



# ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2020

FAIRFAX COUNTY

JUVENILE & DOMESTIC RELATIONS DISTRICT COURT

COURT SERVICE UNIT, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES



# FAIRFAX COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Similar to agencies and organizations across the nation, FY20 was especially challenging due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To mitigate health risks, the JDRDC-CSU (with guidance from Fairfax County) expanded telework capabilities where staff responsibilities allowed. Leadership also limited contact with clients as needed and sourced solutions to increase virtual meeting capabilities. Throughout the year, the focus remained on serving the community in a safe, productive way.

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THE FAIRFAX COURTHOUSE

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This FY 2020 Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, Court Services Unit (JDRDC-CSU) report provides benchmarks for the status, progress, and potential future directions of the JDRDC-CSU. It also serves as a method to share information with staff, external partners, stakeholders, and the public.



In addition to the operating changes that occurred within the agency, we saw huge impacts in data trends relating to our population. As noted on page 8, there was a 18% decline in complaints between FY19 and FY20. While juvenile crime has been declining steadily over the years, this was a decrease larger than previously seen.

## Safe Community Supervision

The JDRDC-CSU has worked toward the decreased usage of detention for low- to moderate-risk offenders. This is accomplished via detention alternatives. Prior to FY20, Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) placements were decreasing, and Supervised Release Services (SRS) placements were increasing. When the pandemic hit, JDC limited intakes, Shelter Care (SC)

closed, and court hearings were significantly delayed. SRS continued to maintain high caseloads due in part to these factors. While overall SRS placements decreased significantly between FY19 and FY20, average length of stay (LOS) was largely elevated during April and May due to court delays. It should be noted that despite operating above capacity, SRS maintained successful reoffending rates. Just 14% of youth under SRS supervision during FY20 picked up one or more new charges while in the community (see [page 31](#) for more).

## Agency Initiatives

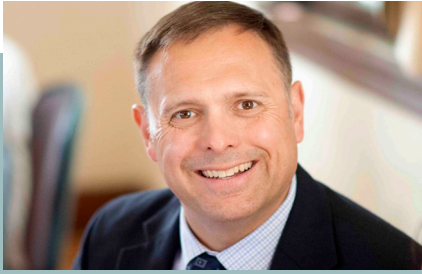
FY20 continued the agency's focus on several initiatives including reducing racial and ethnic disparities, family engagement, and trauma-informed care. Data indicates that disparities for youth of color increase as youth journey further into the system. In FY20, youth of color represent 92% of detention placements compared to 87% of detention alternative

placements and 79% of intake complaints. Agency efforts continue to monitor data and work to decrease disparities for youth of color.

JDRDC-CSU is committed to engaging families to provide services and promote success for all clients. Survey data over the last three years shows that 97-100% of families feel engaged with providers in making decisions about their child's services. In addition, 96% of families in FY20 indicated that program staff worked with them during treatment/services. Along with Family Engagement, JDRDC-CSU strives to meet the needs of clients and families through trauma-informed practices. In FY20, 97% of youth reported feeling physically and emotionally safe while participating in services. Finally, FY20 was the first full year of survey data regarding perceived racial/ethnic disparities. Ninety-five percent of clients who responded to feedback surveys agreed that staff treated them/their child in a fair and unbiased manner.

**97%** OF YOUTH REPORTED FEELING PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY SAFE WHILE PARTICIPATING IN SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT  
FY 2020



Matt Thompson  
Deputy Director, Probation



Ivy Tillman  
Deputy Director, Residential



Johanna Balascio  
Deputy Director, Operations

The JDRDC Research & Development Unit presented at the ACJS conference in Baltimore, Maryland.

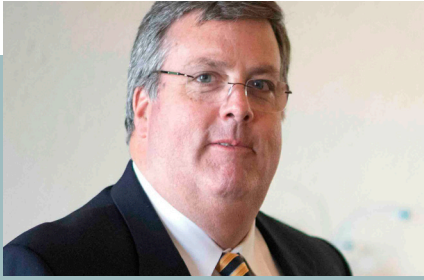


Special appreciation for the writing and production of this report is extended to the court's Research and Development unit; led by Dr. Courtney Porter (to r) and staffed by research analysts Ana Ealley (now with Family Services), Kate Mackey, and Tina Casper. This document and the information contained within the report would not have been possible without their dedication and commitment to excellence.



HISTORIC COURTHOUSE, FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA

THE COURT AND ITS SERVICES ARE BASED ON ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH SERVICE DELIVERY, REHABILITATION, AND THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF VICTIMS.



Robert A. Bermingham, Jr.  
Court Service Unit Director

# FROM THE CSU DIRECTOR

## INTRODUCTION

The JDRDC-CSU has a long history of collecting and sharing valuable data with staff, stakeholders, and the community. The JDRDC-CSU prides itself on being a data-driven and data-supported organization using best- and evidence-based practices. Through continuous evolution, the JDRDC-CSU is improving both short- and long-term outcomes for the residents we serve. Today, more than ever before, data and statistics play a prominent role in the delivery of services, staffing, programming, and budgeting.

The content of the FY '20 Annual Report continues our desire to highlight dynamic data and outcomes and focus less on static data and outputs. Contained within this report, the reader will find information specific to strategic planning and agency initiatives aimed at reducing systemic racial and ethnic disparities, engaging

On behalf of each staff member of the Fairfax County Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court Service Unit (JDRDC-CSU), I proudly present the Fiscal Year '20 Annual Report.

families, and understanding the impact of trauma on our clientele. Additionally, the reader will gain insight on several highlighted programs including our expanded diversion efforts, the Domestic Relations Unit, and our Supervised Visitation and Exchange Program.

Fairfax County's Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court is statute driven; thus, the court's authority, purpose, and intent are all derived directly from the Code of Virginia. The court and its provided services are based on public safety, accountability through service delivery, rehabilitation, and the protection of the rights of victims. Within this annual report, information is presented on how the court addresses each of those statutes and the outcomes achieved.

The court and its associated services continue to evolve alongside the needs of our ever-changing community in which we serve. As public servants, the court remains committed to its vision of being national leaders in merging law, science, and evidence-based practices for decision-making and service delivery. The effectiveness and positive outcomes achieved to date are attributed to the quality of dedicated judges, clerks, and direct service staff. All who must balance changing community needs, evolving justice system practices, systemic disparities, and the protection of the community while providing for the protection and well-being of the youths and families we serve.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert A. Bermingham, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert A. Bermingham, Jr.  
Court Services Unit Director, Fairfax County, JDRDC

QUALITY EMPLOYEES FACILITATE  
POSITIVE OUTCOMES

# AGENCY VALUES, MISSION & VISION

In 2014, the JDRDC-CSU implemented their Strategic Plan with a goal to guide the agency over the next five years. JDRDC-CSU administration, staff, and partners were instrumental in the development and subsequent implementation of the plan.

Over the last six years, the JDRDC-CSU has worked hard to achieve the goals put forth in 2014. Efforts around racial and ethnic disparities, family engagement, trauma-informed care, and the use of evidenced-based practices are just some of the agency initiatives identified in the plan and highlighted further in this report. Additional efforts regarding employee engagement, communication, and collaborative partnerships continue to evolve through the use of staff engagement surveys, video communication, and staff advisory groups. Fiscal year 2020 brought unique challenges in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, the JDRDC-CSU remained committed to agency's vision, mission, and core values.

## MISSION

The JDRDC Court Service Unit provides efficient, effective, and equitable probation and residential services. We promote positive behavior change and the reduction of illegal conduct for children and adults who come within the court's authority. We strive to do this within a framework of accountability, consistent with the well-being of the client, the family, and the protection of the community.

## VISION

As public servants, lead the nation in delivering evidence-based, sustainable and measurable services to clients in partnerships with our community.

## CORE AGENCY VALUES



(l to r) CSU Director, Bob Bermingham, and Deputy Directors, Lori Winter (retired), Ivy Tillman, and Matt Thompson enjoy a staff retreat with CSU Administration that included staff recognition and team building activities.



# AGENCY INITIATIVES

As the agency evolves, some items remain steady. The JDRDC-CSU has four key initiatives that represent core pillars for all agency activities and future goals:

**1 EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICES**

Provide targeted interventions for at-risk youth, adults, and families through the use of empirically supported programs, services, and practices that reliably produce favorable outcomes and reduce recidivism.

**2 REDUCTION OF RED**

Work to reduce disproportionate minority contact (DMC) at JDRDC-CSU decision points and increase equitable outcomes.

**3 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

Support, engage, and empower individuals and families throughout their involvement with the court system.

**4 TRAUMA INFORMED CARE**

Educate all staff about the impact of trauma, the importance of self-care and integrate that knowledge into every policy, procedure, and practice.

While not an initiative in the same sense as those above, the Language Access Program (LAP) is a crucial part of providing services to court personnel and Limited-English Proficient (LEP) clients. Created in 1994, the program serves to meet the growing needs of the LEP community. Eventually the program evolved into two different divisions: Volunteer Interpretation Program (VIP) and vendor management. VIP is the largest provider of JDRDC interpretation services, handling 5,954 requests in FY20. These requests encompassed over 4,000 hours of service.

# DATA DRIVEN AGENCY

As public servants and key decision makers, it is imperative to understand how program and policy choices impact both clients and the community, even beyond their involvement with the court and JDRDC-CSU.

As such, the JDRDC-CSU relies heavily on research and evidence-based practices to guide the implementation of policies and practice.

Key empirical findings over the years within the juvenile justice system establish that:

1. Most delinquency is self-correcting with age in that delinquency increases between late childhood to middle adolescence, but decreases sharply during early adulthood (Loeber, Farrington, Howell, and Hoeve, 2012),
2. As many youth naturally desist from crime, systems should not treat all cases in the same manner, and,
3. When assessed, both risk and protective factors can be used to determine the likelihood of a youth reoffending/becoming a more serious offender (Howell, Lipsey, & Wilson, 2014).

On the adult side, research has similarly shown us that targeting high-risk offenders and managing caseload sizes results in improved outcomes (Jalbert et al., 2011).

This evidence provides a guide for the JDRDC-CSU (alongside systems across the nation) to support the use of data and research to assist in the ongoing efforts of an evidence-based agency. It was national and local research that led to the creation of a Family Engagement Team, Racial and Equity Disparities Team, and a Trauma-Informed Care Team to further establish best practices and better meet the needs our clients. Furthermore, via quarterly monitoring of data, senior management remains up to date on changing trends and needs. This allows decisions to be made regarding workload and any redirection of services that may be needed.







## THE AGENCY ALSO ESTABLISHED THE IMPORTANCE OF STRUCTURED DECISION-MAKING TOOLS

This ensures cases are handled in a consistent, evidenced-based way, minimizing subjectivity and prejudice. Tools currently in use within the agency include:

- YASI - Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument
- EPICS - Effective Practices in Community Supervision
- MI - Motivational Interviewing
- STRESS - Structured Trauma Related Experiences and Symptoms Screener
- GAIN-SS - Global Appraisal of Individual Needs - Short Screener
- MAYSI-2, OST - Offender Screening Tool
- MOST - Modified Offender Screening Tool
- FAM-III - Family Assessment Measure III
- Biopsychosocial Assessment
- SASSI-A2 - Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory
- Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire
- Columbia Screening for Suicidality
- Skillstreaming and more

# TRENDS AT A GLANCE

The JDRDC-CSU serves Fairfax County, the towns of Herndon and Vienna, and the City of Fairfax. Clients coming through our doors tend to represent a much smaller portion of the population. To illustrate larger trends, key metrics are presented below.

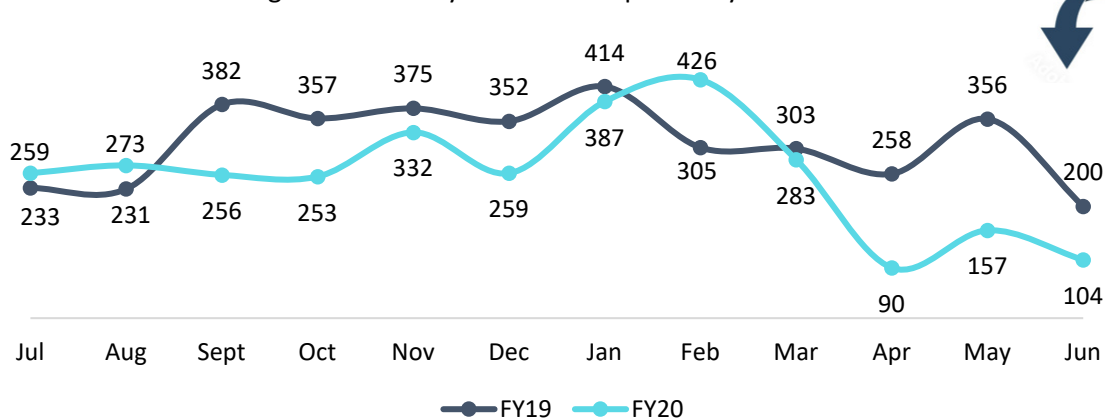
When looking at data trends, FY20 was uniquely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As shown in Table 1, juvenile complaints decreased 18% between FY19 and FY20. While juvenile crime has been declining, this is the largest one-year decline seen over the last few years. When breaking out FY19 and FY20 by month, it's clear that COVID-19 drastically

decreased the number of juvenile complaints received by the JDRDC-CSU. Figure 1 compares FY20 to FY19 and illustrates the decline seen as COVID-19 began. Between February and April of 2020, complaint numbers decreased over 300%. Complaints increased slightly in May and June, but both months were still around 50% lower than May and June of 2019.

