships between emerging adults and community members and manage through a hands-off approach, allowing trust to be built.[201]

Recommendations:

- The District must re-establish local control over community supervision services for the District. Currently, as a federal agency, CSOSA does not have any enforceable adherence to District approaches to serving emerging adults. Such a continued disjointed approach may undermine District wide efforts to effectively serve this population. It is recommended that the District explore options to re-establish local control over supervision services, if not more broadly, then particularly for the emerging adult population.

If the District is unable to re-establish local control or raise the age of jurisdiction, it must work with CSOSA to re-establish a Young Adult Unit and emphasize the importance of developmentally

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[197] "Transforming Juvenile Probation: A Vision for Getting It Right."
[198] Elizabeth Swavola, Kristine Riley, and Ram Subramanian, "Overlooked: Women and Jails in an Era of Reform" (Vera Institute of Justice, 2016):32, https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/overlooked-women-and-jails-report-updated.pdf.
[199] "Young Adults in the Justice System" (Fair and Just Prosecution), accessed July 8, 2021, https://fairandjustprosecution.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/FJP_Brief_YoungAdults.pdf.
[200] Peggy McGarry, Allon Yaroni, and Sean Addie, "Innovations in NYC Health and Human Services Policy: Adult Probation and Neighborhood Opportunity Network Initiative (NeON)" (Vera Institute of Justice, January 2014): 4, https://www.vera.org/publications/innovations-in-nyc-health-and-human-services-policy-adult-probation-and-neighborhood-opportunity-network-initiative-neon.
[201] "Arches Reduces Recidivism Among Young Adults on Probation," Findings at a Glance (NYC Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity), accessed July 8, 2021, https://cmjcenter.org/documents/arches_findings_at_a_glance.pdf.

tailored programming within the unit that meets the requirements under the YRA. If the District is unable to work with CSOSA to effectively address the unique needs of the emerging adult population it should explore its legal and regulatory authority to engage in an MOU with DYRS to provide supervision services for emerging adults who are on supervision in the community. Programming should provide flexibility and must be developmentally appropriate and not rely on punitive measures of correction.

The District must explore promising programs, such as Transitional Age Youth Unit (California), Anyone Can Excel Young Adult Unit (New York), Trial Court's "Learning Laboratory" Pilot Program (Massachusetts). More information on these programs can be found in **Appendix C.**

Objective 3: Build Specialized Unit Programming and Opportunities for Emerging Adults

Maintaining separate housing units for the emerging adults from the general population is crucial. Young people housed with adults are at a much higher risk of danger and trauma. Research conducted by the Department of Justice shows that youth incarcerated with adults are at an elevated risk of rape and sexual assault from other inmates and even prison staff.[202] Youth incarcerated with adults are 36 times more likely to commit suicide than those housed separately from adults.[203] At times, prison systems will place young, vulnerable people in isolation for their protection, yet this frequently results in long-term psychological trauma. Furthermore, this more punitive approach of "scaring straight" actually has the opposite effect than intended: youth placed in the adult prison system are 34 times more likely to recidivate than those placed in the juvenile detention system.[204] Since emerging adults are still in a similar stage of psychological development as their younger peers, it is likely that emerging adults would also be similarly vulnerable if held in the adult prison system.

Emerging adults from the District are made even more vulnerable since many are imprisoned far from their home and community. The Revitalization Act subjects any emerging adult sentenced to longer than year to serve their sentence within a Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facility. As the District has limited authority to direct its federal partners to provide adequate programming and educational resources to follow the YRA, it would behoove the District to require all emerging adult residents who have been incarcerated within the BOP to be transferred back to the DC Jail. Such a move would allow better District oversight, access to programming and community partners, as well as allow young people to be closer to their families. This would, in fact, facilitate the District's compliance with their legal obligation to provide education services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

[202] Jessica Lahey, "The Steep Costs of Imprisoning Juvenile Offenders in Adult Prisons," *The Atlantic*, January 8, 2016, https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/01/the-cost-of-keeping-juveniles-in-adult-prisons/423201/.
[203] Lahey.
[204] Lahey.

On any given day there are around 2,000 people held inside the DC Jail, approximately 1 in 4 of whom are emerging adults.[205]

In the District, the DC Department of Corrections (DOC) provides two specialized units for its emerging adult population. In 2018, the inaugural Young Men Emerging (YME) Unit at the DC Central Treatment Facility (CTF) was established followed by a second unit opening in 2019 at the Central Detention Facility (CDF). The YME units provide a therapeutic and rehabilitative environment to address the needs of legal-involved emerging adults. The key component that helps drive the success of the YME unit is the element of credible messengers: individuals serving lengthy sentences imposed when they were emerging adults who can relate to the issues faced by many of the YME residents.[206]

"The Credible Messenger movement has emerged based on a core belief that communities have within them transformative resources to lift up justice-involved people in a comprehensive and positive way. It works from the inside out: justice involved/at-risk young people who have a higher risk of re-offending are matched with specially trained adults with relevant life experiences (often previously incarcerated, Returned Citizens) called Credible Messengers, who share their background."

-Credible Messenger Justice Center

www.cmjcenter.com/approach

The YME program is in a separate housing unit that provides education, counseling, mentoring, and a measure of self-governance. Restorative justice is the underpinning of the YME community meetings, which are held to discuss any conflicts that arise on the specialized unit. The meetings are facilitated by the unit's Credible Messenger mentors, in addition to outside partners including Dr. Bahiyyah Mohammad, a professor of Sociology and Criminology at Howard University, HOPE Foundation, Inside-on-Inside, and others.

DC's YME units are distinct from other known specialized correctional units for emerging adults due to their placement within a jail setting. Typically, emerging adult specialized correctional units have resided in prison settings, which are designed for long-term incarceration and provide a natural cohort of mentors. However, the YME units operate within a transient short-term population, and its access to mentors is a direct result of the passage of legislation providing

[205] "Young Adult Prison Reform Initiative Expands to Three New States," Vera Institute of Justice, November 15, 2019, https://www.vera.org/newsroom/young-adult-prison-reform-initiative-expands-to-three-new-states.
[206] "A Transforming Approach to Justice," Credible Messenger Justice Center, accessed July 8, 2021, https://cmjcenter.org/approach/.

opportunities for those serving long sentences to petition the court for review.[207] According to the DOC, between April 2019 and May 2020, 78 emerging adults were placed on a YME unit, spending an average of 84 days with a maximum length of stay of 287 days. During this time, 19 mentees were transferred to a federal facility and 16 were released back into the community.[208]

The YME is dealing with a fluid population who can either be transferred to the federal prison system or released into the community. While much of the program prepares emerging adults for their incarceration in the federal prison system, ultimately many will return home to the community. The YME provides some reentry supports for those returning to the community, however the District lacks post-release opportunities that allow this vulnerable population to continue to grow, become independent, and mature. There is no identifiable workforce training or job placement for those who have reached their educational goals while participating in the YME. For these emerging adults to be successful community members upon their return, connecting employment opportunities is critical.

Specialized Units

Services and supports targeting the unique needs of emerging adults offer the space for individuals to mature, learn new skills, and develop prosocial behaviors among their peers.

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)[209]

- Alter the physical environment and staff.
    - Autonomy within the living quarters.
        - Establish a culture of *normalcy* and *creativity*, which humanizes the carceral setting
        - More time on visits with family and loved ones.
        - Physical environment designed by the mentors and mentees.
        - Spending more time out of enclosed environments.
        - No correctional uniforms for staff or incarcerated individuals.
    - Safe space that is restorative, allowing emerging adults an environment within which to heal and grow.
        - Building social bonds and attachments.
        - Developing a sense of personal responsibility.[210]
        - Free from negative pressure of any, and kind and welcoming.
        - Self-efficacy.
    - Language appropriateness such as mentees and community members instead of dehumanizing terms like "inmate."

[207] Incarceration Reduction Amendment Act of 2016, D.C. Code § 24–403.03 (amended by Second Look Amendment Act, D.C. Act 23-568, also known as Omnibus Public Safety and Justice Amendment Act of 2020).
[208] Email Correspondence to Tyrone Walker from Reena Chakraborty, October 28, 2019.
[209] Joel Castón, Tyrone Walker, and Michael Woody, "DC's Young Men Emerging Unit: A Story of Reform and Lessons Learned from the Front Lines" (Washington, D.C.: Justice Policy Institute, 2020), https://justicepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Young_Men_Emerging_Unit_2020.pdf.
[210] Ian Marder, "Restorative Justice for Young Adults: Factoring in Maturity and Facilitating Desistance" (Restorative Justice Council, n.d.), https://restorativejustice.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/files/a7je_t2a.pdf.

    - Staff trained on trauma and restorative practice.
- Programming should include:
    - Community Outreach.
    - Financial Literacy.
    - GED/ high school/college.
    - Job readiness.
    - Vocational skill development that is transferable to the community such as welding, HVAC technician, electricians, carpenter, CDL holder, etc.
    - Work detail.
    - Parenting programs helping parents prepare for reunification.
- Opportunity
    - Recognize milestones, including program completion.
    - Incentivize good behavior with rewards such as movie night, late night, video gaming, and/or music.
    - Engage emerging adult population in development, design, and implementation of the program.
- Policies and programming that address the gender specific needs of women,[211] such as:
    - Access to gynecological and obstetric health care.
    - Access to menstrual hygiene products and contraceptive care.
    - Standard procedures that do not reactivate the trauma women have experienced outside of jails (e.g., supervision by female staff while dressing and showering).
    - Meaningful visitation in child-friendly environments.
    - Parenting programs helping mothers prepare for reunification.
    - Prohibit shackling of pregnant women.
    - Trauma-informed and healing-trained staff who are responsive to common symptoms of trauma.

Recommendations:

- The Mayor's Office Must expand existing programming to serve the unique needs of emerging adults. This may include expanding the service provision of existing programs, specifically DYRS, to serve emerging adults. DYRS has secure facilities providing youth under the age of 18 at the time of their offense, who have serious and chronic offenses, with supervision and care. Should DYRS expand its population to serve legal-involved emerging adults, the District would be able to fulfill several components of the YRA such as education, employment, housing, family services, mental and behavioral health, and restorative justice.

- If DYRS expands its services, the Mayor's Office must provide guidance on the expansion. The Office must also provide DYRS resources to obtain technical assistance on best practices to expand programming to address the unique needs of emerging adults, as well as inform DYRS of all improvement initiatives in the YRA.

[211] Swavola, Riley, and Subramanian, "Overlooked: Women and Jails in an Era of Reform."

- Short of re-establishing local control of justice system functions or raising the age of jurisdiction, the Mayor's Office should explore all legal and regulatory framework to bring all emerging adults serving their sentence in a BOP facility home to serve out their sentence at the DC Jail.

- DC DOC should work to expand the YME units' offerings to all eligible emerging adults held within DOC custody.

The District must continue to consult and stay on top of best practices on specialized correction units for emerging adults by exploring other programs such as promising programs such as Young Adult Offenders Program (Maine), The T.R.U.E Project (Connecticut), The PEACE Unit (New York), The PACT Unit (Massachusetts), and The Restoring Promise Initiative (South Carolina). More information on these units can be found in **Appendix C**.

Objective 4: Build Reentry Programming and Opportunities for Emerging Adults

Individuals returning to their communities in the District have unique backgrounds and individualized treatment recommendations and services are a necessity for successful reentry. Emerging adults in the District are vulnerable to recidivism, as demonstrated by **Figure 3**. Released individuals comprise a large percentage of the rearrested population, with 51.3% being rearrested within the first year of release.[212] By year two, the re-arrest rate increased to 68.1%, within five years, 84.1%, and by the ninth year of release, the re-arrest rate reached 90.1%.[213] This is not an individual failure, rather this is indicative of a systems failure. In 2014, 28.8% of emerging adults supervised by CSOSA were rearrested, 513 of whom were re-incarcerated.[214] Emerging adults account for 27.5% of all adults rearrested.[215]

[212] Matthew R. Durose, Alexia D. Cooper, and Howard N. Snyder, "Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 30 States in 2005: Patterns from 2005 to 2010 - Update" (Bureau of Justice Statistics, April 2014), https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/recidivism-prisoners-released-30-states-2005-patterns-2005-2010-update.
[213] Mariel Alper, Matthew R. Durose, and Joshua Markman, "2018 Update on Prisoner Recidivism: A 9-Year Follow-up Period (2005-2014)" (Bureau of Justice Statistics, May 2018), https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/2018-update-prisoner-recidivism-9-year-follow-period-2005-2014.
[214] "Beyond Second Chances: Returning Citizens' Re-Entry Struggles and Successes in the District of Columbia" (Council for Court Excellence, December 2016), http://www.courtexcellence.org/uploads/File/BSC-FINAL-web.pdf.
[215] "Beyond Second Chances: Returning Citizens' Re-Entry Struggles and Successes in the District of Columbia."

