

High Utilizers of Services Workgroup Update to Juvenile Service Committee and Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice

Background

This workgroup was tasked to explore the demographic of youth receiving the most critical services available through the juvenile justice and related systems. “High utilizers of services” are juvenile justice involved youth, with complex care needs, who have experienced multiple placement settings and/or delays in appropriate placement due to a lack of available options. These youth have often experienced multiple interventions from various systems including child welfare, educational services, developmental disabilities and/or behavioral health in addition to juvenile justice involvement.

The goal of this group is to identify the gaps in services and ways to increase appropriate service delivery for juvenile justice youth with high needs and improve a continuum of services to meet the needs.

High Utilizers of Services Defined

With the assistance of the Administrative Office of Probation (AOP), a data set was collected and reviewed. Through this assessment, a definition of a *high utilizer of services* emerged. The following criteria was used to generate a population:

1. Top 5% of voucher recipients
2. Juveniles in current placement 12 months or more
3. Juveniles with six or more out of home placements
4. All juveniles placed out-of-state
5. Juveniles currently placed at the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center (YRTC)

The attachment provided includes the preliminary data provided by the AOP and includes criteria one through four (above) as of July 5, 2018.

Other Groups Considered

Being a multidisciplinary workgroup, members from similar systems are represented. The workgroup learned about other systems doing similar and important work. A meeting with representatives from various work groups from Behavioral Health, the Supreme Court Commission on Children in the Courts, LB1112, and DHHS Children and Family Services to inform the work of the JSC High Utilizers of Services work group. Within this group, the group discussed youth with high needs receiving services across systems, placement disruptions, and greater Nebraska service array for juveniles, transition services and provider capacity.

It was determined that all groups discussed are serving these populations in very unique ways and the efforts and work of the High Utilizers of Services group will not be a duplication.

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Emerging Characteristics

After reviewing the preliminary data provided by the AOP, and ruling out efforts by in other systems, high utilizing juveniles experiencing barriers to placement emerged in three groups.

- a. Juveniles with chronic and persistent mental illness;
- b. Juveniles exhibiting conduct related concerns such as aggression, treatment resistance, and elopement;
- c. Juveniles with complex needs including one or more of the following:
 1. Cognitive impairment
 2. Abuse/Neglect history
 3. Sexually Harmful Behaviors
- d. Juveniles with complex treatment needs combining two or more focuses of treatment including (mental health, behavioral health, substance use, developmental disabilities and Sexually Harmful Behaviors).

Next Steps

1. Work with our data resource members to develop a method to gather further data using focus groups to gather quantitative data about the emerging characteristics and identify common barriers.
2. Partner with Nebraska service providers to strategize solutions to fill the identified gaps and/or identify systems barriers that prevent providers from adequately meeting the needs of the youth identified in this high utilizers population.
3. Other feedback or direction from the Juvenile Services Committee