Table 1: Five Year Data Trends

Fiscal Year	Juvenile Complaints		New Juvenile Probation Supervision Placements		Secure Detention Placements		Domestic Relations Complaints		Adult Complaints (Calendar Year)		Adults Under Probation Supervision as of the Last Day of Fiscal Year	
	N	% ±	N	% ±	N	% ±	N	% ±	N	% ±	N	% ±
2016	3950	-11%	432	-24%	504	-12%	9727	3%	13320	1%	710	5%
2017	3767	-5%	381	-12%	533	6%	8795	-10%	12822	-4%	627	-12%
2018	3395	-10%	395	4%	505	-5%	8929	2%	13092	2%	569	-9%
2019	3766	11%	409	4%	494	-2%	8292	-7%	14057	7%	488	-14%
2020	3079	-18%	286	-30%	452	-9%	6153	-26%	10017	-29%	332	-32%
% ± 15 to 20		-22%		-34%		-10%		-37%		-25%		-53%

Figure 1: Monthly Juvenile Complaints by Fiscal Year

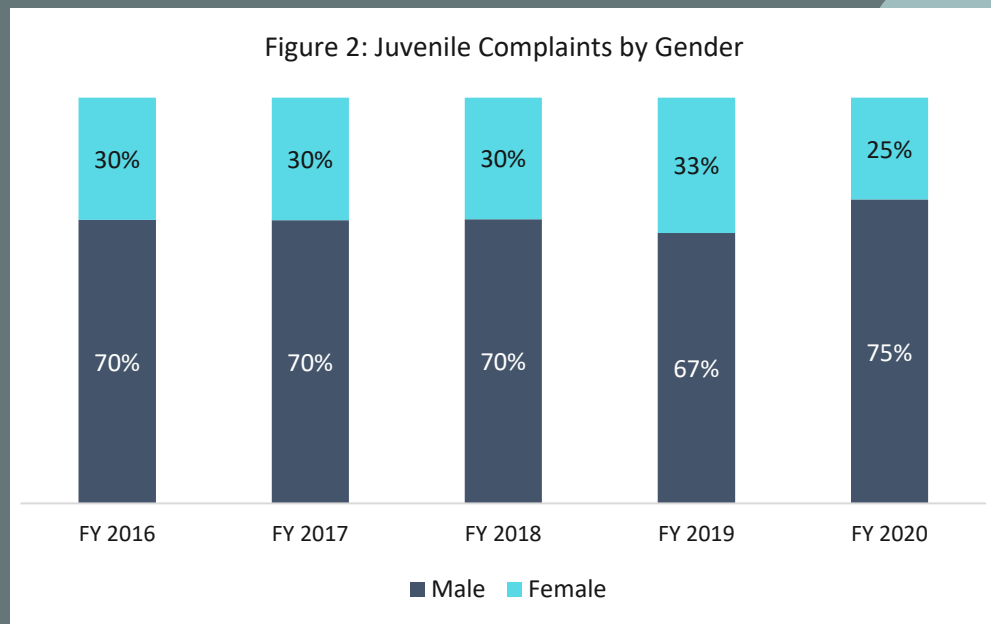


When taking a closer look at the type of juvenile complaints received over the years, Table 2 shows that Class 1 Misdemeanors consistently are the most prevalent. Remaining categories have also

remained stable, for example, felony complaints have hovered between 20-24% over the last five years.

	FY2016		FY 2017		FY 2018		FY 2019		FY 2020	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Felony	884	22%	889	24%	790	23%	869	23%	602	20%
Class 1 Misd.	1428	36%	1493	40%	1273	37%	1492	40%	1220	40%
Class2-4 Misd.	535	14%	447	12%	458	13%	394	10%	413	13%
CHINS/CHINSup	247	6%	193	5%	261	8%	187	5%	180	6%
VOPs	297	8%	195	5%	178	5%	124	3%	169	5%
Technical Violations	129	3%	112	3%	97	3%	61	2%	67	2%
Other	430	11%	438	12%	338	10%	639	17%	428	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3950</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3767</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3395</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3766</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3079</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 2 depicts gender breakdown for complaints received over the last five years. Trends have historically hovered around 70% male versus 30% female. FY20 saw slight changes, with males making up 75% of complaints and females accounting for 25%.



As shown in Table 1 (at left), Domestic Relations saw a significant decrease in complaints between FY19 and FY20. While COVID-19 significantly interrupted this unit’s functioning, staff sought out creative solutions to continue serving the community. See [page 39](#) for in-depth data on Domestic Relations.

# EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICES

To make informed decisions, Fairfax County's JDRDC-CSU works to utilize evidence-based, evidence-informed and/or promising practices at all major decision points within the juvenile justice system.

Evidence-based practice refers to applying the best available research results when making decisions that affect clients. Research shows that specific programs and/or interventions reliably decrease recidivism when applied to certain groups of offenders.

To achieve this, the agency relies on professional experience, empirical evidence, and evidenced-based tools like those mentioned on [page 5](#), including the YASI, the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument, which is built upon the RNR principles.

## RISK

Treatment intensity should match the risk level of an offender. This means high-risk offenders should receive more services than low-risk offenders.

## NEED

Probation officers and other correctional staff should target criminogenic needs. These include family, peers, alcohol and drugs, etc.

## RESPONSIVITY

It is critical to provide cognitive behavioral treatment to offenders in line with their specific learning styles, abilities, and strengths.

The YASI is comprised of ten domain areas (see Figure 3 at right) and is designed to assess a youth's static risk factors (historical characteristics that cannot be changed), dynamic risk factors (needs-changeable characteristics or situations), and protective factors (strengths that provide resilience and preventative benefits); three well-

established components that contribute to overall outcomes. Through YASI assessments, professionals can identify areas of most need, which in turn, informs case planning. By focusing services on youth with higher risk levels, they are able to receive tailored and unique services at a higher frequency than youth identified as low risk.

**IN 2008, USAGE OF THE YASI BEGAN IN SELECT PILOT LOCATIONS (DJJ,2008). BY JULY 2010, YASI USAGE WAS COMPLETE STATEWIDE (DJJ, 2011). ALONG WITH THE STATE, THE FAIRFAX COUNTY JDRDC-CSU HAS ADOPTED THE YASI MODEL IN FULL.**



With support for a bi-furcated system from the Judiciary, Commonwealth Attorney, Public Defender, and other stakeholders, the JDRDC-CSU created an Assessment Unit, which is inline with the RNR principle. The Assessment Unit (ASU) receives all unassigned cases (youth adjudicated delinquent, but not currently on probation) and pre-adjudicatory cases placed at the Juvenile Detention Center or Shelter Care for criminal petitions. The unit utilizes the YASI to assess areas of needs, existing protective factors, and risk to reoffend in order to make informed, data-driven recommendations to the court.



**THE ASU SAW SLIGHTLY LOWER REFERRALS DURING FY20 THAN IN FY19. THIS IS IN LINE WITH OTHER AGENCY DECREASES BECAUSE OF COVID-19.**

Table 3: ASU Referrals by Fiscal Year

	FY19	FY20
Referrals	291	234

In addition to the YASI being utilized for pre-dispositional reports, every youth under supervision with the JDRDC-CSU is reassessed every three months. When a youth completes proation supervision (successfully or unsuccessfully), they receive one final closure YASI assessment. During FY20, there were 150 closure YASI assessments completed. To assess changes in risk and protective factors, youth's

closure YASIs were compared to their most recent initial assessment (if a full screen initial was unavailable, their next reassessment was used) to measure change during probation. The desire is to see lower levels of dynamic risk and higher levels of dynamic protective factors. Dynamic risk and protective factors refers to elements youth can change such as community and peers, family, employment, education, etc.

# 75%

**OF YOUTH SHOWED DECREASES IN THEIR RAW DYNAMIC RISK SCORE.**

Figure 3 also shows that three percent had scores that remained stable while just 21% had higher raw dynamic risk scores after supervision. Additionally, 67% of youth showed increases in their dynamic protective scores.

Time varied between assessments in the analysis above. Table 4, right, provides further time details.

While many youth decreased their dynamic risk scores, areas of need remain for youth leaving supervision. Table 5 highlights areas of need by risk level.

Figure 3: Changes in Dynamic Risk and Dynamic Protective YASI Scores

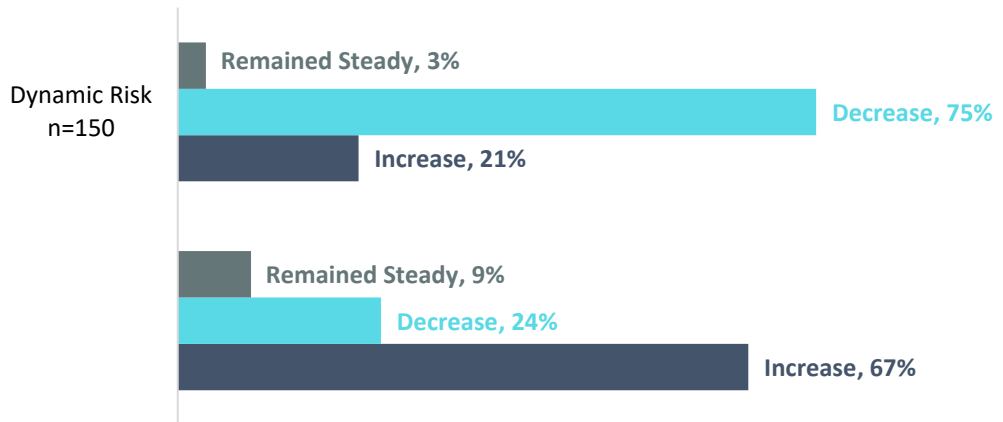


Table 4: Average Number of Days Between Initial and Closure YASIs

	Dynamic Protective n=150	Dynamic Risk n=150
Increase	590.4	706.5
Decrease	625.0	581.9
Remained Steady	548.4	178.2

Table 5: Areas of Need by Dynamic Risk Level

	N	Low	Moderate	High
Family History	130	36%	55%	9%
School	97	28%	63%	9%
Community/Peers	122	38%	43%	19%
Alcohol/Drugs	90	32%	33%	34%
Aggression/Violence	102	34%	50%	16%
Attitudes	144	35%	52%	13%
Skills	141	28%	47%	25%
Employment/Free Time	117	85%	13%	2%

# REDUCTION OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES

Similar to the adult system, racial and ethnic disparities are found in juvenile arrests, secure detention placements, petitions filed, and probation placements (OJJDP, 2019). Racial and ethnic disparities have been a JDRDC-CSU priority for over two decades.

The findings from two reports conducted in 2012 highlighted areas to address. A statewide assessment of disproportionate minority contact (DMC) found that the intake process reduced the likelihood of Black youth being diverted and increased petition likelihood for Hispanic youth. Additionally, it was found that Black and Hispanic youth were also 50% more likely to be detained while waiting for a hearing. Similar results

highlighted during an institutional analysis (CSSP, 2012) showed that needs were not sufficiently met for Black and Hispanic youth. Following these findings, the JDRDC-CSU formed an internal Racial and Ethnic Disparity (RED) team to lead efforts within the agency. Please refer to the [RED Progress Update](#) for a comprehensive timeline of efforts around racial and ethnic disparities.

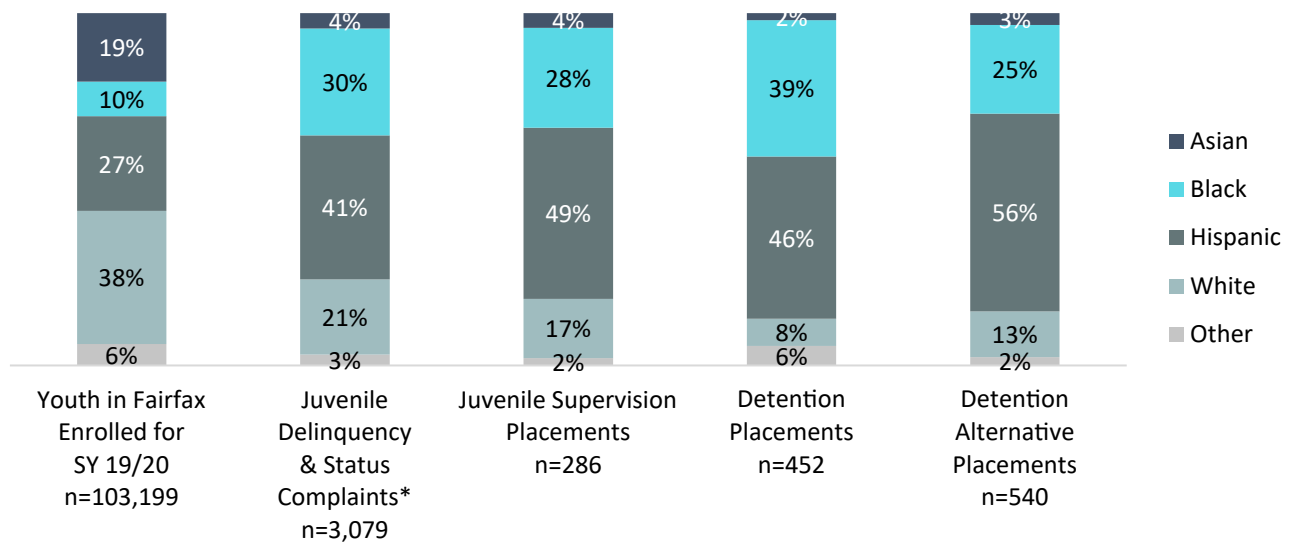
Following these initial reports, internal research efforts found a large number of youth placed on probation through the plea bargain process were youth of color who were later found to be low-risk to reoffend. This, of course, is detrimental, as research shows that low-risk youth should have minimal involvement with the formal court system, and having these youth penetrate the system can actually increase their risk

to reoffend (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005). Many of these youth were placed on a standard one-year probation with limited input from JDRDC-CSU workers or the use of an objective evaluation tool. This discovery and subsequent conversation led to the Pre-Dispositional Assessment Program pilot and eventually the creation of the Assessment Unit, one of the larger initiatives/outcomes from the RED team directly impacting youth.

## WHEN ADDRESSING RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES, IT'S IMPORTANT TO VIEW HISTORICAL TRENDS.

Figure 4 highlights FY20 racial/ethnic breakdowns in key system decision points. As shown, disparities persist. While Black youth make up about 10% of the Fairfax youth enrolled in grades 6-12, they make up 28% of new supervision placements and 39% of secure detention placements. Similar concerns exist for Hispanic youth, who make up around 27% of 6th-12th graders in Fairfax. As depicted, they make up 49% of new supervision placements and 46% of secure detention placements.

Figure 4: Race/Ethnicity Across JDRDC-CSU Decision Points

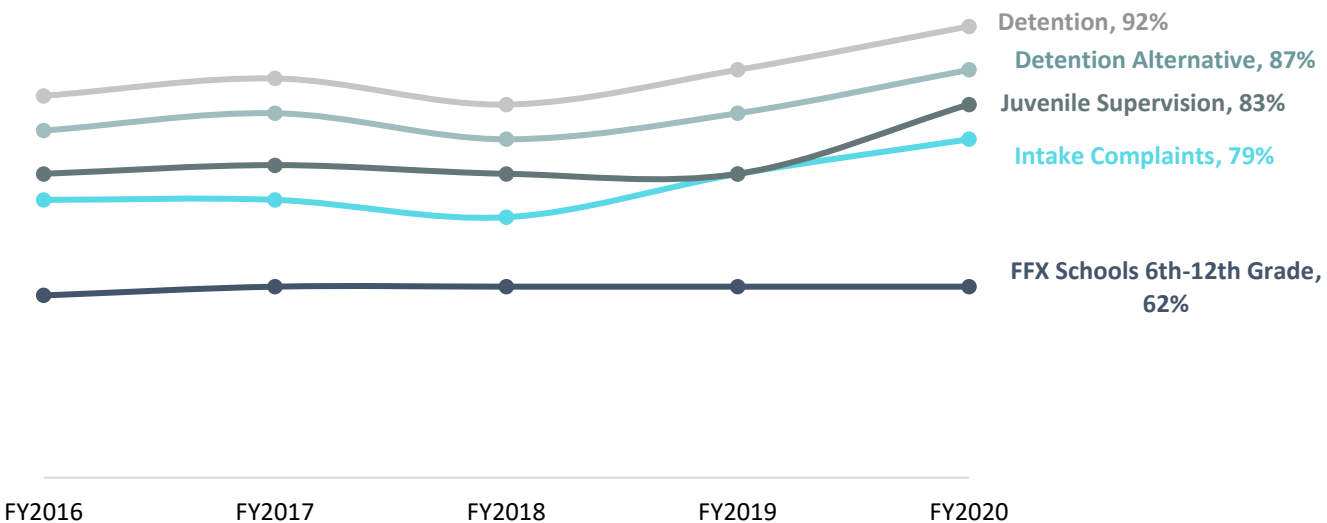


When addressing RED, it's important to view historical trends. While, initially, most attention focused on the disparities of Black youth compared to White youth, recent data from Fairfax follows changing national trends, pointing to increased disparities for Hispanic youth. Figure 5 shows five-year trends for youth of color at each decision point compared to youth of color enrolled in 6th to 12th grade within Fairfax County Public Schools.

