



SAN JOAQUIN
— COUNTY —
Greatness grows here.

Board of Supervisors

Robert Rickman, *Chairman, Fifth District*
Miguel Villapudua, *Vice Chair, First District*
Paul Canepa, *Second District*
Tom Patti, *Third District*
Steven J. Ding, *Fourth District*
Rachél DeBord, *Clerk of the Board of Supervisors*

Honorable Michael D. Coughlan, Presiding Judge
San Joaquin County Superior Court
180 E. Weber Avenue, Suite 1306J
Stockton, CA 95202

Dear Judge Coughlan:

Response to 2022-2023 Grand Jury Report: “Good Intentions Are Failing San Joaquin County’s At-Risk Children” (Case No. 0422)

Pursuant to Section 933.05 of the California Penal Code, attached please find the additional Board-approved departmental response to the Grand Jury Final Report for the following new case:

Good Intentions Are Failing San Joaquin County’s At-Risk Children (Case No. 0422)

If you have any questions regarding these responses, please contact Jay Wilverding, County Administrator, at (209) 468-3203.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert Rickman".

Robert Rickman, Chairman
Board of Supervisors
County of San Joaquin

Attachments:

- Response to Grand Jury Report
- Board Letter
- Board Order

c: Steve Jackson, Chief Probation Officer
Edward Kiernan, County Counsel



September 12, 2023

Board of Supervisors
County Administration Building
Stockton, CA

Dear Board Members:

**Approve Response to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Report:
“Good Intentions Are Failing San Joaquin County’s At-Risk Children”
(Case No. 0422)**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the additional departmental response to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Report entitled “*Good Intentions are Failing San Joaquin County’s At-Risk Children;*” and
2. Authorize and direct the Chairman to sign and submit a letter with the attached response to the Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

On June 20, 2023, the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury released a report entitled “*Good Intentions are Failing San Joaquin County’s At-Risk Children*” (Case No. 0422).

California Penal Code (PC) Section 933 requires that specific responses to all findings and recommendations contained in the report be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court on the Grand Jury’s findings and recommendations within 90 days of issuance. PC Section 933.05 designates responses to findings must be: 1) Agrees with the finding; or 2) Disagrees, wholly or partially with the finding. Responses to recommendations are limited to: 1) Has been implemented; 2) Has not yet been implemented, but will be within a certain timeframe; 3) Requires further analysis and timeframe for further determination within six months; or 4) Will not be implemented, and reasons therefor.

A summary of the Probation responses/actions reflecting the Grand Jury’s findings and recommendations are attached.

FISCAL IMPACT

Except for staff time, there is no fiscal impact to approve and submit the responses.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN FOLLOWING APPROVAL

Following signature by the Chairman, the Clerk of the Board will submit the responses to the Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court.

Very truly yours,



Jerome C. Wilverding
County Administrator

Attachments:

- Responses to the Grand Jury
- Letter to Presiding Judge w/ Attachments

c: Steve Jackson, Chief Probation Officer
Edward Kiernan, County Counsel
Board Clerk for 09/12/23 Agenda

BL09-03

JW:KS

Reviewed by County Counsel's Office:



Kimberly D. Johnson, Assistant County Counsel 8/30/2023

Before the Board of Supervisors

County of San Joaquin, State of California

B-23-465

**Approve Response to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Report:
"Good Intentions Are Failing San Joaquin County's At-Risk Children" (Case No. 0422)**

THIS BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DOES HEREBY:

1. Approve the additional departmental response to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Report entitled "*Good Intentions are Failing San Joaquin County's At-Risk Children;*" and
2. Authorize and direct the Chairman to sign and submit a letter with the attached response to the Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the above order was passed and adopted on September 12, 2023 by the following vote of the Board of Supervisors, to wit:

