

Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative JDAI

Begun two decades ago as a pilot project to reduce reliance on local confinement of court-involved youth, the JDAI change model is now operating in nearly 300 counties nationwide, dramatically reducing detention facility populations. With the support of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, juvenile justice leaders in Massachusetts through JDAI seek to:

Reduce detention rates of low-risk youth

- Identify Opportunities to Reduce Lengths of Stay in Detention through Case Processing Reforms
- Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities
- Replicate JDAI with Fidelity at the Local Level



PPAL and Juvenile Justice

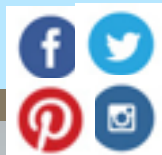
Parent/Professional Advocacy League is a statewide, family-run organization dedicated to improving the well-being of children, youth, young adults and their families through education, advocacy and partnership.

PPAL has the expertise to help families whose youth are justice involved through information, training and one-to-one support. Through strengthening parent skills and knowledge, providing navigation and nurturing family leaders, we are partnering to divert youth back to the community and improve youth and family outcomes.



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Family Voice Matters

The Family Voice Matters project provides support to families whose youth are justice –involved and at risk of being detained. This project builds on the natural strengths of families by providing them with information, skill building and training to support their youth and the needs of their families.

Research shows that family involvement helps reduce recidivism and leads to better outcomes.



In collaboration with the Department of
Youth Services

RV.11/16

Family Voice Matters

The Family Voice Matters project is designed to support families whose youth are justice-involved and at risk of being detained through a variety of strategies and activities. Some of these include:

- Assistance with navigating the probation, juvenile justice and child welfare system and services
- Teaching families skills to access school, health and other services
- Providing families with materials and information about the juvenile justice system
- Providing one-to-one family peer support
- Connecting families with community resources
- Providing training including telling your personal story in order to improve the juvenile justice system



All services are free to families of justice-involved youth or at risk of being detained across Massachusetts.

Involving Families

86% of families of justice-involved youth say they want to be more involved.

Often juvenile justice system staff are frustrated by their limited success in involving families in their work or do not see the benefit in greater family engagement.

Family engagement consists of a specific set of approaches to assist families. Family peer support is essential to help families understand and navigate the system for their justice involved youth.

Barriers to Family Involvement

Parents and youth face extreme hardships before, during and after they are involved in the juvenile justice system:

- Families often feel blamed and confused during the juvenile justice process
- 1 in 5 families reports having to take out loans to pay for court costs
- Distance is a significant impediment to visitation
- Only 32% of families report discussing service plans with juvenile justice providers

Why Family Engagement Is Important

For families:

- Learn better skills to respond to situations involving their youth
- Better understanding of the process and expectations of the juvenile justice system
- Feel valued for sharing important information about their child
- Can be seen as important to better outcomes, not part of the problem

For juvenile justice system:

- Gain important knowledge and insights from families of the youth's strengths and needs
- Partnerships with families increase likelihood of follow through with service plans
- Helps reduce recidivism and promotes positive youth outcomes
- Increases successful transitions to school and community.

