



Appendix A: Principles from the 2020-2025 YRA Strategic Plan

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

The 2020-2025 YRA strategic plan called for three key objectives (p. 26).

Objective 1: The District's Mayor's Office must engage in a process to develop Districtwide 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.

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 with the YRA.

HOUSING

The 2020-2025 YRA strategic plan called for **comprehensive affordable housing services** (pp. 30-31).

Objective: Build housing programming and opportunities for emerging adults.

Core principles:

- Individualized programming
- Re-entry plans
- Housing support prior to system involvement
- Short-term and long-term housing
- Financial resources
- Services/policies to prevent crimes of survival from leading to arrest
- Diversion of young people from the criminal legal system by providing services that address homelessness
- Housing not restricted by prior system involvement
- Services to support a transition to independent living



EDUCATION

The 2020-2025 YRA strategic plan called for **building education programming and opportunities** (pp. 39-40).

Core Principles:

- **Multiple pathways:** Provide options to pursue a high school diploma, GED, workforce certification, and/or various postsecondary programs.
- **Accommodations:** Create accommodations for special education learners in choosing their pathway(s).
- **Address dehumanizing impact of incarceration:** Adapt education programming to specifically counter the dehumanizing effects of incarceration.
- **Needs assessment:** Perform individualized assessments and develop an individualized approach to meet educational needs.
- **Ongoing support:** Involve guidance, counseling, and special education attorneys at all stages of the educational process. Ensure quick access to transcripts. Ensure credits transfer.
- **Diverse opportunities:** Offer various educational programs (coding, art, music, etc) and allow students to experience different postsecondary and workforce pathways.
- **Include higher education:** Provide information and support for college applications and financial aid applications. Create mentorships with college students and local employers to guide emerging adults.
- **Wraparound supports:** Take a holistic approach to support housing, health, and other needs that impact an emerging adult's ability to pursue education.
- **Flexibility:** Ensure programs don't create new barriers for learners.

WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

The 2020-2025 YRA strategic plan called for **building workforce development programming and opportunities** (pp. 42-43).

Core Principles

- **Programming during incarceration:** Offer workforce programs as soon as possible upon incarceration.
- **Programming upon re-entry:** Extend programming through to re-entry.
- **Credential programs prioritized:** Offer programs based on length of credentials and length of sentence.
- **Individualized support:** Provide case management and resources from other advocates and stakeholders, including District agencies.
- **Industry-aligned:** Training should lead to jobs in the community.
- **Ongoing support:** Focus on employment retention support once individuals obtain jobs.
- **Quality and outcomes:** Be clear on goals. Measure progress.



DIVERSION

The 2020-2025 YRA strategic plan called for **building diversion programming and opportunities** (pp. 22-23).

Core Principles:

- Formalized cooperative agreements between the diversion program and key stakeholders ensure program consistency and continuity.
- Broad, equitable, and objective eligibility criteria are applied consistently at multiple points of case processing.
- Exclusionary criteria and costs for program participants must be limited.
- Uniform needs assessments should be used to determine the most appropriate and least restrictive levels of supervision and identify service needs.
- Intervention plans must be tailored to the individual participant's needs and developed with the participant's input.
- Programming must be strength-based and use incentives instead of graduated sanctions in response to participant behavior.
- Programs avoid or greatly limit contact with the criminal legal system by relying on clinical staff to run programs.
- Programming should be rooted in the community and led by the community.
- Staff must receive robust and routine training to ensure trauma-informed care, knowledge of rules, regulations, and best practices.
- Programs must be independently monitored and evaluated.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The 2020-2025 YRA strategic plan called for **building restorative justice programming and opportunities** (pp. 26-27).

Core Principles:

- Trained facilitators individually prepare participants to engage in the process.
- Those involved in the issue, their families, and their support systems participate in a facilitated discussion about the issue.
- Participants develop a plan with the help of the facilitator to address the issue and provide support to ensure the plan is enacted.
- Restorative justice options are available. Schools, police, and others know about these options.
- Facilitators focus on relationship-building and an asset-based approach toward each person.
- Confidentiality is essential for all involved.
- All involved parties have buy-in. Facilitators should come from or know the communities well that they are serving.
- Community mediation supports returning citizens in restoring relationships with family and other close relationships.



FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

The 2020-2025 YRA strategic plan called for **building family support programming and opportunities** (pp. 45-46),

Core Principles:

- High-need communities prioritized
- Community-led, government-invested initiatives
- Holistic support for intergenerational trauma
- Empowerment and provider selection prioritized
- Bilingual staff added

HEALTH

The 2020-2025 YRA strategic plan called for **building physical/mental/social health programming and opportunities** (pp. 32-36).

Core Principles:

- Individualized approach
- Self-reliance focused
- Inviting, engaging programming
- Family support
- Based on lived experience



Appendix B: References and Models by Chapter

CHAPTER 1: ENACT THE YRA STRATEGIC PLAN TO SUPPORT PUBLIC SAFETY

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CHAPTER 4: PROVIDE SAFE AND STABLE HOUSING

HOUSING PROGRAMS IN THE DISTRICT

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 drop-in center focused on emerging adults. Youth Connect helps impacted individuals access vital documents (e.g., Social Security and ID cards) that build independent living opportunities.

Supporting and Mentoring Youth Advocates and Leaders (SMYAL)

SMYAL is the largest LGBTQ youth housing provider in the DMV region. Across SMYAL's Youth Housing Program, residents receive LGBTQ-affirming support and individually-tailored services as they move through a three-tiered progress system toward sustainable independence. Each program provides safe and stable shelter, food, case management services, mental health counseling, crisis intervention, and community support for residents. Residents meet weekly with case managers to work collaboratively on their individualized service plans. Residents can attend life skills courses and community engagement opportunities, including nutrition and cooking classes, financial literacy, healthy relationships and communication, and resume workshops. Entry into SMYAL's Transitional Housing, Extended Transitional Housing, and Rapid Re-Housing Programs are part of the District of Columbia Coordinated Entry System.

Youth HOPE, Department of Human Services for the District of Columbia

The Youth HOPE (Housing Options and Prevention Education) program is part of DC's Youth Homeless Services out of the Department of Human Services. The program provides preventative services, including family counseling, medication, or mental health treatment. These services are designed to ameliorate some of the long-term impacts of homelessness. Additionally, HOPE provides short-term intervention and case management to transition a youth to a more permanent housing solution as quickly as possible.

HOUSING PROGRAMS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

California: Center on Juvenile & Criminal Justice - Cameo House

Cameo House provides housing and in-house case management to homeless or nearly homeless justice-involved women, ages 18 and over, to build the necessary skills for independent living. Participants in the program may be pregnant or have a young child. In addition to housing, program participants develop individual plans and practice skills in independent living, relationship-building, parenting, economic self-sufficiency, civic engagement, and educational attainment.



Minnesota: Ujamaa Place

Ujamaa Place directs its variety of support services – housing, education, employment, family reunification, and avoiding future contact with the criminal legal system – to Black men between 18 and 30 years old. Its housing arm includes emergency shelters and independent units as well as opportunities for home ownership. Financial literacy training and education about renting as well as home ownership are designed for long-term positive outcomes. Program goals are facilitated by working with the individual’s needs, but also working within community values.

New York: Lantern Organization - Vicinitas Hall

Vicinitas Hall provides studio apartments for emerging adults aged 18-25. The organization targets vulnerable groups: 60% of the units are reserved for youth with special needs who are leaving or have left the foster care system. The remaining 40% are for low-income emerging adults in need of permanent affordable housing. The building’s live-in superintendent is available 24/7 to respond to emergencies. In addition to housing, Lantern Community Services delivers on-site supportive service programming to all Vicinitas Hall tenants. Program offices offer space for staff to conduct individual and group client meetings, life skills counseling, education and employment development, and referral support. Staff and tenants work together to establish individual goal-centered service plans. The safe and welcoming environment provides stability to youth who have aged out of foster care, many of whom identify as LGBTQ, by helping them to retain housing through case management services organized around social and economic stability, health management, and independent living.

See the full resource list for housing programs on pages 85-89 of the YRA strategic plan.

