



MICHIGAN CENTER *for* YOUTH JUSTICE



Revisiting the Juvenile Justice Reform Task Force Report

The bipartisan Juvenile Justice Reform Task Force, formed by Governor Whitmer and led by Lt. Governor Gilchrist, released its report on July 22, 2022 with 32 recommendations for improving Michigan's juvenile justice system.

The task force, composed of state and local leaders, court professionals, advocates, and individuals impacted by the justice system, took a comprehensive look at the state's system, including its use of residential placement,

alternatives to detention and residential placement, and expanding re-entry and aftercare, as well as opportunities to reduce racial, ethnic, and geographic disparities.

This year-long effort, supported by [the Council of State Governments Justice Center](#), has culminated in a series of tangible and significant policy recommendations (most were unanimously supported by the task force members) that, if implemented, could prove transformative for Michigan's juvenile justice system. The recommendations include, but are not limited to:

- Increasing the rate of state reimbursement for community-based services.
- Establishing and funding a new Juvenile Justice Services Division within the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) to help coordinate statewide court policies, funding, data collection, and reporting.
- Expanding the Indigent Defense Commission to include oversight and compliance with defense standards in delinquency cases.
- Establishing 13 as the minimum age for court jurisdiction.
- Eliminating all non-restitution fees associated with being in the juvenile justice system.
- Restricting the ability to extend supervision for the sole reason of collecting restitution.
- Requiring the use of a statewide validated screening tool.
- Restricting detention for technical violations of court orders and probation.

MCYJ applauds the work of the Juvenile Justice Reform Task Force and looks forward to working with the youth justice community to make these recommendations a reality in 2023 and beyond. The recommendations from the Juvenile Justice Reform Task Force report will guide the policy priorities that we focus on this year. We are hopeful that we will see positive reform during the upcoming legislative session.

You can view the task force report [here](#).

Let's Talk About The Child Care Fund

Last year, MCYJ worked to move our key policy priorities forward to transform the lives of Michigan children, youth, young adults, and their families. While the *Debt-Free Justice* bill package—that would put to an end the assessment and collection of most juvenile court fines and fees—did not advance in the previous legislative session, we are optimistic and ready for 2023. Through the efforts of the Task Force on Juvenile Justice Reform, ending juvenile fines and fees will accompany five other policy priorities in 2023. To ensure supporters like you stay informed, MCYJ will spotlight a priority in each monthly newsletter.

This month we will focus on one of the recommendations unanimously supported by the Task Force to enhance the Child Care Fund (CCF). The CCF is the primary funding vehicle for juvenile justice in the state. Managed by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), the CCF provides financial reimbursement to counties and tribes for community-based programming for child welfare and juvenile justice youth and placement costs for youth involved in juvenile justice cases. The costs are paid 100% initially by the county/tribe for foster care, institutional care, independent living, and In-Home Care programming and reimbursed by the state at 50% for eligible expenditures.

MCYJ supports the Juvenile Justice Reform Task Force's recommendation to enhance the Child Care Fund from the current reimbursement rate of 50% to 75% for community-based care, including pre-arrest diversion as a reimbursable expense and requiring the use of validated risk assessment tools to enable more objective decision making.

These important policy changes would have a tremendous impact across the state. Enhancing the CCF establishes a minimum framework of juvenile justice best practices statewide. These research-based approaches would allow agencies to better match youth to appropriate supervision and services. The new reimbursement structure would effectively incentivize and support the creation, expansion, and strengthening of community-based services and formal alternatives to detention and incarceration, including diversion, which have been proven to be more cost-effective and yield better outcomes for justice-involved youth and their families.

MCYJ will keep you updated as legislation for the proposed Child Care Fund changes is introduced and offer opportunities for you to support getting this important policy reform to the Governor's desk to be signed into law.

Get To Know MCYJ's Policy Director

MCYJ is happy to spotlight our Policy Director, Jen Peacock, who started with us in September. Jen cares deeply about the health, safety, and well-being of young people. After being away from her home state of Michigan for years, she felt a calling to come back and serve the community. She wanted to shift her career to focus on changing the systems that impact children, youth, and young adults at a state level.