Proportions for youth of color are higher for each decision point compared to the school population. In addition, the proportions/disparities increase as youth journey further into the system. In Fiscal Year 2020, youth of color represent 92% of detention placements compared to 87% of detention alternative placements, 83% of juvenile supervision placements, and 79% of intake complaints.



Figure 5: Percentage of Youth of Color at Decision Points by Fiscal Year



The RED team worked with Research and Development to incorporate an agency wide question on all client feedback surveys. FY20 was the first full year of having this data.

The JDRDC-CSU’s 2021 equity Impact Plan shifts focus to three goals; while also sustaining efforts to meet previous goals (i.e., equity training for staff).

Table 6: Racial/Ethnic Disparities Client Feedback Question

**FY20**  
**95%** I FEEL STAFF TREATED ME/ MY CHILD IN A FAIR AND UNBIASED MANNER.



**GOAL 1**

To research and share available resources to the marginalized communities we serve.



**GOAL 2**

To ensure the JDRDC workforce reflects the population we serve.



**GOAL 3**

To apply an equity lens to both new and existing JDRDC policies, practices, and programming.

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

One challenge facing juvenile justice professionals is how to engage the family in a positive manner.

Court-involved youth are more likely to achieve success when their family members are involved in the process (Garfinkel, 2019).

**Further research shows that family engagement also improves service planning and maintains public safety (Shanahan & diZerega, 2016).**

Each unit and program within the JDRDC-CSU provides client feedback surveys to all clients and their family/guardians (where applicable). Questions pertaining to family engagement were added in 2016 to monitor how clients and their families are feeling. Responses shown in Table 7 (right) encompass surveys collected from the Assessment Unit, Family Counseling, Diversion, Stepping Stones, Foundations, Intensive Supervision Program, Juvenile Detention Center, Juvenile Probation, Shelter Care, Supervised Released Services, Supervised Visitation and Exchange, and Victim Services.

The Family Engagement Team offers regular training to all staff (current and incoming) and works with staff to bring any ideas to life that focus on engaging and empowering families.



JUVENILE JUSTICE PROFESSIONALS STRIVE TO WORK WITH BOTH PARENTS AND GUARDIANS IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY YOUTHS' AND FAMILIES' STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES THROUGHOUT SUPERVISION.

**Table 7: Family Engagment Client Feedback Questions**

	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020
At (program), the staff was willing to work with me/my child (rather than doing things for me/my child or to me/my child	96%	99%	96%	96%
Staff here really let me know that they value me/my child as a person	96%	96%	96%	96%
When decisions about my/my child's services or treatment were made, I felt like I was a partner with staff and that they really listened to what I wanted to accomplish	98%	100%	98%	97%
Staff provided me with a clear explanation of program rules/requirements/expectations (if applicable)	97%	95%	95%	96%
When I interacted with staff, they were professional, polite, and friendly	98%	98%	98%	98%
Staff provided me with contact information so that I knew who to contact if I had questions or concerns	93%	93%	96%	95%
Staff explained to me what my responsibilities would be	92%	95%	95%	97%
Staff provided me with written information about the program	80%	89%	90%	92%

# TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

It is well established that youth involved with the juvenile justice system are more likely to have experienced trauma than their peers who never come into contact with the system (Abram et al., 2013).

To appropriately respond and assist these youth, the JDRDC-CSU focuses on trauma-informed practices to meet client and family needs. The Trauma Team formed in 2012 and works to identify youth who may have experienced trauma and need services.

Similar to the Family Engagement Team, the Trauma Team helped create or identify questions on client feedback surveys to gauge how clients

and their families feel as they navigate the court process. Below are results from surveys collected from the Assessment Unit, Stepping Stones, Family Counseling, Foundations, Intensive Supervision Program, Juvenile Detention Center, Shelter Care, Supervised Visitation Services, and Victim Services.

As shown below, both clients and their family members report feeling safe and valued.

**Table 8: Trauma Informed Care Client Feedback Questions**

	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020
When I was in the program, I felt physically and emotionally safe	96%	95%	94%	97%
When I interacted with staff, they were professional, polite and friendly	96%	94%	98%	98%
(Program) staff recognizes that I have strengths and skills as well as challenges and difficulties	96%	95%	94%	97%
I felt safe talking with staff about difficult or frightening experiences	95%	91%	94%	94%
Staff here really let me know that they value me/my child as a person	96%	96%	96%	96%

**BOTH CLIENTS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS  
REPORT FEELING SAFE AND VALUED.**



An Organizational Assessment also falls under the Trauma Team's mission. Working alongside the Research Team, the Trauma Team administers a survey assessing the use of trauma-informed spaces, self-care, and secondary trauma awareness every other year.

Results from the 2020 survey are included in Table 8 at left and show improvements across all domains from the 2017 and 2018 surveys. The team also established a group of Trauma Champions who are available as needed to provide additional resources and support, including training and consultations.

# JDRDC-CSU RESPONSIBILITIES

Virginia statutes drive the activities, services, and responsibilities of Fairfax County's Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, Court Service Unit.

The JDRDC-CSU takes its authority, purpose, and intent directly from the Code of Virginia. The four key areas are summarized below.

In the following pages, you will learn additional details surrounding how the court meets these expectations.



## ACCOUNTABILITY

- Holding youth and adults accountable for their actions is a crucial element of the agency's work and mission
- The agency holds clients accountable through community supervision, victim impact education, restitution, and community service



## REHABILITATION

- The agency aims to rehabilitate offenders whenever possible, without impacting public safety.
- Achieved through therapeutic residential placements, specialized program/service referrals, and multiple evidenced-based interventions.



## PUBLIC SAFETY

- Keeping the community safe is paramount
- Via evidenced-based tools, special care is taken when deciding whether or not to detain a youth or adult



## VICTIM RIGHTS

- The agency is committed to serving all victims of juvenile crime
- A dedicated unit provides information, support, and advocacy to all victims while they await future court hearings

**PART OF THE AGENCY'S CORE MISSION IS THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF BOTH YOUTH AND ADULT CLIENTS.**

# ACCOUNTABILITY

**HOLDING CLIENTS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS TAKES MANY FORMS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:**

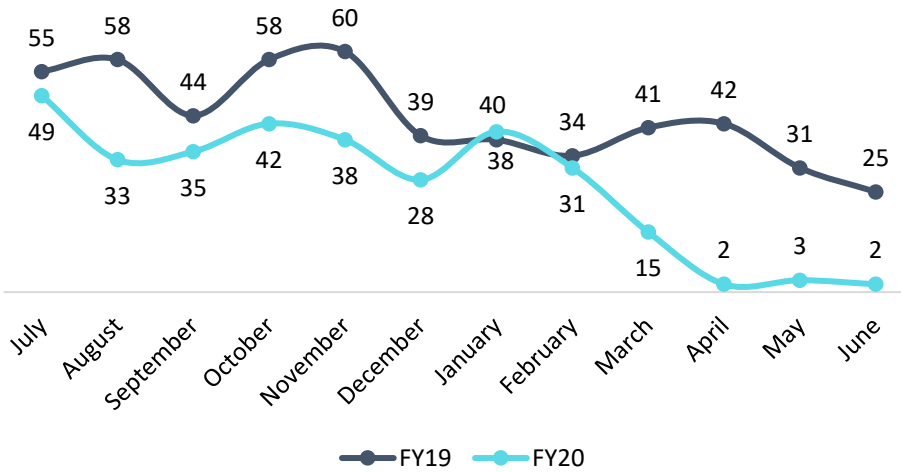
1. Community Service
2. Community Supervision
3. Restitution
4. Classes focused on Victim Education, Anger Management, and Substance Abuse

JDRDC-CSU staff also work closely with clients to monitor and aid compliance with court orders. These elements allow clients to be held accountable while also addressing any areas of need such as mental health concerns, school attendance, peer groups, etc.

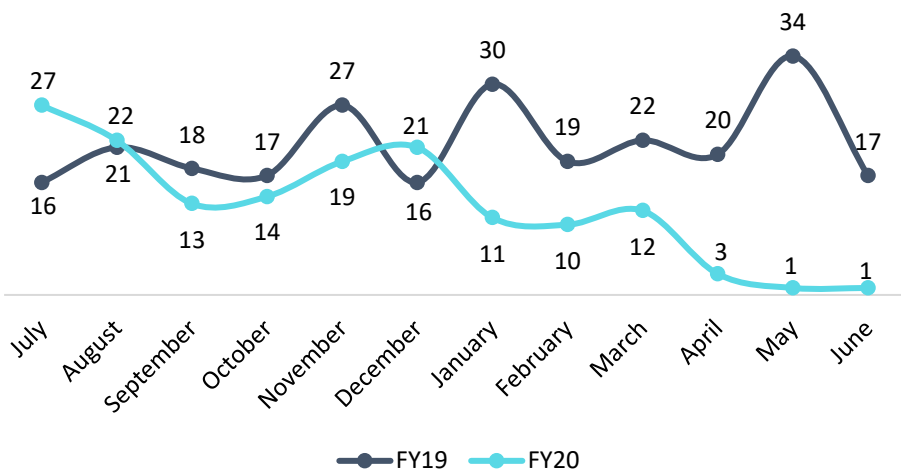
The second half of FY20 brought unique challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with the significant drop in juvenile and domestic relation complaints, monthly new supervision placements for both juveniles and adults started to decrease in

late March/early April. For example, April 2020 had 95% less new adult probation placements and 60% fewer juvenile probation placements than 2019. Monthly trend data is shown below.

**Figure 6: Adult Supervision Placements by Fiscal Year**



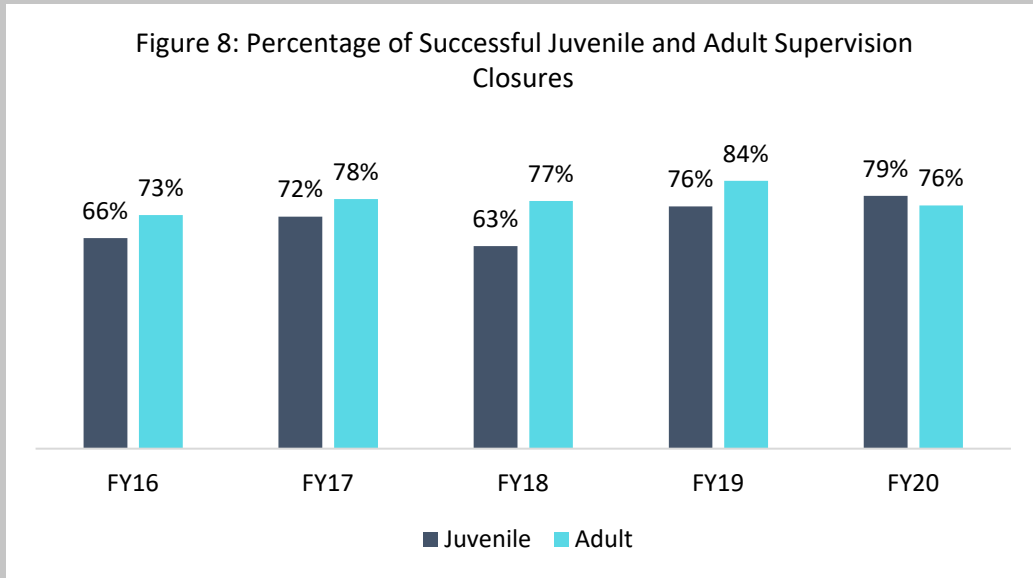
**Figure 7: Juvenile Supervision Placements by Fiscal Year**



To continue serving clients and the community in a safe manner, the JDRDC-CSU altered how certain services were provided. Some examples included the increased usage of virtual supervision calls in lieu of face-to-face contact and remote court hearings.

Despite these challenges, most clients completed supervision successfully. To successfully complete probation, clients must meet all court-ordered obligations and demonstrate positive behavior at the end of their probation term.

From last year, FY20 success rates increased slightly for juvenile clients, but decreased for adult clients. FY20 represents the first time in over five years where juvenile probation clients had a higher successful completion rate than adults.

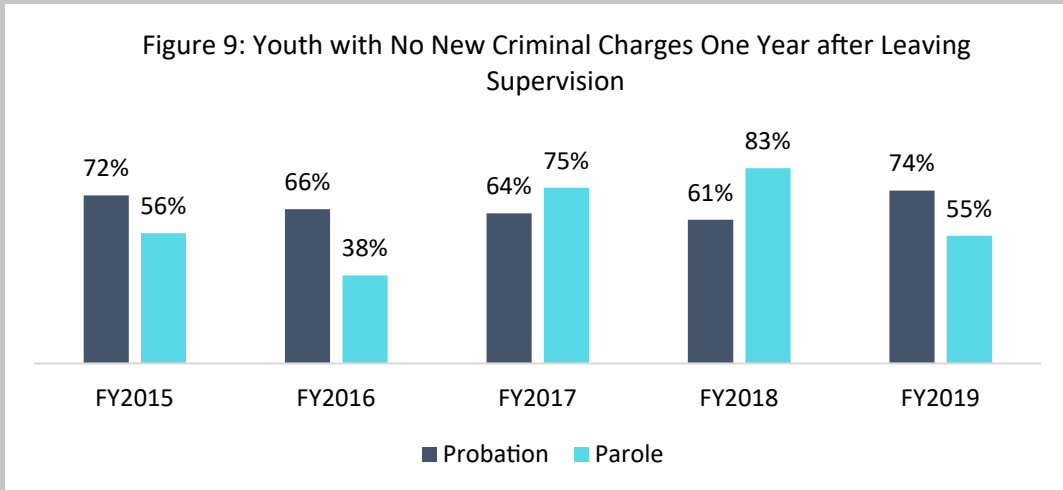


At the close of juvenile supervision cases, additional information is collected to measure school, employment, and substance use/abuse status for each client. Shown below, the percentage of youth attending school or graduating dipped slightly from the last few years. Similar numbers of youth were employed when supervision ended and encouragingly, 73% reported no substance use/abuse.

**73%**  
REPORTED NO  
SUBSTANCE USE

**Table 9: Juvenile Probation Outcomes by Year**

	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020
<b>Attending School or Graduated</b>	78%	81%	83%	81%	78%
<b>Employed</b>	60%	63%	69%	60%	59%
<b>No Substance Use</b>	66%	69%	62%	69%	73%



Recidivism, defined as no new criminal charges one year after leaving supervision, is a key outcome measure for supervision clients.