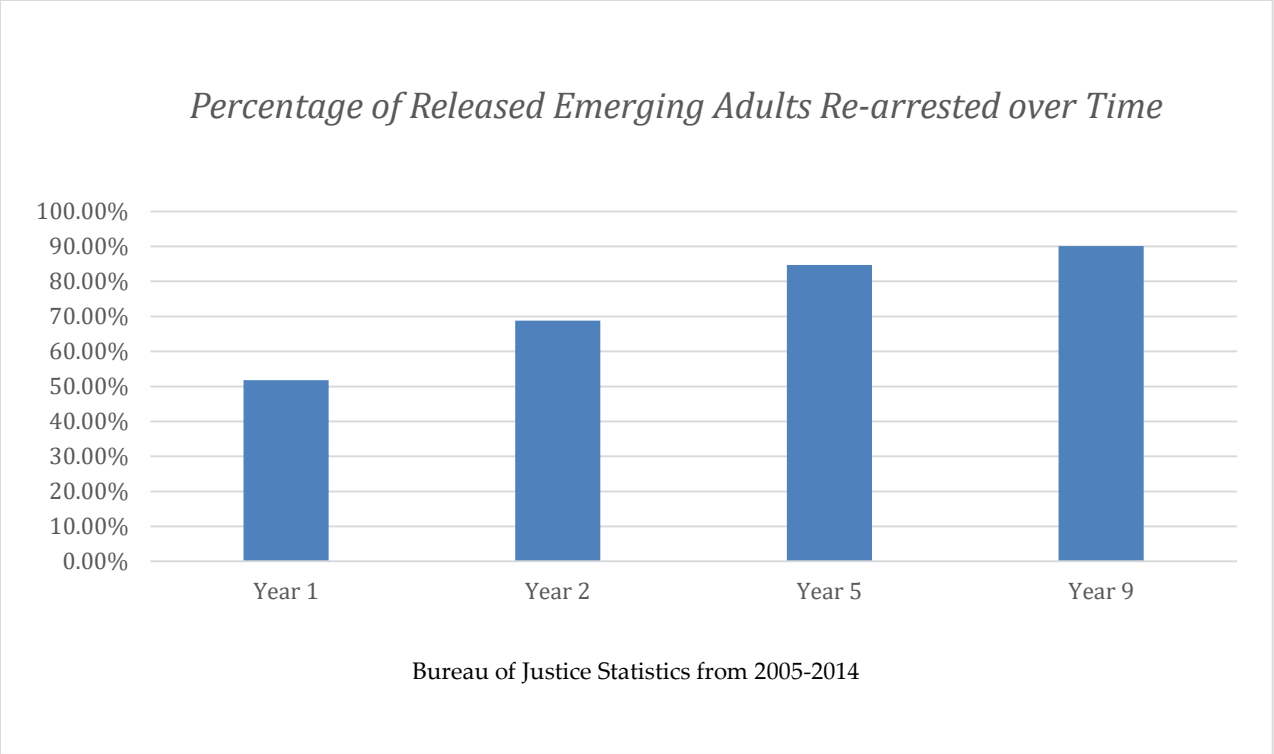

Figure 3. Percentage of Released Emerging Adults Who are Re-arrested Over Time

As with diversion programs that offer legal-involved individuals a pathway to pro-social activities including treatment, education, or community service as an alternative to prosecution or sentencing, court-supervised emerging adults should have access to the same opportunities to improve their outcome. The outcomes sought by diversion programs include reducing the likelihood of reoffending while providing individuals with the opportunity to change behaviors that have led to legal involvement.[216]

In the District, programs focused on either the general returning citizen population or the youth population are carried out by Amazing Souls Philemon Mission, the DC Central Kitchen, the H.O.P.E. Project, Jubilee Reentry Housing, MORCA, the Mayor's Opportunity Scholarship (MBSYEP)[217], Voices for a Second Chance, National Reentry Network for Returning Citizens, NAARC, Open City Advocates, The DC Reentry Action Network, the Ready Center, and Thrive DC New Directions. However, these reentry services struggle to adequately meet the needs of the District's returning emerging adults. Additionally, existing reentry services are not accessible to all eligible people who are incarcerated in the federal system. A dedicated unit for legal-involved emerging adults equipped to provide and connect to services to prepare individuals emotionally, mentally, and programmatically for their successful return should be developed.

[216] "Diversion and Deflection in The District of Columbia."
[217] A competitive scholarship awarding $2000 for post-secondary education or training.

Reentry

Reentry is the term used for individuals leaving a correctional setting and returning to the community. Reentry planning is the practice of assessing needs and providing appropriate education, workforce, mental and behavioral health programming, and other supportive services to ensure sustainable success and reduce the likelihood of an individual recidivating.

Key Ingredients (core principles needed for success)[218]

- Reentry planning must begin the day an individual comes into contact with the criminal justice system. While traditional reentry is focused on exiting a correctional facility, many individuals need wrap-around reentry services at any point in the system.
- Emerging adults should receive a reentry assessment during the intake process to develop and individualized reentry plan.
- All emerging adults should receive essential transitional supports, education, mental health services, substance misuse education and treatment, peer support, and other programs in accordance with their identified needs during incarceration.
- During their incarceration, emerging adults should be provided the opportunity to build and maintain familial relationships to strengthen their community-based support network. This is particularly important when an emerging adult is placed in a Bureau of Prisons facility, which may be located anywhere in the country, making family visits challenging and reducing opportunities for vital social contact.
- Reentry programs and providers should have active partnerships with community stakeholders and organizations to develop a robust reentry system aimed at providing the support necessary for returning citizens that promotes a comprehensive care collaborative approach.
- Community supervision must only be required for individuals who will benefit from programming, as overprogramming has been shown to be counter-productive[219] and risk assessments are often problematic.[220] Services should be directed away from individuals with misdemeanors and nonviolent offenses.
- Parameters for success should be reevaluated, as technical violations drive mass incarceration.

[218] Nancy La Vigne et al., "Release Planning for Successful Reentry: A Guide for Corrections, Service Providers, and Community Groups" (The Urban Institute, September 2008), https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/32056/411767-Release-Planning-for-Successful-Reentry.PDF.
[219] "No Entry: A National Survey of Criminal Justice Diversion Program and Initiatives," accessed July 8, 2021, http://www.centerforhealthandjustice.org/chjweb/tertiary_page.aspx?id=77&title=No-Entry:-A-National-Survey-of-Criminal-Justice-Diversion-Programs-and-Initiatives.
[220] "Q & A: Profile Based Risk Assessment for US Pretrial Incarceration, Release Decisions," Human Rights Watch, June 1, 2018, https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/06/01/q-profile-based-risk-assessment-us-pretrial-incarceration-release-decisions.

Recommendations:

- The Mayor's Office must coordinate to expand reentry programming to serve the unique needs of emerging adults. This may include directing existing programs to prioritize returning emerging adults.

- The Mayor's Office must establish cooperative agreements between reentry programs and key stakeholders, including community-based organizations, to ensure program consistency and services for emerging adults, including increased affordable housing opportunities, employment, and entrepreneurial training.

- The Mayor's Office must coordinate with community providers to expand training and skill development to provide a pathway for stable employment. Most returning citizens are offered low-wage temporary jobs. Providing a pathway to a career position with a living wage can assist an individual's return home.

- The Mayor's Office must coordinate with community providers to expand training and skill development to provide a pathway for stable employment. Most returning citizens are offered low-wage gig job. Providing a pathway to a career position can assist an individual return home.

- The Mayor's Office should coordinate with MPD, the Superior Court, and diversion program stakeholders to implement a needs assessment during an individual's processing if diversion is unable to be effectuated. This assessment to analyze the needs of emerging adults must take place prior to loss of liberty.

- The Mayor's Office must inform the DC DOC, especially participants in the YME Unit, about the YRA implementation efforts and the District's YRA initiatives to improve reentry services for legal-involved emerging adults. The Mayor's Office must provide guidance to ensure incarcerated emerging adults receive intensive reentry support preparing individuals mentally, emotionally, and programmatically. The Office must direct DOC and YME units to implement best practices to serve the unique needs of emerging adults.

- DOC must provide reentry support to emerging adults as soon as they enter the system, to ensure continuity of services and supports through post-release. This must include expanding the District's reentry services in the DOC Reentry Unit to be available to any incarcerated individual as soon as they enter the system. Currently, the unit and services are only available to individuals who are required to receive the services and are within 180 days of release. Furthermore, the READY Center can only engage 30 days prior to release. The short-term contact can significantly impact an individual's initial reentry.

    - Reentry efforts should coordinate all services and initiatives of the YRA which have been previously discussed throughout this strategic plan.

- The District must develop mechanisms for all reentry services to have reach-in to those serving their sentence in the BOP to identify needs and create a plan for reentry. This may include directing the District's DOC Reentry Unit providers to identify individuals in the BOP, initiating contact with them to assess their needs and provide referrals to appropriate community-based resources and service providers.

Timeline

Year 1 – 2 Research, convene stakeholders, transmit Strategic Plan

Year 3 – Mayor works with elected officials and authorities on statutory and regulatory practices for full authority over emerging adults; hires emerging adult coordinator who begins operationalizing plan

Year 4 – Multiple pilots implemented/existing programs expanded through budget and appropriations – housing, diversion, employment, education, and family support

Year 5 – Continue programming, develop evaluations

Year 6+ – Continue to innovate and expand efforts resulting in positive outcomes; address and improve other interventions

Implementation, Measuring Impact, and Oversight

A coordinated body of local policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and advocates focusing on learning, developing, and implementing responses to the unique needs and lived experiences of legal-impacted emerging adults in the District is necessary for implementation of the YRA strategic plan. With an initial investment from the Public Welfare Foundation, and in partnership with the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, the Justice Policy Institute convened such a workgroup, named the DC Emerging Adult Justice Action Collaborative (Collaborative) on November 21, 2019.[221] The Collaborative was tasked with finalizing the strategic plan and identifying priorities of the plan for implementation. The Mayor's Office should continue to engage a body like the Collaborative to ensure that District and community partners are able to participate in oversight and coordinating implementation strategies for the enactment of the YRA strategic plan, including making recommendations relating to outcomes, data measurement, and evaluation of the plan. The Mayor's Office must work in partnership with service providers, directly impacted individuals, and their families, community members, advocates, and District agencies to identify outcome metrics, data sharing agreements, and develop an annual report on the status of YRA strategic plan implementation. Key outcomes shall include:

- Increased availability of community-based programming for legal-involved emerging adults;

[221] For more information on the launch meeting of the DC Action Collaborative see Appendix B.

- Increased availability of affordable housing for emerging adults pursuant to this plan;
- Increased diversion of emerging adults from the legal system;
- Increased funding for community-based services for emerging adults;
- Decreased number of confined emerging adults; and
- Decreased rate of recidivism among legal-involved emerging adults.

