

Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Meeting
Tuesday, September 19, 2023
Houston, Texas
9:00–3:00 p.m. CT

Coordinating Council Participants

Liz Ryan, Administrator, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Vice Chair, Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Amy Solomon, Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs

Julie Herr, Designated Federal Official, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Andrea Bizzell, Workforce Research Analyst, U.S. Department of Labor

Kellie Blue, Associate Administrator for the Youth Justice and System Innovation Division, OJJDP and Co-Chair, Programs and Practice Subcommittee of the Coordinating Council

Jeffery Buehler, Team Lead Title I, Part D program, U.S. Department of Education

Joseph Bullock, Senior Public Health Advisor, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Eric Cobb, Director, Houston Office Field, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Amiyah Davis, Project Coordinator, Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy

Walter Dorn, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Rebecca Jones Gaston, Commissioner, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Kristen Kracke, Associate Administrator for the Policy Division, OJJDP and Chair, Policy Subcommittee of the Coordinating Council

Michael Mendoza, Director of Advocacy, Anti-Recidivism Coalition

Sonali Nijawan, Director, AmeriCorps State and National

Mark Patterson, Administrator, Kawailoa Youth and Family Wellness Center

Renee Rodriguez-Betancourt, Judge, 449th District Court, Hidalgo County, Texas

Lourdes Rosado, President and General Counsel, LatinoJustice

Liz Simons, Chair of the Board, Heising-Simons Foundation and Marshall Project

Tricia A. Tingle, Associate Director, Tribal Justice Support, U.S. Department of the Interior-Indian Affairs

Shaina Vanek, Senior Policy Analyst, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Bonita Williams, National Program Leader, Division of Youth and 4-H USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Julie Herr opened the meeting by welcoming participants. She introduced OJJDP Administrator **Liz Ryan**, who serves as Vice Chair of the Coordinating Council.

Administrator Ryan welcomed participants and introduced **Assistant Attorney General Amy Solomon** to start the meeting.

Assistant Attorney General Solomon recognized the Council's practitioner members and emphasized how important it is to have the input and expertise of representatives from the field.

She noted that the power of partnership is on full display at this Council meeting, and that participants share a goal of a nation where children are free of crime and violence and where youth interaction with the justice system is rare. When interaction is necessary, it should be fair and beneficial to children and their outcomes. This Council, through its willingness to engage in collective problem-solving and having the combined broad expertise, hopes to build on the momentum of problem-solving and ensures children are treated fairly and beneficially.

The Coordinating Council—and OJJDP—supports approaches designed to minimize youth contact in the justice system and to make it fair and beneficial. That is central to the work the Council does. AAG Solomon said that we know that children feel better when they are served in their communities, close to home, with their families and support systems. We know that unnecessary confinement, especially in adult prisons, yields the worst outcomes. Research shows that young people in adult facilities experience lasting trauma and are much more likely to suffer sexual assault and violence than their peers in youth facilities.

She noted how imperative it is that justice practitioners continue to explore and establish alternatives to incarceration and keep our youth out of the system. We must work hard to keep our youth close to their support systems, and that is how we will help our youth realize their potential and ensure the safety of communities across the nation.

Programs recommended and developed by the Council and OJJDP offer hope, not just to those enrolled in the programs, but to all who want to see this work succeed. The Opportunity Center and the Harris County Reinvestment Fund are two examples of the kind of collaboration and innovative thinking that give us hope and inspire us to do more on behalf of our nation's children. Federal agencies represented at this meeting can learn from Harris County's example.

We can ask ourselves, "how can we leverage and foster similar success within our constituency?" Our vision at OJP is one that we all share: safe, just, and healthy communities. One piece of this work is the power of partnerships and communities to serve as co-producers of public safety. We will see this in action at The Opportunity Center, where partners have come together from across Harris County to uplift kids in need.

This program is a partnership between the Harris County Office of Safety and Justice and the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department. The aim is to keep young people out of the juvenile justice system and to promote community safety by enhancing community-based prevention and intervention services.

Practitioner Members

Administrator Ryan introduced the Council's new practitioner members.

Amiyah Davis serves as the project coordinator for the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University's Court School of Public Policy, where she strives to elevate youth voices while working to transform services for youth and communities across the nation. She is an advocate and an activist for youth in the juvenile justice system, and she understands that effective transformation requires consultation and partnerships with justice-involved young people.