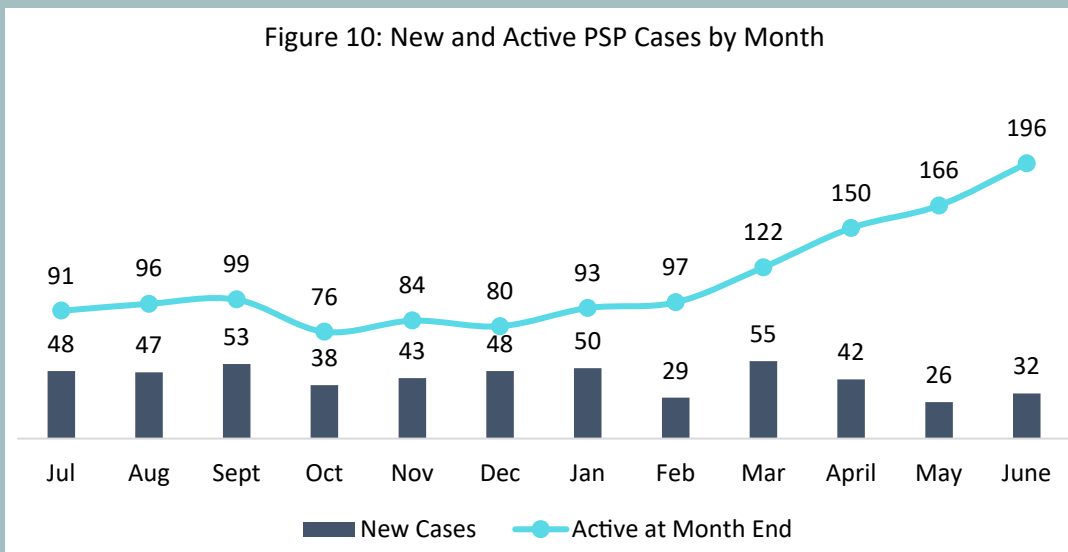
**TO ACCOMMODATE CHANGING WORKLOAD NEEDS  
STAFF HAVE BEEN TEMPORARILY ASSIGNED TO  
ASSIST WITH COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS.**

Like juvenile clients, adult probation clients are often referred to services designed to meet individualized needs, identified by the Offender Status Tool (OST). Clients may also be court-ordered to complete certain classes or services based on charges or history with the court. Overwhelmingly, adults referred to services while under court supervision complete them successfully.

	<b>FY2016</b>	<b>FY2017</b>	<b>FY2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>
<b>Domestic Violence Intervention Program</b>	95%	95%	95%	99%	92%
<b>Anger Management Course</b>	100%	98%	95%	100%	92%
<b>Substance Abuse Treatment</b>	93%	87%	94%	94%	96%
<b>Mental Health Services</b>	90%	86%	91%	92%	88%
<b>Parenting Education</b>	100%	88%	95%	94%	100%

In addition, to post-dispositional supervision, the Community Corrections unit also provides pre-trial services. The Pre-Trial Supervision program allows for adults who are awaiting trial to be safely supervised within the community. Program staff typically review criminal history records, interview defendants after arrest

and work to verify information collected from references, family members, employees, and others. Staff members work to create reports to assist the Judiciary in making informed decisions regarding the defendant’s risk to public safety, the victim(s), and bond recommendations.



With COVID-19 related changes such as delayed and limited court hearings, the Pre-Trial Supervision Program saw significant impacts on its population. As shown below, while new cases dropped slightly in the later half of FY20, the program’s active population began to steadily increase after March.

**61%** ACTIVE POPULATION INCREASE BETWEEN MARCH AND JUNE 2020

**115%** HIGHER ACTIVE CASELOAD IN JUNE THAN JULY

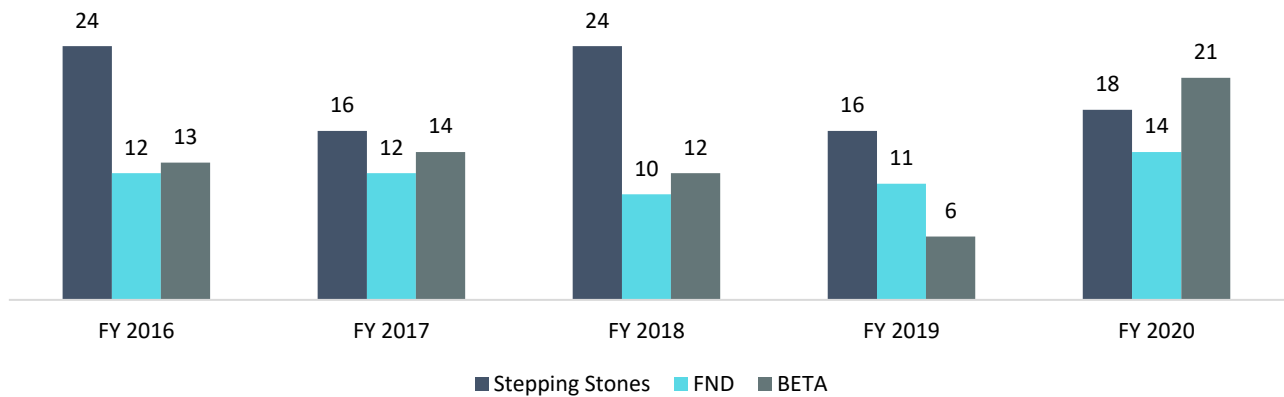
## REHABILITATION

### REHABILITATION IS PART OF EVERY PROGRAM WITHIN THE JDRDC-CSU

Three residential facilities currently exist within the agency. Staff at Stepping Stones, Foundations, and BETA work with both clients and their families to develop service plans and facilitate treatment by identifying strengths and areas of need. Due to the nature of these programs and their capacity

limitations, populations tend to remain low. As shown below, despite challenges associated with COVID-19 during the last 4-5 months of the fiscal year, each program had more placements than the year prior.

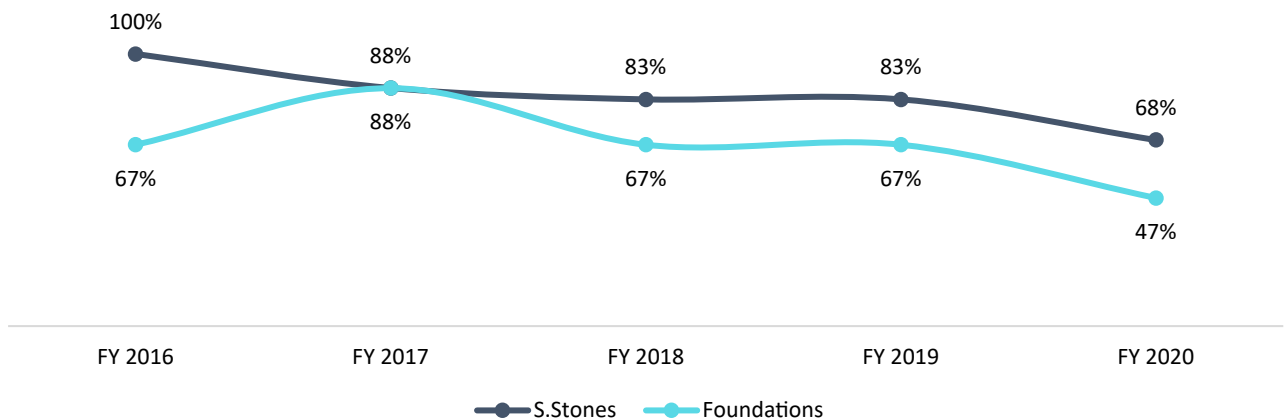
Figure 11: Program Placements by Year



Shown below in Figure 12, 68% of Stepping Stones clients and 47% of Foundations clients successfully completed in FY20. Both programs saw sizable

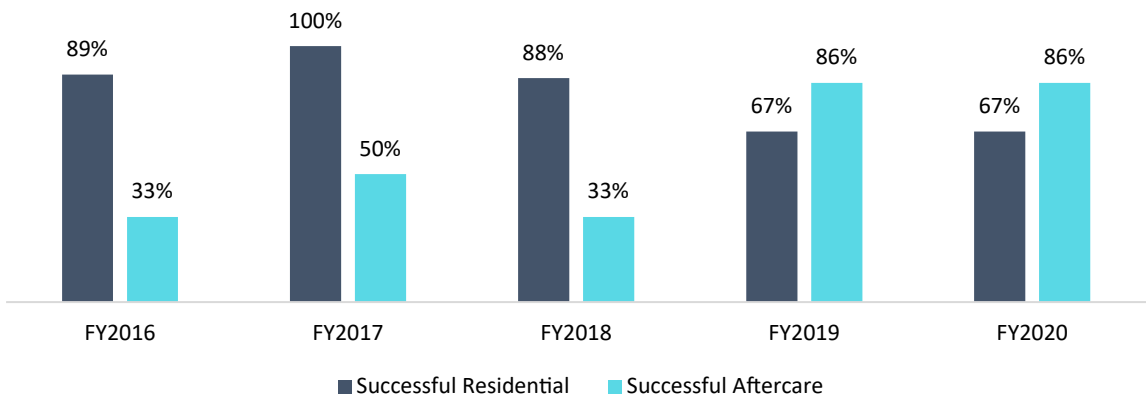
decreases in this measure compared to FY19. Success rates have been trending down for both programs since FY17.

Figure 12: Successful S. Stones and FND Completions



BETA is divided into two portions, a residential phase and an aftercare phase. Successful completion of the aftercare portions (Figure 13) entails six months of community supervision, completion of all court orders, and a final court hearing.

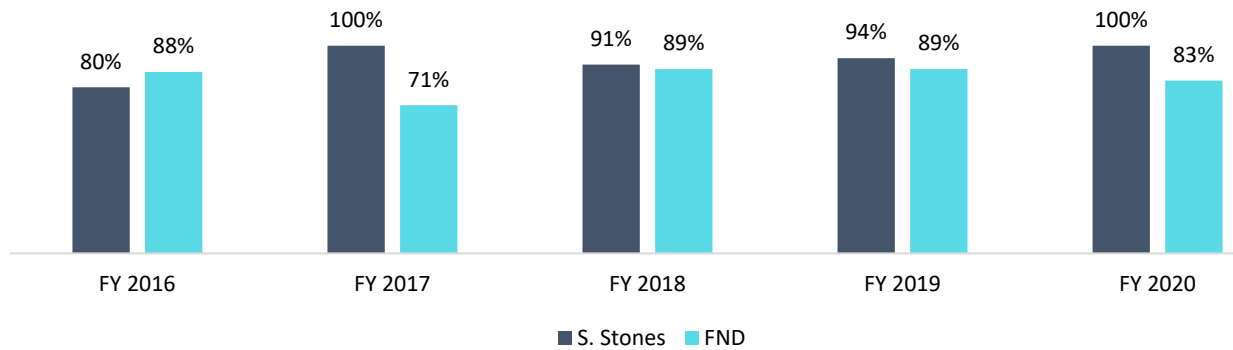
Figure 13: Successful BETA Completions



Education is a key component of programming at all residential facilities. Stepping Stones defines educational improvement as either raising core subject grades or earning credits while Foundations defines educational improvement as only the latter.

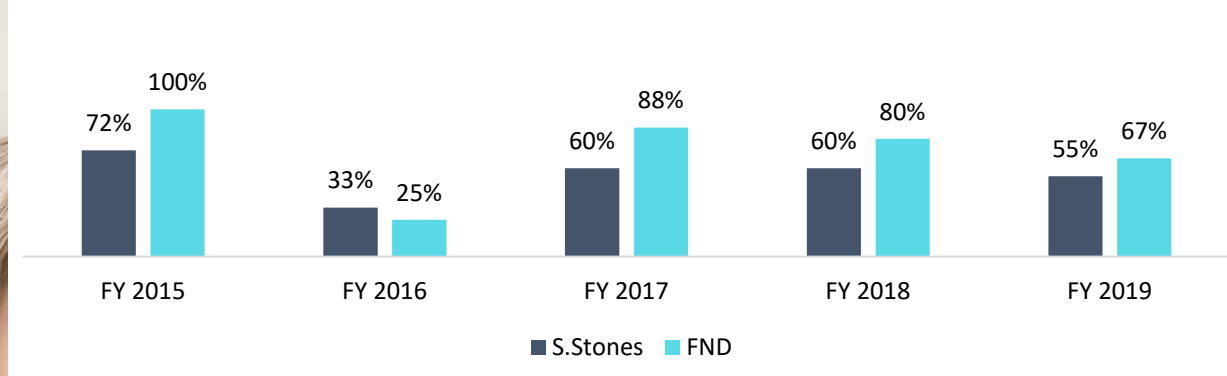
Encouragingly, most clients improve their educational standing while in these programs. During FY20, every youth placed in Stepping Stones improved compared to 83% of Foundations clients.

Figure 14: Educational Improvements by Program



Recidivism is an important measure for residential facilities, as youth who enter are often of higher risk and/or higher need than youth who just receive community supervision. Due to the nature of recidivism information, data is reported one year behind. As seen below, for youth released from Stepping Stones in FY19, 55% had no new charges after one year and 67% percent of youth released from Foundations had no new charges after one year.

Figure 15: Percentage of Youth with No New Charges within 12 Months of Program Release

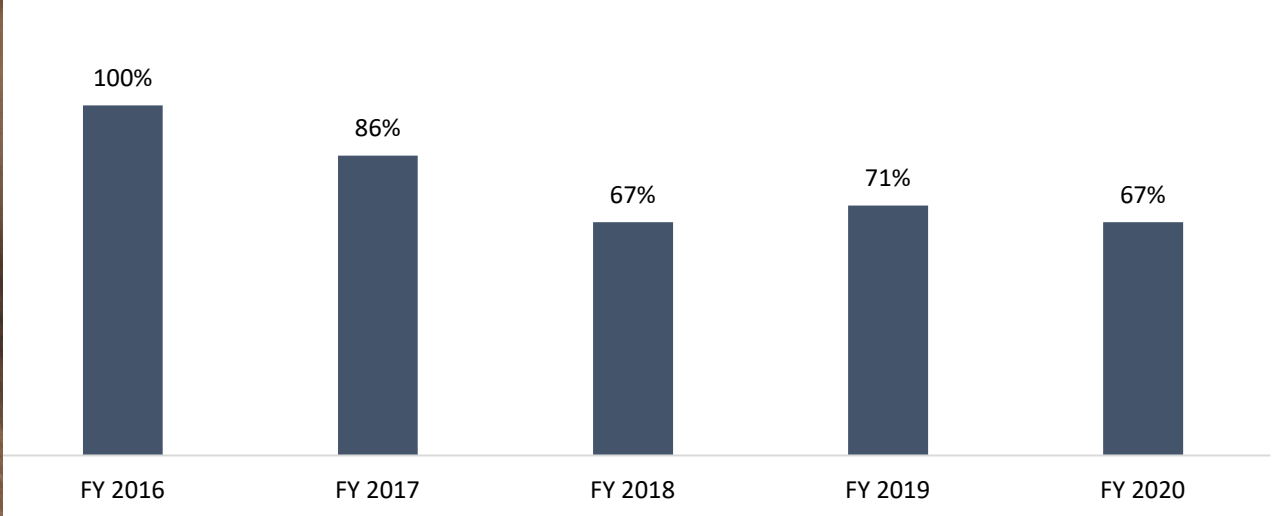


For BETA placements, special attention is paid to client success during the aftercare phase.

