

# Family Engagement Policies and Practices for Juvenile Courts and Probation

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Coalition for Juvenile Justice, Scottsdale AZ, 2019

Angela Robertson, Ph.D. - *Mississippi State University*

Matthew Aalsma, Ph.D. – *Indiana University School of Medicine*



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# Acknowledgement

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The National Survey was conducted under the JJ-TRIALS cooperative agreement, **funded at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)**. The authors gratefully acknowledge the collaborative contributions of NIDA and the grant awarded to

**Chestnut Health Systems - U01DA03622**

The contents of this presentation are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the NIDA, NIH, or the participating universities or juvenile justice systems.

# Caregiver Engagement

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Caregiver engagement practices in the juvenile justice system include educating parents, guardians, and caregivers about the juvenile justice system and empowering them to be involved in decision making regarding their children.



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# Current Study

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Using data from a nationally representative sample of community supervision (CS) agencies and 2 years later.

Examine the extent to which CS agencies actively to engage families and the types of strategies used.

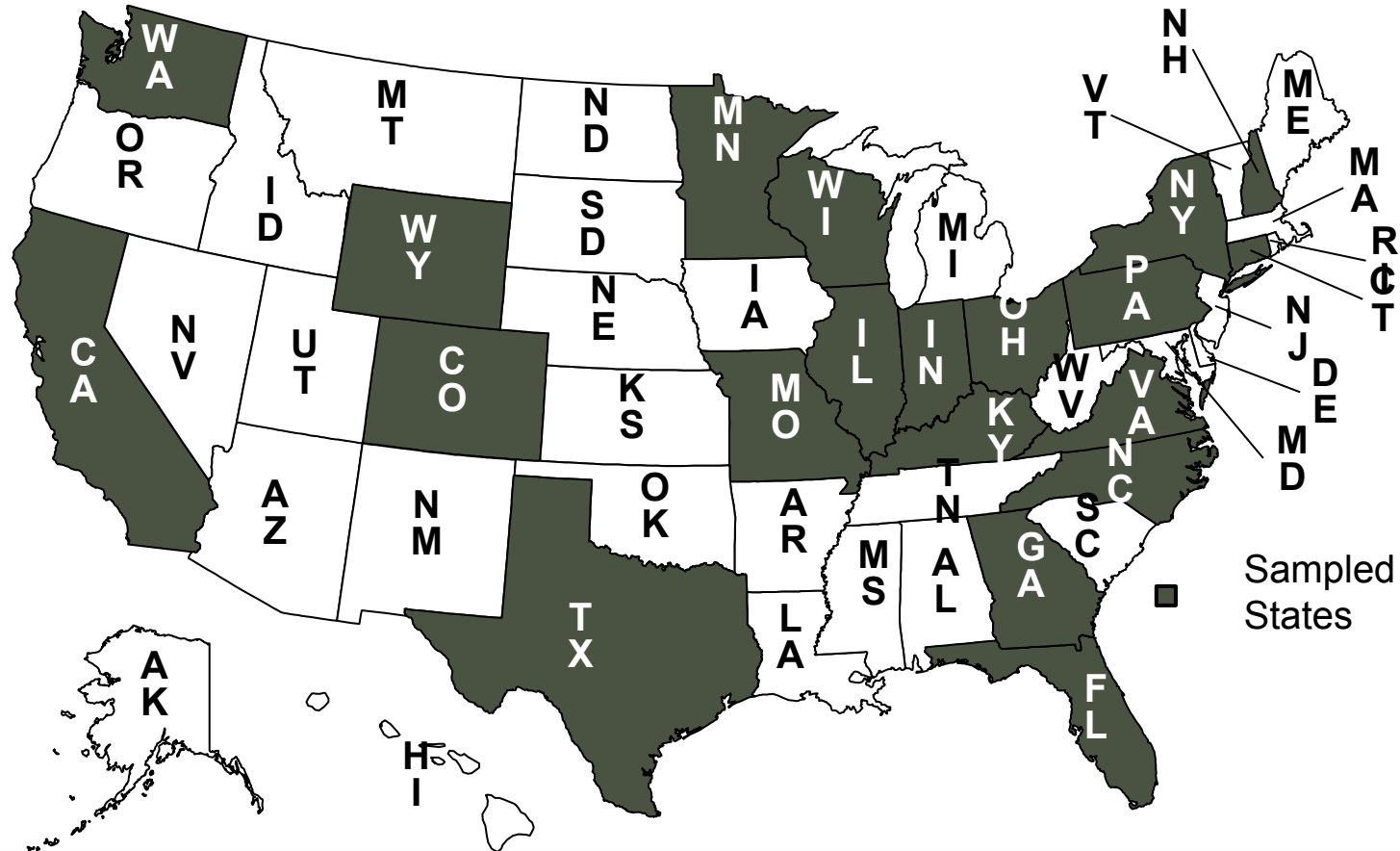
Examine the relationship between family engagement strategies and involvement in juvenile justice and behavioral health engagement.