MOTION: Patti/Canepa/5-0

AYES: Villapudua, Canepa, Patti, Ding, Rickman

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

**THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT COPY
OF THE ORIGINAL ON FILE IN THIS OFFICE**

ATTEST September 13, 2023
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Of the County of San Joaquin, State of California

by: Nichole Lee Deputy

ATTEST: RACHÉL DeBORD
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of San Joaquin
State of California



By: Nichole Lee
Deputy Clerk

THE FORGONES IS A CORRECT COPY
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DATE 08-11-2011 BY 60322/UC/STP/STP

DATE 08-11-2011 BY 60322/UC/STP/STP



ATTACHMENT A
Probation Department Responses to the
2022-2023 Grand Jury Final Report

San Joaquin County, Case No. 0422 – “Good Intentions Are Failing San Joaquin County’s At-Risk Children”

Finding F1.1:

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors and San Joaquin County Probation Department failed to promptly take expedient measures to keep up with the ever-changing regulatory environment regarding the Juvenile Realignment Act, which created significant deficiencies in available placement options.

Response to Finding F1.1:

Disagree.

Finding F1.3:

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors and San Joaquin County Human Services Agency and San Joaquin County Probation Department are underutilizing available program options like the San Joaquin County Office of Education’s Discovery ChalleNGe Academy, or the Youth Law Center’s Quality Parenting Initiative. This deprives children of additional available resources.

Response to Finding F1.3:

Disagree.

Finding F1.4:

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors and San Joaquin County Human Services Agency and San Joaquin County Probation Department, did not plan or account for the increased number of the most difficult-to-place youth needing placement in congregate care, creating restricted access to services and potential harm to juveniles and communities throughout San Joaquin County.

Response to Finding F1.4:

Partially Agree.

Finding F3.2:

Substantial issues in managing the care for At-Risk Youth in the County were due to a lack of meaningful interagency cooperation, which missed an opportunity to leverage and gain sustainable support from other agencies.

Response to Finding F3.2:

Disagree.

Recommendation R1.1:

By December 31, 2023, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors and San Joaquin County Probation Department, through collaboration with Human Services Agency, Children’s Protective Services, Behavioral Health Services develop, adopt, and implement appropriate alternative housing placement options (e.g., transitional housing placement program, small family homes, group homes, and/or short-term residential therapeutic programs).

Response to Recommendation R1.1:

Has been implemented.

The Grand Jury report defines SB 823 as, “Senate Bill 823 Department of Juvenile Justice Realignment Act, signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom in September 2020, effectively eliminates Juvenile incarcerations.” However, the Juvenile Justice Realignment Act or SB 823 addresses youth who were committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and were returning to the County of jurisdiction by June 30, 2023. San Joaquin County Probation took the necessary measures to be in compliance with the Board of State Community Corrections (BSCC) and began work on a plan immediately upon the imposition of the legislation. Since this legislation was enacted, the Department’s Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant plans have all been approved by the Office of Youth and Community Restoration. The Department has been operating a Secure Youth Track Facility within the existing Juvenile Hall for nearly two years.

San Joaquin County Probation assesses all youth being booked into the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC). They utilize the Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (DRAI) and Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI) assessment tool to determine a youth’s risk to reoffend. Based on the risk score, some youth must stay in custody if they pose a danger to themselves or the community. If a youth is released from custody prior to adjudication, there are some intermediate sanctions Probation and/or the Courts can impose. Before being placed on Formal Probation, the Courts have the authority to place youth on an Informal Grant of Probation. These informal options allow the youth to prove to the Courts and Probation they made a mistake and are willing to be rehabilitated. The following are options afforded to the Court for use as informal sanctions:

- Informal Probation – Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) categories 654.2 and 725, allow a judge to place a youth on supervised or unsupervised care, for up to six months.
- Deferred Entry of Judgment – A judicial program where youth enter a plea, but the court defers judgment and sentencing while youth complete 12 months on probation.
- Project Navigate Constructive Change – A diversion program through the District Attorney’s Office. If accepted into the program, the youth will participate in counseling and evidence-based programming to target their needs.

