



JOHNSON COUNTY Decategorization Board

Laurie Nash – Youth & Family Services Manager and Decat Coordinator

FY21 Johnson County Decat Annual Progress Report

Approved by the Johnson County Decat Board on November 15, 2021

Participating Counties: Johnson
Coordinator: Laurie Nash
Contact Information: Johnson County Social Services
855 S. Dubuque St. Suite
202B Iowa City, Iowa 52240
319-356-6090
lnash@johnsoncountyiowa.gov
Date of Report: December 1, 2021

Summary of Key Activities and Progress of Johnson County Decategorization Board

(Summarize the project's key activities and the progress toward reaching the project's desired outcomes during the previous FY21 state fiscal year)

In FY21 the Johnson County Decat Board included 9 members representing the Department of Human Services, Juvenile Court Services, Johnson County Board of Supervisors, domestic violence (DVIP), substance abuse (Prelude), youth services (Four Oaks), education (ICCSA), and public health (JCPH). The board meets on a monthly basis, excluding July and December. The Contract Oversight Committee, which includes four board members, met on multiple occasions to monitor contracts and review grant proposals.

The Johnson County Decategorization Board entered into 13 contracts, including CPPC, to provide services to youth and families in Johnson County at-risk of new or increased child welfare or juvenile court involvement. The dollar value of those contracts totaled \$184,932. The contractors expended \$173,667 of the grant funds awarded.

In FY21, the Johnson County Decategorization Board maintained the following Priority Service Areas to guide funding decisions:

Priority Service Areas

- Meet the needs of children and families currently involved in the child welfare system and/or juvenile court system paying particular attention to the needs of minority children and families.
- Address social isolation and mental health and trauma needs, and to build circles of support for children and families that are at-risk of involvement in the child welfare and/or juvenile court systems, paying particular attention to the needs of minority children and families.
- Promote positive youth development for youth ages 6 - 16 during out of school time, paying particular attention to youth most at risk for involvement with the child welfare or juvenile court services.

Proposals were solicited for the following services that align with the local priority service areas: fatherhood supports and supplemental supervised visits. Contracts were renewed for crisis intervention, Family Treatment Court Supports, young fathers' supports, motherhood supports, mental health supports, positive youth development. In addition, Johnson County Social Services administered contracts for wrap around services, professional development, and Juvenile Court interpretation services. There were 5 new contracts procured in FY21.

The Decat Board monitors contracts carefully. The Contract Oversight Committee receives each of the quarterly reports. Following the second quarterly report, the Committee carefully reviews for contract compliance and progress toward scope of services and performance measures. The Decat staff monitor progress and spending on a monthly basis. In FY21, presentations from three contractors as well as CPPC were provided to the Decat Board. In addition, Decat Board staff and board members completed one contractor site visit.

The Johnson County Decategorization Project solicited information from a variety of sources throughout the year to fulfill its obligations for planning and identification of needs. The activities utilized during FY21 included: discussion during regularly scheduled board meetings with individual service providers and key stakeholders, contractor presentations at the Decat board meetings, solicitation of information from a variety of local groups and coalitions and review of local child welfare and juvenile court services data. Additionally, Empowerment Early Childhood Iowa Area and CPPC provided updates to the board, along with the Juvenile Court and DHS supervisor. The Decat Coordinator is engaged in many community coalitions and groups; facilitating the Disproportionate Minority Contact Committee, coordinating CPPC activities (including Shared Decision-Making Team, Community & Neighborhood Networking), coordinating the Johnson County Juvenile Justice Youth Development Program and Policy Board, and supporting the Early Childhood Iowa Area Board.

The Board maintained the priority of reduction of disproportionate minority contacts for children in the child welfare and juvenile court systems, family support services and child mental health services. In FY21 programs funded with a primary or secondary goal of reducing disparities included LGBTQ support groups, translation services, and supplemental supervised visits. Mental health and supportive services were enhanced with the Young Father's group.

The Decat Board prioritizes increasing access to after-school and summer care for low income and at-risk youth and reducing isolation for families most in need. In FY21, 107 families received individual and/or group-based family support services funded by Decat. These supportive services assisted families with building community connections, identifying and accessing resources, and increasing parental skills. As a result of Decat funding, 207 youth participated in after-school/summer enrichment programming. This decrease was a result of limiting group size due to social distancing requirements necessitated by the pandemic. In FY21, there were 409 group sessions, 269 individual sessions, and 71 court-based support sessions offered.

