

SPECIAL DETENTION CASES – YOUTH AWAITING PLACEMENT
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Envision Two Doors in the Detention Facility
The door for pre-dispo youth
The door for post-dispo youth

J.D.A.I. Concepts that apply at the “front door” also apply the “second door”

- Every Day Counts
- Least Restrictive Setting
- Total population is a product of LOS and the number of youth coming through the “second door”
- Control the gate
- Risk-based assessment criteria
- Expedited placement process
- Adequate placement alternatives and alternatives other than secure detention for those awaiting placement
- Use of data to measure system effectiveness

Controlling the Gate

Think of the out-of-home placement recommendation process as a very narrow gate at which decisions are made by objective, departmental criteria – not by subjective, multiple decision-makers.

Manage the numbers of youth who get this recommendation by developing a multi-leveled screening process which requires that all other less restrictive options have been exhausted. High level supervisor approval for the recommendation must be standard practice.

Risk-Based Assessment Criteria

Department must develop objective, risk-based criteria that drives the placement decision.

Several levels of screening and assessment should be employed, one of which is designed specifically to identify youth who could be candidates for a placement alternative.

Part of the screening process must include a Family Conference. Try to create a plan and build support from the family and other caregivers to have the child at home with appropriate services.

The decision to recommend out-of-home placement should be justified by public safety concerns – not just by need or technical violations.

Expedited Process

Create a unit of placement specialists who are familiar with placement resources and have relationships with the providers.

Placement specialists should sit on the screening teams so they can become aware of new referrals prior to the Court's order and begin to lay the groundwork for the placement.

Create a time standard by which the Court's order and the case information must reach the placement specialist (1 day).

Create a written procedure that guarantees that the file doesn't "sit" unattended for even 1 day.

Create a database to measure days awaiting placement by gender and ethnicity, and report on the results monthly to JDAI Core Working Group.

(See Attachment)

Establish methods to gather information needed for placement from families and the file as soon as the placement order is made.

Establish a "pending placement" roster so that it can be reviewed daily and acted upon.

Establish time lines for recontacting placement providers once the referral has been sent (follow-up).

Adequate Alternatives

Develop adequate home-based or community-based alternatives to placement and to secure detention pending placement.

- Day Treatment
- Family Preservation Programs
- Short-stay residential programs
- Tracking programs with Electronic Monitoring/Services/Treatment
- Evening and/or Day Reporting Centers
- Transitional residential programs
- M.S.T.

Funding and developing these alternatives should be a multi-disciplinary effort – Probation, Community Partners, Jurisdictional Government, Mental Health, Schools, Consumers of Services, District Attorney and Defense Bar, maximize federal funding, utilize blended funding strategies. Calculate cost of out-of-home placement and cost-benefit analysis on home-based services. Get agreements to redirect cost avoidance or savings to program operation (or better yet – prevention services).

Track public safety outcomes to build support for the use of alternatives to out-of-home placement.

Use of Data

Suggested data elements that should be developed for managing the awaiting placement population.

- Number of bed days pre and post dispo
- Percentage of bed days pre and post dispo
- Number of days from booking to placement
- Number of days from dispo order to placement by placement type, gender, ethnicity, age, profile, etc.