The above programs allow the youth to comply with the court’s conditions, and if successful, their case will be dismissed. If the youth are unsuccessful, they will be placed on a formal grant of probation. Formal types of sanctioning can include the following programs, which are already in place by the Probation Department and Juvenile Courts:

- Formal Probation – Supervised release to the community by probation, who is responsible for ensuring youth comply with their court ordered conditions and encourage positive growth.
- Court Committed – Youth serving a commitment in a custodial facility. While in custody the youth are assigned to a probation officer who ensures the youth are complying with their court ordered conditions and encourage positive behavior in custody. The youth receive the following while in custody:

- Career and Technical Education
 - Delta College
 - Culinary Program
 - Logistics (forklift and truck driving)
 - Coding Program
 - Art Therapy
- Evidence-Based Programs
- Victor Community Support Services
- Behavioral Health Services
- Ethnic Studies
- Religious Services/Bible Studies
- Holiday Activities
- Graduations
- Prison Education Project – Provides life skills and career development programming to educate, empower, and transform the lives of incarcerated individuals. The goal is to create a “Prison-to-School Pipeline” and provides a multi-layered approach to enhance human development, reduces recidivism, saves resources, and allows participants to positively contribute to society.
- Placement – Youth who are removed from their biological parents and need treatment are placed in a short-term residential treatment program.
- Secure Youth Treatment Facility (Secure Track or SYTF) – Youth who would have normally been sentenced to DJJ are sentenced to Secure Track. While in a SYTF, youth receive the above services along with access to the following programs:
 - Secure Track Youth Progress Team
 - Social Hour – Meeting with a Social Worker weekly to review the youths’ overall performance and provide feedback and incentives for the youth.
 - Pine Grove Youth Conservation Camp
 - Mary Magdalene Mentorship Program
 - Community Partnership for Families of San Joaquin
 - Camp Peterson – Provides a step-down incentive for SYTF youth.

While youth are housed in JJC, below are the various incentive based programs youth can earn:

- Book Nook – Institution library with various suitable books youth can take back to their room/unit to read.
- Dream Center – Activities involving video game consoles, exercise equipment, arcade machines, and other games for the youth.
- Big Bang – Access all amenities in the Dream Center along with ordering an outside meal of their choice.
- 45-Day Celebrations – Institution-wide celebration with all youth who did not accrue any levels for 45 days. They get all amenities in the Dream Center, outside food selected by youth, and engage in various other activities selected for the celebration.

SB 823 did not eliminate juvenile incarceration, rather, it imposed the closure of DJJ. The JJC still houses youth who commit crimes. While youth are housed in JJC, they are required to attend school, and participate in evidence-based programming through our Passport Program. While housed, youth are in a continuous cycle of learning skills and knowledge to make better decisions once released.

The Passport Program is a regimented program, which consists of the following:

Phase 1:

- Orientation – Consists of exercises to increase motivation for change and awareness of the client’s risk factors. It also teaches clients some basic social skills to prepare them for more effective group participation and integration into more pro-social community supports.

Phase 2:

- Foundations – Focuses on youth’s criminal thinking, recognizing risky thinking, reducing risky thinking, and utilizing new thinking.
- Social Skills – Focuses on the science of social learning. This is applied in a structured manner to assist clients in acquiring skills necessary to be successful in pro-social environments. The basic elements of modeling, practice, feedback, and graduated practices are incorporated together for what is called structured skill building.
- Problem Solving and Cognitive Self-Change – Centers on applying problem-solving models related to their individual risk areas to find healthier and pro-active solutions.

Phase 3:

- Focus on Top 3 Criminogenic Needs – The youths’ criminogenic needs will determine which group the youth are enrolled in.
 - Anger/Aggression – Anger control training.
 - Substance Abuse – Cognitive Behavioral Intervention (CBI) Substance Use Classes.
 - Others will complete Social Skills levels 2 and 3.