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Appendix B: Stakeholder Input / Conversations

Quincy Booth, Director, DC Department of Corrections, May 17, 2019

David Domenici, Executive Director, Center for Educational Excellence in Alternative Settings, May 31, 2019

Lael Chester, Director, Columbia University's Emerging Adult Justice Project, June 4, 2019

Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, Senior Staff Meeting, June 18, 2019

Tarek Maassarani, Restorative DC, June 7, 2019

Department of Youth Rehabilitation, Focus Groups, July 24 and September 4, 2019

Council of Court Excellence, August 7, 2019

Mentor and Mentees Focus Group, Young Men Emerging Unit, September 3, 2019

Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, September 19, 2019

Emerging Adult Women Focus Group, Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, October 28, 2019

YRA Strategic Plan Stakeholder Input Meeting, hosted at the Public Welfare Foundation, November 21, 2019. Attendees Included:

- Adam Aljoburi, Chief of Staff, DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
- Jamie Argento Rodriguez, Chief - Community Defender Division, Public Defender Service
- Paul Ashton, Development & Finance Manager, Justice Policy Institute
- Weyimi Ayu, Program Coordinator, The Reentry Network
- David Bailey, Credible Messenger, DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
- Davon Benton, Community Member
- Bianca Bersani, Associate Professor, University of Maryland
- Betsy Biben, Chief - Office of Rehabilitation & Development, Public Defender Service
- Quincy Booth, Director, DC Department of Corrections
- Cleveland Brown, Community Member
- Hilary Cairns, Deputy Administrator, DC Department of Human Services
- Zoe Carrol, Intern, Justice Policy Institute
- Sarah Comeau, Cofounder and Director of Programs, School Justice Project
- Kevin Donahue, DC Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice
- Maria Duarte, Policy Associate, American Youth Policy Forum

- Azadeh Erfani, Attorney, Washington Lawyers' Committee
- Mai Fernandez, Executive Director, National Center for Victims of Crime
- Halim Flowers, CEO, SATO Communications
- Thennie Freeman, Associate Director, DC Department of Employment Services
- Seema Gajwani, Special Counsel on Juvenile Justice Reform, DC Office of the Attorney General
- Michelle Garcia, Director, DC Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants
- Robert Goings, Workforce Specialist
- Aliyah Graves-Brown, Program Coordinator, Prison and Justice Initiative, Georgetown University
- Angel Gregorio, Owner, The Spice Shop
- Jamila Grooms, Operations Facilitator, The Reentry Network
- Laura Harding, Director of Strategic Initiatives, DC Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education
- Linda Harllee-Harper, Senior Deputy Director, DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
- Naida Henao, Strategic Advocacy Counsel, Network for Victim Recovery of DC
- Donald Isaac, Executive Director, DC Corrections Information Council
- Jennifer Kerkhoff, Senior Advisor to the Director, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency
- Jeremy Kittredge, Research and Policy Associate, Justice Policy Institute
- Ramey Kyle, Commander, DC Metropolitan Police Department
- Tara Libert, Executive Director, Free Minds Book Club
- Stacey Litner, Prisoners' Rights Advocacy Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee
- Tarek Maassarani, Technical Lead, Restorative DC
- Alise Marshall, Director of Strategy & New Ventures, Public Welfare Foundation
- Julia Mascioli, Deputy Director, Free Minds Book Club
- Ellen McCann, Statistician, DC Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
- Melissa Milchman, Juvenile Justice Specialist, DC Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants
- Marcy Mistrett, CEO, Campaign for Youth Justice
- Roger Mitchell, DC Chief Medical Examiner
- Kate Mitchell, Committee Director, DC Council Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
- R. Daniel Okonkwo, Corporate Responsibility, JP Morgan Chase
- Al Pearson, Community Reinvestment & Community Partnership Relationship Manager, JP Morgan Chase
- Yusef Rabb, Free Minds Book Club
- Rashawn Ray, Rubenstein Fellow and Associate Professor of Sociology, Brookings/University of Maryland
- Josh Rovner, Senior Advocacy Associate, The Sentencing Project
- Alejandro Ruiz, Intern, Justice Policy Institute
- Wayne Ryan, DC Workforce Development Specialist

- Marc Schindler, Executive Director, Justice Policy Institute
- Katya Semyonova, Special Counsel to the Director for Policy and Legislation, Public Defender Service
- Debby Shore, Executive Director, Sasha Bruce Youth Network
- Courtney Stewart, Founder/CEO, The National Reentry Network for Returning Citizens
- Samaura Stone, Senior Director, American Youth Policy Forum
- Gerard Tate, Strategy & Innovation Officer, DC Office of the City Administrator
- Emily Tatro, Deputy Director, Council for Court Excellence
- Paula Thompson, Executive Director, Voices for a Second Chance
- Lee Thompson, Workforce Development Specialist, DC Department of Employment Services
- Jeffery Tribble, Executive Director, The Muscianship
- Ashley Wagstaff, Operations Coordinator, Justice Policy Institute
- Tyrone Walker, Associate, Justice Policy Institute
- Jua Williams, Branch Manager, JP Morgan Chase
- Kathryn Zickuhr, Director of Policy, DC Policy Center

Thrive Under 25 Coalition, Monthly Meetings 2019 - Present

DC Emerging Adult Justice Action Collaborative, Quarter Meetings, September 2020 – Present. Organizational Members Include:

- Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice
- Council Member Charles Allen's Office
- Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
- DC Young Men Emerging Unit (YME)
- DC Department of Corrections (DC DOC)
- DC Office of the Attorney General (OAG)
- Public Defender Service of DC (PDS)
- Free Minds Book Club and Writing Workshop
- School Justice Project
- Impacted Community Members
- Voices for a Second Chance
- Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA)
- Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth
- Corrections Information Council (CIC)
- Public Welfare Foundation
- DC Superior Court
- DC Justice Lab
- The National Reentry Network for Returning Citizens
- DC Office for Students in Care of DC (SCDC)
- The Alliance of Concerned Men
- JP Morgan Chase

Appendix C: Models of Emerging Adult Justice Reforms and Programs

Note: *The selection of programs featured in this appendix is not intended to be an exhaustive list of programs, but to serve as a reference point for existing programs in the District and to highlight select model programs focused on serving the unique needs of emerging adults.*

Diversion Programs

Diversion Programs in the District

Alternative to the Court Experience (ACE) Diversion Program

Founded in 2014, ACE provides both deflection and diversion programming for status and low-level delinquency offenses for youth up to 17-years-old. Youth can be diverted at three different points: (1) pre-arrest by MPD (deflection); (2) post-arrest by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG); or pre-petition for status offenses by Court Social Services (CSS) in collaboration with the OAG. ACE Specialists work with the youth's family to develop a 6-month diversion plan to address the youth's unique needs, provide tailored programming (i.e. family therapy, mentoring, mental health treatment, school support services, etc.), and present opportunities for youth to take responsibility for their behavior. Ultimately, ACE works to connect youth and their families with a range of individually tailored support and behavioral health services, monitors successful program participation, and seeks to change the trajectory of the young person's life by keeping them from entering the justice system.

For more information, visit https://oag.dc.gov/public-safety/juvenile-diversion-program and https://fairandjustprosecution.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/FJPBrief.Diversion.9.26.pdf.

Superior Court Drug Intervention Program (SCDIP)

Established in 1993, SCDIP positions the court to play an integral role in the oversight of the treatment of substance abuse and addiction. The Court utilizes a combination of case management, regular court appearances, frequent drug testing, recovery-focused incentives, sanctions, and access to treatment and social services as an immediate alternative to incarceration. Steps for placement in SCDIP generally include: (1) PSA screening for eligibility, (2) assessment must indicate need for intensive substance abuse outpatient or residential treatment, (3) USAO approval for misdemeanor diversion and felony amended sentencing agreements or for those with prior histories that would normally be excluded. For a list of eligibility exclusion criteria see DC's Pretrial Services Agency's summary on SCDIP.

For more information, visit https://www.psa.gov/?q=node/514.

Mental Health Community Court (MHCC)

The MHCC, established in 2007, is a specialized court that focuses on defendants with serious or persistent mental illness, or with mental illness and co-occurring substance abuse disorders. Initially eligibility is determined by USAO and PSA who screens current charges, legal history, and clinical eligibility for a severe mental health diagnosis. The vast majority of defendants certified to the MHCC are dual-diagnosed, requiring both mental health and substance use disorder treatment. If the defendant complies with treatment services and other conditions set by the court, then upon successful program completion the USAO will request criminal charges be dismissed or reduced.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/services/criminal-matters/community-court-and-problem-solving-courts.

U.S. Misdemeanor Community Courts

Launched as a pilot project in 2002, the East of the River Community Court (ERCC) presided over misdemeanor cases originating from Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) districts six and seven, and provided a voluntary diversion alternative for defendants to traditional case processing with eligibility determined by the USAO. The ERCC allowed defendants to participate in diversion programming focused on making restitution to the community, accepting responsibility for behavior, and obtaining access to necessary treatment and educational services. Following a 2010 evaluation study, the DC Superior Court expanded the community court model to all MPD districts in 2012.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/matters-docs/ERCC-Evaluation-Report.pdf.

Juvenile Behavior Diversion Program (JBDP)

Established in 2010, JBDP is a specialty court that provides intensive case management for youth in the juvenile justice system with serious mental health issues. The program is an intensive non-sanctions based program connecting youth and status offenders to appropriate mental health services and supports in the community. Eligibility is determined based upon both clinical and criminal criteria managed by the DC Department of Mental Health and DC Office of the Attorney General, respectively. JBDP includes three possible tracks: (1) pre-plea, (2) pre-disposition, or (3) post disposition.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/superior-court/family-social-services/juvenile-behavioral-diversion-program.

Office of Attorney General (OAG) for the District of Columbia Restorative Justice (RJ) Program

Launched in 2016, the RJP works to address the root problems of crime and conflict by providing an alternative to traditional prosecution. RJP takes juvenile and adult cases from the DC OAG, and young adult (18-24) misdemeanor cases from USAO. The program operates on a referral basis where the prosecutor can recommend a case for RJP or a victim may request an alternative to

prosecution. Restorative justice conferencing brings those affected by crime together with those who committed the harm for a discussion focused on accountability, empowering victims, and repairing the harm caused by crime.

For more information, visit https://oag.dc.gov/public-safety/restorative-justice-program.

Diversion Programs in other Jurisdictions

New York: Common Justice

Common Justice is an alternative to incarceration restorative justice-based program for younger adults (16-26) facing violent felony charges in court in Brooklyn and the Bronx, New York. Rigorous screening by the District Attorney's Office, Common Justice, and approval by the victim of the crime are required for entrance into the program. Qualifying defendants and those harmed by the crime (victims) engage in a dialogue process as a diversion to incarceration where they collectively identify and address impacts, needs, and obligations for accountability and healing. Through the dialogue process all parties agree on sanctions other an incarceration to hold the defendant accountable in ways which are meaning for the victim. Staff monitor compliance and connect victims with appropriate services.

For more information, visit https://fairandjustprosecution.org/wp-content/uploads,/2017/09/FJPBrief.Diversion.9.26.pdf and https://www.commonjustice.org/.

New York: Project Re-direct

Based in Brooklyn, New York, Project Re-direct is designed for young men ages 14-24 facing their first felony charge and whom are gang-involved. The program focuses on providing a cost-effective alternative to incarceration for approximately 20 participants annually. Defendants are required to plead guilty before entering the program, and once they plead their sentencing is deferred. The prosecutor or judge refers an individual to the program for screening prior to enrollment. The program includes mandatory supervised weekly group meetings, life skills and anger management sessions, weekly drug testing, substance abuse counseling (when necessary), nightly curfew, community service, required completion of high school or GED, and current employment or enrollment in higher education.

For more information, visit https://www.nycservice.org/organizations/1848.

Restorative Justice Programs

Restorative Justice Programs in the District

Office of Attorney General (OAG) for the District of Columbia Restorative Justice (RJ) Program

OAG is the chief legal officer of the District of Columbia. The Office enforces the laws, provides legal advice to the District's government agencies, and protects the interests of the District's

citizens. The OAG RJ Program is the first public-safety agency in the nation to implement restorative justice programs in-house. OAG restorative justice specialists work alongside prosecutors by bringing those who committed the crime and affected by crime together to have a discussion. The discussion holds the person with the offense accountable, empowers the impacted person/people, and repairs the harm caused by crime. The OAG RJ Program covers juvenile and adult cases from DC OAG, as well as adult (18-24) misdemeanor cases from the United States Attorney's Office. The program is a referral program where a prosecutor can recommend a case or a victim may request an alternative prosecution. Most cases are accepted, except for domestic violence, gun offenses, homicides, and sex crime cases.