The Johnson County Decat Board is committed to funding programs that increase community supports for children and families and reduce the prevalence of out-of-home placements for children. The average daily population for Johnson County youth at Linn County Detention decreased in FY21 to 2.18 youth per day, but that decrease may be largely due to the pandemic. Data trends that include FY21 are not considered reflective of overall trends. In FY17 the average daily population was 3.58 youth per day. The number of youth increased to 5.58/day in FY18 and down to 4.28 in FY19. The average daily population during FY20 was 2.66, largely a result of decreased population due to COVID-19. The average daily population for the first 3 quarters of the year was 3.28, still a significant decrease from the previous two years.

Key Activities, Outcomes, and Expenditures

(Describe key activities, outcomes, and expenditures for programs and services that received funding from the governance board during the previous state fiscal year)

Outcomes Achieved by Funded Programs

Priority Service Area: Meet the needs of children and families currently involved in the child welfare system and /or juvenile court system paying particular attention to the needs of minority children and families.

CONTRACTOR	Description	Outcomes
United Action for Youth – Shoplifter’s Program DCAT4-21-002 \$1,500 Designated (reduced by \$1,500 to interpretation) (\$1,000) 67% Expended	Provide monthly Shoplifter diversion class to first-time offender youth and their parents.	9 youth, 8 parent/ guardians attended one of 4 workshops offered in FY21. 100% of youth and 100% of parents indicate the program was well organized, and that the workshop increased their understanding of the impact shoplifting has on their community, and that the program was presented in a clear and effective manner. Juvenile Court data indicate that 1 youth was charged with a subsequent shoplifting / theft charge within 6 months of taking the class. Contract met 100% of Performance Measures.
Johnson County Social Services – Wrap Around DCAT4-21-001 \$8,000 Designated (\$6,695.54) 84% expended	Wraparound fund for families to prevent the removal of a child from their home, or to support a Suitable Other placement. Funds assist with necessities making the home safer for a child to remain in, or supporting a relative placement	30 Families /54 children received assistance with wrap-around services in the form of housing (19%), food/ diapers (53%), transportation (11%), utilities (7%), clothing (10%) . Surveys indicate that funding assisted families in obtaining stability, 100% of workers reported that their requests were addressed timely and that the coordinator was responsive and available. Suitable other designation assisted with requests for shelter (3%), food and diapers (2%), transportation (4%), summer camps (31%) and utilities (60%). Contract met 100% of Performance Measures.
Johnson County Social Services – DHS Wrap Around Interpretation- Translation DCAT4-21-001 \$500 Designated (\$220) 44% expended	Wraparound funds designated for interpretation and/or translation services for families involved in the child welfare system.	Translation services were provided for one family involved in the child welfare system, to keep the youth safely in their home.

<p>Johnson County Social Services – Wrap Around DCAT4-21-001 \$2,000 PSSFP Funds (\$1,208.65) 60% expended</p>	<p>Wraparound funds for family reunification services, to assist with services for children who have been removed from their homes, in order to return to family care.</p>	<p>Three families were assisted with 11 transportation supports to keep children reunified with their families.</p>
<p>Families Inc. – Family Treatment Court DCAT4-20-001 \$28,000 (\$27,499) 98% Expended</p>	<p>Provide Family Treatment Court services that includes; family support services, community outreach, and implementation of supportive family events.</p>	<p>7 families (16 children) served during FY 21 through the FTC. 1,151 client visits completed, 78 Client supports for court hearings/ DHS staffing’s were provided. 88% of families participated in a family networking events (4 offered). 1 out of 3 cases closed successfully (33%). 91% of participants made moderate/ substantial progress with family interactions. 75% of participants made some progress toward abstinence. 100% are making moderate /substantial progress with parenting skills. An Alumni group continues to meet. Contract met 100% of Performance Measures.</p>
<p>Families Inc. - Supervised Visits DCAT4-21-003 \$19,067 PSSFP FUNDS - (\$19,000.80) 100% Expended</p>	<p>Provide supervised visitation and parent education services for families’ who meet the Time-limited Family Reunification Services guidelines.</p>	<p>67 Supervised visits provided, each visit included transportation supports. 9 families were served with a total of 12 children receiving additional visits with their parents while in the foster care system. 100% of youth were eligible for the PSSF funding. 100% of Families’ received parenting education and support during each visit. Reunification was promoted for families using this service by providing them additional visits with their children during foster care placement. This contract met 100% of Performance Measures</p>
<p>Johnson County Social Services – Juvenile Court Interpretation \ Translation DCAT4-21-006 (Shoplifter designated moved to JCSS Interpretation) \$1,500 (865.40) 58% Expended (balance carries into FY22)</p>	<p>Provide interpretation and translation services for families involved with Juvenile Court Services Contract term 2/1/21-6/30/22</p>	<p>Fiscal Agent Contract used to pay for services needed to assist families who are English language learners. Service was requested for 1 family twelve times. Contract met 100% of Performance Measures</p>
<p>Priority Service Area: Address isolation of mental health and trauma needs of youth and families that are at-risk of involvement in the child welfare system and/or juvenile court system.</p>		
<p>United Action for Youth - LGBTQ+ Groups DCAT4-20-003 \$18,000 (\$18,000) 100 % Expended</p>	<p>Provide weekly support groups, at 3 locations, for LGBTQ identified youth. Provide a trained Health Educator to work with youth attending groups to promote healthy relationships, and to educate others regarding LGBTQ youth populations.</p>	<p>67 youth attended group programming (498 duplicate contacts) 147 groups were provided.31 Youth met with the Health Educator, 84 duplicate contacts. (71 % of group participants report that they feel they learned something new after meeting with the Health Educator. 100% of group participants reported that after attending group they felt better able to communicate their feelings, 86% report that the number of safe adults in their lives increased. After attending the LGBTQIAA Summit PRIDECON 100% of youth report that the Summit helped them better understand the needs of the LGBTQ population. Contract met 70% of Performance Measures.</p>