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CHAPTER 5: BUILD EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE PATHWAYS

EDUCATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE DISTRICT

Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop

The Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop provides a variety of services, including book clubs with members in and outside of prisons. They also work alongside members who are working to reenter society by providing education and training opportunities. Free Minds also maintains 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. Participants can seek help with obtaining vital documents, skills development, and case management. The group structure provides peer support as well as facilitator knowledge.

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 assists participants as they obtain a GED, earn college credits, or undergo career training in health care and informational technology fields. The Student Support Team conducts in-depth needs assessments for their students to determine their physical, social, and emotional support needs to ensure their academic success. In addition, the Academy provides students with free health insurance, toiletries, transportation services, groceries, housing assistance, and other services as needed.

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. YALC particularly helps justice-involved emerging adults who are transitioning from incarceration. In addition to 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 students who have challenging home environments, attendance/academic concerns, need assistance with post-secondary plans, and/or have 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.



EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Massachusetts: ROCA

ROCA provides outreach and services to emerging adults between the ages of 17 and 24. Their target population has 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. It also offers HiSET/GED classes taught within a flexible curriculum, either in small groups or one-on-one sessions. The classes are tailored to the participant's level and learning abilities. 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.

New York: Young Adult Justice Scholars

Young Adult Justice Scholars serves justice-involved emerging adults between the ages of 17 and 24. This voluntary six-month program allows participants to further their educational goals, whether they seek to further or complete a GED, progress with college courses, take job readiness or skills training courses, complete internships, or pursue other employment development. The Justice Scholars program focuses on education, providing educational services, tutoring, case management, career exploration, financial incentives, and follow-up services.

WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAMS WITHIN THE DISTRICT

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 emerging adults are assigned to an internship with an approved employer within the industries of allied health, administrative services, and basic IT/administrative tech.

Run Hope Work (RHW)

RHW provides training 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 training and services such as physical fitness training, workforce readiness training, construction skills training, and post-traumatic meditation therapy.

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 who may lack a diploma or GED for careers such as building maintenance service technicians and medical administrative assistants.



WORKFORCE PROGRAMS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Maryland: Turnaround Tuesday

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

New York: Young Adult Justice Community Program

This program was developed by the New York City Young Men's Initiative to provide career-related opportunities to justice-involved youth. 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.

Tennessee: Project Return

Founded in 1979, Project Return is an employment-focused agency that helps returning citizens find and retain jobs after incarceration through a series of supportive services. The process begins within prisons and can extend beyond the location of secure employment. Signature services 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 local industries. In 2018, 80% of Project Return participants found job placement.

See the full resource list for education and workforce training programs on pages 92-101 of the YRA strategic plan.

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CHAPTER 6: OFFER ROBUST DIVERSION AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE OPTIONS

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 youths up to 17 years old. Youths 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 (3) pre-petition for status offenses by Court Social Services in collaboration with the OAG. ACE specialists work with the youth's family to develop a six-month diversion plan to address the youth's unique needs, provide tailored programming (e.g., family therapy, mentoring, mental health treatment, school support services, etc.), and present opportunities for the youth to take responsibility for their behavior. Ultimately, ACE works to connect youths and their families with a range of individually tailored support and behavioral health services, monitor successful program participation, and seeks to change the trajectory of the young person's life by keeping them from entering the criminal legal system.

Juvenile Behavioral Diversion Program (JBDP)

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

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMS IN THE DISTRICT

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

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 the U.S. Attorney's Office. 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.

DIVERSION PROGRAMS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Williamson County, Texas: Second Chance Community Improvement Program

The Second Chance Community Improvement Program serves emerging adults, 18-24, who have committed low-level offenses. Participants can only have committed non-violent offenses and may have been engaged with drug or alcohol charges. Programs run 12-14 months, improving participants' education, employment, housing and financial stability. Additional aims are to reduce recidivism rates, track the tendency for people who commit crimes to re-offend, and promote public safety. Enrollment is offered in lieu of incarceration and often allows participants' criminal records to be wiped clean upon completion.