For more information, visit https://oag.dc.gov/public-safety/restorative-justice-program.

Restorative DC

Restorative DC is a program of SchoolTalk, Inc., a nonprofit whose mission is to create spaces that promote self-determination, collaborative problem-solving, and a voice for youth with disabilities and their peers. Restorative DC provides intensive, trauma-informed, collaborative, customized, onsite, and locally-based technical support to dozens of the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter schools. Restorative DC also supports local agencies and organizations, including the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Department of Human Services, and the Office of Attorney General, to internally integrate practices such as restorative circles. In partnership with DC's Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Restorative Justice DC convenes a monthly Community of Practice (CoP) to discuss the implementation of Restorative Justice practices in DC schools. The CoP provides participants with the opportunity to engage with other educators for peer support and professional development, while learning how restorative justice can be used to build communities and resolve issues collectively.

Restorative DC has four different restorative justice processes: a Restorative Conference, Proxy or Reflective Conference, Intensive Support Circles, and Family Dynamics Circles. All processes include the referred youth, parents/guardians of the youth, the harmed individuals, requested supporters, a DHS case worker, facilitator, and resource people. Other than those who are involved, each restorative justice process is different.

For more information, visit http://www.restorativedc.org.

DC Peace Team Restorative Justice Practices Program

The DC Peace Team is a program that deploys unarmed civilian protection units; provides training in key nonviolent skills; and facilitates dialogues and restorative justice approaches. The program offers basic restorative justice training and advanced training in specific skills such are circle processes. The program has given restorative justice trainings throughout the DMV, as well as nationally and internationally.

For more information, visit https://dcpeaceteam.com/our-work/restorative-justice/.

Young Men Emerging Unit (YME)

The YME opened in February 2018. It created a therapeutic and rehabilitative environment to address the needs of 18-year-old justice-involved young adults. The program is in a separate housing unit that provides education, counseling, mentoring, and a measure of self-governance. The YME practices restorative justice through community meetings which are held to discuss any conflicts that happen in the unit. The meetings are facilitated by outside partners such as the HOPE Foundation, Dr. Mohammad from Howard University, Inside-on-Inside, and more.

For more information, visit https://doc.dc.gov/page/programs-and-case-management-pcm.

Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS)

DC's DYRS uses restorative circle practices for committed youth in their facilities. DYRS also uses restorative circle practices in the community to reduce the involvement of youth in the justice system. In addition, DYRS's Credible Messenger Initiative implemented Restorative Justice Practices in their program. The Credible Messenger Initiative is a mentoring intervention program for youth committed to DYRS. Credible Messenger mentors are experienced youth advocates, neighborhood leaders, and individuals with relevant life experiences. The Initiative's use of restorative practices helps youth learn skills of conflict resolution such as being respectful to others, self-reflection, building empathy, and reducing future conflicts.

For more information, visit https://dyrs.dc.gov/page/restorative-justice.

Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (ONSE) Pathways Program

ONSE's Pathways Program initiative aims to decrease criminal justice involvement to young adults most likely to commit a violent crime. ONSE uses restorative justice practices to help individuals hold accountability for their actions, understand the harm they have caused to the impacted person/people, and understand the role they play in rebuilding their communities.

For more information, visit https://onse.dc.gov/page/onse-programs.

Restorative Justice in other Jurisdictions

New York: Common Justice

Common Justice is the nation's first alternative-to-incarceration and victim-service program. The program focuses on addressing violent felonies (e.g., assault and robbery) in Brooklyn and the Bronx, through restorative justice principles and practices. Common Justice only supports cases if the survivors of the crimes consent. If the survivors' consent, the case is diverted into the restorative justice process. Common Justice extensively prepares to bring together the person who committed the offense, the people who support both parties, and a trained facilitator into a restorative justice circle. If victims do want to be a part of the restorative justice process surrogates can take their place. Surrogates can be family or friends of the victim, or victim of the same crime that has been committed.

The circle is monitored by the trained facilitator. It provides the opportunity for those most affected by the crime to have their needs validated and addressed in order to heal and foster accountability.

As a collective, the circle shapes the appropriate consequences and reaches an agreement of what the person who committed the offense can do to make things as right as possible. The agreements can include restitution, extensive community service, commitments to attend school and/or work, and completing a 12 month or 15-month intensive violence intervention program. In addition, the circle gives the impacted person/people the opportunity to develop strategies to cope with and come through the trauma they experience. Those who successfully complete their agreed commitments, and the violence intervention program, do not serve the jail or prison sentences they would face.

For more information, visit https://www.commonjustice.org/common_justice_model.

California: Restorative Justice Mediation Program (RJMP)

San Diego's Restorative Justice Mediation Program is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that works in partnership with the local justice sector agencies and other non-profit organizations to provide programs and trainings that promote restorative justice. RJMP's main program is their Victim-Offender Dialogue (VOD) program. The VOD program is a restorative justice approach that provides an opportunity for a meeting between the victim of the crime, person who committed the crime, and a trained mediator or facilitator. The dialogue begins with the process with a mutual understanding. Both the impacted person/people and responsible person are given the opportunity to express their feelings and perceptions of the offense. Then they construct their own approach to achieving justice.

RJMP offers VOD for both juvenile or adult (all ages) justice cases in San Diego when the person who committed the offense is on probation or in pre-charge cases. However, at the initiation of the victim or surviving family member of a serious or violent offense such as homicide, DUI causing death, sexual assault, kidnapping, aggravated robbery, etc., in which the offender is incarcerated in a CA State Prison, a Victim Offender Dialogue (VOD) may be requested. VOD focuses on the victim of the crime and on the accountability of the person who committed the crime. The program gives the opportunity for the victim to talk about the harm and to help the person responsible understand the harm done. Whenever possible, VOD includes community members who are affected as well.

For more information, visit https://www.sdrjmp.org/programs-services/what-is-restorative-justice/.

Housing Programs

Housing Programs in the District

Youth HOPE, Department of Health Services (DHS) for the District of Columbia

Youth HOPE (Housing Options and Prevention Education) program is part of DC's Youth Homeless Services (YHS) out of the Department of Human Services. The program provides preventative services including family counseling, medication or mental health treatment, to help

long-term impacts of homelessness. Additionally, HOPE provides short-term intervention and case management to transition a youth to a more permanent solution as soon as possible.

For more information, visit https://dhs.dc.gov/page/youth-homeless-services.

Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP)

Housing Choice Vouchers are not specifically for young adults, but are available for their access. HCVP is a federally funded program through the Department of Housing and Urban Development in order to help individuals transition into a community and not be impacted by the cost-prohibitive housing market. When enrolled, an individual is required to be part of the rent (a calculation determined on their income and financial situation) and the remainder is paid through the voucher program. Recent numbers indicate that 10,500 families are currently benefiting from the DC or federal HCVP.

For more information, visit https://www.dchousing.org/doc.aspx?docid=159.

Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF)

The Department of Housing and Community Development created a special revenue fund to help administer resources to close the gap on affordable housing to low- and moderate-income households throughout the city. To qualify, funding goes towards developing housing for families that have an income 30 – 50 percent less than the area median income. Since 2001, nearly 9,000 housing units have been developed through HPTF resources, and in 2018, over $150 million were allocated towards this fund.

For more information, visit https://dhcd.dc.gov/page/housing-production-trust-fund.

Local Rent Supplement Program

This program is aligned with the federal housing choice voucher program and allows lower income households to rent in the private market. They are required to put 30 percent of the household income towards rent, while the remainder if covered by the program.

For more information, visit https://www.dcfpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/16-04-LRSP-Brief.pdf.

Housing First

There are no prerequisites for admittance into a housing first model, but its main focus is assisting those experiencing chronic homelessness. The program is coupled with treatment and services based on individualized needs. Pathways to Housing DC, which has a ‘housing first’ model, has served over 850 individuals who had been living on the streets for years prior.

For more information, visit
https://dhs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dhs/page_content/attachments/Project%20Reconnect%20Program%20Manual.pdf.

Free Minds Book Club

The Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop has a credit building program, which enables members to gain secure credit lines and participate in financial literacy programming as they develop their own credit history. Members are assisted with obtaining a secured credit card and are guided through tips on making timely payments and how to effectively use/manage credit cards in order to increase their credit limit and credit scores. Graduates of the program are approved for their own credit card. Lester, a Free Minds member, said "The credit card was there for me in my times of need, just like my Free Minds family has always been there for me. It has set me up for success. Now my dream of owning my own commercial cleaning company in the future is closer."

For more information, visit https://freemindsbookclub.org/our-work/reentry-services/.

Friendship Place / Youth Connect

Friendship Place is a comprehensive housing and homelessness model that provides short and long-term housing, as well as services to help individuals overcome mental health or substance abuse issues. This program also provides long-term sustainability by focusing resources on employment readiness and placement.

Another aspect of the model is Youth Connect, a program focused on emerging adults as a drop-in center. Youth Connect helps impacted individual access documents (i.e. social security and ID cards). In 2018, they were able to serve 326 emerging adults.

For more information, visit https://friendshipplace.org/programs-outreach/youth-young-adults/.

Supporting and Mentoring Youth Advocates and Leaders (SMYAL)

SMYAL provides programming, leadership opportunities, and housing for LGBTQ youth. Youth enter the program through the DC Coordinated Entry for Homeless Person and remain in the program for either two or six years. The 38 youth in their youth houses are provided with case management, support services, skills development, social support, and communication with their case manager for at least one year after completing the program.

For more information, visit https://smyal.org/.

The Wanda Alston Foundation

The Wanda Alston Foundation has two facilities that provide pre-independent living services to homeless LGBTQ youth ages 16-24. Wanda's House provides transitional living for up to 18 months with on-site staff, case management, educational and employment support, and life skills training, Alston's House provides similar services and offers transitional living for up to 6 years.

For more information, visit https://www.wandaalstonfoundation.org/.

Housing Programs in Other Jurisdictions

Minnesota: Ujamaa Place

The program is individualized to accomplish positive outcomes in housing, education, employment, family reunification, and avoiding future contact with the criminal justice system. This is facilitated by working with the individual's needs, but also working within the community values. Their focused demographic is young Black men between 18 and 30 years old.

For more information, visit http://www.ujamaaplace.org/about.html.

California: Reset Foundation

A residential-based program that is specifically designed for young adults that were previously incarcerated for 18 months. In addition to establishing housing, the Reset Foundation is holistic in terms of emphasizing education and relationship building. If accepted, the young adults are engaged in the program for a minimum of 18 months; in that time period, they obtain job skills, and receive a stipend for their participation.

For more information, visit https://theresetfoundation.org/.

California: Independent Living Program

Independent living provides housing in furnished apartments to homeless or nearly homeless justice-involved youth, ages 18 to 21, to build necessary skills for independent living. In addition to housing, residents also receive a weekly stipend and 24-hour monitoring and support. The residents develop individualized and comprehensive "life plans" to access the support services they need for success (e.g., educational services, substance abuse, vocational training, mental health counseling, etc.). Residents are also required to engage regularly in life skills seminars focused on basic living skills, budgeting and banking, nutrition, food preparation, personal hygiene, and proper home cleaning techniques. While the program officially ended in 2009, the Center for Juvenile and Criminal Justice provides a way in which the District can re-establish its program.

For more information, visit http://www.cjcj.org/Technical-assistance/Independent-Living-Program.html.

Massachusetts: Y2Y Harvard Square

Y2Y is a Harvard student-led housing program to interrupt the cycle of homelessness for young adults. The Y2Y functions as a three-part model: Sanctuary, Pathways Programming, and Leadership Development and Advocacy. This allows the program to provide suitable housing to get the young adults off the streets, helps physical and emotional stability and facilitates individualized transition resources. In 2018, Y2Y provided housing to 185 unique guests, with nearly 40 percent spending at least one night in jail. Of that population, the individualized treatment breakdown varied (one young adult had the potential to need multiple services):

- Education: 39
- Employment & Job Training: 136

- Healthcare: 65
- Identification: 72
- Legal Aid: 32
- Mental Health: 96
- Permanent Housing: 82

For more information, visit https://www.y2ynetwork.org/.