Michael Mendoza is the Director of Advocacy at the Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC), which aims to end mass incarceration in California. ARC's core initiatives include an emphasis on preventive care, especially on keeping youth out of the state's juvenile justice system. For young people who are incarcerated, ARC offers a support network and comprehensive services to ease their reentry into the community. Michael ensures that ARC's legislative efforts center on the voices of people who are and were incarcerated. OJJDP shares this priority with ARC.

Liz Simons chairs the board of the Heising-Simons Foundation, a family foundation headquartered in Los Altos, California. The foundation's approach to juvenile justice embraces community investment. Liz and the foundation espouse practices that recognize our common humanity, emphasizing healing and community development.

Administrator Ryan ended her introduction but saying collaboration is exciting, but it is difficult. The juvenile justice system has focused primarily on harm reduction, but increasingly we also understand the importance of youth well-being and that young people need and deserve support and services that will help them grow into their best selves. That means that ensuring young people maintain relationships with their families and the communities that support them. It also means ensuring access to opportunities for personal growth, like education and vocational training. It means connections to mentors, classes and life skills, chances for enrichment and recreation, affordable housing, and mental health services that promote healing. The Administrator noted that the juvenile justice system must do a better job of helping youth to access support systems, but OJJDP cannot do this work alone, and that is why partnerships with agencies represented at this meeting are so critical.

Introductions

Meeting participants introduced themselves.

Administrator Ryan introduced **Henry Gonzales**, Executive Director of the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department.

Henry stated that he became the Executive Director in 2018 after 30-plus years with the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department, starting as a practitioner. In those 30 years, he saw all aspects of the juvenile justice system in Harris County. When he became the Executive Director, he wanted to do things differently. He reached out to the Annie E. Casey Foundation. They had worked together before, and the county judge reached out to Columbia Justice Lab to explore how to do things differently.

These entities helped Henry realize that the community's perception of juvenile justice was of a system that harms young people, families, and communities. It is a system plagued with systemic racism. He realized that the system punishes kids for bad decisions. He noted that the majority of the kids are not serious offenders. Over 80 percent of the kids were caught for lower-level misdemeanor offenses. These kids were put on probation and given rules to follow. If they did not follow the rules, the punishment would get worse, often removing the child from their home.

Henry continued explaining the problems with the juvenile justice system, mentioning that once a child who is on probation gets seven unexcused absences from school, they are in violation of the probation. No one, however, examined what caused the child to get the unexcused absences. Some kids would be eligible for a diversion program, but he noted that most kids who got into a diversion program were white, exemplifying the disparity within the system. All kids need the opportunity to get into these programs.

A paper he read focused on juvenile justice. As he read the paper, he found that it was the perfect articulation for what he wanted to do with juvenile justice in Harris County: create a positive youth justice system rooted in the community. Services should be provided by community-based organizations embedded in those impacted communities with people from those communities providing the services and the supports that families need. For these community organizations to do that, they have to have resources. The paper he read provided 10 steps to create a system based on 3 principles: reduce, improve, and reinvest.

In 2017, Harris County received 7,137 referrals from the various police departments in the county. Today, Harris County received 3,000 so far this year, so the county has reduced the referrals. Further, the 210-bed facility in 2017 held 273 kids. Today, the facility averages 114 kids. Of those 114, about 30 are there for homicide-related offenses. The vast majority of those other kids are in there for violent offenses that included a weapon. This is further evidence that the program has succeeded in reducing the population.

For improvements, Henry noted that the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department pivoted away from a punitive correction system to one that is more therapeutic. Before, family visitation consisted of parent-child meetings at tables. Now, visitation can last all day and can occur in more natural settings, like on a fishing pier or in a park. Henry wanted to show the courts that he understands that kids go to these facilities to get the tools that they need, the education, the wraparound services, and the treatment. He wanted to let the courts know that we do not have to remove kids from their family or their community.

Vanessa Ramirez, the Strategic Partnerships Assistant Director for the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department, spoke next. She talked about creating a space where youth could come and not just access academics, but also enrichment programs and vocational programs. She noted that it is important to meet kids where they are. She spoke about the importance of adapting programs and services to kids' needs.

She started by deinstitutionalizing the building that would become The Opportunity Center: removing more than 60 800-pound doors that used to slam shut. The sound of slamming doors was likely to re-traumatize the kids who had spent time in traditional facilities.

Vanessa spoke about getting partners on board to support The Opportunity Center.