**67%**  
OF YOUTH IN  
BETA AFTER-  
CARE HAD NO  
NEW CHARGES.

While this is similar to rates seen in FY18, overall recidivism rates during aftercare have been trending down over the last five years.

Figure 16: Percentage of Youth Receiving No New Charges During Aftercare



In addition to residential facilities, the JDRDC-CSU also has a Family Counseling unit that provides direct therapeutic services to families and individuals. The number of referrals to this unit remained stable from last fiscal year.

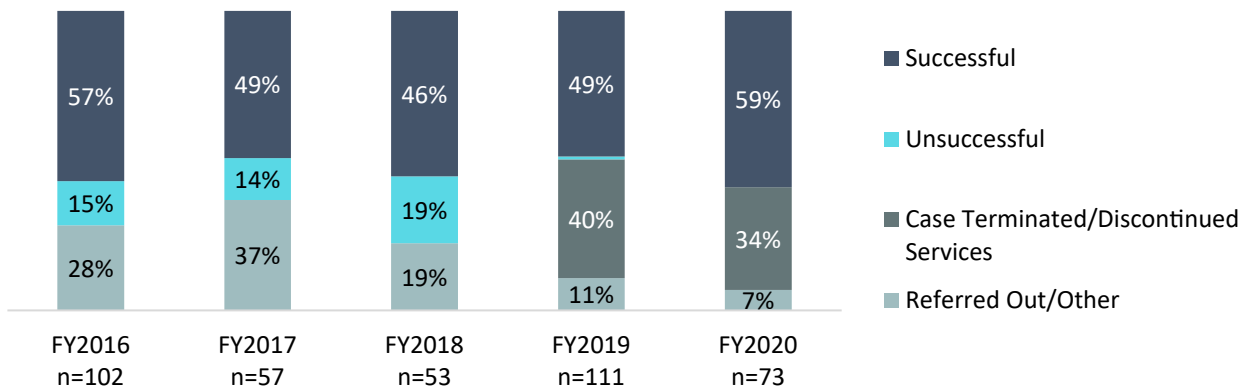
	FY2016 n=142	FY2017 n=94	FY2018 n=108	FY2019 n=103	FY2020 n=102
<b>Juvenile Probation</b>	54%	34%	40%	31%	25%
<b>Diversion</b>	34%	32%	22%	33%	34%
<b>Judge</b>	6%	18%	31%	27%	36%
<b>Adult Probation/DR</b>	7%	16%	7%	9%	5%

The definition of success for Family Counseling clients is challenging. Figure 17 shows 59% of cases closed successfully during FY20. This means clients kept appointments, engaged in treatment, and met all of some of their treatment goals.

Thirty-four percent were terminated or had services discontinued. This can occur when a client meets some goals, but the case closes earlier than expected. This can include clients

that seek services elsewhere. Due to this, coding case closures as unsuccessful has been used infrequently in the last few years.

Figure 17: Family Counseling Case Closure Type



**TO THE FOCUS IS TO REHABILITATE  
OFFENDERS WHEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT  
SACRIFICING PUBLIC SAFETY.**

A final component of the agency’s rehabilitative efforts includes working directly with youth offenders on their attitudes and beliefs towards victims and the harm their crimes may have caused. The Victim Services unit holds Victim Impact Curriculum classes (VIC) for adjudicated youth where pre- and post-surveys measure the efficacy of the program. Questions focus on attitudes, values, and general victim education. In addition to this full curriculum, diverted youth are often referred to Core Values (CV), a similar, one-time class focused on empathy and values.

Youth continue to respond favorably to both VIC and Core Values. Rates of youth indicating these classes benefitted them have remained stable over the years. Highlighted below are a sample of questions from the FY20 VIC analysis. Youth responded on a 5-point scale with 1 (Strongly Disagree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). All questions shown below showed change in the desirable direction.

**95%** OF YOUTH WHO COMPLETED VICTIM IMPACT CLASS FELT IT WAS BENEFICIAL FOR THEM

**99%** OF YOUTH WHO COMPLETED CORE VALUES FELT IT WAS BENEFICIAL FOR THEM

**Table 12: Select Question Pre- and Post-VIC Survey Means**

	Pre	Post
People who leave their cars unlocked are partly to blame if someone breaks in and steals from them.	4.84	2.16
Defensive thinking allows one to make excuses for their actions, maybe even blaming others.	3.47	4.39
I know the difference between empathy and sympathy.	3.61	4.47
Victims of crime suffer significant financial troubles after a violent crime.	3.21	4.00
Crime has a ripple effect that affects the victim’s family, friends, and community.	3.89	4.58
Values are things that are important to me and can show the difference between right and wrong.	3.89	4.47
Values can map out how I live, how I act, what I say, and what I think.	4.00	4.58
When houses are broken into, people often have things that can’t be replaced.	3.84	4.37
Stolen items are only of monetary value.	2.53	2.00

# PUBLIC SAFETY

## KEEPING THE COMMUNITY SAFE IS PARAMOUNT

While it is ideal for youth to stay in their local communities alongside family and other support systems, it is not the reality for some. While court processes are pending, youth may be securely detained or offered some level of community supervision. The JDRDC-CSU uses the Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI), created by the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) (Maggard, 2013). Similar to the YASI, the DAI is an evidenced-based tool to assist staff decision-making.

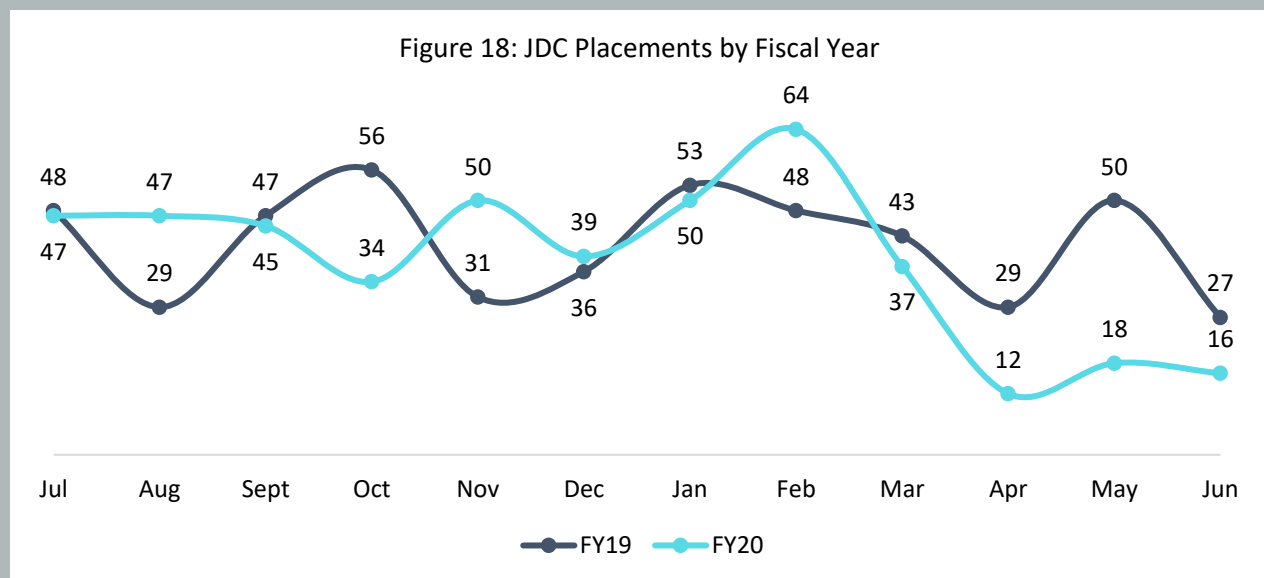
Table 13: Program Placements by Year

	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
JDC	504	533	505	494	452
SC	194	180	177	173	140
SRS	235	323	336	366	279
ISP	123	121	118	100	121

The table above highlights new placements in four agency facilities/programs. These programs include:

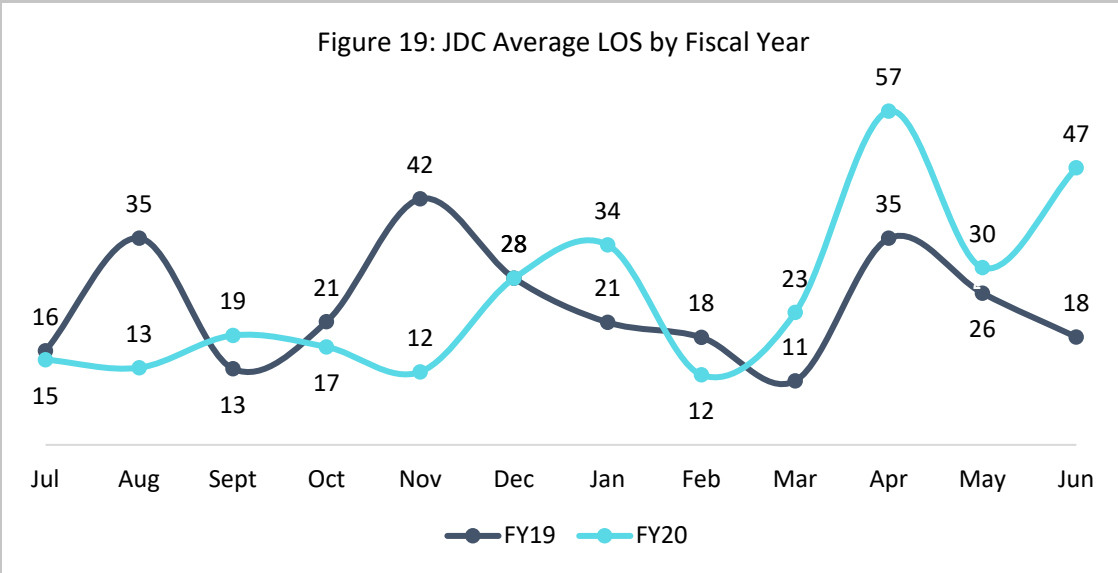
JD	SC	SRS	ISP
<b>JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER</b>	<b>SHELTER CARE</b>	<b>SUPERVISED RELEASE SERVICES</b>	<b>INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROGRAM</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>secure facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>non-secure, temporary facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>community supervision</li> <li>pre- and post-dispositional</li> <li>rules relating to curfew, school, and substance abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>more intensive community supervision</li> <li>pre- and post-dispositional</li> <li>more contacts, especially during evening &amp; night hours</li> </ul>

While placements across JDC, SC, and SRS have trended down over the last five years, each saw more significant decreases between FY19 to FY20. This is likely due, in part, to significant operating changes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 18 shows FY19 and FY20 placements by month for JDC.

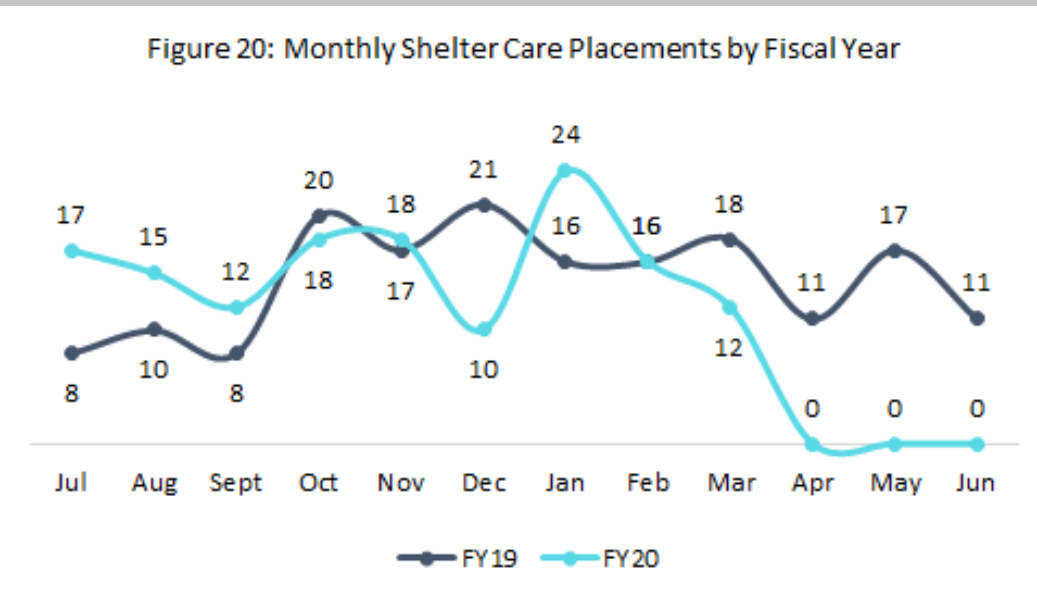


- Prior to March and April of 2020, placements were very similar to the previous year.
- Between February and March 2020, placements dropped 81% and remained lower than the year prior through the close of FY20.

While new placements dropped at JDC, increased court connuances and more limited detention alternatives (see *Shelter Care below*) led to higher lengths of stay for the youth who were housed at JDC.



- During the month of April 2020, average LOS for youth at JDC was 56.79 days compared to just 35.15 in April of 2019.
- In June, at end of FY20, average LOS had decreased somewhat to 47.14 days.



While services were significantly impacted at SC during the COVID-19 pandemic, staff were deployed to other units to continue serving the community.