Health Programs

Health Programs in the District

Potomac Programs

With a location in the District of Columbia, Potomac Programs serve the community by offering a non-institutional space for youth and young adults (roughly 14-24 ages old) to address behavioral and emotional challenges. Services range from dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT), day treatment of acute symptoms, intensive outpatient care and in home community support for substance abuse, mental health disorders or for both when they exist at the same time.

For more information, visit https://www.potomacprograms.com/services/.

Break the Cycle

Break the Cycle is a relationship support group for young people between the ages of 12 and 24. It seeks to nurture healthy partnerships absent of abuse by working to encourage honest communication and to supply the necessary resources for building positive relationships and mitigating abusive ones. This can include helping participants legally and guiding them through the justice system, or supporting victims of abuse by aiding them in processing and moving past their trauma.

For more information, visit https://www.breakthecycle.org/how-we-help.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) – DC

As the largest grassroots advocacy organization in the United States, NAMI's wide-reaching network informs the DC branch's support and education of people in the lives of those with serious mental illness diagnoses. There is a free 12-week program available to family members, caregivers, and other loved ones of people living with a serious mental illness.

For more information, visit http://www.namidc.org.

Whitman Walker Health

The Whitman Walker Health Organization offers community-based health care, specializing in LGBTQ+ and HIV care. Whitman Walker Health provides most medical care services, but is unique in its capacity to adequately serve LGBTQ+ folks because it is familiar with the medical

issues facing the community, non-judgmental of LGBTQ+ identities, and equipped for gender affirming medical care and HIV care.

For more information, visit https://www.whitman-walker.org/get-to-know-us.

Thrive DC

Thrive DC provides a breadth of services with the goal of fighting homelessness, unemployment, housing instability and food insecurity in Washington, DC. Services include, but are not limited to, cooking free meals twice a daily, supplying weekly emergency groceries, helping individuals find affordable housing, assisting individuals seeking employment, connecting individuals to legal resources, and providing access to computers, showers and machine washers and dryers.

For more information, visit https://www.thrivedc.org/programs/.

La Casa Transitional Rehabilitation Program (TRC)

La Casa TRC is a resource providing transitional housing to English and Spanish speaking homeless men in the District. This program strives to help these men achieve self-sufficiency. Each experience is individualized to meet specific goals and needs. The housing has bilingual staff, case managers, employment guidance, course to prepare for getting one's GED, future housing placement assistance, training in life skills, immigration issue resources, and counseling for substance abuse.

For more information, visit http://www.dccfh.org/programs/transitional-housing/la-casa-transitional-rehabilitation-program-trp/.

Health Programs in Other Jurisdictions

Connecticut: Multisystemic Therapy for Emerging Adults (MST-EA)

Located in Hartford, Connecticut, MST-EA conducts individualized therapy for young adults, meeting several times a week for up to six months. The primary objective of the therapy is to stabilize young adults by managing crisis, prioritizing safety, building natural support systems and cultivating life skills. Through the assignment of a life coach, who spends an additional two to four months overseeing success, the involvement of social and familial resources, on top of enhancing participants' independence. MST-EA prepares emerging adults to support themselves with the aid of others' close in their lives.

For more information, visit https://www.nafict.org/services/community-programs/mst-ea/.

Texas: Lone Star Justice Alliance

While physically located in Austin, Texas, the impact of Lone Star Justice Alliance's (LSJA) efforts reaches throughout the state of Texas. Their work centers around the production and integration of policies that strengthen support networks in order to improve the likelihood of young adults succeeding in their own communities. Part of this objective includes trying to return youth sentenced to adult prisons to their hometowns. The specifics of other components of meeting their objective are unclear at the moment since the program is still in its pilot stage, but LSJA has

released a service guide to help emerging adults in central Texas locate resources for physical, behavioral, and reproductive health.

For more information, visit https://www.lonestarjusticealliance.org.

Massachusetts: ROCA

ROCA, a non-profit based in Massachusetts, works with young adults between the ages of 17 and 24 that are at a high-risk of criminal behavior, incarceration, and recidivism in order to impede the cyclical nature of incarceration and poverty. ROCA reaches out to high-risk young adults, such as individuals involved in gangs or those continuously in-and-out of jail, and continues to follow up with them to foster a base of mutual trust. The ROCA program has a four-year model, beginning with two years of immersing participants in educational programs, pre-vocational training, employment assistance, positive cognitive-behavioral guidance, and general life skill practice. Participants receive two additional years of individualized support and guidance with an emphasis on workforce readiness and financial literacy. Throughout 2019, 97 percent of the high-risk young men from the ROCA program had no new arrests; 79 percent were able to hold jobs for a minimum of 6 months.

For more information, visit https://rocainc.org.

International: Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid is an international training program that advocates for the mental and behavioral health of youth and young adults by training teachers to notice signs, symptoms and risk factors of mental illnesses and addictions. Teachers are also given the skills and knowledge necessary to refer students to appropriate resources. There are over two million teachers trained by Mental Health First Aid in the United States. Having people looking out for the mental wellbeing of this age demographic while at school is extremely important given the stressors present in academic environments and the amount of time students spend at school. Furthermore, successful prevention of the onset of psychiatric disorders and addictions is most achievable during childhood and adolescence.

For more information, visit https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org.

National: Multidimensional Family Therapy (MDFT)

Although it addresses a wide range of problems, MDFT's overarching goals are to advance youth and young adults' coping, problem-solving and decision-making skills, bolstering their self-reliance while simultaneously strengthening family ties. MDFT is available to individuals between the ages of nine and 26, but adapts its treatment to respond appropriately to one's age. Part of their goals are met by addressing environmental factors influencing youth and young adults' family functions and overall wellbeing. The National Institute of Health has conducted research that substantiates the success of MDFT's approach. However, individuals need at least one parent or guardian to be eligible to participate, nor can they have an ongoing psychiatric disorder that does not pertain to substance abuse.

For more information, visit http://www.mdft.org.

Connecticut's TRUE Program

Taking place at the Cheshire Correctional Institution in Connecticut, the pilot TRUE program centers its work on the belief that recognizing and healing one's trauma is an imperative component to having a successful life after prison. The fifty young men in the program, ranging from age eighteen to twenty-five, are living together in single unit alongside a small number of older men that've been incarcerated for a significant amount of time. These older men operate as mentors to the younger men, teaching them how to comprehend and come to peace with their pasts and how to communicate their emotions effectively. It's a relatively small program, so there hasn't been much opportunity to assess its efficacy, although none of the men who have been released following the program have been re-incarcerated.

For more information, visit https://www.themarshallproject.org/2018/05/08/the-connecticut-experiment.

California: Youth ALIVE

Youth ALIVE is a program in Oakland, California that strives to interrupt cycles of violence and heal victims of violence in addition to their communities. The staff are members of the communities they are working with; they go to the clients to meet them in their environments and use START (Screening and Tool for Awareness and Relief of Trauma) to discern symptoms of trauma below the surface that are commonly unregistered and neglected.

For more information, visit http://www.youthalive.org/about/http://www.youthalive.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/BoardStaff_2019.jpg.

California: UCSF Trauma Recovery Center

The Trauma Recovery Center (TRC), originating at the University of California, San Francisco in 200, uses a positive psychology model of care to heal trauma in survivors of violent crime. TRC focuses on being accessible to underserved communities and personalizing psychotherapy; despite providing services at no cost, their model of care has been proven to have both clinical and cost effectiveness. The TRC model has been replicated throughout California and has begun spreading throughout the United States.

For more information, visit http://traumarecoverycenter.org/.

Educational Programs

Educational Programs in the District

Ballou STAY

Ballou STAY Opportunity Academy provides young adults the opportunity to receive a traditional diploma through a personalized learning experience. Ballou STAY uses the Summit Personalized Learned, an instructional program that provides individualized, high quality digital learning for the required core subjects. In addition, Ballou STAY provides vocational training for barbering, cosmetology, and early childhood.

For more information, visit https://www.balloustay.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1163870&type=d&pREC_ID=1416271.

LAYC Career Academy

The Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) Career Academy provides education services and support for emerging adults between 16 and 24. The LAYC Career Academy offers services such as obtaining a GED, earning college credits, as well as career training in health care and informational technology fields. The Career Academy has a Student Support Team that conducts in-depth needs assessments for their students to determine their physical, social, and emotional support needs to ensure their success academically. In addition, the Academy provides students with free health insurance, toiletries, transportation services, groceries, housing assistance, and other supports as needed.

For more information, visit https://laycca.org.

Maya Angelou Young Adult Learning Center

The Maya Angelou Young Adult Learning Center (YALC) provides GED preparation and workforce development for emerging adults between the ages of 17 and 24. On average, YALC serves 125 students annually. YALC particularly helps justice-involved young adults who are transitioning from incarceration. Aside from the programs offered, YALC students and participants have access to onsite counselors, special education teachers, and social workers. Students and participants are offered support with their learning and emotional needs, as well as individualized and group counseling to help them overcome the challenges that affected their education in the past. YALC also provides residential housing for 20 of their students that have challenging home environments, attendance/academic concerns, needs assistances with post-secondary plans, and/or has the desire to improve.

YALC Academic Program: The Academic Program provides a GED preparation program that assists students with few high school credits in getting their GED certification. In addition, it requires students to take their "Foundations Course" which provides information on employment opportunities and the necessary academic skills to secure and sustain employment.

Workforce Development Programming: This program partners with the Home Builders Institute to expose participants to seven construction trades. Upon completion of the program participants are certified for the U.S Occupational Safety and Health Administration 10 certification.

For more information, visit https://www.seeforever.org/schools/yalc/.

Office of the State Superintendent of Education DC Re-engagement Center (REC)

The DC Re-engagement Center (REC) conducts outreach targeted to emerging adults between the 16 and 24 who have dropped out of school. REC also accepts walk-ins and referrals. In order to be eligible to receive services from REC, individuals must be: 1) between the ages of 16 and 24;

2) a DC resident or classified as homeless; 3) does not hold a high school diploma or GED; and 4) is not currently enrolled in school.

The goal of REC is to connect participants back to education options and other critical services to support their educational outcomes. REC accesses their academic status and non-academic needs to develop a personalized plan. The plan identifies educational options (e.g., community-based organizations and DCPS alternative schools), supporting the enrollment process, and providing ongoing support for at least one year once the participant is re-enrolled.

For more information, visit https://osse.dc.gov/service/dc-reengagement-center

DC Central Kitchen

The DC Central Kitchen provides culinary job training and career readiness training at their café in Southeast. The training is specifically for emerging adults between the ages of 18 and 24 who are not in school and not working. DC Central Kitchen enrolls an average of 20-25 individuals for each 12-week training program.

For more information, visit https://rocainc.org/work/our-intervention-model/stage-based-programming/.

Pathways for Young Adults Program

The Pathways for Young Adults Program (PYAP) serves residents in the District between the ages of 18 and 24 who are out-of-school and out-of-work. PYAP provides occupational training in allied health, administrative services, and basic information technology. In additional, PYAP provides life skills development, and work readiness instructions to connect participants to industry-oriented work experience. Participants in PYAP are assigned a paid internship and must commit to working between 25 to 40 hours per week throughout the program.

For more information, visit https://does.dc.gov/service/pathways-young-adults-0.

UDC Community College Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning Program (WDLL)

The UDC WDLL provides residents of the District with job skills training. The trainings are focused on high demand industries in the District such as: hospitality, construction, transportation, property management, information technology, and office administration. The trainings are offered in multiple locations in Ward 5, 6, 7, and 8.

For more information, visit https://www.udc.edu/cc/assessment/workforce-development-and-lifelong-learning-wdll/.

Education Programs in Other Jurisdictions

California: Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)

California's Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Division of Juvenile Justice is a detention facility that provides education and treatment to justice-involved youth up to the age of

25. DJJ only serves youth with the most serious criminal background and with the most intense treatment needs. The youth are assigned living units based on their age, gender, treatment needs, and risk of institutional violence. DJJ provides academic, vocational, and treatment programs. More specifically, DJJ operates an accredited school district that provides high school curriculum where youth can achieve a high school diploma. If the commitment of the individual is short term they are guided through GED curriculum. Vocational certifications and college classes are offered as well. A diploma or GED is the requirement for parole consideration.