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# National Sample



Scott, Dennis, Grella, Funk, & Lurigio (2019) *Health and Justice*.



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# Methods

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Surveys were attempted in all 203 community supervision (CS) agencies and 195 (96%) completed the first survey, 171 completed both surveys.

Each state was assigned a survey coach to facilitate survey completion and to identify the person(s) at each agency who would be best suited to respond to the survey.

Survey data was weighted and adjusted for non-response to represent the actual 3,509 community supervision agencies in the U.S. and the 770,323 youth they served.



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# Family Engagement Strategies

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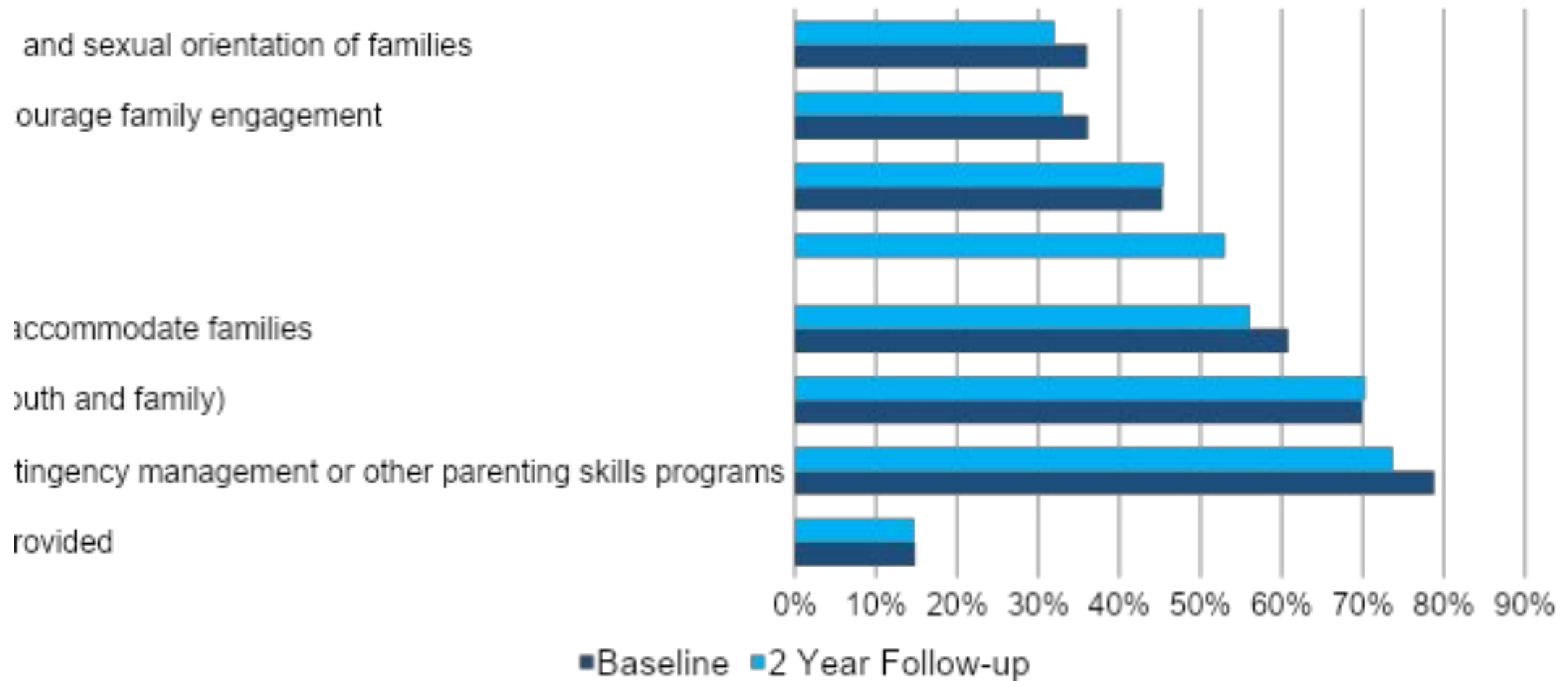
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| Services provided to increase family engagement...                                    | Baseline | 2 Year Follow-up | Difference |
|---|----------|------------------|------------|
| None, no strategies/services provided   | 14.8%    | 14.7%            | -0.1       |
| Refer to family behavioral, contingency management or other parenting skills programs | 78.8%    | 73.7%            | -5.1       |
| Refer to family therapy (with youth and family)                                       | 69.9%    | 70.3%            | +0.4       |
| Provide flexible scheduling to accommodate families                                   | 60.8%    | 56.1%            | -4.7       |
| Provide services in the home  | -        | 53.0%            | -          |
| Assist with transportation  | 45.3%    | 45.4%            | +0.1       |
| Adapted written policies to encourage family engagement                               | 36.1%    | 33.0%            | -3.1       |
| Address the cultural, linguistic, and sexual orientation of families                  | 36.0%    | 32.0%            | -4.0       |
| Provide family behavioral, contingency management or other parenting skills programs  | 22.4%    | 14.3%            | -8.1       |
| Provide family therapy (with youth and family)  | 13.9%    | 11.2%            | -2.7       |
| Invite family representatives to serve on advisory boards                             | 12.1%    | 10.5%            | -1.6       |
| Assist with childcare   | 11.3%    | 8.9%             | -.24       |
| Provide family member (not youth) education groups                                    | 4.0%     | 7.9%             | +3.9       |
| Provide family support groups   | 3.6%     | 8.3%             | +4.7       |