Alyssa (last name withheld) spoke to the Council as a former participant at The Opportunity Center. Last year, she graduated as the valedictorian of her class. She was enrolled as a workforce solutions intern, where she received hands-on training. She is now a paid employee for WorkTexas, a vocational training center and part of The Opportunity Center. She noted that The Opportunity Center is not just a school, but also hands-on learning lab. Without The Opportunity Center, she feels she would be homeless.

She noted that The Opportunity Center:

- Prepared her for work and taught her public speaking skills.
- Helped her to prepare for job interviews.
- Prepared her for college.
- Helped her get her GED.
- Helped her get scholarships and grants.

Alyssa said that resources should not just be for people on probation but the community as well because everyone struggles. The Opportunity Center trains the teachers, mentors, juvenile probation officers, and social workers who want to help. The Opportunity Center helped her move forward. Through The Opportunity Center, she is inspired to help others. She closed by saying things at her home could have prevented her from ending up on probation, but everything has helped her get to where she is today. “It all has shaped me. That’s who I am and who I can become.”

Henry echoed that services should be available to everyone, not just youth involved in the justice system. He said that if decision-makers truly wanted to help impacted communities build their capacity to be able to best serve and support the young people within the system, they need to make sure that they have the resources to be able to do that. This is where the idea for the reinvestment fund came in. If there is any budget surplus, they keep this money that was earmarked specifically for the population and make sure that it stays with them. Henry noted that they put that money into the community, which led to the reinvestment fund.

Lourdes Rosado asked Alyssa if the issue of homelessness is one she sees a lot.

Alyssa said that she does see some kids at The Opportunity Center who are thrown out of their home by their parents, and they stay with bad people who guide them into living a bad life.

Administrator Ryan noted that this is an issue she thinks the Council should address: the intersection between homelessness, police involvement, and justice system involvement, and what we as government representatives can recommend. What actions can the Council recommend to address these concerns?

Harris County Reinvestment Fund: Financing a New Vision for Youth Justice

Dr. Sujeeta E. Menon, Program Director of Civic Heart Community Services, introduced Civic Heart, a community-based social service organization in Houston, Texas. The organization works with marginalized and disadvantaged communities and is designed to enhance and promote community-based programming, reduce juvenile justice involvement for youth, offer culturally responsive prevention and intervention services, and provide direct investments in homegrown, grassroots, community-based organizations.

Civic Heart partnered with the Harris County Office of Justice and Safety and Harris County Juvenile Probation Department (HCJPD) to identify investments to address racial and ethnic disparities and reduce disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system. Services provided by Civic Heart hope to prevent further youth involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Maps displaying services provided for youth were shown. The map shown had multiple color-coded areas. The highest number of referrals for services were shown in red. By identifying these social services and what they provide, practitioners can review to see what else is needed and bolster the services in those areas for young people.

Dr. Menon explained that the development of the Request for Proposal (RFP) was to provide services and award four to six organizations with funding that ranged from \$212,500 to \$318,750 a year.

During the RFP phase, Civic Heart sought youth and family-serving organizations that aided young people 5 to 18 years of age. Risk factors included youth involved in the justice system; victims of child abuse, neglect, and domestic violence; lack of parental support; and youth who experienced homelessness and mental or behavioral health concerns.

To select organizations, Civic Heart engaged in a gap analysis and then used HCJPD data to pinpoint locations. It looked at programs that could support youth and their families in the community and the willingness of these organizations to work with justice-involved youth, with importance given to family engagement and youth boys.

Next, a selection committee was convened. The selection committee consisted of 12 members from the community, HCJPD, Office of Justice and Safety, and Civic Heart. There were 66 applications in the first round of the RFP, which were narrowed to 10.

Selected organizations included The Forgotten Third, Workshop Houston, Talent Yield Coalition, My Chapel, Young People in Action, and The Legends and Legacies. Once selected, Civic Heart met with grantees to ensure they had all the resources they need to start. Grantees also had orientation with HCJPD.

Civic Heart established a Global Outcomes Board, consisting of community members who are experts in the area of juvenile justice and who are invested in ensuring that young people and families get the support that they need. The Board meets quarterly to identify different areas for focus to reduce and address disproportionate minority contact with the justice system.

Additional slides showed multiple domains and tenets that were the framework of Civic Heart's program related to nonprofit management. Civic Heart wanted to ensure that all nonprofits that they funded will become competitive for future contracts and grants.

When Civic Heart conducted assessments of grantees, they met with them and collected and analyzed data. Civic Heart then created a pathway plan. A pathway plan is a working document that allows Civic Heart to see the capacity-building plan for each of the organizations.

