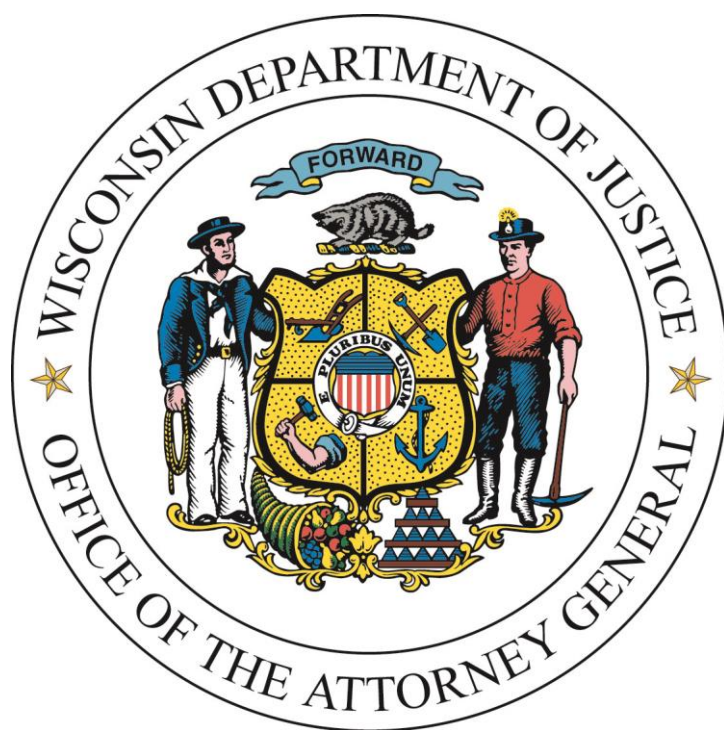


Report on Grants – Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)  
2023



Wisconsin Department of Justice  
January 15, 2024

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## Introduction

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m), “beginning on January 15, 2015, and annually thereafter, the department of justice shall submit a report to the legislature regarding its administration of grant programs under Wis. Stat. § 165.95, 165.955, 165.96, 165.986, and 165.987. The report shall include, for each grant program, all of the following information:

(a) *The amount of each grant awarded by the department of justice for the previous fiscal year.*

(b) *The grant recipient to whom each grant was awarded.*

(c) *The methodology used by the department of justice to choose grant recipients and to determine the level of grant funding for each grant recipient.*

(d) *Performance measures created by the department of justice for each grant program.*

(e) *Reported results from each grant recipient in each fiscal year as to the attainment of performance measures the department of justice developed for the grant recipient.”*

**Alternatives to Incarceration Grants, Wis. Stat. § 165.95**

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(a) The amount of each grant awarded in the previous year.**

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(b) The grant recipient to whom each grant was awarded.**

\$97,989	Adams County
\$135,000	Ashland County
\$150,000	Barron County
\$150,000	Bayfield County
\$384,712	Brown County
\$210,286	Buffalo County (includes Pepin County as a partner)
\$115,231	Burnett County (includes Washburn County as a partner)
\$119,817	Chippewa County
\$127,492	Clark County
\$204,124	Columbia County
\$217,101	Crawford County
\$344,931	Dane County
\$244,620	Dodge County
\$177,895	Door County
\$108,031	Douglas County
\$166,577	Dunn County
\$137,213	Eau Claire County
\$150,000	Grant County
\$150,000	Green County
\$63,536	Ho-Chunk Nation
\$75,046	Iowa County

\$63,307	Jackson County
\$262,673	Jefferson County
\$134,500	Kenosha County
\$141,000	La Crosse County
\$123,294	Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
\$150,000	Lafayette County
\$94,000	Langlade County
\$150,000	Manitowoc County
\$150,000	Marathon County
\$98,148	Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin
\$400,782	Milwaukee County
\$69,401	Monroe County
\$75,000	Oneida County
\$178,343	Outagamie County
\$124,999	Ozaukee County
\$215,577	Pierce County
\$174,400	Polk County
\$221,187	Portage County
\$124,975	Racine County
\$130,000	Richland County
\$275,000	Rock County
\$123,144	Rusk County
\$242,778	Sauk County
\$225,000	Sawyer County

\$107,347	Shawano County
\$103,079	Sheboygan County
\$179,017	St. Croix County
\$110,000	Taylor County
\$2,770	Trempealeau County
\$22,135	Vernon County
\$125,000	Vilas County
\$150,717	Walworth County
\$200,000	Washington County
\$149,680	Waukesha County
\$111,182	Waushara County
\$200,664	Wood County

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(c) The methodology used by the department of justice to choose grant recipients and to determine the level of grant funding for each grant recipient.**

All projects are funded for a calendar year period. All groups listed above, and the Drug Court projects identified in Wis. Stat. § 165.955 enumerated in the next section, applied for funding through a competitive grant announcement. Each application was reviewed by the following state agency partners: Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Corrections (DOC), Department of Health Services (DHS), the Director of State Courts, and the State Public Defender. Each grantee responded appropriately to the grant announcement and was determined to meet the criteria for the program. The partner agencies recommended approval to the Attorney General and the Secretaries of DOC and DHS. DOJ thereafter accepted the recommendations and approved the grant awards.