<p>Dream Center – Fathers United Now DCAT4-21-005 \$5,500 Designated (\$5,500) 100% Expended</p>	<p>Provide weekly father’s group, using the 24/7 Dad Curriculum, focusing on building strong bonds between fathers, their children and/or co-parenting each session.</p>	<p>13 fathers attended a weekly group using the 24/7 dad curriculum. 26 weekly sessions of programming were provided using small groups, and 32 sessions were provided using one-on-one settings. 2 full sessions of 24/7 Dad were completed. 156 duplicate contacts were made. 13 home visits provided. 1 family night was offered. 100% of fathers were matched with a mentor. 2 Staff member supports were provided for DHS staffing’s/court hearings. 85% of fathers report an increase in pro-fathering knowledge, and 85% report an increase in healthy interactions with their children. Contract met 80% of Performance Measures.</p>
<p>United Action for Youth Young Fathers DCAT4-20-011 \$5,500 Designated (\$4,552.99) 83% Expended</p>	<p>Provide a fatherhood program using the parents as teachers curriculum, serving young fathers currently involved or at risk of DHS involvement</p>	<p>22 Young fathers groups were provided using the parents as teacher’s curriculum to 5 young fathers. Each father met with staff individually and were connected with services and resources. 100% of participants have been connected with concrete supports. 60% completed the Fathers as Teachers curriculum survey. 33% of Dads report they maintained or increased family functioning, and problem solving. 100% report increased knowledge in child development and parenting after participating in group. Contract met 38 % of Performance Measures.</p>
<p>United Action for Youth - Crisis Intervention & Mediation DCAT4-20-002 \$27,000 (\$27,000) 100% Expended</p>	<p>Provide 24- hour crisis services, advocacy, and consultation for youth and families in crisis.</p>	<p>76 youth accessed the crisis mediation services. 237 counseling or crisis mediation services provided. 31 Families were served with 102 sessions of mediation. 100% of families in crisis were met with within 24 hours of initial contact. 100% of youth report crisis mediation/counseling services were helpful, and 100% report that after receiving services there was an increase in family functioning/ communications. 28 Outreach activities provided to assist other schools and child serving agencies with addressing needs for this specific population. Contact met 92% of Performance Measures.</p>
<p>Families, Inc. - Nurturing Parent Program DCAT4-20-006 \$11,000 Designated (\$4,124.82) 37% Expended</p>	<p>Provide an in-home parenting program using the In-Home Nurturing Parent Program curriculum</p>	<p>10 Families participated in the Nurturing Parent Program. Each family was contacted within 48 hours of requesting assistance. A total of 10 parents and 13 children were served during 48 tele-health home counseling sessions. 109% report increases in parent/child communication, and improved parent/child relationships. 100% report increased knowledge of child development and increased involvement in their child’s life. 100% report improved parent/child increased knowledge on effective parenting. Contract met 70% of Performance Measures.</p>
<p>Priority Service Area: Promote positive youth development for youth ages 6 to 16 years old during out of school time, paying particular attention to youth most at risk for involvement with the child welfare or juvenile court services.</p>		
<p>United Action for Youth - 6th Grade Art and Music Club DCAT4-20-004 \$18,000 (\$18,000) 100% Expended</p>	<p>Provide bullying prevention that promotes social skills, creative self-expression, and effective conflict resolution skills for 5th – 6th graders providing art and music clubs after-school. (held virtually in FY21)</p>	<p>39 sixth graders participated in weekly virtual art/7 youth in virtual music workshops for a total of 597 duplicated contacts. 58% of youth were eligible for FRL 95% of youth reported they are better at telling others about their ideas and feelings after attending Art Club and 91% report they have more formal and informal supports after participating in Art/Music Club. 91% of youth also report they have more caring adults in their lives after attending programming. Contract met 60% of Performance Measures.</p>
<p>OTHER</p>		