Civic Heart's hope is that by the end of the first year, grantees would have an increase of at least 25 percent capacity to work with justice-involved young people. Civic Heart conducted outreach activities that included talking with community members and stakeholders, the CEO visiting a conference in New York to talk with the Columbia Justice Lab and convening a juvenile board meeting and community advisory board meetings, and networking opportunities.

Dr. Menon noted that collaboration is key, and the organization looks forward to continuing to find opportunities to expand their work. Networking and outreach is vital, and Civic Heart did this by:

- Hosting resource fairs and introducing participating organizations to our grantees.
- Introducing grantees to the Workforce Solutions youth internship program.
- Informing grantees about the OJJDP newsletter and encouraging sign up.
- Hosting multiple back-to-school fairs.
- Conducting collaborative meetings.
- Holding a networking meeting known as a Day of Caring.
- Establishing communities of practice.

Civic Heart gathers communities of practice—including grantees and applicants—on a quarterly basis. Organizations that did not get funded were invited to join to build a good ecosystem of youth justice programs where collaboration is encouraged.

Civic Heart conducts the following trainings with grantees:

- September 28: Writing workshop training.
- October 18: Social media training.
- October 26: Community of practice.
- November: Case management training.
- December: Grant writing training.

Dr. Menon recognized, acknowledged, and thanked The Reinvestment Fund and the work it does to deepen community connections to serve children at home with their families and their communities. Dr. Menon emphasized that it could not be possible without Harris County Juvenile Probation Department, the Office of Justice and Safety, and the Commissioner's Court for investing in small grassroots organizations that play a critical role in building a true continuum of care and opportunity for youth and families in their home communities to prevent and address the root causes and involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Questions related to the Harris County Reinvestment Fund

A meeting participant commented and asked about the money being spent and if it is \$2 million a year. Dr. Menon replied that that is correct.

The participant followed up by asking if the public safety budget reflects some of the priorities and is the “attitude contagious.” If it is not, how can we make it that way.

Dr. Menon replies that a representative from the Office of Justice and Safety is in attendance, **Kelly Venci Gonzalez**. When this program succeeds, the initiative can be contagious throughout the different departments that provide funds.

Another participant asks about the plan for sustaining capacity building. Is the idea that in years ahead there is another batch of community organizations that are added to the fold, and that the initial organizations have some capacity to continue to sustain the work?

Dr. Menon responded by saying that part of the initial intent of the program is to create sustainable plans. The desire is to see all organizations become sustainable, and creating a strategic plan is part of the work. Dr. Menon concluded by indicating that part of the sustainability plan is fundraising. Federal funds alone will not keep the work going. Increasing credibility within the community, and raising funds, will help the program remain sustainable.

A meeting participant asked if there is a way to help those who have not received the grants measure their progress and look for ways to ensure they are selected on the next program.

Dr. Menon noted that only the six grantees are being evaluated, but one thing the organization does is conduct surveys and feedback forms for every activity. The feedback provides the team with feedback on ways to provide greater support to grantees and applicants.

Administrator Ryan stated that OJJDP is establishing a community of practice with the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR). NICJR is creating a shared learning space focusing on building community-based alternatives to incarceration. It will also focus on partnerships with practitioners, government, community members. It will launch this fall and be hosted both virtually and in person.

A Process for Reform: Implications and Lessons for Council Membership

Administrator Ryan introduced the panelists for the next discussion.

- **Charles Rotramel**, Chief Executive Officer, reVision, a nonprofit that works with justice-involved youth.
- **Kelly Venci Gonzalez**, Senior Policy Analyst, Office of Justice and Safety for Harris County.
- **Dr. Mike Feinberg**, Co-founder of the WorkTexas Training Center in Houston; President and Co-founder of the Texas School Venture Fund and Career for All.
- **Karlton Harris**, Executive Director of The Forgotten Third, a nonprofit organization working with at-risk youth in underserved communities.

- **Tiffany Echevarria**, Executive Director of Collective Action for Youth, a nonprofit with a core area of focus on juvenile justice.
- **Danielle Lipow**, Senior Associate at the Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- **Vidhya Ananthakrishnan**, Director of the Youth Justice Initiatives Project at the Columbia Justice Lab, which focuses on helping jurisdictions and leaders across the country interested in ending the punitive youth prison model, shifting resources into communities, and developing community-based supports that are youth-centered, community, and family-focused.