Phase 4:

- Success Planning – Ensures the youth are maintaining their steps and positive mindsets, and are continuing to work on any other issues they feel they need help on. This phase can also address new issues that may arise.

This finding also mentioned, *“Laws reducing juveniles’ exposure to the harshness of the incarceration system failed to provide an alternative to juvenile detention or county jail, and instead created a ‘revolving door’ in the courts.”* Although that statement may be true to some degree, Probation never stopped providing intermediate sanctions or alternatives to incarceration. Youth are sentenced to the JJC and held accountable for the offenses they committed. Probation has seen a difference in the population of youth in JJC, but never stopped providing services to them.

The Grand Jury Report defined SB 439 *“established a minimum age of 12 for prosecuting youth in juvenile court in California, except in the most severe cases of murder and forcible rape. The law intends to protect young children from the adverse consequences of justice system involvement and encourage more effective interventions, if appropriate, to improve children’s well-being and public safety. In addition, by January 1, 2020, counties must have a protocol for addressing alternatives to prosecution of youth under 12, even though juvenile court jurisdiction is no longer permissible starting January 1, 2019.”*

The Grand Jury infers that San Joaquin County did not have a plan or protocol in place to deal with youth under the age of 12 as described in SB 439. On December 18, 2019, a robust protocol was signed by all law and justice partners in San Joaquin County, which also included San Joaquin County’s Behavioral Health Services (BHS) and Human Services Agency. The protocol is titled, *“The San Joaquin County Juvenile Justice Alternatives Plan.”* This plan articulates how to treat a youth aged 12 or younger who comes in contact with local law enforcement.

Additionally, Probation Officers collaborate with community-based organizations and different programs in the community to assist with the needs of our at-risk youth and their families. These programs and services provide support, guidance, encouragement, and a safe place for our youth and their families.

Neighborhood Service Centers (NSC) – Neighborhood Service Centers are located throughout the County in high-risk neighborhoods. NSCs use a multidisciplinary team approach to working with at-risk youth, justice-involved youth, and their families. Within each of the six NSCs there is a Family Resource Center (FRC). These FRCs are inclusive community centers that emphasize family strengthening and child protective factors, located in an at-risk community. It functions as a coordinating hub, decreasing the degree of separation between resources/providers and their target populations.

Two core practice principles implemented through an NSC is the building of protective factors and using a trauma-informed lens to assess youth and family needs and development of a comprehensive and coordinated service plan. Additional principles are described below.

Building Protective Factors – According to the Center for the Study of Social Policy, the following protective factors are a foundation for strengthening families.

- **Parental Resilience** – Resilience is the ability to manage and bounce back from challenges that affect families. It means finding ways to solve problems, building, and sustaining trusting relationships including with the family's children, and knowing how to seek help when necessary.
- **Social and Emotional Competence of Youth** – Relationships with family, other adults, and peers are positively impacted by children's ability to interact positively with others, self-regulate their behavior, and communicate feelings. Early identification of any potential challenges helps both children and parents.
- **Trauma Informed Care** – High rates of trauma have far-reaching and severe consequences. Children exposed to violence are more likely to experience difficulties in school and work settings and to engage in delinquent behaviors that may lead to contact with the juvenile and criminal justice systems (Felitti et al., 1998; Ford, Chapman, Connor, & Cruise, 2012).

The core of the NSC model is an integrated Youth and/or Family Success Team (YFST). The purpose of the YFST is to enable service providers to efficiently convene and coordinate multidisciplinary services. Clients that typically receive YFST services are probation involved; demonstrate school and/or home issues; exhibit a history of truancy (chronic absentees), school violence, and/or expulsion; youth/families that are homeless; at risk of becoming involved in criminal activities; and/or have prior gang interaction. YFST are initiated when the family's situation requires coordinating multidisciplinary services, and when there are additional service barriers for the family.

