

# Youth Diversion & Development Summit

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UNDERSTANDING LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S NEW MODEL  
TO HELP YOUTH THRIVE AND SUCCEED

MARCH 1, 2018

# Part 1: Introduction

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- Motion passed by Board of Supervisors in January 2017
- CCJCC Youth Diversion Subcommittee
- Report and recommendations focused on advancing a comprehensive and coordinated countywide approach to youth diversion in lieu of arrest
- Recommendations unanimously approved by Board of Supervisors in November 2017
- Division of Youth Diversion & Development (YDD) established in the Health Agency's Office of Diversion & Reentry

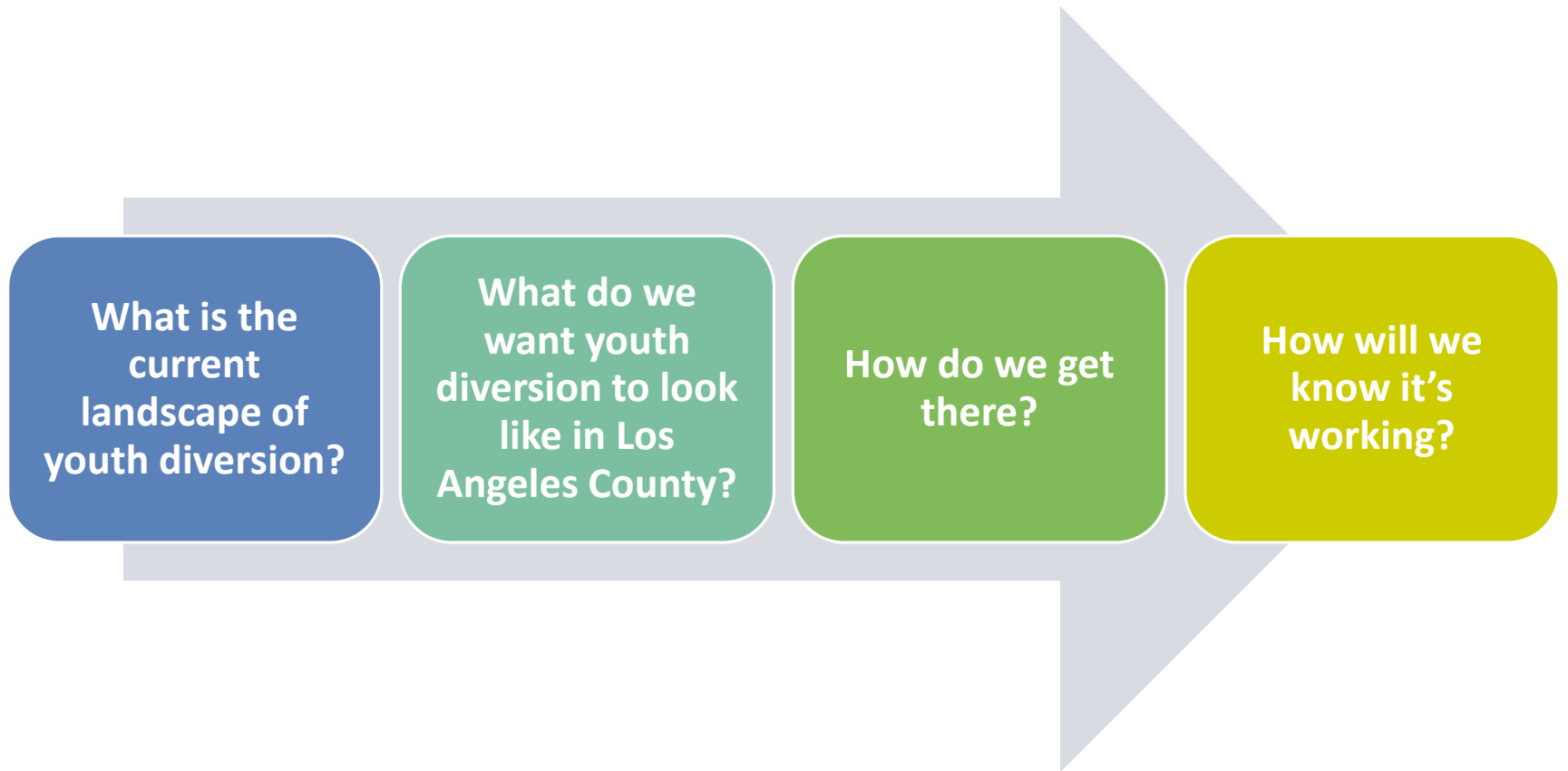
# Health & Development Approach

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- Building on a strong community-led foundation
- Support from County leadership to address gaps and disparities
- Collaborative planning process
- Data-driven recommendations
- Sustainable implementation to build a network of effective, community-based youth services

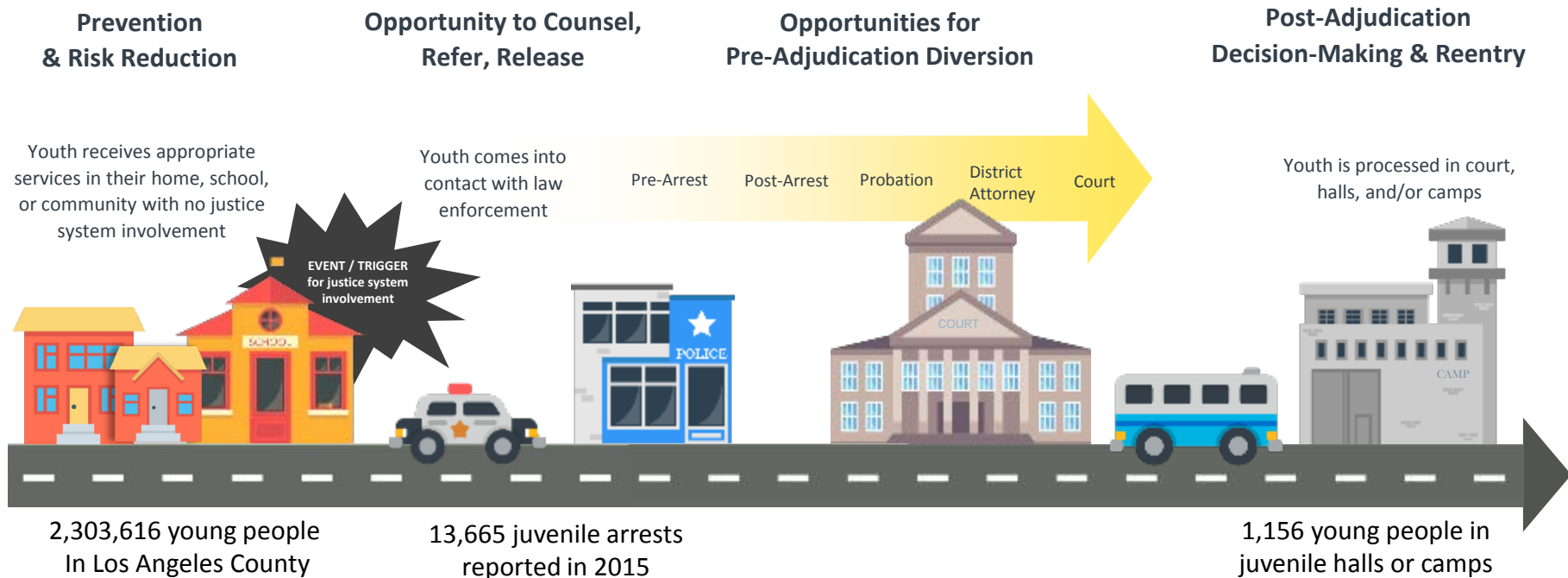
# Collaborative Planning Process

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# What is youth diversion?

Youth diversion is broadly defined as an intervention that redirects system responses in order to prevent a young person's involvement or further involvement in the justice system.