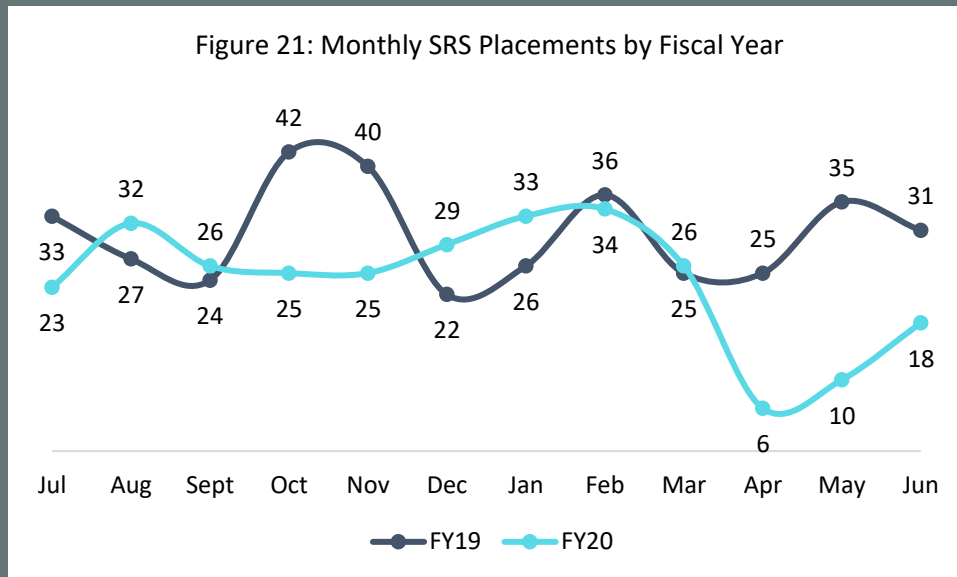


It is important to highlight that while SC is a non-secure facility, few youth run from the facility. In FY20, just 7% of discharges (n=151) went AWOL. This is the lowest rate in over five years. As noted, Shelter Care serves as a non-secure facility for youth. Many youth are placed here while awaiting

further court action. Due to concerns surrounding COVID-19, this facility did not accept placements between April 2020 and August 2020. Figure 20, at left, shows the impact of this closure on placements by month for the last two fiscal years.

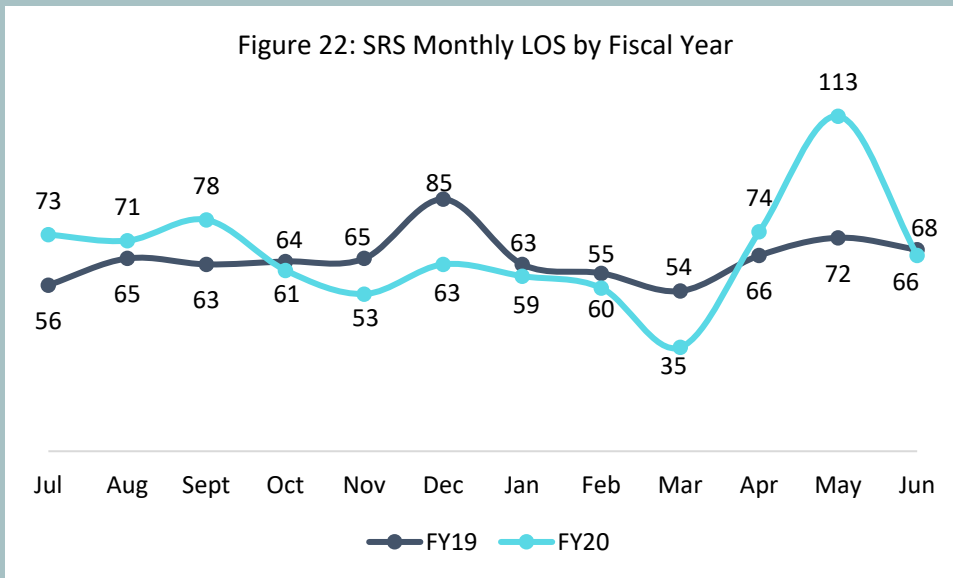
Supervised Release Services (SRS) also saw COVID-19 related impacts. As shown in Table 13 above, SRS placements were trending upwards between FY17 and FY19, but from FY19 to FY20, there was a 24% decrease. The placement decreases for SRS occurred in tandem with the other agency-wide

declines such as overall juvenile complaints. It's important to note that while placements decreased in FY20, the program continued operating over capacity to serve the community. Figure 21, below depicts monthly placements for FY19 and FY20.

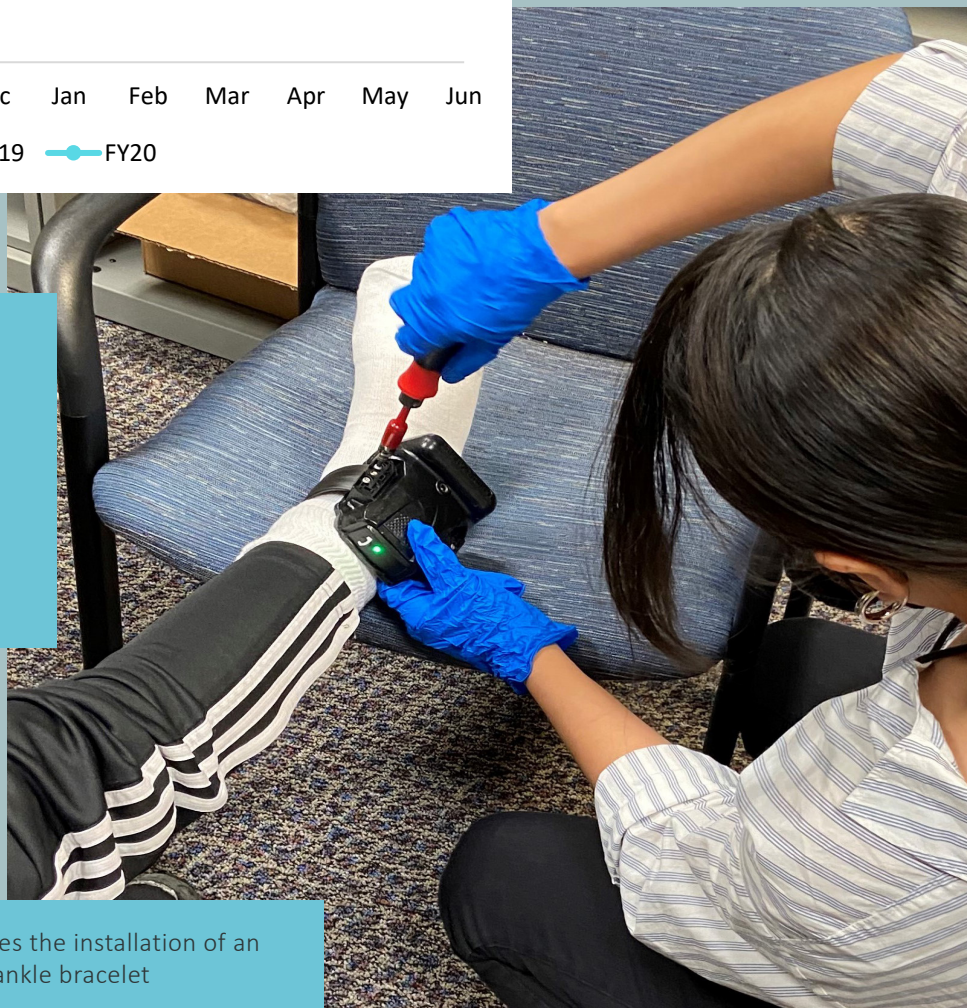


- Between February and April of 2020, there was an 82% increase in placements.
- While numbers began to increase, June 2020 was still 42% lower than June of 2019.

Because many court cases were delayed, youth who may have had short SRS stays, ended up staying with the program for abnormally long periods. As shown above, monthly lengths of stay (LOS) during FY20 were below FY19 from October through March. As changes to court and agency processes began to happen in late March, average LOS drastically increased.



- From March of 2020 to May 2020, there was over a 200% increase in LOS.
- Average LOS was also 57% higher in May of 2020 than May of 2019.



ISP worker demonstrates the installation of an electronic monitoring ankle bracelet

Although JDC primarily serves as a secure facility for youth who cannot be safely supervised in the community, youth receive many services while there. Fairfax County Public School staff provide instructions and assist with the STAR Reading and Math testing that is required by Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

Both SRS and ISP exist to safely supervise youth while they remain in the community. Figure 24 below shows that both programs are successful in keeping youth from reoffending while under supervision.

Figure 23: Education Improvements by Fiscal Year

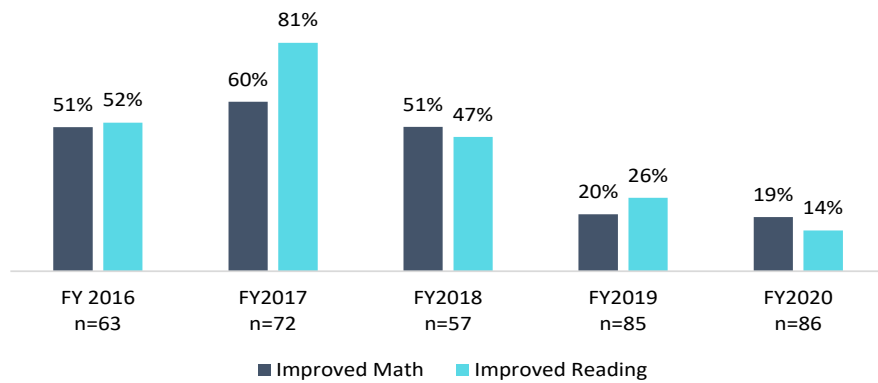
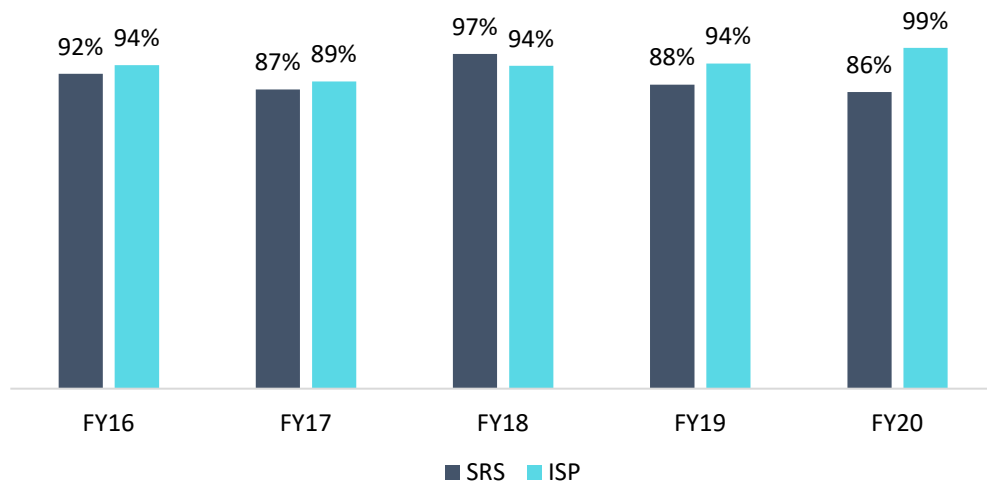


Figure 24: Youth Supervised within Community with No New Charges



SRS is currently in the middle of moving to a new supervision structure. Moving forward, supervision level will be based on risks and needs. By using the DAI and youths' offense history, appropriate levels of supervision will be assigned. SRS will also soon be utilizing graduated sanctions.

THE NUMBER OF VICTIMS SERVED HAS BEEN TRENDING DOWNWARD OVER THE YEARS, WHICH IS IN LINE WITH DECREASES IN OVERALL JUVENILE CRIME.

## VICTIM RIGHTS

### ENSURING THAT CRIME VICTIMS AND WITNESSES ARE TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT

The JDRDC-CSU has a standalone Victim Services Unit. This unit provides crucial information, support, and advocacy to victims of juvenile offenders.

Shown at right, the unit served 140 primary victims and 134 secondary victims during FY20. Secondary victims are often individuals who witnessed the primary victimization or have a relationship with the primary victim and thus require services to address trauma.

Criminal cases often last several months and entail multiple court hearings. Victim service advocates attend every hearing to support victims and help keep them informed.

The number of hearings attending decreased around 30% between FY19 and FY20. The decreasing rate of juvenile crime and court delays associated with the COVID-19 pandemic likely impacted these rates.



Victim Services Program staff (l to r) Jeannie Kuley, Program Manager; Probation Officers Maria Price, Toni Torres-Ramos, and Warren Vines.

Figure 25: Victims Served by Fiscal Year

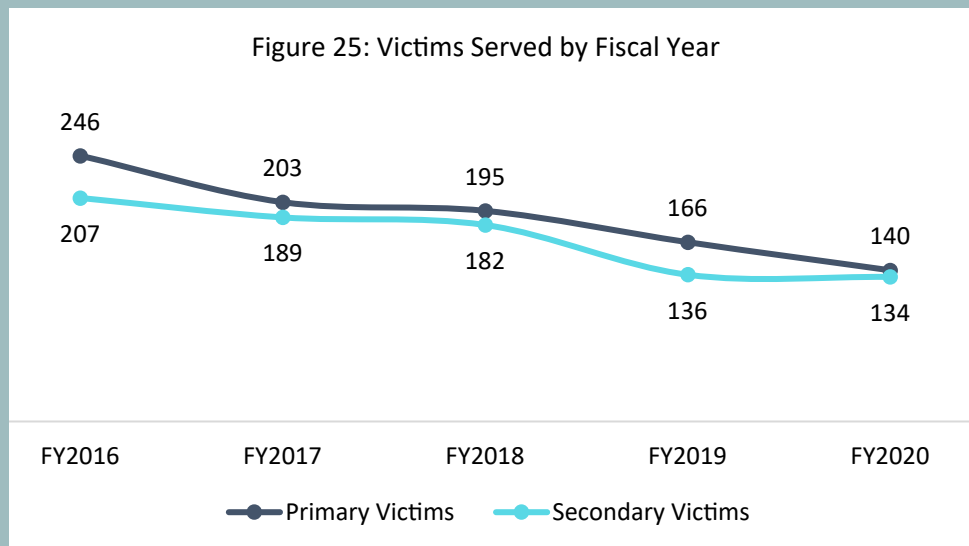
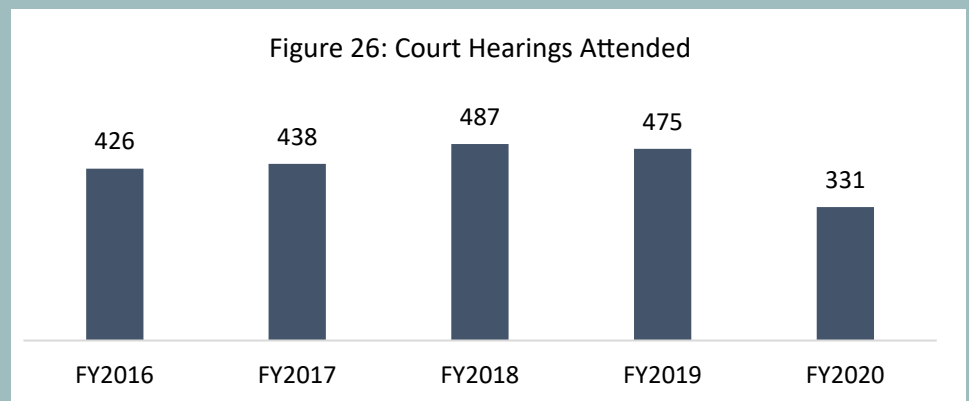


Figure 26: Court Hearings Attended



In addition to our Victim Services unit, the Domestic Relations unit provides services to victims by providing referrals to two programs.