Additionally, NSCs offer:

- **Youth Organizing/Positive Youth Development Groups** – Comprehensive youth-centered services curriculum which includes youth-centered case management, including youth-only case management and youth-centered family case management, youth organizing, and youth-facilitated community events. It also includes components such as Positive Youth Development facilitation based on the Teen Empowerment curriculum published by the Center for Teen Empowerment in Boston, Massachusetts.
- **Parenting Groups** – Parenting groups are peer learning groups with informal facilitation by a service provider. These groups promote the sharing of parenting concerns, ideas, solutions, and skills. They also provide an additional type of social connection. Parenting

classes impart child development knowledge and teach parenting techniques and skills such as child discipline, developing self-esteem, praising good behavior, etc. These skills are associated with the development of protective factors within the family, which in turn reduces the risk of child abuse/ neglect, juvenile justice involvement, etc.

The following chart represents those who received services at one of the six NSCs in San Joaquin County.

Fiscal Year	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Number of families with children age 7-18	N/A	N/A	4,961	7,183	2,372	Not reported yet
Number of youth served age 7-18	N/A	2,955	3,185	4,735	4,165	Not reported yet

Positive Youth Justice Initiative (PYJI) – Through the PYJI, the San Joaquin County Probation Department works with a wide range of youth-serving agencies to create positive youth development and mentorship opportunities for youth at high-risk of delinquency and/or further justice system contact. Programs include:

- Transitions to Independence (TIP) – An evidence-based approach to mentoring at-risk youth is offered to very high risk youth.
- Peacekeepers – Operated by the City of Stockton Office of Violence Prevention, Peacekeepers Youth Outreach Workers are trained in conflict resolution, mediation, community organizing, mentoring, and case management. They work with young people at risk of violence and seek to resolve conflicts that have a risk of escalating to violence.
- My Brother's Keeper – Provides mentoring and intensive case management support to young men of color. The project addresses persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and men of color and ensures that all young people can reach their full potential. Other youth development and mentoring programs operate using the Teen Empowerment Model, Thinking for a Change, El Joven Noble, and other evidence-based or promising practices.

The following chart represents the number of youth who were referred to the PYJI program.

Fiscal Year	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Number of youth referred	N/A	N/A	20	30	17	30

Lexis Nexis – A tool used to gather names of family members in an effort to keep the youth with their family. The Probation Officers assigned to the youth will contact the family members and see if they would be interested in having the youth stay with them should the youth be removed from their parents.

Wraparound Program – Wraparound is a strength-based approach which supports youth and their families in identifying their own strengths, building upon those strengths, and working as a family to foster those strengths. Wraparound services is an intensive, holistic method of engaging with individuals with complex needs (typically children, youth, and their families) so they can remain in their homes and communities and realize their hopes and dreams.

- Child and Family Teaming (CFT) – Is widely recognized that services for children and families are most effective when delivered in the context of a single, integrated team that includes the child or youth, his or her family, natural and community supports, and professionals. Everyone who plays role in the youth's success is invited to these CFT

meetings. This is important so that everyone understands and sees the big picture and can assist and do their part in the youth’s case plan as they work towards their goals.

This chart represents the number of youth who were referred to WRAP services through Victor Community Support Services.

Fiscal Year	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Number of referrals	264	311	208	195	147	173

In February 2018, the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was signed into law. The objective of FFPSA is to enhance support services to families to help children and youth remain at home and reduce the use of congregate care placements by increasing options for prevention services, increased oversight, requirements for placements, and enhancing the requirements for congregate care placement settings.

The following provisions are included in FFPSA:

- Title IV-E reimbursement for evidence-based, trauma-informed prevention services.
- Support for kinship (relative) caregivers.
- Limits on congregate care placements.
- Improvements to services for older and transitional-aged youth.