<p>Johnson County Social Services – Decat Administrative Support DCAT4-17-004 \$20,000 (\$20,000) 100% Expended</p>	<p>Decat Coordinator and Johnson County Social Services program administrative support.</p>	<p>Held monthly Decat Board meetings and completed state required contracting. Completed monitoring and reviews of all contracts, created financial reports for monthly board meetings; reviewed all financial claims submitted for payment, prepared and submitted the Annual Services Plan and Annual Progress Report to DHS and JCS officials. Facilitated renewal process and a competitive grant application for new funding including preparation of documents for board review. Contract met 100% of Performance Measures.</p>
<p>Johnson County Social Services - CPPC DCAT4-19-005 \$20,000 (\$20,000) 100 % Expended</p>	<p>Provide community based child abuse prevention strategies.by coordinating community based services, managing grants, and promoting shared decision making,</p>	<p>Community networking met as outlines, Family team and youth transition goals were met, policy and practice goals were met and the shared decision-making survey scored above the required percentage. Contract met 100% of Performance measures.</p>

Lessons Learned/Planning Adjustments

(Describe any lessons learned and planning adjustments made by the governance board during the previous state fiscal year)

Johnson County Decat, along with most of the state, experienced programming and planning adjustments during FY21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many funded activities that previously took place in school buildings were reconfigured after those buildings closed mid-March 2020. In the Iowa City Community School District, approximately 40% of students continued with online learning in FY21. This made it more difficult for programs to contact youth participants and to conduct outreach. Consideration was given regarding safety and social distancing and many agencies continued to provide many services in a virtual and then hybrid format. In FY20 it was noted that the switch to online programming highlighted issues of lack of available technology and access to broadband internet. Staff were and continue to be creative in addressing student needs.

The unpredictable nature of available Decat funding makes it difficult for both the Decat Board and partner agencies to plan and implement programming. Several years ago, in an effort to increase efficiencies and maximize services, the JC Decat Board prioritized fully funding projects whenever possible and dedicating fewer resources to smaller, piece-meal programs. Procuring and monitoring contracts is a staff-intensive task and is not cost effective for low dollar projects. However, the Board has been apprehensive about soliciting new, larger scale projects that require significant investment of time and resources to implement, given the uncertainty of future funding.

From the perspective of our partner agencies, few organizations are responding to notices of funding requests for smaller scale projects. The administrative costs to solicit and implement new projects often exceed the value of the potential grant. Staff resources are very lean and agencies lack the capacity to take on new projects without hiring additional staff. Many organizations are not interested in conducting a hiring search for part-time, potentially short-term employment (an added cost to the organization). As a result, there are fewer responses to solicitation of proposals. The board has addressed this by occasionally utilizing discretionary funds to increase amounts available for designated projects. The board continues to evaluate ways to help facilitate the utilization of Decat funding to meet the growing needs within our community while also preserving existing programs that have proven effective in serving vulnerable children and families.

Johnson County is fortunate to have an engaged and knowledgeable Decat Board that represents many disciplines. The board carefully reviews community needs while communicating with partner organizations and monitoring contracted programs. The board is mindful of funding priorities and intentional about distributing funding based on the identified priority areas while placing emphasis on services that are evidence-based and proven effective. Johnson County Decat has effective communication with other local initiatives including Community Partnerships for Protecting Children, Early Childhood Iowa, Juvenile Justice & Youth Development, and Prevent Child Abuse-Johnson County. This helps to identify gaps and increase effectiveness of local funding.