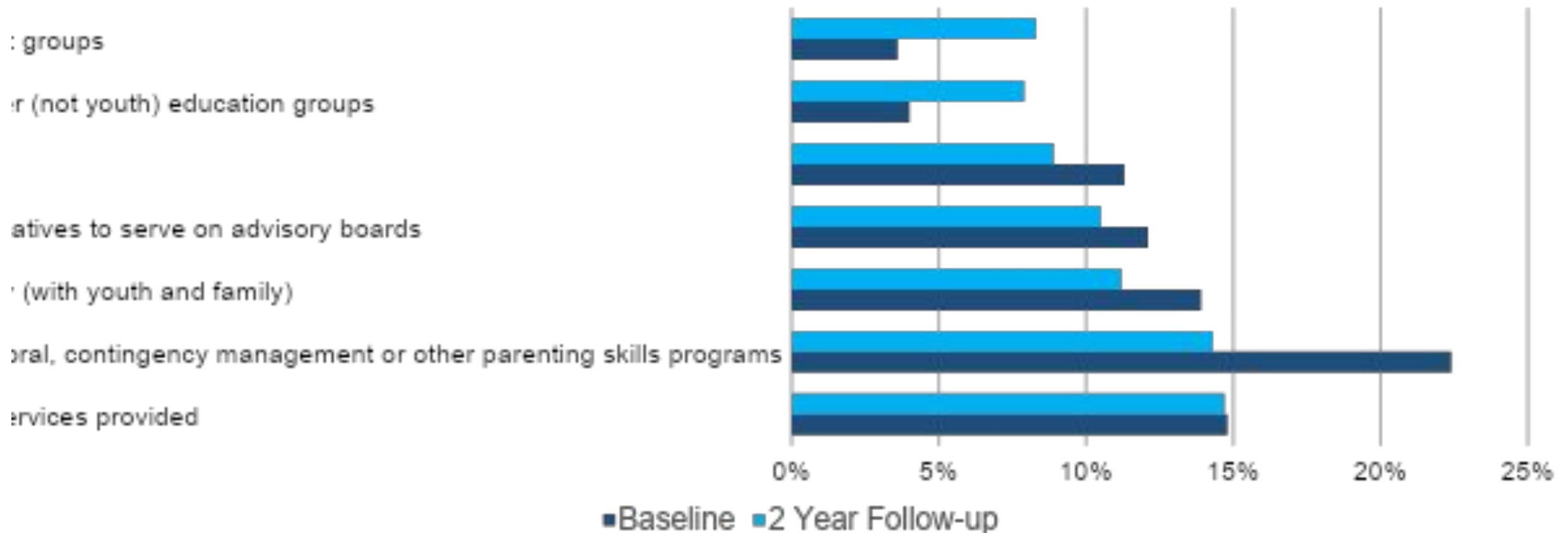
## Services provided to increase Family Engagement