When FFPSA was enacted, the San Joaquin County Probation Department was already doing a lot of what FFPSA was signed into law to do. As a Department, we were already trained in evidence-based programming and utilized trauma-informed preventative services.

As noted, Officers utilize Lexis Nexis to find kinship relatives who may want to care for the youth. We also understand there are non-kinship relatives who may want to care for the youth. We are also reaching out to families to see if they want to be a Resource Family. If they qualify and are eligible, we are working with HSA to have the family attend the County’s Resource Family Approval (RFA) Family Orientation.

San Joaquin County has limited the use of congregate care placements. We look to place in an STRTP as our first choice. If we have no other options and a congregate care facility is the only placement that will take the youth, we utilize who will take them. When we have a difficult youth with complex needs, programs have the luxury to accept or deny a youth based on the referral and or interview. For some youth, this is a struggle.

The San Joaquin County Probation Department currently utilizes transitional housing for youth who are reaching the age of majority. This type of placement allows for stability past the age of 18 and the youth continue to receive services. Transitional-aged youth are connected to the community to receive independent living skills as part of their placement and aftercare services.

The San Joaquin County Probation Department will utilize and exhaust all options before a youth is given placement orders. In the event a youth is ordered placement, Probation Officers will conduct an interview with the youth and review all documents to ensure they have a comprehensive understanding of the youth and their needs before placement of the youth occurs. We currently look for placement options (transitional housing, short-term residential therapeutic programs, and independent living) that will meet the needs of the youth.

It should be noted that all youth on probation in San Joaquin County do not go straight to placement. The San Joaquin County Probation Department works diligently to keep youth home with their families whenever possible. Case plans are created based on identified risk factors that need to be addressed, and individual goals are created for the youth to work on. Some

goals may include counseling, referrals to community-based organizations, or working on strengthening the family structure. The youth, the parent, and the Probation Officer all play a role in each goal. The case plan is a working document and is addressed each time contact is made with the youth and/or the family.

Probation has minimal youth that are ordered to placement, as outlined in the chart below:

Fiscal Year	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Youth in Placement	59	58	50	27	22	31

San Joaquin County Probation is always looking for ways to improve the work that we do and capitalize on resources in the community. We are currently working with the Human Services Agency to assist with recruiting Resource Families to provide a home-like environment for the youth with placement orders. We are also looking to explore collaboration with local foster agencies to see if any of their families would be interested in becoming a Resource Family for our youth. We will continue to collaborate with HSA, Child Protective Services (CPS), and BHS to utilize alternative placement options for the youth in our custody.

Recommendation R1.2:

By December 31, 2023, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors and Human Services Agency, through collaboration with the Behavioral Health Services, San Joaquin County Probation Department, San Joaquin County Office of Education, and all San Joaquin County Law Enforcement Agencies, develop, adopt, and implement appropriate programs for justice-involved youth, as listed in Finding 1.3.

Response to Recommendation R1.2:

Has been implemented.

The San Joaquin County Probation Department collaborates with each of the mentioned agencies above. We pride ourselves with the relationships we have fostered throughout the years. We will continue to partner with community-based organizations and programs in the community to provide evidence-based programs, practices, and alternatives to incarceration to limit future crimes, reduce victimization, and reduce recidivism for our youth with a focus on trauma informed rehabilitation.

. Programs include:

- Community Accountability Prevention Services (CAPS)
- Neighborhood Service Centers
- Prevail
- Positive Youth Justice initiative
- Community Partnership for Families of San Joaquin (CPFSJ)
- Sow a Seed
- Victor Community Support Services-Wraparound Services
- Reconnect Day Reporting Center (Reconnect)
- Passport Program
- Catalyst
- Aspiranet
- Pine Grove Youth Conservation Camp
- Project Navigate Constructive Change (PNCC)

The San Joaquin County Probation Department is currently in collaboration of a tri-county team including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Merced counties to implement a Children’s Crisis Continuum of Care Pilot Project (CCCPP). The focus of this CCCPP is to create a one-stop shop for youth with complex needs, therefore creating additional programs for justice-involved youth.