Administrator Ryan asks Vidhya and Danielle to put Harris County in context from their national vantagepoint and explain how Harris County fits in and what is unique about it.

Vidhya explains that the United States has a history of youth justice systems that equate punishment and harm and incarceration with safety. Evidence is clear that that does not work, it is expensive, it is racist, and ineffective. Many places, however, are fully invested in that structure and it is hard to fully disentangle.

Vidhya explains that there is a disparity among Harris County's communities of color that are hardest hit by incarceration. This has left some of these communities and particularly young people and their families unstable and unsettled, which makes their focus on day-to-day survival. It creates conditions for young people becoming ensnared in the legal system.

The focus of Harris County's youth justice reform has been on trying to end mass incarceration with a focus on harm reduction. Lately, there has been more focus on being more thoughtful about supporting and investing in young people.

Danielle explains how in most places in the country, not just Harris County, probation sentences are handed out excessively. Some sentences include 500 probation conditions in their standard order. Probation is the most common disposition in juvenile justice; it often serves as a snare for young people. It sets them up with many rules, and freedoms go away quickly when probation is violated. The transformation initiative is a different approach. Harris County is part of the probation transformation, which means it is one of twenty-one places across the country that are pushing the envelope for what juvenile justice can and should be.

Kelly Venci Gonzalez emphasized that the approach in community reinvestment is a first for Harris County and much of the nation. Community and stakeholder collaboration is a new way of doing business and it requires a lot of negotiation. Community collaboration is essential and must be a big part of the equation.

The Youth Justice Reinvestment Fund was created to build and empower communities so that kids can stay with their families, in their communities, and receive what they need to be successful.

The Fund has seen invested interest from the community, including commissioners and other elected officials. It appeals to a broad spectrum of political orientations because it gives funding back to local communities and empowers them.

Prior to ending her session, Kelly noted that transportation in Harris County is an ongoing issue. They are constantly trying to figure out how to help transport the youth. Families have multiple kids, work, doctors' appointments, special needs, etc. and are not always available to provide transportation. She emphasized that they must be passionately client-centered, always putting their clients and families first. They must be vigilant in everything they do to keep kids and families at the forefront of this project.

Administrator Ryan introduced **Karlton Harris**, Executive Director of The Forgotten Third, and asked him to address the impact these reforms have on young people.

Karlton begins by explaining how the impact is more restorative than punitive compared to years past. The Forgotten Third's program supports young adult interns with training and job readiness. Karlton was formerly incarcerated and spent six years in prison. He has now been out for over twenty-three years, and having that history, he knows what is necessary for individuals like him to be successful.

Karlton emphasizes mentorship and relationship building with younger people as a priority. He gave an example of two young adults in their program who had a conflict with one another. In the past this may have led to gun violence and aggression, but these young adults agreed to sit down and talk instead. They're learning conflict resolution.

Locking someone up does not get to the root cause of the problem or address the trauma that the person has experienced. Healing spaces and circles are needed to address some of the things that have significantly impacted someone's life and led them to a life of survival mode. Karlton emphasizes that learning to come from a place of understanding and empathy is vital. You do not have to agree with them or condone the behavior, but kids are people too and we often forget this.

The Forgotten Third supports young adults from education to employment opportunities, from entrepreneurship to training and even day-to-day living. If a young person feels uncomfortable because they do not have clothes, The Forgotten Third partners with an organization like Houston Threads or Clothed By Faith, to supply what someone needs.

Karlton noted that the bad decisions someone makes does not define the person. In the past, the system was more punitive; today, with the help of organizations and agencies like those in attendance, the system is more restorative and therapeutic.

Liz asks **Dr. Mike Feinberg**, who was also involved in The Opportunity Center, if he can speak about takeaways and some lessons learned.

Dr. Feinberg begins by covering the lessons learned from the education reform journey over the last thirty years. As a founder of the KIPP schools, Dr. Feinberg helped the KIPP Houston region reach a 50 percent college graduation level, but he was aware that that number only accounted for half. It was time to re-think the approach KIPP schools took. While college prep is good to offer, college is not always for all. The college-for-all mentality tells kids that to be successful

after school, a student has to go to college. We should be asking, “what are you doing that you enjoy?” “What are you doing that provides a sustainable life for yourself and your current family and future families?” There are plenty of pathways to success. Some people go through college, and some require different types of trade training and skill development.