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## Services provided to increase Family Engagement



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| Other Services or Approaches to Engaging Parents/Caregivers  | Baseline | 2 Year Follow-up |
|--|----------|------------------|
| Staff training on how to engage families, including Solution Based Casework, Motivational Interviewing   | 5        | 2                |
| Include in case planning meeting/service coordination team meetings  | 4        | 1                |
| Incentives, including gift cards, gas vouchers, provide food at meetings   | 4        | 1                |
| Parent aid service/parent consultants/parent advocates   | 4        | 3                |
| Family engagement meetings/Family Partnership meetings/Parent Orientation  | 3        | 1                |
| Increasing access vis arranging meeting sites for easier access by families or use of technology, such as video conferencing, providing transportation | 2        | 2                |
| Sanctions for not participating, i.e., file parental participation petition/enforce case plans and court orders  | 2        | 1                |
| Parenting classes  | 2        | 0                |
| Family dinner night at the evening reporting center  | 1        | 0                |
| In-home family counseling  | 1        | 5                |
| Provide families with a copy of “A family guide to PA’s Juvenile Justice System”   | 1        | 1                |
| Phone calls to remind of appointments  | 1        | 1                |



# Parent Engagement Activity Participation

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Screening

Clinical assessment

Orientation to go over rules and expectations

Developing a pre-adjudication report

A formalized treatment staffing or planning meeting to decide what services are needed and set goals

Determining which treatment agencies the youth is referred to



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# Parent Engagement Activity Participation Continued

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Specifying incentives for compliance with treatment or service plan

Specifying consequences for non-compliance with treatment or service plan

Choosing the type of treatment or level of care

Reporting on progress

Social events

Participating in formal treatment sessions

Participating in a 3-way call or meeting with other agency and youth present



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# Most Influential Parental Engagement Strategies

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Provide family support groups

Refer to family behavioral, contingency management or other parenting skills programs

Provide family member (not youth) education groups

Refer to family therapy (with youth and family)

Assist with transportation

Assist with childcare



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# Less Influential Parental Engagement Strategies

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Provide family behavioral, contingency management or other parenting skills programs

Invite family representatives to serve on advisory boards

Provide flexible scheduling to accommodate families

Provide family therapy (with youth and family)

Adapted written policies to encourage family engagement

Address the cultural, linguistic, and sexual orientation of



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# Other Findings

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Agencies reported engaging in approximately 4 family engagement strategies.

- Most common included referral and flexible scheduling to accommodate caregivers

Agencies in rural areas had proportionally greater rates of caregiver involvement in all areas of behavioral health service activities.

Greater need for family engagement training was associated with lower proportion of caregiver involvement in selecting the treatment level of care.

Jurisdictions with 10% or higher minority youth had proportionally lower rates of caregiver participation in treatment.



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# Discussion

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Which of these strategies does your organization use?

What other strategies does your organization use?

What do you think that your organization could benefit from adding or changing?



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# Thank You

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Angela Robertson

[angela.robertson@ssrc.misstate.edu](mailto:angela.robertson@ssrc.misstate.edu)



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# Family Engagement in the Juvenile Justice System

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Marion County Courts, Juvenile Probation   | Christina Ball<br>Kevin Riley                                       |
| Indiana University School of Medicine      | Matthew Aalsma (maalsma@iu.edu)<br>Katie Schwartz (kaschwar@iu.edu) |
| Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative | Tanisha Mayers  |
| Peace Learning Center                      | Naeemah Jackson   |
| Justice for Families                       | Grace Bauer   |
| Case Commons,<br>Annie E. Casey Foundation | Annie Salsich   |



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# Marion County, Indiana: Our Approach