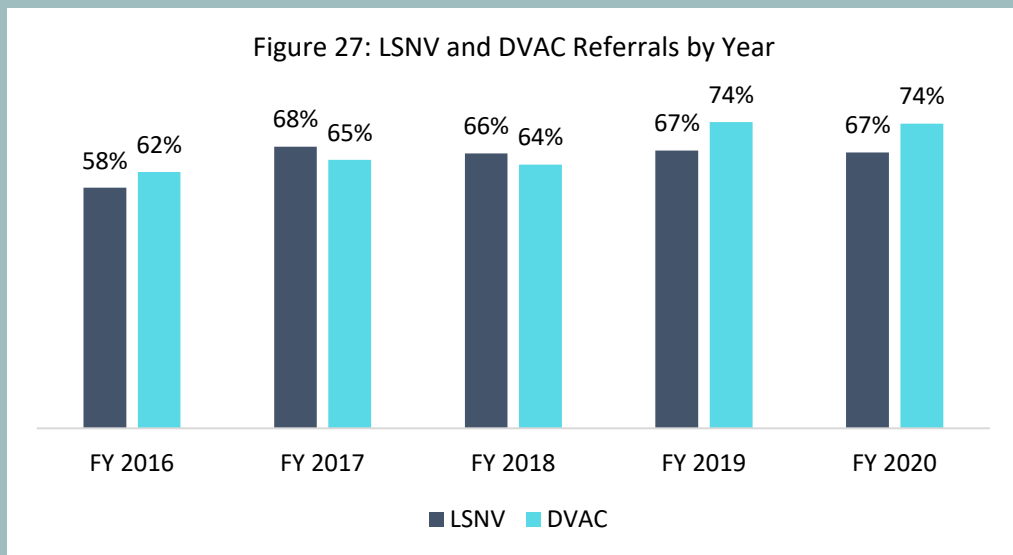
These two programs are incredibly valuable as the number of PPOs filed remains high, demonstrating a need for these services within the community.

### LSNV - LEGAL SERVICES OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

- attorney of the day program
- available to clients filing preliminary protective orders (PPOs) with financial need

### DVAC - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCATE

- advocate for domestic violence cases
- works directly with victims to identify risks in their situation and assist with safety planning, securing financial resources, and counseling services.



DOMESTIC RELATIONS SERVICES, COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS SERVICES AND SUPERVISED VISITATION PROGRAM STAFF (2018)

# CSU HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS

## DIVERSION

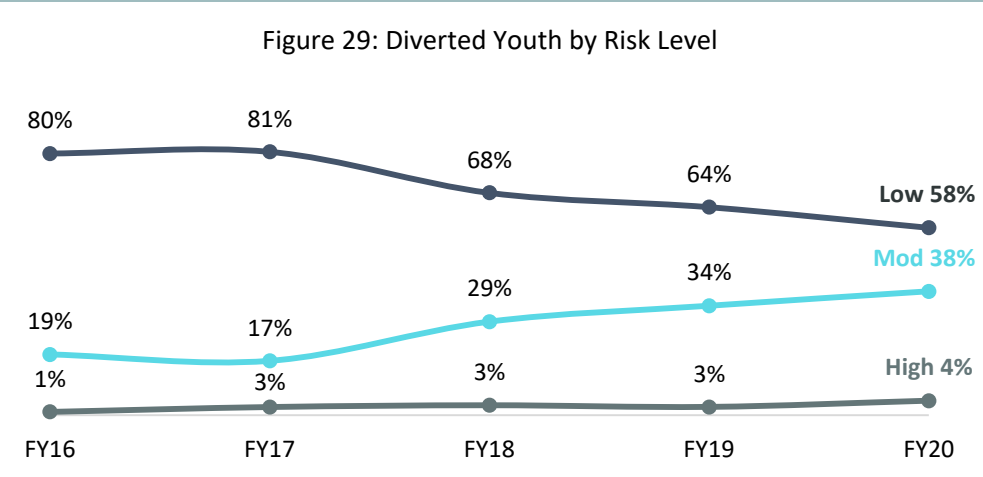
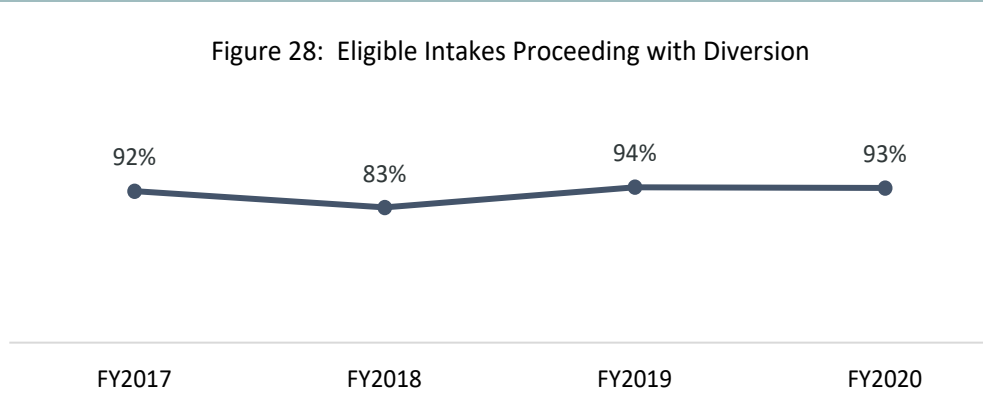


Ailsa Burnett, Unit Director Juvenile Intake

**DIVERSION IS A CORE PRIORITY FOR THE JDRDC-CSU AND ALL DIVERSION PROGRAMMING FALLS UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE JUVENILE INTAKE UNIT.**

During the diversion process, multiple evidenced-based tools such as the YASI and the GAIN-SS (see [pg 12](#)) are used to determine risk to reoffend and areas of need. During FY20, 93% of youth who were eligible for diversion proceeded with the process. This has remained fairly consistent over the years.

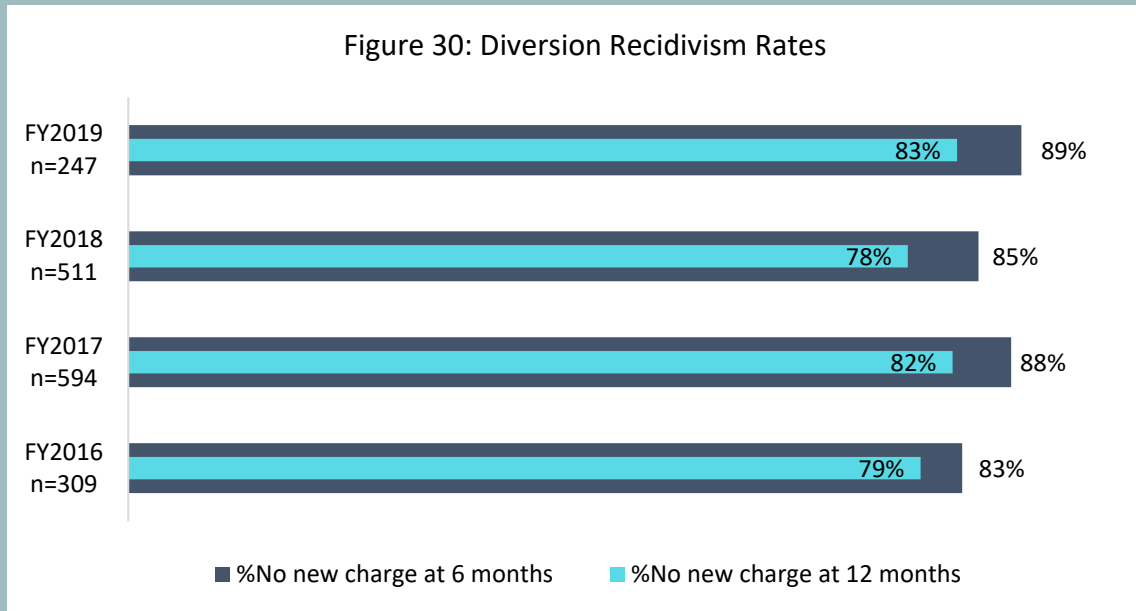
Through a partnership with Northern Virginia Mediation Services (NVMS), Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), and the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD), the JDRDC-CSU expanded the Alternative Accountability Program (AAP). This program allows FCPD to refer youth directly to a restorative justice (RJ) process for school and/or community related incidents or to a shoplifting program for larceny related offenses without formal court involvement. Via AAP, many low-risk youth are screened out prior



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON NVMS AND AAP, CHECK OUT [NVMS'S ANNUAL REPORT](#)**

to reaching Juvenile Intake. While the majority of diverted youth are low-risk, the number of moderate-risk youth has increased over the last few years (see Figure 29).

Recidivism is tracked for all diverted youth. Youth who complete diversion programming with the JDRDC-CSU historically do not reoffend. As shown below, 89% of youth diverted during FY19 had no new charges after six months. Eighty-three percent had no new charges after one year.



## DOMESTIC RELATIONS INTAKE & MEDIATION

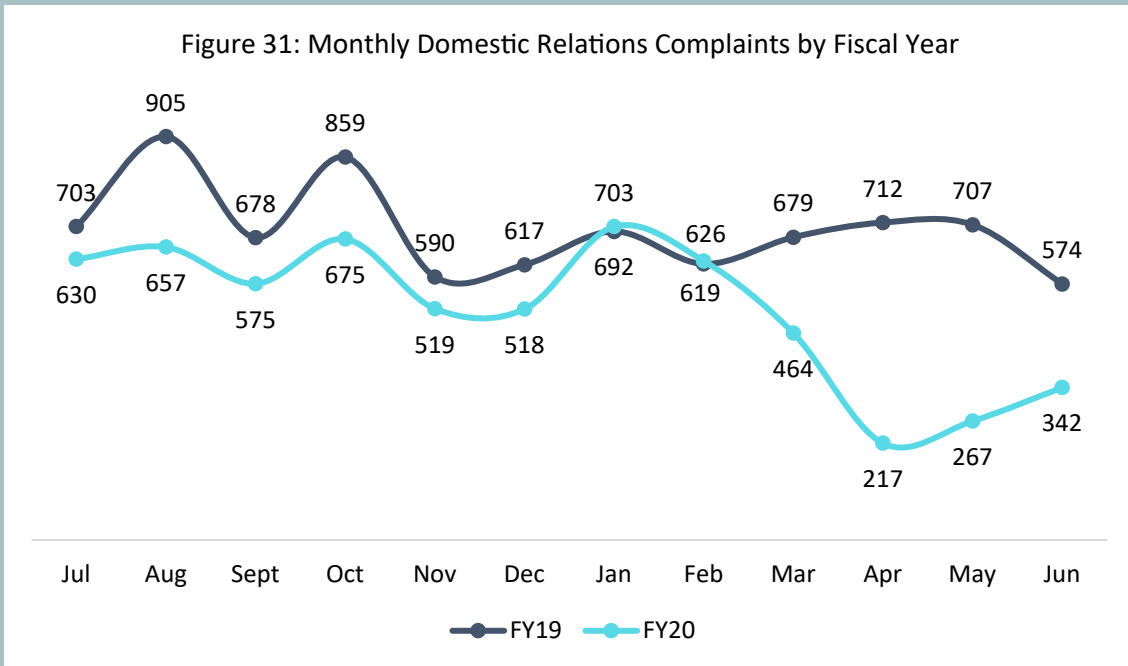
**DOMESTIC RELATIONS (DR) IS A UNIT THAT HANDLES CHALLENGING, COMPLEX CASES.**

Clients who come to DR often seek assistance regarding things like custody, visitation, paternity, and child support. DR also handles cases involving family abuse and/or abuse involving a minor.



Katrina Smith, Unit Director  
Domestic Relations

Domestic Relations complaints decreased 23% between FY19 and FY20. This is most likely a direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While FY20 monthly complaints were lower than FY19 from July through December, DR complaints decreased 25% between February and March, and then decreased another 53% between March and April. While the DR office was closed to the public for most of this time, staff utilized virtual filing services for all petition types. Staff also were available on-site, should clients wish to file in person while following social distancing and other safety protocols.



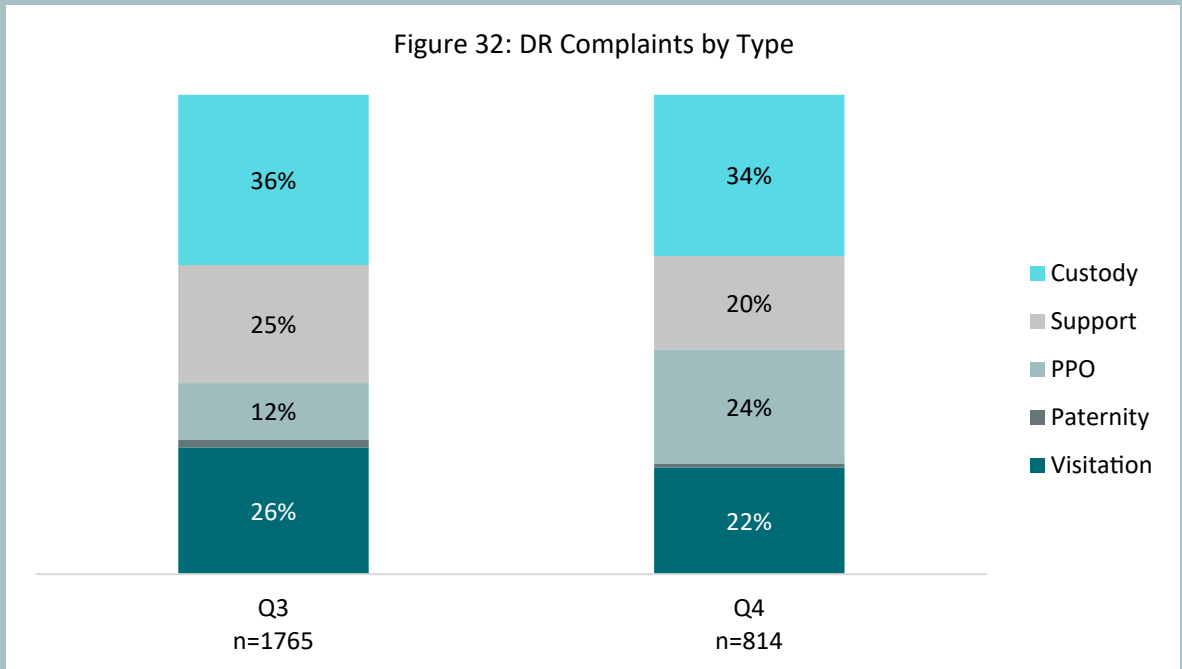
Breakdowns of the type of complaints received by Domestic Relations tend to be stable year to year. During FY20, custody complaints made up 35% of all DR complaints and visitation made up 26%.

Table 14: Domestic Relations Complaint Type by Fiscal Year

	FY 2016		FY 2017		FY 2018		FY 2019		FY 2020	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Custody	3674	38%	3249	37%	3300	37%	2922	35%	2167	35%
Visitation	2611	27%	2462	28%	2578	29%	2364	29%	1616	26%
Support	2408	25%	2100	24%	2021	23%	1996	24%	1439	23%
PPO	891	9%	906	10%	886	10%	856	10%	812	13%
Paternity	130	1%	74	1%	143	2%	153	2%	118	2%
Other	13	0%	4	0%	1	0%	1	0%	1	0%
Total	9727	100%	8795	100%	8929	100%	8292	100%	6153	100%

The percentage of preliminary protective orders (PPOs) was slightly elevated for FY20. This is likely due to the fact that when complaints decreased severely March through June, the proportion of PPOs increased. To illustrate this, Figure 32 at right shows data from FY20 Q3 versus Q4.