For more information, visit https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/juvenile-justice/.

Massachusetts: ROCA

ROCA is an organization that provides outreach and services to emerging adults between 17 and 24. Their targeted population have been previously arrested, previously incarcerated, gang or street involved, use drugs, have dropped out of high school, or were once on juvenile or adult probation. Roca provides life skills, educational, and employment programming in informal and formal structures. Roca offers HiSET/GED classes which are taught in a flexible curriculum, either in small groups or one-on-one sessions. The classes are tailored to the participants' level and learning ability. Roca's Transitional Employment Program provides participants the opportunity to join Roca's work crews, earn real wages, and learn basic work skills. In addition, Roca provides workforce readiness curriculum, pre-vocational training, as well as job placement and retention services.

For more information, visit https://rocainc.org/.

New York: Young Adult Justice Scholars/Justice Community Programs (YAJS/C)

YAJS/C is a two-part program in New York that serves justice-involved emerging adults between 16 and 24. The Justice Scholars program focuses on education, providing educational services, tutoring, case management, career exploration, financial incentives, and follow-up services. The Community Justice Program engages participants in subsidized community benefit projects. Participants see themselves as role models of the community, learn about their legal rights to reduce barriers to their education and employment, all while receiving stipends or incentives in support of their workforce engagement.

For more information, visit http://home2.nyc.gov/html/prob/html/young_men/programs.shtml.

Workforce Development Programs

Workforce Development Programs in the District

Run Hope Work (RHW)

RHW is an organization that provides trainings to emerging adults between 20 and 24 who are experiencing homelessness, returning from incarceration, runaways, or are single parents. RHW targets emerging adults with violent offenses, drug cases, and gang injunction cases. The

organization provides trainings and services such as: physical fitness training, workforce readiness training, construction skills training, and post traumatic meditation therapy.

For more information, visit https://runhopework.org/what-we-do.

So Others Might Eat (SOME)

SOME is an interfaith and community-based organization that supports residents of the District experiencing homelessness and poverty. SOME provides services such as affordable housing, addiction treatment, counseling, and job training. SOME's Center for Employment Training prepares residents, without a diploma or GED, for careers such as building maintenance service technicians and medical administrative assistants.

For more information, visit https://www.some.org/about.

Pathways for Young Adults Program

This program provides aid to DC residents aged 18 to 24 who are not currently working or in school. Participants receive occupational training, workforce readiness training, and paid internship experience. The young adults are assigned to an internship with an approved employer within the industries of allied health, administrative services, and basic IT/Administrative Tech.

For more information, visit https://does.dc.gov/service/pathways-young-adults-0.

Mayor Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program

An initiative sponsored by the Department of Employment Services that serves 14-to-24-year-old youth with six weeks of work experience in private and government offices. Participants gain exposure to career paths, working professionals, and earn $20 per hour. In 2018, nearly 11,000 youth participated, and many came from wards with the highest unemployment rates in D.C.

For more information, visit https://does.dc.gov/service/mayor-marion-s-barry-summer-youth-employment-program.

Internships/Apprenticeships through DYRS

In 2010, DC Department of Youth Rehabilitative Services received a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to establish a workforce development program tailored to young adults. Youth work as interns for various DC based organizations and agencies where they develop the skills necessary to achieve their desired career. Interns work 15 to 30 hours per week and receive payment.

For more information, visit https://dyrs.dc.gov/service/workforce-development.

Youth Café

In 2019, DC Central Kitchen opened a new cafe location within Ward 8. This location provides culinary training and job readiness training to young adults aged 18 to 25 who have faced challenges with finding education or work. DC Central Kitchen also meets the total financial needs

of the young adults admitted which averages to $14,000 per student. Their students have gone on to work in local culinary establishments such as restaurants and hotels.

For more information, visit https://dccentralkitchen.org/enroll/.

Civic Justice Corps under DYRS

Established by the DYRS and the Earth Conservation Corps, this program provided 34 justice-involved youth aged 17 to 21 an opportunity to engage in community projects and gain work experience. They assisted in building the New Beginnings Youth Development Center, rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina, and other conservation projects within DC.

For more information, visit https://dyrs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dyrs/release_content/attachments/Juvenile%20Justice%20and%20Jobs.pdf.

Guns to Roses

Started in 2008, this vocational program teaches justice-involved youth how to weld so to convert confiscated firearms into community art projects. Youth are trained in blacksmithing, welding, and cutting to morph the weapons and create sculptures. This program aims to give youth skills to be competitive in the job market and raise awareness about gun violence.

For more information, visit https://dyrs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dyrs/release_content/attachments/Juvenile%20Justice%20and%20Jobs.pdf.

STRIVE DC

Founded in 1999, STRIVE DC is a non-profit who assist low-income residents in finding and sustaining employment. STRIVE is tailored to address the varying needs of residents facing struggles with addiction, homelessness, and incarceration. The STRIVE Job Readiness tract provides work readiness training and two years of individualized support services.

For more information, visit https://samaritanministry.org/content/job-assistance.

Project Empowerment

The Department of Employment Services created this program to provide job education, training, and subsidized employment to DC residents aged 22 to 54 living in areas with high unemployment rates. Support services offered include job coaching, job search assistance, physical or mental health treatment, business attire, life-skills workshops, apprenticeships, and job retention follow-up.

For more information, visit https://does.dc.gov/page/about-project-empowerment.

READY Center

Launched in February 2019, the Resources to Empower and Develop You Center is a “one-stop shop” where returning citizens can go to receive supportive services for housing, employment, and

more. Upon release, residents participate in a one-time visit to the Center to begin working on their post-release needs. The Center works as an information hub, where returning citizens are worked with to develop an individualized plan to ease the burden of re-entry.

For more information, visit https://mayor.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-launches-ready-center-connecting-returning-citizens-housing-employment-and.

Mayor's Office on Returning Citizen Affairs (MORCA)

The Mayor's Office on Returning Citizen Affairs provides services and information to previously incarcerated D.C. residents to remove barriers to employment and reentry. MORCA focuses heavily on case management through intake and assessment reviews, which are used to direct participants to the programs best suited to meet their needs. MORCA also provides referrals for specific industry trainings and gender-specific employment services.

For more information, visit https://dccouncil.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2-15-2019-Performance-Oversight-Responses-for-ORCA.pdf.

The Young Men Emerging (YME) Unit

The YME unit serves 18 to 25-year-old young adults and aims to foster an environment that promotes rehabilitation. YME uses a credible messenger theory to provide incarcerated people with models of successful reentry. YME provides mentorship, counseling, trauma treatment, and corrective behavior measure to positively impact young adults and create a community that leads to change. YME works with Department of Corrections staff to teach life skills, financial literacy, and fiscal responsibility.

For more information, visit https://justicepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Young_Men_Emerging_Unit_2020.pdf.

The Maya Angelou Young Adult Learning Center (YALC)

This Center provides workforce development programming to young adults aged 17 to 25 who reside in the DC/Maryland area and with a focus on justice-involved youth. Participants are placed within an internship with the Home Builders Institute and are taught about seven construction trades to be OSHA certified. Specialized counselors and social workers also meet with participants to develop working plans, provide group counseling, and meet their mental health needs.

For more information, visit https://www.seeforever.org/schools/yalc/.

Workforce Development Programs in Other Jurisdictions

Tennessee: Project Return

Founded in 1979, Project Return is an employment-focused agency that helps returning citizens find and retain jobs in Tennessee through a series of supportive services. The process begins within prisons and can last even after employment is secured. Signature services of theirs include individualized coaching, job search strategies, mentorship, assistance with living costs, counseling, childcare, direct aid in food, clothing, and more. Transitional employment and housing

are available as a temporary service to provide a starting income and living space. Skill development programming allows participants to earn certifications in construction and hospitality services to take advantage of growing industries. In 2018, 80% of Project Return participants found job placement.

For more information, visit https://www.projectreturninc.org/annual-report/.

National: Opportunity Works

Launched in 2015, Opportunity Works was a national initiative led by Jobs for the Future and community-based organizations (CBOs) with the goal of establishing specialized programming that would help opportunity youth access pathways into occupational training programs. Seven cities, including Philadelphia and San Francisco, managed to directly impact over 2,000 youth within three years. A focus was placed on boys of color who had spent time in correctional facilities. Collaborative partners provide personalized case management, career-readiness training, and subsidized employment. Participants were found to be 25 percent more likely to attain employment.

For more information, visit https://jfforg-prod-prime.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/JFF_Opportunity_Works_Final_Report_FINAL_508_0.pdf.

Oregon: Hope Partnership

Founded in 2010, the Hope Partnership is a joint program between the Oregon Youth Authority and Janus Youth Services that encourages positive development for currently incarcerated youth between the ages of 17 and 24. Youth are taught how to build relationships, develop skills in public speaking, theater, native beading, and other arts through workshops and vocational trainings.

For more information, visit https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249902.pdf#page=26.

National: Youth Build Offender Project

This program began in 2004, and it targets low-income justice-involved youth between the ages of 16 to 24. The program functions to divert youth away from incarceration by providing job training in construction. Participants work 6 to 24 months on rehabilitating housing for disadvantaged families in their own communities. Additional services such as individual counseling and mentorship are also offered. There are currently 252 general Youth Build programs in 46 states.

For more information, visit https://www.youthbuild.org/sites/default/files/BCA_YouthBuild_JBCA_2015.pdf.

National: Right Turn Career-Focused Transition Initiative

This is a national, career-focused development program for justice-involved youth ages 16 to 21. Participants are encouraged to identify their personal interests and work with staff to develop an Individual Career Development Plan (ICDP) over time. Youth are provided soft skills training, summer work experience, workplace visits, pathways to postsecondary education, and a mentor

from the local community. “74 percent of out-of-school participants aged 18 and above were placed in jobs, postsecondary education, or occupational training.”

For more information, visit http://iel.org/Right-Turn-about.

Young Adult Justice Community Program

This program was developed from the New York City Young Men’s Initiative to provide justice-involved youth career related opportunities. The program centers around community benefit projects meant to improve the safety, sustainability, and beauty of neighborhoods. Through these projects, participants develop skills in leadership, teamwork, and project management. Justice Community also offers job readiness workshops. job placement support, counseling, and case management. Participants are given a stipend upon completion of training.

For more information, visit https://www1.nyc.gov/site/probation/services/justice-community.page.

Massachusetts: ROCA

Launched in 1988, ROCA is an intervention program that serves justice-involved youth aged 16 to 24 who have a proven resistance to accepting services. Their Young Men Program and Young Mothers Program use the same intervention model that has three phases (Building Trust, Behavior Change, Sustaining Change). This four-year model has two years of intensive behavior change services followed by two years of follow-up regarding job readiness. In addition, the Transitional Employment Program allows participants to be on work crews and earn income. In 2019, Roca served 246 young mothers and 904 young men.

For more information, visit https://rocainc.org/work/our-intervention-model/.

Massachusetts: UTEC, Inc.

Founded in 1999, UTEC offers justice-involved youth aged 17 to 25 paid work experience to increase job readiness. UTEC has a long-term program model centered around social enterprises including mattress recycling, food service, and woodworking. These enterprises facilitate positive development, generate revenue to support UTEC costs, and support the economic development of the broader community. In 2018, 97 percent of enrolled youth had no new convictions or technical violations and 63 percent had earned an industry-recognized certification.

For more information, visit https://utecinc.org/our-impact/impact/.

California: Reset Foundation

Founded in 2013, the Reset Foundation was a residential-based program that aimed to dismantle the poverty to prison pipeline by encouraging alternatives to incarceration for transitional age young men. Services provided included mentorships, direct training, and career development workshops. Residents were assigned a job within the program and provided a stipend. Reset shut down in 2017 due to financial constraints.

For more information, visit https://theresetfoundation.org/what-we-do/campuses.

Maryland: Turnaround Tuesday

Turnaround Tuesday prepares returning citizens, as well as unemployed citizens, in returning to the workforce. In addition, the program trains participants to become leaders in their communities and work environment. Every Tuesday program participants attend trainings that covers leadership development, job readiness, soft skills, resume writing, interview skills, background story support, and many other skills needed to return to the workforce.