# Why focus on pre-arrest diversion?

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- Justice system involvement operates as a negative health exposure.
- The odds of high school dropout are nearly doubled by first-time arrest and nearly quadrupled by first-time court appearance.
- Youth in pre-arrest diversion programs have been shown to be 2.5 times less likely to re-offend than similar youth who were not diverted; youth in post-arrest were 1.5 times less likely to re-offend.

# What works?

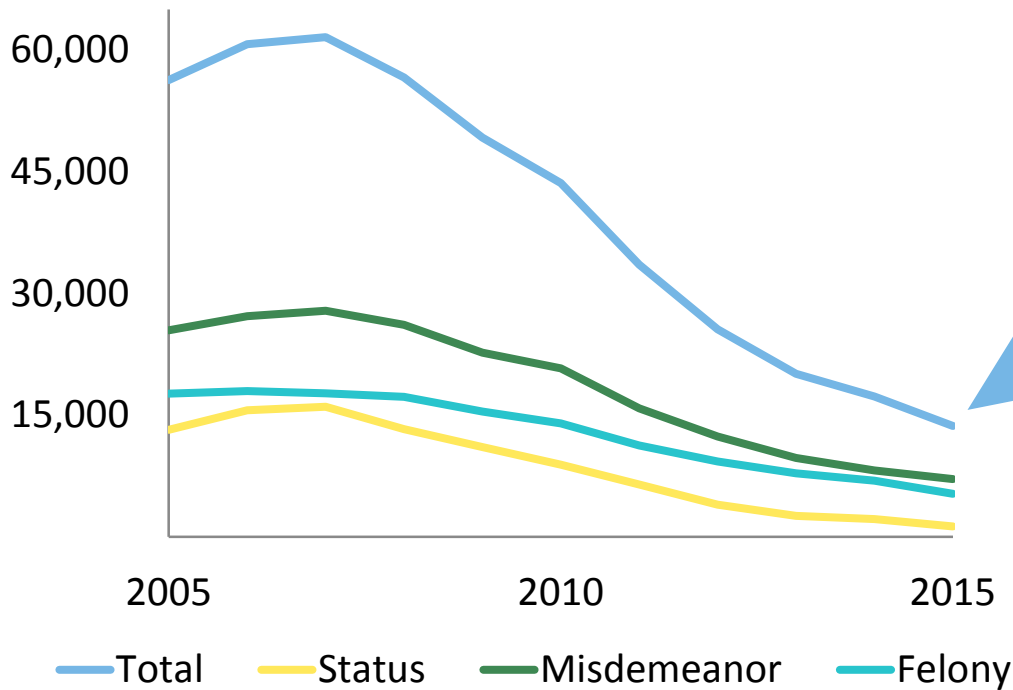
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We know diversion programs are most effective when they:

- Reflect therapeutic rather than punitive or control-oriented approaches
- Reach high-risk youth and do not further criminalize low-risk youth
- Are implemented with strong oversight and clear standards
- Are informed by ongoing assessment and a focus on equity

# What does the data tell us?

**Total Number of Youth Arrests in Los Angeles County by Offense Level, 2005-2015**



**13,655**

total youth arrests or citations reported in 2015:

**91%**

14 years or older,

**75%**

Male,

**62%**

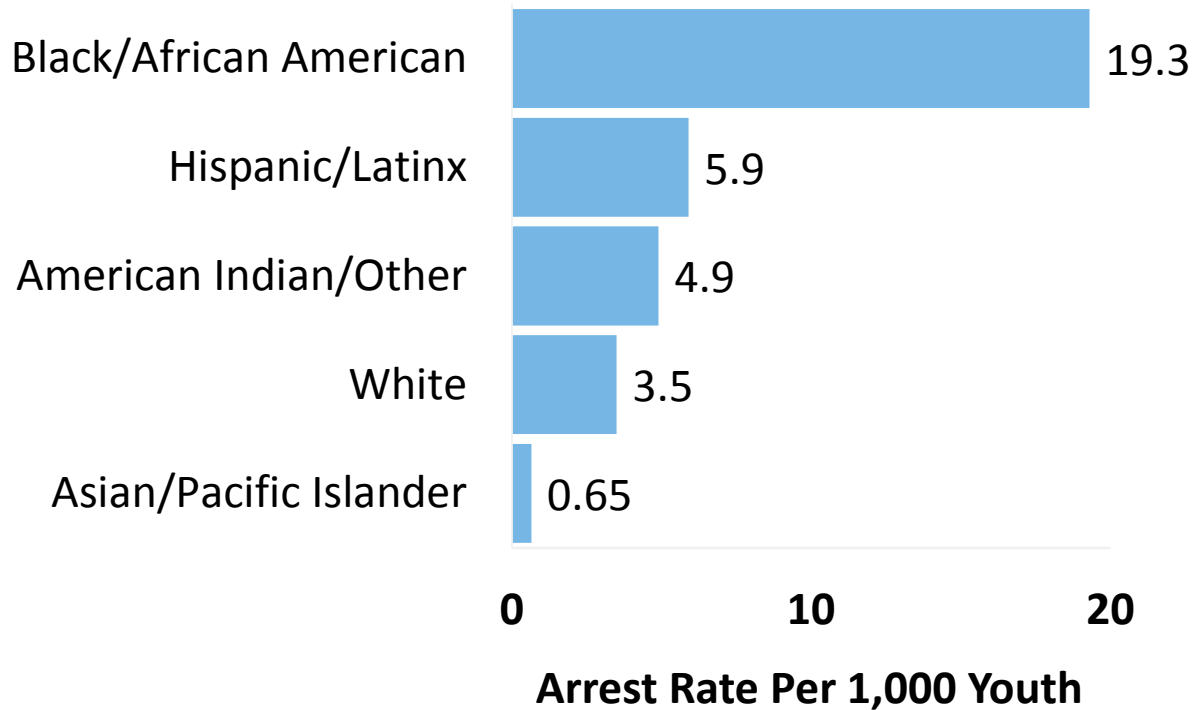
Hispanic/Latinx,

**81%**

Arrested for status, misdemeanor, or non-707(b) felony offenses that would be legally eligible for arrest diversion.



