

Indiana Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative



Indiana's JDAI CORE Principles

The vision of the Annie E. Casey Foundation reads: "All youth involved in the juvenile justice system have opportunities to develop into healthy, productive adults." Indiana supports this vision and has chosen the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative, as designed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, as the method by which Indiana communities will implement meaningful juvenile detention reform.

The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) is a public safety and detention reform strategy for working with youth in the juvenile justice system. JDAI is based on the belief that it is in the best interest of youth and the community to provide community-based alternative programs which allow youth to remain in the community while still ensuring public safety.

Since inception in 1992, JDAI has grown to approximately 145 sites in 34 states and the District of Columbia. The focus of JDAI is the juvenile detention component of the juvenile justice system. Reform at this critical point of entry to the juvenile justice system for many young people can reduce detention expenses and foster the development of effective community based alternatives to detention, while enhancing public safety and the long term healthy development of youth.

Situated at the cross roads of America, Indiana is a state comprised of communities often vastly different in size and demographics. Yet we are a population of Hoosiers who value efficiency in government, safety on the streets of our communities, and who look to the sound development of our children as the way to a bright future for our state and our nation.

Indiana seeks to utilize JDAI due to its demonstrated history as a juvenile justice reform that is effective, influential and widespread.

Indiana has been selected to serve as a state-wide JDAI replication site. The Indiana Criminal Justice Institute, the Indiana Department of Correction and the Indiana Supreme Court have come together with members of the Indiana legislature, and key juvenile justice stakeholders, to assist counties in Indiana who seek to realize the financial savings, public safety enhancements and improved outcomes for youth which have, across the nation, come to those who have implemented this juvenile justice reform.

The Indiana Criminal Justice Institute has endorsed the JDAI initiative as a part of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) State Three-Year Juvenile Justice System Improvement Plan. The expectation is that, in Indiana, JDAI will promote changes in policies, practices, and programs, which will:

- improve public safety,
- reduce reliance on secure detention,
- reduce disproportionate minority contact,

- save taxpayers' dollars; and
- stimulate overall juvenile justice reforms.

The Indiana Supreme Court, the Indiana Department of Correction and the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute comprise the unique leadership level of the initiative. The support and guidance of these three state level entities is critical to the success of our local communities and counties who embark upon the journey of addressing juvenile detention reform.

The Indiana Supreme Court has endorsed the JDAI initiative and is supporting the efforts of talented juvenile court judicial officers and their teams to pilot the initiative in Indiana. JDAI has the support of the Indiana Department of Correction as a mechanism to reduce the juvenile correctional population in a manner that promotes community safety, improves the lives of children, and saves taxpayer dollars. The Indiana Criminal Justice Institute has committed staffing and financial support to this critical juvenile justice effort which entails comprehensive evaluations of the juvenile detention system and the policies and practices in place at the critical decision points, while promoting the development of programs designed to achieve the goals of the reform.

VISION

The juvenile justice system in Indiana will be equitable, efficient and effective in responding to public safety by ensuring that our youth have the opportunity to develop into healthy, productive adults.

MISSION

The juvenile justice system will improve public safety in Indiana through the use of evidence-based interventions for youth and families that eliminate the unnecessary detention of youth, reduce racial disproportionate minority contact, improve outcomes and welfare of youth, and save tax payer money.

GOALS

- Limit secure detention to those youth who have committed serious crimes and pose an imminent public safety risk or would fail to appear in court.
- Use least restrictive, state and community partnered, evidence based, culturally competent practices through the creation of community based alternatives, to alleviate use of secure facilities and other out of home placements whenever possible.
- Create a culture of collaboration and communication internally, externally and among state and local juvenile justice agencies and community stakeholders.
- Build effective and efficient data collection and reporting by race, ethnicity, gender, geography and offense at every decision point in the juvenile justice system to ensure data driven monitoring of outcomes and disparities.
- Develop policies and practice to reflect and sustain JDAI principles.
- Ensure objective criteria at juvenile justice decision points to eliminate disproportionate minority contact.
- Develop conditions of confinement standards aligned with JDAI and community standards.
- Encourage development of collaborative, multi-system alternatives that reduce the referrals of youth with minor offenses whose needs are better addressed by other child serving systems.