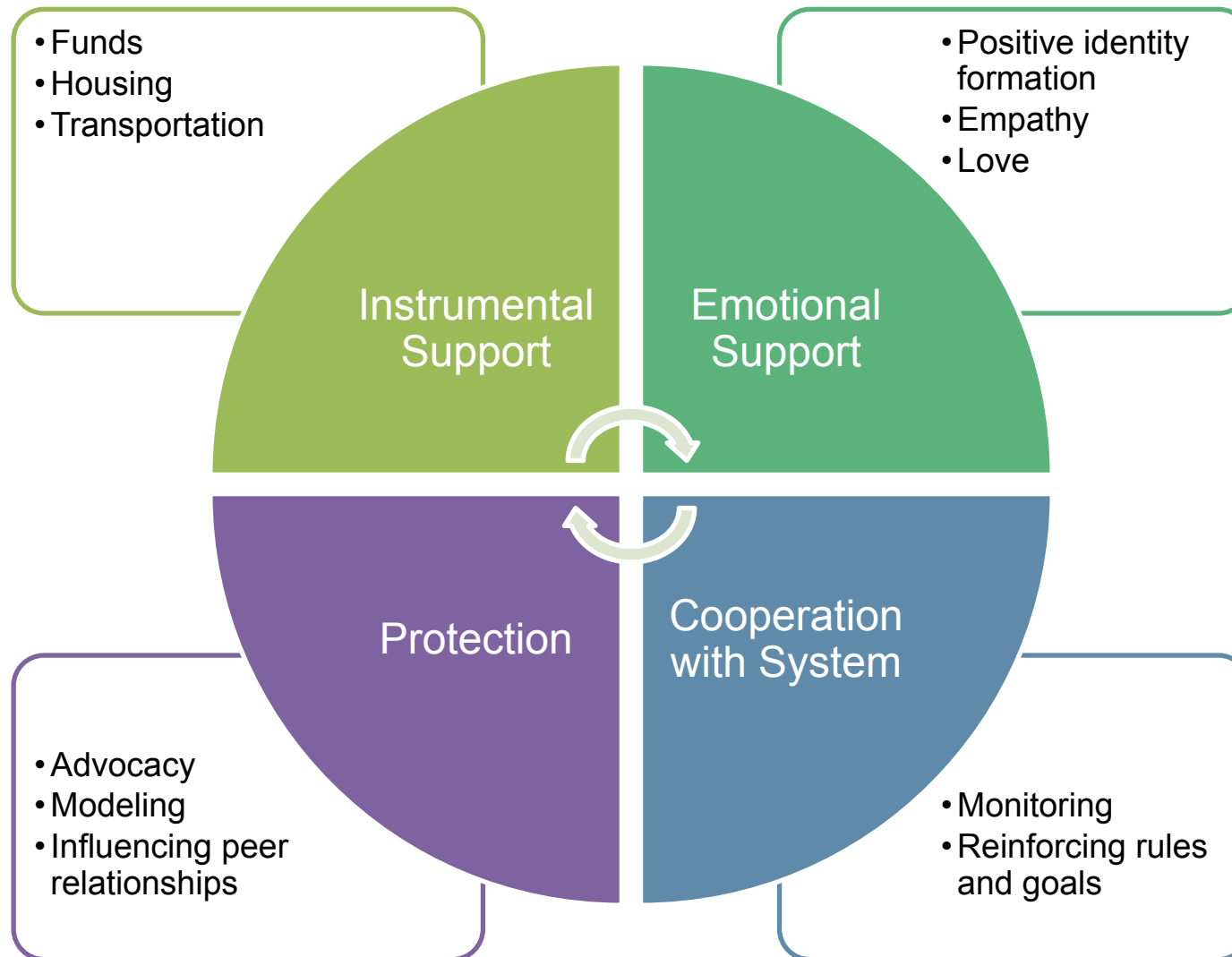
1. Pilot Family Engagement Advisory Board (Peace Learning Center)
2. Provide information and training to system personnel (Justice for Families)
3. Develop local best practices for effectively incorporating family perspectives



# Recent national emphasis on family engagement



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# Family Engagement is a Mindset

“Family engagement begins with a fundamental belief that all families care for their children, have strengths that can be built upon, and can be engaged and empowered.”

- Justice for Families



# Practical Domains of Family Engagement

- Attendance
- Adherence (i.e., active participation)
- Cognitive preparation (e.g., understanding goals of the system; having motivation to engage)





# General Strategies to Increase Engagement

- Assess strengths
- Assess barriers
- Provide psychoeducation
- Promote accessibility
- Set goals



# Engagement vs. Compliance in the Juvenile Justice System

- Recognizing families as experts
- Focusing on strengths
- Honoring cultural context
- Offering a meaningful voice
- Building relationships



# Potential Pitfalls

- Providing a false opportunity to families
- Failing to acknowledge past system harm to families, particularly disproportionate minority contact
- Imposing, rather than eliciting, Board ground rules
- Failing to identify benchmarks of success