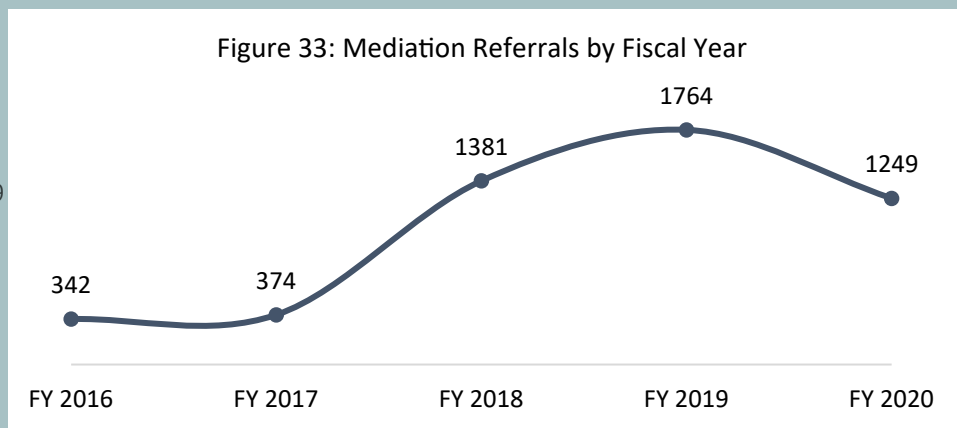




The Domestic Relations Intake unit works very closely with the Mediation Program. After someone files a petition seeking custody, visitation, and/or support, they may be referred to Mediation.

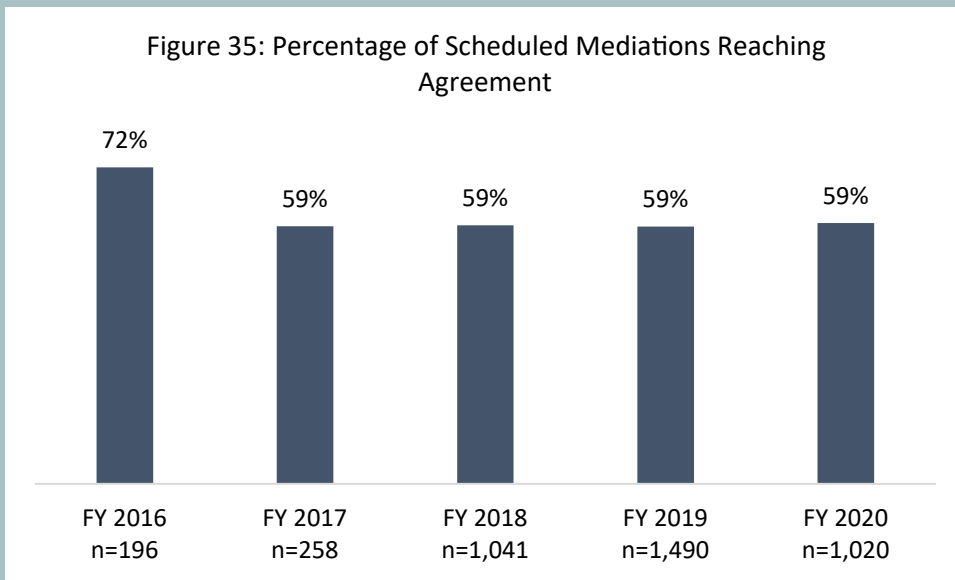
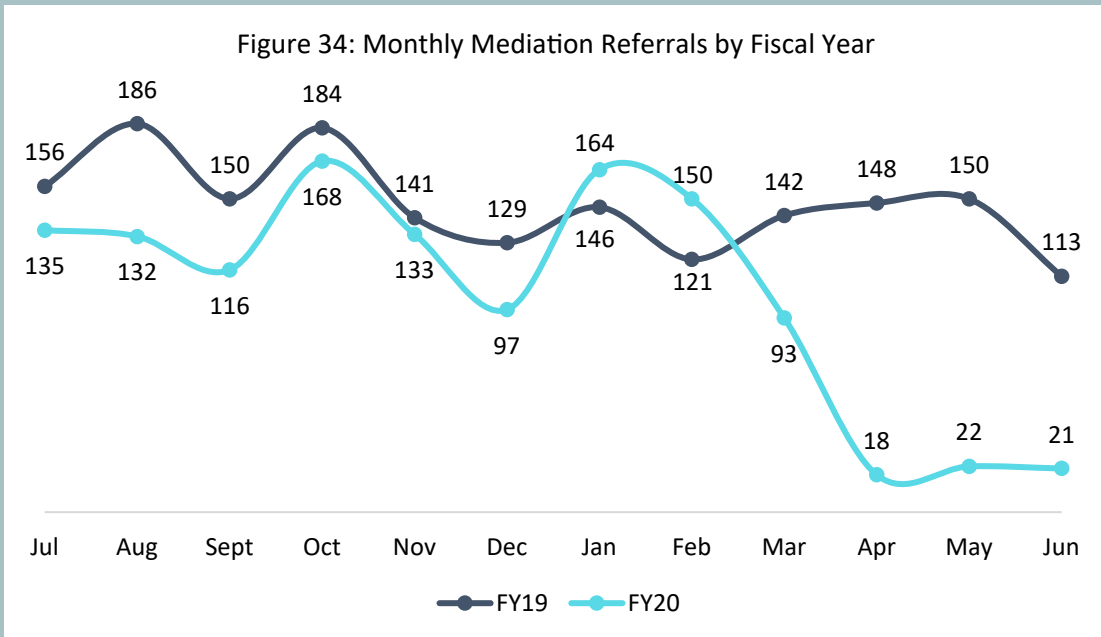
Referrals for mediation surged between FY17 and FY18, Figure 33. This was due to changes in court processing requiring all eligible cases to attempt mediation prior to court hearings. Each year, custody, visitation, and child support typically make up around a third each of total referrals.

Around 2-3% of referrals deal with spousal support. The number of referrals declined 29% between FY19 and FY20. As with other units and programs within the JDRDC-CSU, this largely can be attributed to COVID-19.



A MEDIATION AGREEMENT IS DEFINED AS A FULL, PARTIAL, OR TEMPORARY AGREEMENT BEING REACHED BETWEEN PARTIES.

Figure 34 below shows monthly referrals for both FY19 and FY20. Referrals dropped 38% between February and March and then another 81% between March and April.



Despite a challenging year on top of typically complex cases, the Mediation Program achieves high rates of agreement. As shown in Figure 35 at left, 59% of scheduled mediations in FY20 reached agreement. This trend has been very stable over the years.



## SUPERVISED VISITATION & EXCHANGE

**THIS PROGRAM PROVIDES SUPERVISED VISITATIONS AND/OR SUPERVISED EXCHANGES FOR NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS IN A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT.**

Supervised Visitation and Exchange (SVE) allows for safe, consistent, parenting time in accordance with a Fairfax County court order. The program aims to connect family members to promote healthier relationships.

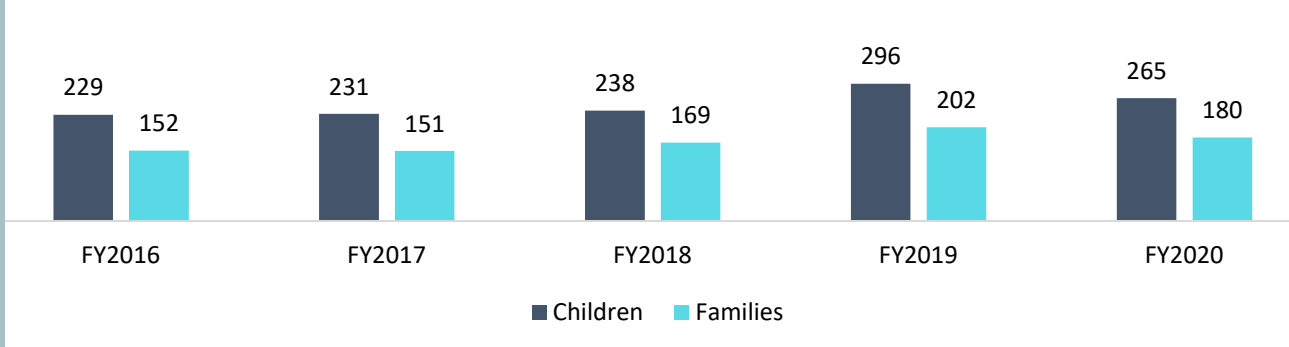


Lori Wymore-Kirkland  
Program Manager, SVE

Prior to FY18, JDRDC-CSU operated two separate programs, Safe Havens and Stronger Together. When grant funding ended for Safe Havens, the two programs merged. As the two programs operated in the same location and served similar populations, this was a smooth transition.

SVE served 265 children and 180 families in FY20. After a surge in demand seen in FY19, FY20 numbers are slightly down. COVID-19 restrictions and policy changes significantly limited services and led to delayed court proceedings, leading to fewer families served.

Figure 36: Number of Children and Families Served by Year



The impact of COVID-19 is perhaps most clearly seen in referral numbers for the program. Between July 1st, 2019 and February 28th, 2020, monthly SVE referrals averaged between seven and ten. In March, two were received, and during April and May, no referrals were received. While there were six referrals in June, half of those cases had court orders dated prior to March 15th.

While the number of both children and families served decreased from FY19, the number of visitations and exchanges provided both increased slightly. Visitations increased 4% while exchanges increased 3% from FY19. Furthermore, visitations have increased 67% over the last five years while exchanges have increased 34%.

To continue meeting community needs, SVE pivoted to virtual visitation options. While this helped maintain contact for some clients, it was not a viable option for all. For some, protective orders prevented virtual visitations. This was a large hurdle as nearly half of clients in FY20 had an active protective order, Figure 38.



Figure 37: Services Provided by Year

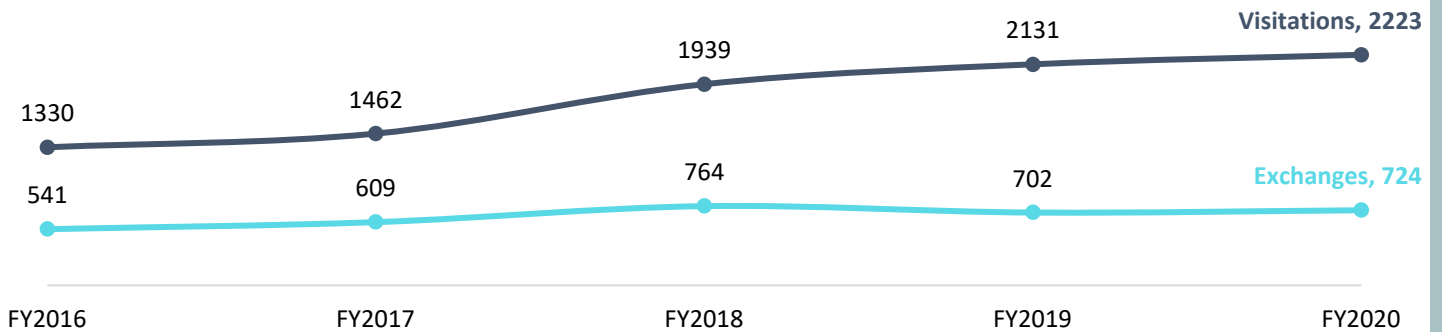
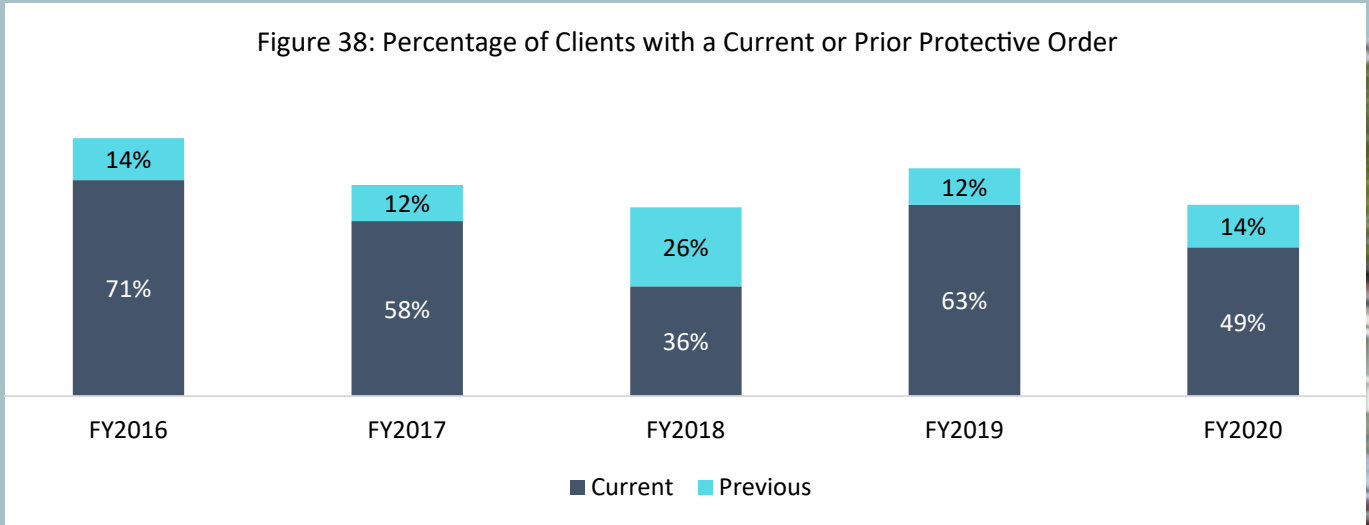


Figure 38: Percentage of Clients with a Current or Prior Protective Order



Despite the challenges SVE clients faced this year, satisfaction remained high. Client feedback surveys collected throughout the year showed that 90% of clients were overall satisfied with the program. Additionally, 81% reported feeling safer, both emotionally and physically, with the SVE program compared to their prior arrangements. Similarly, 81% indicated visitation would not have occurred without the help of the visitation program, Table 15. These rates of positive responses are like FY19.



Supervised Visitation & Exchange staff members



Table 15: SVE Client Feedback

	FY2019	FY2020
Overall, I was satisfied with my experience with the program	94%	90%
When using this program for visitations/exchanges, I felt more physically and emotionally safe than I did with my previous arrangement	78%	81%
Visitation with my child would not have occurred without the help of the visitation program	78%	81%



Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. For information, call CSU Administration at 703-246-3343 or TTY 711.



Fairfax County Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court  
Court Service Unit, Administrative Services  
Research & Development Unit  
Courtney Porter, Program Manager  
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/juveniledomesticrelations/>