

Justice-Involved Youth Subcommittee Meeting

04/28/2025 10:00am-11:00am

Attendees: Ashley Neuendorf, Dennis Schilling, Terrance Campbell, Laura Hidlebaugh, Marla Loecke, Reed Palo, Vickie Pralle

Meeting Notes

“How can we make these things available to youth BEFORE probation?”

The meeting focused on initiatives to reduce recidivism and support reentry for justice-involved youth, with discussions on mentorship programs, education, workforce training, and partnerships with employers. The group identified key focus areas, including job fairs, transportation, and wraparound services, and explored strategies for supporting youth in employment and career readiness. The juvenile court system and its processes were explained, emphasizing early intervention and community partnerships, while the group also discussed scheduling future meetings and potential collaborations with Juvenile Court Officers.

The group agrees to focus on three main areas: job fairs and workshops, transportation, and wraparound services. The group discusses strategies for supporting justice-involved youth in employment and career readiness. They identify the need to locate these youth, with Reed noting that most are not in detention but rather in various placements or still at home. The group agrees that connecting with Juvenile Court Services early is crucial for diversion efforts. The discussion emphasizes the importance of early intervention, mentorship, and ongoing support to help youth avoid further involvement in the justice system.

Iowa's Juvenile Court System Overview

Ashley explains the process of handling juvenile offenders in Iowa's juvenile court system. Referrals come from law enforcement, and the level of involvement depends on the age and charge. Options range from sending a letter with resources to formal court involvement. For informal cases, accountability is required, and a probation-like contract is developed. More serious cases may involve detention or formal court involvement. The system aims to keep youth in the community when possible, with detention used for safety reasons. Juvenile Court Officers (JCOs) work directly with the youth, and community partnerships are utilized for various services. The discussion highlights the need for continued support after youth leave the juvenile court system to prevent recidivism and help with transition to adulthood.