In her free time, Jen enjoys hiking with her rescue dog, Randall, and diving into a good read. If she's out and about, you can find Jen trying to find street art to add to her collection and support local artists.



MCYJ Welcomes A New Board Member

MCYJ is pleased to announce the addition of William "Chuck" Jackson to our Board of Directors. Chuck is a dedicated nonprofit leader with a strong background in the juvenile justice system and a demonstrated capacity to restructure organizations to streamline management and foster growth.

Chuck received a Bachelor of Science degree from Western Michigan University and continued his educational journey at Wayne State University, where he earned his Ph.D. in Sociology. Chuck has previously served as a board member of multiple organizations, including The Senior Alliance and Black United Fund of Michigan. Chuck has also held multiple leadership roles inside Michigan juvenile justice organizations, including at StarrVista (now Insight Youth and Family Connections), Starr Commonwealth, and Community Social Services of Wayne County. Chuck brings this extensive background, as well as his thoughtful approach, to the MCYJ board.



Mapping Transformative Schools: From Punishment to Promise

MCYJ believes that justice-impacted kids deserve the ability to learn in an environment that gives them the resources and support they need to achieve their full potential. This includes a community-based, positive school environment that meets kids where they are, gives them the opportunity to do their best, and forgives them when they make mistakes. MCYJ is proud to support the National Juvenile Justice Network (NJJN) and their latest policy platform, *Mapping Transformative Schools: From Punishment to Promise*, which provides recommended action steps that all individuals can take to modify schools into cultures of opportunity and away from cultures that prioritize surveillance and punishment.

Mapping Transformative Schools includes the stories, ideas, and experiences of young people impacted by school environments that have not served them in a way that has been inclusive in creating a supportive school climate and community. Their experiences, combined with research and policy examples from jurisdictions around the country, create an image of the positive school environment that students deserve. Read NJJN's policy platform [here](#).

Join the Michigan Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee!

Be a part of the change you want to see! The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is seeking young adults (30 years old or younger) to participate in the Michigan Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (MJJC). As members of this committee, parents will share their experiences and provide input regarding juvenile justice (MDHHS, courts, residential) programs, policies, and practice with the goal of improving them.

Who can apply? Adults who have been previously adjudicated within the juvenile justice system. Successful completion of these programs is not required. Committee members will be compensated for their time and participation. Interested parties can email Colin Parks at Parksc@michigan.gov to learn more or request an application.

Please spread the word about this unique opportunity to shape our juvenile justice system!

Youth Justice in the News

- [Michigan Supreme Court picks Clement as Chief Justice for a full term](#)
- [More Resources for Justice-Impacted Foster Youth](#)

- [A Toolkit For Building The Field Of Ethical, Authentic, & Youth-Led Advocacy](#)
- [State working with Michigan providers to help meet behavioral health needs for those in foster care & juvenile justice system](#)
- [Staffing crisis at juvenile justice facilities: low retention rates, overcrowding](#)

Upcoming Events

Responding to Gun Violence and School Shooting Through A Youth Justice Lens

National Juvenile Justice Network

February 9th, 2023; 3-4 p.m. EST. Join the call [here!](#)

Forum on Juvenile Justice Reform

The League of Women Voters of Washtenaw County

February 23rd, 2023; 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. Learn more [here!](#)

Day of Empathy 2023

Safe & Just Michigan

February 23rd, 2023; Central United Methodist Church, Lansing, MI 48933. Register [here!](#)

National Conference of Juvenile Justice

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

March 19-22nd, 2023, Renaissance Dallas Addison Hotel, Addison, TX 75001. Learn more [here!](#)

Coalition for Juvenile Justice 2023 Annual Conference

Coalition for Juvenile Justice

May 24-26th, 2023; Marriott Marquis, Washington D.C. Learn more [here!](#)

Our Vision: a fair and effective justice system for Michigan's children, youth and young adults.

Our Mission: we work to advance equitable youth justice policies and practices that protect young people and help them achieve their full potential.

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