For more information, visit https://www.buildiaf.org/turnaround-tuesday/.

Family Service Programs

Family Service Programs in the District

DYRS Family-Centered Service

DYRS provides many services for the families of the youth placed in its care, including DC Youth Link, Anchored in Strength Family Support Group, family retreats, family counseling, and cultural outings.

- Anchored in Strength Family Support Group: A support group where guardians can share their feelings about their child's involvement in DYRS, learn about DYRS resources, and receive peer support from other parents or guardians.
- The Achievement Center: The Center provides drop-in family nights and skill building classes, which the family members of young people involved in DYRS can participate in.
- Credible Messengers: Credible Messengers are community members who were involved in the justice system and have similar backgrounds to the youth and families that DYRS serves. They can offer support to youth and their families during the young person's commitment or transition from commitment.
- DC YouthLink (Sasha Bruce Family Strengthening Program): DC YouthLink provides a number of services for young people who are placed in the community. The Sasha Bruce Family Strengthening Program helps families improved their communication, conflict resolution skills and coping skills.
- Family Counseling: Family counseling may be a recommended part of a young person's treatment plan.
- Family Retreats: DYRS offers periodic family retreats designed to foster family healing and connecting.
- Teach Us Our History, Show Us Our Strength: Cultural activities including a Civil Rights tour, prosocial family activities, and museum tours designs to teach families about their cultural history and inspire families' natural coping capacity.
- Visitation Support: In DYRS facilities youth are permitted to have face to face visits with their family, as opposed to visitation practices at the DC Jail, where most social visits are held via video. DYRS also offers transportation assistance to the family members of youth placed in out of state facilities, which the Federal Bureau of Prisons does not offer even though DC residents are placed all over the country.

For more information, see https://dhs.dc.gov/service/family-services and https://dyrs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dyrs/page_content/attachments/What%20Love%20Looks%20Like%20-%20A%20Voice%20for%20Your%20Family_0.pdf.

DHS Family Centered Services

The DC Department of Human Services also offers family support programs. Young people involved in the justice system and their family may have access to these services depending on several factors, including most notably their age and placement. DHS family support services include Parent and Adolescent Support (PASS), the Strong Families Program and the Teen Parent Assessment Program. The District of Columbia may want to consider amending the eligibility requirements for some of these programs to extend them to the justice involved emerging adult population.

- Parent and Adolescent Support (PASS): Offers services to youth under the age of 18 who have committed a status offense such as truancy, running away, curfew violations and extreme disobedience. The goal of the program is to reduce the occurrence of these status offense and prevent further involvement in the juvenile justice system. The services offered include youth and family assessments, intense case management, parent and youth support groups. For more information, visit https://dhs.dc.gov/service/parent-and-adolescent-support-pass-intensive-case-management.
- Strong Families Program: A prevention or early intervention program that is designed to help strengthen family units, foster healthy relationships, and help families that are in danger of disintegration address complex problems. For more information, visit https://dhs.dc.gov/service/strong-families-program-division.
- Teen Parent Assessment Program: The program provides services to help TANF recipients under 18 years old become more self-sufficient by offering assessments of living arrangements, counseling, education programs, parenting classes and other community-based services. For more information, visit https://dhs.dc.gov/page/teen-parent-assessment-program-tpap.

Big Brother Big Sister of the Capital Area

The Mentoring Children of Promise Initiative provides mentoring for children who have a parent incarcerated in Washington DC.

For more information, visit https://www.bbbsnca.org/mentoring-children-of-promise-initiative/.

Hope House Family Groups

This organization offers peer support groups for the children, wives, and caregivers of people who are incarcerated. In addition to support groups the organization offers recreational activities and mentoring for children.

For more information, visit https://www.hopehousedc.org/programs/.

U.S. Dream Academy

Through a partnership with local public schools including Turner Elementary School, in Washington DC, the organization provides after school services and mentoring for in high risk communities, including communities where a number of students have a parent who is incarcerated.

For more information, visit https://usdreamacademy.org/.

Family Service Programs in other Jurisdictions

Maryland: Camp at FCI Cumberland

For those parents in the Federal Bureau of Prison's custody who wish to enhance their parenting skills, parenting classes and activities are available. A select group of parents, at the Federal Correctional Institution Cumberland, participate in a program that arranges for their children to visit them and participate at a camp at the prison. During the camp children visit their parents and engage in craft projects.

For more information, visit https://www.bop.gov/resources/news/20130925_reconnecting.jsp.

California: Family Unification Liaison, Services in the State Prison in Solano

Contracted staff offer personal liaison services between people who are incarcerated and their family, as well as parenting and creative conflict resolution workshops.

For more information, visit https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/facility-locator/sol/.

Georgia: Forever Family Reentry Assistance

Forever family provides a number of services for parents who are incarcerated and their children, including re-entry assistance. As a part of this process licensed marriage and family therapist work with children and families to create a reunification plan.

For more information, visit https://www.foreverfam.org/for-our-parents/.

California: Parenting Inside Out (California State Prison Solano)

The contractor Community Works West teaches the 60-hour evidence Parenting Inside Out curriculum, which has been recognized by California's Child Protective Services. The program is designed to provide parents who are incarcerated with the cognitive and behavioral skills they need to parent their children.

For more information, visit https://www.kalw.org/post/being-father-inside-prison#stream/0.

Georgia: Parenting with Love and Limits

PLL is not a direct service provider. It is a company that trains agencies and therapist in its proprietary evidence-based system of care model. This model provides intensive proactive support for youth transitioning from confinement to the community. The model encompasses a 6 to 7-

month plan including 12 family therapy sessions, 6 weeks of parenting classes and wraparound services for the youth and their family.

For more information, visit https://gopll.com/PLLPrograms/Reentry.

California: Project Avary

This organization provides year-round programming to meet the emotional needs of children whose parents are in prison. Participating children have access to yearlong school enrichment programs and a residential summer camp. Teens who are fourteen years old or older can become junior counselors, participate in a teen advocacy group, and lead restorative justice parenting workshops. This organization is also a family camp for affected children and their caregivers.

For more information, visit www.projectavary.org/mentoring-program.

Virginia: The Up Center

Strengthening Fathers Program: This program provides comprehensive transitional services to young fathers, between ages of 16 and 24, who have been selected for a pre-release program. Fathers in the program receive transitional services, including case management, parenting classes, job development skills, and mentoring to promote family engagement and healthy relationships, and to reduce recidivism.

For more information, visit https://www.theupcenter.org/how-we-help/families/strengthening-fathers-program/.

Specialized Courts

Specialized Courts in the District

Family Court Operations

The Superior Court of the District of Columbia's Family Court Operations Division receives and processes youth specific cases such as: adoption, child support, child abuse and neglect, custody, divorce, guardianship, juvenile delinquency, paternity, termination of parent rights, and mental health and habilitation.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/superior-court/family-court-operations.

Juvenile and Neglect Branch

The Juvenile and Neglect Brand of the Family Courts Operations processes cases such as child abuse and neglect, juvenile delinquency, persons in need of supervision (PINS), as well as truancy and runaway cases.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/superior-court/family-court-operations/juvenile-and-neglect-branch.

Family Court Social Services Division (FCSSD)

FCSSD is the Districts juvenile probation agency that serves and supervises youth involved in the District's juvenile justice system. The mission of FCSSD is to "assist in the rehabilitation of youth through the provision of comprehensive services and probation supervision with an eye toward public safety to prevent recidivism and protect the community."

The division serves and supervises newly arrested youth entering the Court system with juvenile delinquency cases, diversion matters, truancy cases, and Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) cases.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/services/juvenile-matters.

Criminal Division Problem Solving Courts

Problem Solving Courts hold individuals accountable, as well as address their needs and underlying cause of their actions. In the Problem-Solving Courts, both criminal justice and community members have a role in determining solutions and solving problems. Members include the judge, defense attorney, businesses, person awaiting trial, community organizations, faith community, government agencies, prosecutor, individual residents, and social services agencies. The goals of the court are to address needs of the individuals by connecting them to treatment and social services; increase the person's accountability such as performing community service; streamline case processing; reduce criminal justice costs; create partnerships to solve neighborhood problems; increase public trust and confidence in the court system; and enhance the quality of life in DC neighborhoods including reducing reoffending activity.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/services/criminal-matters/community-court-and-problem-solving-courts.

Traffic Courts

The Traffic Court is a community court-based model that handles arraignments for individuals given citations in the seven Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) districts and other police agencies. Traffic Courts also handle any trials that result from "DC misdemeanor" charges for which individuals are arrested in their districts. DC misdemeanors include: disorderly conduct, drinking in public, possession of an open container of alcohol, and panhandling. Criminal traffic violations include: DWI, DUI, OWI, no permit, unregistered vehicle, operating after suspension, and reckless driving. The individual detained in the cell block pending arraignment may be interviewed to identify social service needs and given a referral to necessary services. Individuals may be given the opportunity to "remedy" and/or perform community service in DC, which influence their case to be dismissed. A person's eligibility for a diversion opportunity is determined by the Office of Attorney General.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/services/criminal-matters/community-court-and-problem-solving-courts.

Mental Health Community Court (MHCC)

The MHCC is a voluntary specialized court that integrates community resources to meet the needs of persons with mental illnesses in the court system. In order to participate in MHCC, individuals must be competent and not incarcerated. In addition, individuals must be both legally and clinically eligible. Eligibility is determined by two screening processes:

1. The US Attorney's Office screens charges for legal eligibility by reviewing current and past legal histories.

2. The DC Pretrial Supervision Agency (PSA) screens the individual for clinical eligibility.

MHCC disqualifies individuals with pending domestic violence, violent felonies, or gun convictions. As for clinical eligibility, individuals must have a severe mental health diagnosis (e.g., schizophrenia or bi-polar) and must be approved for supervision under PSA's Specialized Supervision Unit. Individuals with substance abuse disorders are allowed to participate in MHCC but must cooperate with drug testing and substance abuse treatment recommendation. If individuals comply with the treatment services and conditions set by the court, they will enter a diversion agreement for four months. Once the period is completed, individuals graduate from MHCC and their criminal charges may be dismissed or reduced.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/services/criminal-matters/community-court-and-problem-solving-courts.

U.S. Misdemeanor Community Courts

There is a US Misdemeanor Community Court in all seven MPD districts. The courts adjudicate US misdemeanor cases not involving domestic violence, including: drug possession, theft in the second degree, sexual solicitation, illegal dumping, unlawful entry, and simple assault. Eligible individuals are offered to voluntarily participate in diversion programming, eligibility is determined by the DC United States' Attorney's Office. The diversion programs give individuals the opportunity to make restitution to the community, accept responsibility for their behavior, obtain educational services and necessary treatment, and divert a possible criminal conviction.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/services/criminal-matters/community-court-and-problem-solving-courts.

The Superior Court Drug Intervention Program (Drug Court)

Drug Court is responsible for cases involving individuals with substance dependence/addiction with nonviolent misdemeanor and felony charges. Individuals with Drug Court cases receive supervision, drug testing, treatment services, and immediate sanctions and incentives.

For more information, visit https://www.dccourts.gov/services/criminal-matters/community-court-and-problem-solving-courts.

Specialized Courts in other Jurisdictions

New York: Brooklyn Young Adult Court

Located in Kings County, New York, the Brooklyn Young Adult Court serves all cases involving young adults between the ages of 16 to 24 in Brooklyn. The Young Adult Court team is made up of a judge, attorneys, and prosecutors who are trained to understand the developmental needs of young. The court does not incarcerate individuals, instead the court mandates evidence-based social service interventions (e.g., that is determined by the specific needs of the young adult. The interventions are identified by a specialized social worker that screens the individual using a risk-need assessment.

For more information, visit https://www.courtinnovation.org/programs/brooklyn-young-adult-court/more-info.