Kalamazoo, Michigan: Young Adult Diversion Court (YADC)

YADC is a six-to-eight-month program for individuals on probation between the ages of 17 and 20 who have been sentenced for a criminal charge under a diversion statute. Each individual must also, as a requirement of the program, complete a service-learning project in an area that is meaningful to them. Participants beginning their projects simultaneously are encouraged to collaborate and implement a project together. YADC participants speak with local non-profit leaders and learn about their organizations' needs. This connection yields not only community-oriented projects but also valuable communication and employment skills.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Brooklyn and The Bronx, New York: Common Justice

Common Justice is an alternative to incarceration and a victim service program for serious crimes based on restorative justice practices. The program provides an important opportunity for healing to those harmed by a range of crimes, including assault and robbery, and an opportunity for those who have caused harm to make things as right as possible in place of a lengthy prison term. Common Justice involves victims of any age harmed by younger adults (ages 16 to 26) facing violent felony charges in the Supreme Court in Brooklyn and the Bronx. To enter the program, a defendant's case is rigorously screened and must be approved by the victim of the crime, the District Attorney's Office, and Common Justice. The program does not work with sexual, domestic, intimate partner, or family violence cases.

Common Justice engages qualifying defendants and those they have harmed. If the harmed parties (victims) agree, these cases are diverted into a dialogue process that gives participants the power and opportunity to collectively identify and address impacts, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible. In the dialogue process, all parties agree on sanctions other than incarceration to hold the responsible party (defendant) accountable in ways meaningful to the person harmed. Staff closely monitors responsible parties' compliance with the resultant agreements and connects the harmed parties with appropriate services. These agreements replace the lengthy prison sentences that responsible parties would otherwise have received. Common Justice works with a broad range of victims of all demographics, but crucial among them are young men of color — notably, a full 70% of the program's harmed parties are men of color.

Chicago: Restorative Justice Community Court

To participate in Cook County's Restorative Justice Community Court (RJCC), the person charged must be age 18-26, charged with a nonviolent felony or misdemeanor, live in the jurisdiction where charged, have a nonviolent criminal history, and accept responsibility for the harm caused. The victim of the crime must also agree to participate. The RJCC utilizes restorative justice conferences and peace circles to resolve disputes. These practices focus on the ways that crime harms relationships in the community, and then bring together the people most impacted by the crime to repair the harm. Under the court's model, defendants take accountability for their actions. They then work out an agreement with the person(s) harmed and the community, focusing on restitution, community service, and letters of apology. Through this program, young people are also connected with a variety of services including mental health.

See the full resource list for diversion programs and restorative justice programs on pages 80-85 of the YRA strategic plan.



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CHAPTER 7: INVEST IN FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, AND HEALTH

HEALTH PROGRAMS IN THE DISTRICT

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, courses to prepare for getting a GED, future housing placement assistance, training in life skills, immigration issue resources, and counseling for substance abuse.

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 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.

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.

HEALTH PROGRAMS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

California: Youth ALIVE

Youth ALIVE strives to interrupt cycles of violence and heal victims of violence as well as 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 that are commonly unregistered and neglected.

International: Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid is an international training program that advocates for the mental and behavioral health of youths and young adults by training teachers to notice signs, symptoms and risk factors of mental illnesses and addictions. Teachers and other connected community members are given the skills and knowledge necessary to refer students and young people to appropriate resources. To date, Mental Health First Aid has trained more than two million instructors in the United States. Attention to the well-being of young people is extremely important given the stressors present in academic environments and the amount of time students spend at school. Training programs are based on the principle that successful prevention of the onset of psychiatric disorders and addictions is most achievable during childhood and adolescence, while brains are still developing.



National: MultiDimensional Family Therapy (MDFT)

MDFT's overarching goals are to advance youths' 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 9 and 26, but adapts its treatment to respond in age-appropriate manners. Some of these goals are met by addressing environmental factors influencing youths' and young adults' family functions and overall well-being. Individuals need at least one participating parent or guardian to be eligible for the program. By working with both youths and at least one adult, positive outcomes are reinforced from multiple directions. Participants in the program have demonstrated higher rates of drug avoidance, remaining enrolled in schools, and living with families. They showed lower rates of additional arrests as well as decreased reports of child abuse or neglect.

See the full resource list for health programs on pages 89-92 of the YRA strategic plan.

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