## Youth Arrest Rates in Los Angeles County by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



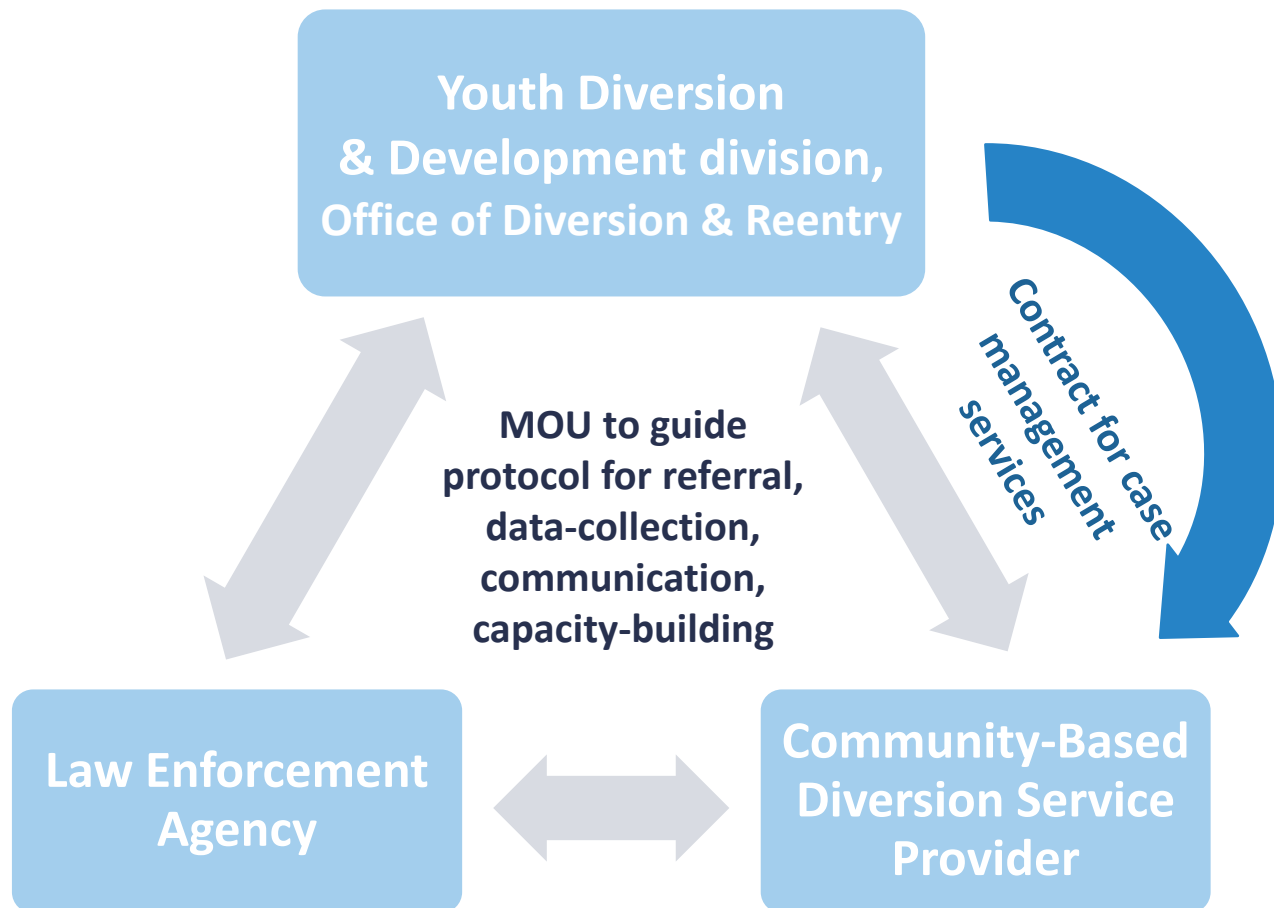
# What can we achieve?

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1. Increase / improve collaboration between law enforcement, community-based organizations, other youth-serving agencies
2. Reduce overall number of youth arrests, referrals to probation, and petitions filed
3. Reduce racial and ethnic disparities in youth arrests, referrals to probation, and petitions filed
4. Increase number of youth who are connected to services that address their underlying needs without acquiring an arrest or criminal record
5. Improve health, academic, economic, other outcomes for youth

# Part 2: Overview of the Model

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# The YDD Model in Practice



# Core Components: Organizational Characteristics

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- Expertise in meaningful community leadership and engagement
- Capacity for strengths-based and identity-affirming services
- Capacity for evidence-based and evidence-informed services when appropriate