Recommendation R1.3:

By December 31, 2023, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors, through collaboration with Human Services Agency, Probation, Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, develop plans for the increased utilization of programs such as the San Joaquin County Office of Education’s Discovery ChalleNGe Academy or the Youth Law Center’s Quality Parenting Initiative.

Response to Recommendation R1.3:

Has been implemented.

The Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) focuses on oversight of the Probation Department’s prevention and early intervention programs that are funded through the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA). The JJCC reviews and approves the programs funded through the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act monthly and reviews the overall plan annually.

The San Joaquin County Probation Department utilizes programs designed around prevention and early intervention. Our goal is to intervene and provide services to the youth before they become justice involved. Our Community Accountability Prevention Services (CAPS) Unit is comprised of three Social Workers who provide counseling to the youth on a voluntary basis. Our referrals come from different avenues:

- School Districts
- Law Enforcement Citations (closed at intake)
- Community
- Family Members

The CAPS Unit does an outstanding job providing preventative services to youth in the community. The below chart represents the number of referrals received and the number of youths who received services:

Fiscal Year	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Number of referrals	196	262	208	70	132	134
Number of youths who received services	179	182	167	64	95	119

The San Joaquin County Office of Education’s Discovery ChalleNGe Academy (DCA) is a successful program. Many youths are referred, enrolled, and complete the various components of the program. DCA is a voluntary 22-week residential program that is highly structured and quasi-military format. Cadets, while at the Academy, must meet military grooming standards, wear military-type uniforms, and observe standard military customs and courtesies. For youth to be eligible for DCA, they must be between the ages of 16-18, dropped out or at risk of not graduating school, and not have been convicted of a felony. Applicants must be willing to become drug free and be physically and mentally able to complete the program. No parent, court, judge, or probation officer can force the teen to participate.

The chart below represents the number of youths who were enrolled in DCA:

Fiscal Year	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Youths Enrolled in DCA	248	305	319	88	236	299

The San Joaquin County Probation Department has an outstanding working relationship with the San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE). Currently we have a full-time Social Worker stationed at the DCA and a Probation Unit running SJCOE's Project 654, a collaborative truancy program designed to improve school attendance through support and services.

Reconnect Day Reporting Center is a collaborative effort between the San Joaquin County Probation Department, San Joaquin County Office of Education, and Community Partnership for Families of San Joaquin, which provides an alternative to detention, educational services, and evidence-based programming and services to rebuild family relationships. Additional program goals include decreasing truancy for probation-involved youth, providing on-site family service integration, and assisting probation youth in reconnecting and remaining in the community in lieu of custody.

The two major program objectives of the Reconnect Program have been to:

1. Provide a comprehensive alternative to detention by establishing a day reporting center.
2. Reduce recidivism by providing targeted evidenced-based programming to a high-risk population.

In April 2017, Reconnect enhanced the evidenced-based programming offered to include a regimented and structured Passport Program. Similar to what is offered to youth in custody, the youth in the Reconnect program receive the same programming structure:

Phase 1:

- Orientation – Consists of exercises to increase motivation for change and awareness of the client's risk factors. It also teaches clients some basic social skills to prepare them for more effective group participation and integration into more pro-social community supports.

Phase 2:

- Foundations – Focuses on youth's criminal thinking, recognizing risky thinking, reducing risky thinking, and utilizing new thinking.
- Social Skills – Focuses on the science of social learning. This is applied in a structured manner to assist clients in acquiring skills necessary to be successful in pro-social environments. The basic elements of modeling, practice, feedback, and graduated practices are incorporated together for what is called structured skill building.
- Problem Solving & Cognitive self-change – The clients will be applying the model of problems related to their individual risk areas to find healthier and pro-active solutions.