WorkTexas Training Center was formed as a nonprofit to work with those youth who choose not to go to college. That has now been incorporated into The Opportunity Center. If kids decide to go to and through college, then that is celebrated. Should kids decide to take some of the training The Opportunity Center provides and obtain skills to get jobs right away, then that is celebrated, too.

If training is going to be provided, it must be aimed at the right thing. Dr. Feinberg mentions how most training organizations are focused on skill development training. They determine success based on the percentage of students who earn a certificate. However, when asked how many of those students get a job, training organizations do not have an answer. Additionally, when asked if those students are still in their jobs and advancing in their careers, they do not have an answer. The focus should not be on training or jobs, it should be on careers.

Administrator Ryan asked Tiffany how the Federal government agencies represented in today’s meeting could support a more coordinated, effective service for young people who are involved in justice systems.

Tiffany said that engaging staff or justice-involved young people in the process to speak to what they hope to see and achieve. Communication and relationship building is key. This cultivates an environment of respect. It is also important to have a comprehensive onboarding plan for those who are starting a job.

Liz closed the morning session thanking panelists for their involvement in the morning portion of the meeting.

Council Business: Subcommittee Reports and Recommendations

Kellie Blue provided updates from the **Programs and Practice Subcommittee**.

The subcommittee has met three times since the October 2022 Coordinating Council meeting. In that time, the subcommittee has welcomed 26 members.

The subcommittee has determined that a focus on youth mental health is critical. The subcommittee reviewed the [Surgeon General’s Report on Protecting Youth Mental Health](#) and developed some themes stemming from the report. Those themes are:

- Incentivizing coordination across grant programs.
- Improving coordination across all levels of government to address mental health needs.
- Emphasizing the importance of partnerships.
- Braiding and blending funds.
- Emphasizing the importance of training.

- Highlighting the importance of childhood trauma and ACEs [adverse childhood experiences].
- Understanding sustainability when working with our training partners and grant programs.

At the next meeting, the subcommittee will explore how to establish processes and approaches to ensure the subcommittee and Council collect information from youth and families on a regular basis. The subcommittee wants to explore how to make it their business to gather the data.

Another area of focus is to look at the key issue of trauma and ACEs. The subcommittee wants to examine trauma and ACEs and make recommendations for Council action. The subcommittee is looking at the possibility of forming smaller working groups to explore these issues.

Pursuant to decisions made at the April 2023 Coordinating Council meeting, the subcommittee will begin more conversation and planning for the OJJDP National Conference in November 2024.

There were no questions for the subcommittee, and the Council voted unanimously to approve the subcommittee's notes.

Kristen Kracke provided updates from the **Policy Subcommittee**.

The Policy Subcommittee has met three times since the April 2023 Coordinating Council meeting. Thirteen members represent 6 Federal agencies; there are 5 practitioner members.

Our goals are to identify and explore policy opportunities that benefit from interagency Federal collaboration.

The subcommittee has defined its purpose broadly, and it acknowledges that policy and practice are closely aligned. As strategies for action are identified, subcommittees can identify how to work together closely.

The subcommittee wants to define and delineate what sets us apart from the Practice Subcommittee, even though the two go hand in hand.

The Policy Subcommittee identified five objectives that will guide its work.

- Objective 1: To examine and coordinate legislative, regulatory, or organizational policy changes to mutually inform and benefit our collective ability to serve justice-involved youth and those at risk of justice involvement.
- Objective 2: To review the programs and related policies of Federal member agencies and report on the degree to which those policies are consistent or inconsistent with emergent research and promising practices for justice-involved youth and those youth at high risk of contact with the justice system.

- Objective 3: To review interagency agreements of Federal member agencies to ensure consistency in Federal policy and practice, ensure alignment of agency priorities, and encourage interagency collaboration and agreement.
- Objective 4: To examine and identify service or system gaps that result in unmet youth needs, for the purpose of coordinating Federal member agency response in the form of policy modifications and guidances, interagency agreements, new funding, funding waivers, and/or statutory changes that would serve to address these gaps.
- Objective 5: To review the reasons why Federal agencies take juveniles into custody and make recommendations regarding how to improve Federal practices and facilities for holding juveniles in custody.

The plan of action for achieving those objectives include:

- Collect and review data and report back to Council.
- Identify policy inconsistencies, gaps and needs, and alignment with goals that support justice involved youth.

There were no questions for the subcommittee, and the Council voted unanimously to approve the subcommittee's notes.

Wrap-Up and Adjournment

Julie thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 1:46 p.m.