# Wisdom from Other Boards

1. Address barriers to Board participation during recruitment (e.g., scheduling, child care, transportation, time commitment)
  - Offer financial incentives for participation
  - Consider meeting location and facility setup
  - Be transparent about expectations
2. Identify a Board Champion within the juvenile justice system
  - Find someone to “beat the drum” of family engagement



# Wisdom from Other Boards (cont.)

## 3. Invite diverse group facilitators and speakers representative of Board members' lived experiences

A facilitator of disbanded Board in Tennessee: *“Really, I think they saw me as part of the [system] and thought I had more influence on existing policies than I actually did... I think they felt I couldn’t or didn’t support what they wanted [if it didn’t happen right away].... It didn’t help that I’m a white female with no kids and no record.”*



# Probation Perspectives

- 59% reported that the amount of interaction with families was sufficient, but the remaining respondents wanted more face-to-face time with youths' family members
- 30% indicated that family member involvement in their caseloads had been “problematic” in a majority of cases
- Ways to increase “positive family engagement”
  - Improve family understanding of court/probation process
  - Increase opportunities for families to communicate with probation
  - Seek buy-in from Court leadership



# Marion County Board: Basics

- Personally invited members of the community with previous justice system involvement; goal was 12 Board members retained beyond pilot phase
- 6 meetings (1-2hrs each), January through April 2019
- Partnered with **Peace Learning Center** to facilitate meetings
- Provided meals and incentives (\$50 gift cards) for participation



# Marion County Family Engagement Advisory Board

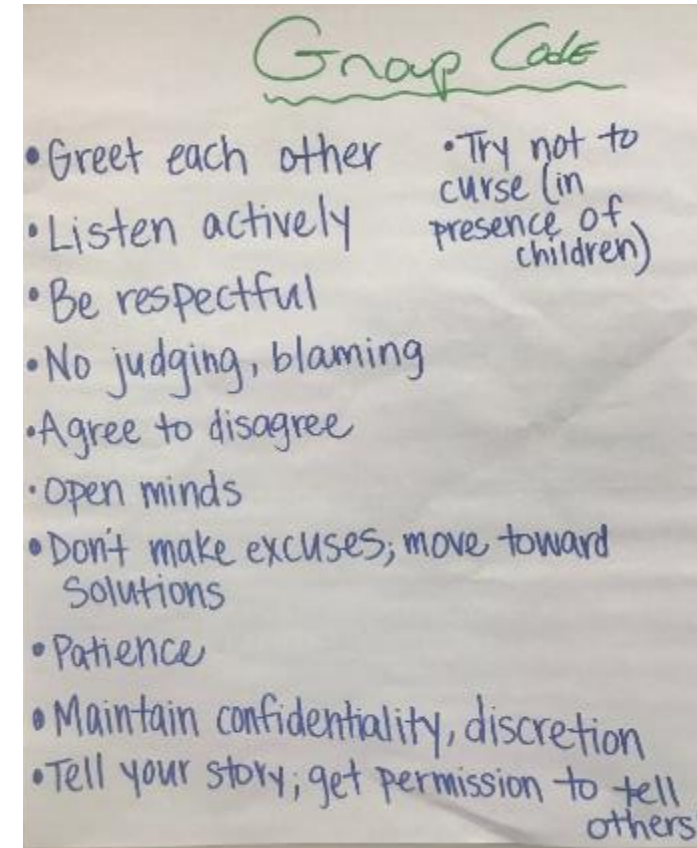


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# Board Activities

- Established “group code”
- Shared personal pathways to Board
- Peace Learning Center discussion of conflict resolution
- Juvenile Court orientation film
- Reviewed local Court practices to determine need for Board



# Goals for 2020 Board

- Establish and act under Board bylaws
- Increase age and gender diversity of Board members, and improve retention
- Pursue areas of long-term system change:
  - Expand educational materials for future families to navigate the system
  - Develop family peer-support initiatives
  - Compile a list of resources for families involved in the system



# Juvenile Justice System Personnel Training Led by Justice For Families

Guiding Principles:

- 1) Justice Reinvestment
- 2) Partnering with Families



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# Inviting Justice System Staff and Leadership – All Levels



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# Bringing in the Families

Jeannette Bocanegra, pictured here with her son, JahPower, is J4F's Director of Family Partnership in NY



Meri Viano, pictured here with her son, is a J4F Trauma consultant and a Parent/Professional Advocate in MA





# Questions?



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