Phase 3:

- Focus on Top 3 Criminogenic needs – The youths criminogenic needs will determine which group the youth are enrolled in.
 - Anger/Aggression – Anger Control Training.
 - Substance Abuse – Cognitive Based Intervention-Substance Classes.
 - Others will complete Social Skills levels 2 and 3.

If youth complete the above three phases, they will start the fourth phase, Success Planning.

Phase 4:

- Success Planning – Ensures the youth are maintaining their steps, positive mindsets, and continuing to work on any other issues they feel they need help on. This phase can also address new issues that may arise.

Additionally, Officers are trained in Motivational Interviewing (MI) techniques and Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS), in addition to facilitating various cognitive behavioral interventions.

We are always open to new programs within the community. We are developing relationships with new organizations to provide quality services and programs to the youth we serve. Currently, we rely on our partner agencies and our community-based organizations to provide opportunities for our youth to participate in programs to improve themselves, their surroundings and inflict positive change within them. Youth must be willing to accept the opportunity for change offered to them, and legislatively, cannot be forced to accept assistance with certain programs.

Recommendation R1.4:

By December 31, 2023, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors, through collaboration with the Human Services Agency and the San Joaquin County Probation Department, develop, adopt, and implement a type of alternative placement for the most difficult-to-place youth.

Response to Recommendation R1.4:

Will be implemented.

The recommendation will be implemented but not by December 31, 2023. The State of California’s Continuum of Care (CCR) and Assembly Bill 403 focused on policy changes to improve the outcomes of youth in foster care. One of those changes restricted placement in congregate care settings. In San Joaquin County, group homes were required to meet new licensing standards and convert to a short-term residential therapeutic program (STRTP). If they were unable to meet the licensing requirements, group homes were ultimately forced to close, drastically decreasing the number of placement options available for our youth. The San Joaquin County Probation Department has worked collaboratively with the Human Services Agency to assist and support group home providers in our County and neighboring counties transition to an STRTP. Collaboratively, we put on a CCR training to educate all providers and wrote letters showing our support of their transition to an STRTP to include with their application to the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division. Despite all our efforts, the CCR policy changes reduced the number of placement options for our youth. In December 2020, the State eliminated out-of-state placement of youth, again, restricting the ability to meet youth placement needs.

The San Joaquin County Probation Department works diligently to keep youth with their families and provide services to the family unit. Should a youth be removed, we place them according to their needs. There are many factors that we, as a department, keep in mind when placing a youth. The youth’s needs and services are our number one priority; the family and their ability to be a part of the rehabilitative process is second, and the community is third. While a youth is pending placement, he/she continues to receive services through our Passport Program. Probation Officers meet with the families monthly throughout the whole process and provide referrals to services for them as well. Lastly, community-based organizations and support services are available to the youth and their family upon the youth’s completion of placement to acclimate back into the community.

The Probation Department is also a part of a tri-county team, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, working together to implement a Children’s Crisis Continuum of Care Pilot Project (CCCPP). The focus of the CCCPP is to create a one-stop shop for youth with complex needs. Many times, these youth are hard to place.

Recommendation R3.2:

By December 31, 2023, San Joaquin County Human Services Agency establish and utilize a multiagency task force to focus on managing the care for At-Risk Youth in the County.

Response to Recommendation R3.2:

Will be implemented by December 31, 2023.

This finding mentioned Probation was in attendance when discussions were held surrounding ways to build interagency cooperation and that we collaborated consistently. The San Joaquin County Probation Department has great working relationships with all agencies listed in this report. Again, we pride ourselves for the relationships we have and continue to collaborate and build connections in the community to provide the best services for the at-risk youth we serve. The Probation Department participates in many multiagency meetings and task forces which focus on managing the care of at-risk youth. Those include:

- Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council
- Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission
- Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Task Force
- Ceasefire Task Force
- Children's Services Coordinating Commission

As a Department, we will continue to engage and support our partners as we serve our at-risk youth.