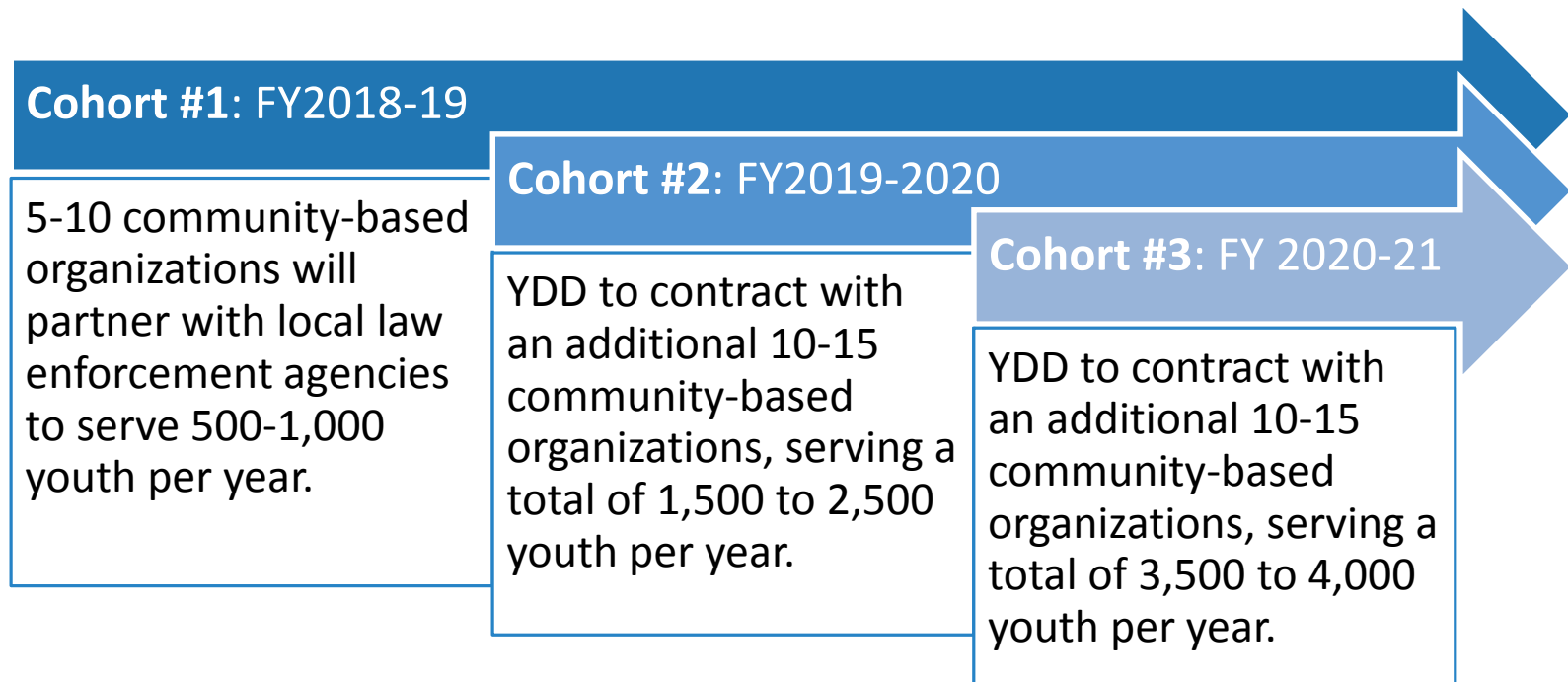
# Core Components: Menu of Services

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- Resources to address barriers to participation and successful completion
- Youth development / social support
- Education / employment
- Health / healing
- Family / caretaker support
- Restorative / transformative justice

# Part 3: Implementation

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# What will success look like?

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- Reduce youth involvement in the justice system
- Increase access to activities and services that meet youth needs without establishing a permanent arrest or criminal record
- Improve community safety and wellbeing
- Improve equity
- Build capacity for effective community-based youth diversion and improve collaboration



# Part 4: Oversight Committee

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- Annual Summits and the YDD Steering Committee will be spaces for ongoing research and data-driven oversight
  - Share updates and review progress
  - Communicate about process and outcome assessment findings
  - Identify areas for improvement
  - Discuss priorities

# Where do we go from here?

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1. Hire staff
2. Develop electronic referral / case management system
3. Identify potential partners for first cohort of YDD contracts for implementation and evaluation
4. Begin to scale and spread effective practices

# Areas for Future Work

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1. Address needs for coordination and support for diversion in other settings, including schools, foster care, and more.
2. Address needs related to specific youth, including immigration status, housing status, age, gender identification, sexual orientation, and more.
3. Address opportunities for diversion at other stages and build out a full continuum of youth services.
4. Continue to review data to make sure we are meeting our goals and adjusting to improve data protections, revise assessment tools, or expand eligibility as needed.
5. Continue to support widespread buy-in and an effective, community-based continuum of care.