California: San Francisco Young Adult Court

The San Francisco Young Adult Court serves young adults between the ages of 18 to 25 charged with violent and nonviolent felonies. The court is viewed as a program where individuals enter pre-plea, on a deferred sentence, or on a grant of probation depending on the severity of their charges. The Young Adult Court team is made up of a judge, district attorney, public defender, defense attorney, Adult Probation Department, case managers, career advisors/workforce development, community providers, and the Superior Court Collaborative Justice Programs. Through a "collaborative problem-solving approach," young adults complete a "Wellness Care Plan" based on the needs and goals determined through an intensive intake and orientation. Throughout the progress of their plan the participants are connected with clinical case managers that help with their immediate needs, provide ongoing support, and monitor their progress. In addition, individuals participate in life skills groups, job readiness programs, dialectic behavior therapy, and other developmentally aligned programs. Upon the completion of the Young Adult Court program, individuals graduate, and their charges may be dismissed, reduced, or their probation terms are shortened.

For more information, visit
https://www.sfsuperiorcourt.org/sites/default/files/images/YAC%20Participant%20HandbookFINALAPRIL2019.pdf?1568738262210.

Illinois: Chicago Restorative Justice Community Court (RJCC)

The RJCC serves young adults between the ages of 18 to 26 who have been charged with a nonviolent felony or misdemeanor, in Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood. The court is located in a community center and the court process is referred to as a restorative justice "peace circle" which involves a judge, trained circle keeper, the victim, the person charged, family members, friends, and other community members. Prosecutors and defense attorneys are not involved in the process, and the judges hold the responsibility of approving and overseeing implementation of an agreement to repair the action done. After completion of the program, the young adult's charges are dropped, and the arrest expunged.

For more information, visit http://www.cookcountycourt.org/MEDIA/ViewPressRelease/tabid/338/ArticleId/2564/Restorative-Justice-Community-Court-arrives-in-North-Lawndale.aspx.

Texas: Second Chance Community Improvement Program (SCCIP)

Funded by the Lone Star Justice Alliance, this program provides an alternative to incarceration for emerging adults aged 17 to 24 years old. SCCIP uses a formal process to transfer these individuals from adults' prisons after being charged with a felony offense. Participants are connected to a range of services that promote positive health outcomes and seek to reduce recidivism. Social workers and case managers are assigned to participants. After completion of the program, participants can have charges dismissed or cleared off their record. One main focus of the program is to divert people with substance abuse issues in hopes of providing treatment instead of incarceration.

For more information, visit http://www.advocatenewstx.com/juvenile-services-innovating-again-for-emerging-adults/?fbclid=IwAR1Q_fwRucg5VgTWjhjQYw33FZ9N_KM1i41-iBqy0T-13QMrEpfakLD0qnM&sfns=mo.

Specialized Units

Specialized Units in the District

The Young Men Emerging (YME)

The Young Men Emerging Unit opened in February 2018. It created a therapeutic and rehabilitative environment to address the needs of the 18 population. The program is in a separate housing unit that provides education, counseling, mentoring, and a measure of self-governance.

For more information, visit https://doc.dc.gov/page/programs-and-case-management-pcm and https://justicepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Young_Men_Emerging_Unit_2020.pdf.

Specialized Units in other Jurisdictions

Maine: Young Adult Offenders Program

Founded in 2014, The Maine Department of Corrections is pioneering a new incarceration approach for young adults. Launched at the Mountain View Youth Development Center in Charleston, the program started with 24 medium risk individuals aged 18 to 25 and provides similar services and supports that are available in youth detention centers. These include identifying risks that contribute to reoffending and working to overcome them, such as mental health and substance use disorder treatment. The program also offers education and vocational training, family therapy and parenting education, and a reentry plan for release.

For more information, visit https://www.maine.gov/corrections/juvenile/Facilities/MVYDC/index.htm.

California: The T.R.U.E. Program

The T.R.U.E. pilot program (Truthfulness to oneself and others, Respect toward the community, Understanding ourselves and what brought us here, Elevating into success) was established to address the needs of the 18- to 25-year-old population at the Cheshire Correctional Institution. Those in the program, including 12 mentors, are housed in a different unit from the general population and have access to developmentally appropriate opportunities and programming.

For more information, visit https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov/pages/home.

The PEACE Unit

In October 2018, the Suffolk County House of Corrections in Massachusetts opened its PEACE (Positive Energy Always Creates Elevation) Unit. It is a specialized housing for the emerging adult population between the ages of 18 and 25 that focuses on programming to address the unique needs of this vulnerable population.

For more information, visit https://www.wbur.org/news/2018/11/30/peace-unit-south-bay-jail-boston.

The PACT Unit

The Middlesex House of Correction in Massachusetts opened its P.A.C.T Unit (People Achieving Change Together) in February 2018. Designed specifically for 18- to 24-year-olds, it offers specialized programming in workforce development, anger management, and sessions with therapists all geared towards skills for a successful reintegration into the community.

For more information, visit https://www.middlesexsheriff.org/middlesex-jail-house-correction.

The Restoring Promise Initiative

In November 2018, The Restoring Promise Initiative, in South Carolina was opened and is designed to serve people between the ages of 18 to 25. It has four central goals at its core: create safety, strengthen communities, facilitate healing, and advance equity. The program provides a new practice model for incarcerated young adults that "prioritizes family engagement, self-expression, peer support, personal growth and development, education and career readiness."

For more information, visit https://www.vera.org/newsroom/young-adult-prison-reform-initiative-expands-to-three-new-states.

Specialty Probation

Specialty Probation in the District

CSOSA's Young Adult Initiative

Founded in 2013 by Director Nancy Ware, YAI provides wrap around services and case management to young adults under 25 years old through a specialized probation team. This

multidisciplinary team tailor supervision plans specifically to the young adult's level of risk and utilizes motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioral interventions to meet their individual needs. Participants who are not working or in school are provided resources through a day reporting model. YAI aims to increase compliance among emerging adults, decrease criminality, and reinforce prosocial behavior. *This young adult supervision program has been discontinued.*

For more information, visit https://www.csosa.gov/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2019/02/CSOSA-Strategic-Plan-FY2018-2022.pdf.

Specialty Probation in other Jurisdictions

California: San Francisco Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Unit

Launched in 2009, the TAY Unit conducts risk-needs assessments to develop individualized rehabilitation plans for 18-to-25-year-olds on probation. The TAY Unit focuses on collaborating with community partners such as the Mayor's office to provide a variety of developmentally appropriate programs aimed towards emerging adults such as job readiness training. Incentives for meeting program goals include: "reduction in reporting requirements, early termination of supervision, or possible expungement of records." Emerging adults who have successfully completed the TAY program are placed throughout work sites in City departments.

For more information, visit https://sfgov.org/adultprobation/ab109taysourealignment-community-services-division.

New York: NYC Anyone Can Excel (ACE) Young Adult Unit

Started in 2016 by New York City Police Commissioner Ana Bermudez, the specialized ACE unit effectively engage with 16-to-24-year-olds through cognitive-behavior interventions. ACE uses a three-phased sequence that focuses on relationship-building, in-home visits, and fostering strong community connections. These three phases are: (1) Assessment and Engagement, (2) Development and Supervision, and (3) Community Connections Staff receive specialized training in the Positive Youth Development framework to competently utilize motivational interviewing and recognize the qualities of adolescent brain development. ACE crafts an Individualized Action Plan by using a validated risk-needs assessment tool and incorporating input from the emerging adult's "circle of care." ACE caseloads have been reported to have 45% fewer probation violations filed as compared to youth not enrolled in ACE.

For more information, visit https://www1.nyc.gov/site/probation/services/specialized-units.page.

Massachusetts: Trial Court's UTEC "Young Adult Learning Lab"

Established in 1999, UTEC aims to ensure economic mobility for court-involved 18–24-year-olds through participation in a variety of organization-run social enterprises. This program targets young adults who are serious criminally involved and provides asset-based, employment-focused programming. Their model includes: (1) Street Outreach and Gang Peacemaking, (2) Transformational Beginnings, and (3) Workforce Development and Social Enterprises. Young adults are placed with a Transitional coach who helps in developing necessary critical skills, maintaining program engagement, and resuming academic education. The UTEC-run social

enterprises include: mattress recycling business, cafe and catering outfit, and woodworking operation. UTEC also provides participants with supplemental activities that serve as safe outlets for expression. To incentivize participation, UTEC provides behavioral and mental health counseling, free childcare, and can waive/forgive probation-related fines.

For more information, visit https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/editorials/2019/01/22/opinion-editorial-merrimack-valley-vital-experiment-criminal-justice-reform/TkT8G0AFOrtEQB4HuznIzM/story.html.

Reentry Programs

Reentry Programs in the District

Ready Center

Washington DC recently opened the ready center, a post-release hub where recently released individuals can access assistance in housing, employment, education, and health care. They will also have access to obtaining identification cards, birth certificates and social security cards to help the individuals in the first few days of reentry.

For more information, visit https://mayor.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-launches-ready-center-connecting-returning-citizens-housing-employment-and.

Mayor's Office on Returning Citizens (MORCA)

The Mayor's Office on Returning Citizen Affairs (MORCA) was established in 2007 to provide needed treatment and services to residents returning from jail or prison. MORCA's program priorities are focused on providing identification cards and drivers licenses and well as family reunification programs.

For more information, visit https://orca.dc.gov/page/about-morca.

DC Reentry Action Network

Run through the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, the DC Reentry Action Network (RAN) is a coalition of non-profit organizations that provide reentry services to DC residents. RAN members provide services including education, employment, family and friends reunification, health, housing, legal, and transitional support.

For more information, visit https://dc-ran.org/ .

Community Family Life Services

CFLS provides reentry services targeted at women as well as the homeless and low-income families. Their services include stable housing for individuals and families, case management parenting programs, employment services, pre-release planning and assistance, support services for people with HIV/AIDS, and food and clothing assistance.

For more information, visit https://www.cflsdc.org/.

Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop

Free Minds builds on the relationships built with people while they are incarcerated to provide reentry support. They hold reentry book clubs, job training, case management, a credit and financial literacy program, peer support, and connections to job and educational opportunities.

For more information, visit https://freemindsbookclub.org/ .

Voices for a Second Chance

VSC provides re-entry services for DC residents returning from the DC correctional system, the federal Bureau of Prisons, and DC jail. They connect with people while incarcerated to connect them with their families and provide guidance. Upon release, VSC provides case management, counseling, vital records, clothing, toiletries, voter registration, and referrals for housing, employment, education, training, substance abuse, and mental health treatment.

For more information, visit https://www.vscdc.org/ .

The DC Reentry Navigator

Published by the DC Public Defender Service, the DC Reentry Navigator provides information and resources for people arrested, charged, tried, and/or convicted under DC law. It includes information on preparing for release, accessing public services, using technology and transportation, obtaining personal records, managing finances, understanding legal protections and rights, and registering to vote.

For more information, visit https://www.pdsdc.org/need-legal-advice/dcreentrynavigator .

Reentry Programs in other Jurisdictions

Oregon: Hope Partnership

The Oregon Youth Authority partnered with Janus Youth Services to develop a community-based reentry service. A combination of art-based classes, as well as skill development in various employment and vocational sectors has successfully transition young adults back into the community. In 2017, the capacity grew from 150 youth to 450 youth with the merging of two OYA facilities.

For more information, visit https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249902.pdf#page=26.

Philadelphia: Youth Violence Reduction Partnership

The Philadelphia Office of Adult and Juvenile Probation implemented a program to reduce the number of homicides in the four most violent police districts. In partnership with the District Attorney and the Policy Department, the program works with formerly incarcerated young adults and provides job readiness skills, crisis intervention therapy, and referrals to mental and behavioral health treatment. Research has found this program to reduce homicides and shootings in the four Philadelphian jurisdictions.

For more information, visit https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249902.pdf#page=26.

National: YouthBuild Offender Project

This reentry service targets low-income young adults (16-to-24-year-olds) and is a post-adjudication diversionary program. Participation depends on an individual's needs and can vary from 6 to 24 months. Its main objective is to transition a young adult towards sustainable employment, or secondary education.

For more information, visit https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249902.pdf#page=26.

New York: Mentorship program, Department of Probation

The New York City Department of Probation developed a mentorship program for justice-involved young adults. The paid mentors have the purpose of identifying and altering the attitudes that resulted in the initial arrests. This is facilitated through group and individualized support programming and connections to employment opportunities. The program is specifically for those 16 to 24 years old.

For more information, visit https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249902.pdf#page=26.