



POLK COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL

DEFLECTION AND DIVERSION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 3, 2025

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Location: Polk County Behavioral Health & Disability Services (River Place)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joseph Johnson (Change Course), Justin Allen (County Attorney's Office), Stacie Nessa (Des Moines Public Schools), Rachel Adams (BHDS), Darnell Loatman (FOCUSS), Joy Ihle (Polk County Youth Services), Eric Kool (Polk County Youth Services) Greg Stallman (Altoona PD). Jerry Evans (CJCC),

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kameron Middlebrooks (Reform Alliance), John Hawkins (Juvenile Court Services), Jay Hansen (Polk County), Kimberly Graham (County Attorney) Stephanie Swartz (Des Moines PD), Patrick Johnson (Bridges).

GUESTS: None.

ACTIVITY:

1. Meeting called to order by Chair Johnson
2. Minutes from the February 3, 2005, meeting were unanimously approved.
3. Change in agenda, as Andy Bales, CEO of Children and Families Urban Movement, was unable to make it due to an unexpected illness.

PREVENTION/INTERVENTION DISCUSSION:

4. Rachel Adams and Chief Stallman discussed the progress they are making in attempting to replicate the WDSM YJI Program in the Southeast Polk School (SEP) District. Updates included:
 - The YJI in the Southeast Polk School District is focused on prevention.
 - One of the primary goals is to connect with youth who are not connected directly with extracurricular activities in their community. In other words, provide them with a meeting space to form new bonds and create a different kind of structure activity.
 - Ideally, they would like to make this initiative fall under a non-profit organization already established in Altoona. In other words, the YJI would be a subcommittee connected to the non-profit. The group felt it important to have a governing board and an entity capable of applying for grant opportunities.

- They do not plan to call what they are doing YJI. Primarily so they don't get confused with what West Des Moines is doing.
- The funding for the program would come from grants, cities within the SEP District, and private donations.
- Youth who could participate in the program would not necessarily be made up of only youth who have been identified by law enforcement for deflection/diversion, but also youth who might be struggling in various other ways.

The subcommittee members subsequently discussed identifying ways that this group could be more impactful. When this group first started meeting, a lot of focus centered around youth diversion. Over the course of time, it became apparent that structured programs, like the DSM Police Department 2nd Chance Program, already exist, and replicating them in other communities could conflict with how Juvenile Court Services, by Code, are already tasked with identifying and addressing diversion.

Ultimately, the subcommittee members determined that focusing on what Chief Stallman and Rachel Adams presented on relative to the SEP District would be a great way for this group to get involved and assist. The goal would be to learn what worked in the SEP District in terms of launching a new initiative, with the idea of trying to replicate it in other places.

Closing

5. The subcommittee meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m. Next scheduled meeting will be April 7, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. at River Place. Conference Room #3.