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(d) Performance measures created by the department of justice for each grant program.**

DOJ's Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis (BJIA) uses performance measures, as well as outcome and impact measures, that incorporate the goals and objectives enumerated in Wis. Stat. § 165.95(3)(b) and (3)(f) for the Treatment

Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) program. The measures were informed from several resources, including the Wisconsin Adult Drug and Hybrid Performance Measures, published in 2016, along with draft measures for Diversion Programs developed in 2018 under the Evidence-Based Decision-Making Initiative. Ongoing performance measures include participant-focused goals centered on efforts to reduce the use of alcohol or other drugs, facilitate gainful employment or enhance education or training, provide stable housing, reduce in-program recidivism, and ensure payment of child support. Promoting public safety, reducing jail and prison populations, and reducing prosecution and incarceration costs, along with the primary focus of reducing recidivism by utilizing these performance measures continue to be long-term criminal justice goals.

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(e) Reported results from each grant recipient in each fiscal year as to the attainment of performance measures the department of justice developed for the grant recipient.**

To support the expansion of TAD and the tracking of both performance measures and program outcomes, BJIA utilizes the Comprehensive Outcome, Research, and Evaluation (CORE) reporting system to track participant-level data. This secure, web-based system supports more robust and expansive data collection and reporting on participants including tracking key participant characteristics such as education, employment, housing stability, and child support status, both at the time of admission and discharge from the program, as well as various indicators such as demographics, risk level, drug/alcohol use, and related factors. In addition, the system tracks ongoing interventions throughout the program such as the frequency and results of alcohol and drug testing, participant attendance at status hearings, use of incentives and sanctions in response to behavior, attendance at treatment or other services, and changes in key areas such as education and employment.

BJIA has continued to develop data reports for the TAD program based on the data collected through the CORE application. The data continue to be cleaned and summarized to provide an overview of the participants across all TAD sites as part of ongoing program monitoring, including characteristics of program participants such as demographics, program status, and related information. This work will help support routine reporting of this information in annual TAD program progress reports available on the DOJ and CJCC websites. A total of 1,233 participants were entered by local sites into the CORE Reporting System with admission dates in state fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) and funded by TAD. This included 532 admissions to treatment courts, and 701 admissions to diversion programs.

**Drug Court Grants, Wis. Stat. § 165.955**

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(a) The amount of each grant awarded in the previous year.**

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(b) The grant recipient to whom each grant was awarded.**

\$203,770 Marinette County

\$139,000 Marquette County

\$157,230 Trempealeau County

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(c) The methodology used by the department of justice to choose grant recipients and to determine the level of grant funding for each grant recipient.**

The methodology used by DOJ to choose grant recipients and to determine the level of grant funding for each grant recipient is the same as that for the TAD projects under Wis. Stat. § 165.95.

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(d) Performance measures created by the department of justice for each grant program.**

The TAD performance measures and evaluation process are being applied to these three grant awards.

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(e) Reported results from each grant recipient in each fiscal year as to the attainment of performance measures the department of justice developed for the grant recipient.**

The reported results from these grant recipients will be included in required reports as part of the TAD program. In addition, these programs will also use the CORE reporting system to track participants.



**Child Advocacy Grants, Wis. Stat. § 165.96**

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(a) The amount of each grant awarded in the previous fiscal year.**

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(b) The grant recipient to whom each grant was awarded.**

\$17,000	YWCA of Rock County
\$17,000	Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin – Milwaukee
\$17,000	Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center
\$17,000	Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin – Kenosha
\$17,000	Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin – Fox Valley Child Advocacy Center
\$17,000	Family and Children’s Center – Stepping Stones
\$17,000	Family Service of Waukesha
\$17,000	Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin – Wausau
\$17,000	Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin – Chippewa Valley Child Advocacy Center
\$17,000	Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, Inc.
\$17,000	Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin – Racine
\$17,000	Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin – Walworth
\$17,000	Green County Human Services
\$17,000	Marshfield Clinic – Child Advocacy Center
\$17,000	Lakeshore Regional Child Advocacy Center

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(c) The methodology used by the department of justice to choose grant recipients and to determine the level of grant funding for each grant recipient.**

Wis. Stat. § 165.96 identifies the agencies that receive funding and sets the award at \$17,000 per agency.

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(d) Performance measures created by the department of justice for each grant program.**

Subgrantees must submit semi-annual program reports. The program reports must contain client demographics, number of victims served, milestones accomplished by the program, barriers to providing services, and any additional resources or technical assistance that would better enable the project to achieve its objectives.

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(e) Reported results from each grant recipient in each fiscal year as to the attainment of performance measures the department of justice developed for the grant recipient.**

**YWCA of Rock County** used funds to support one of two Child and Family Advocates at the CARE House. The Child and Family Advocate position assists and facilitates child advocacy services, including interview coordination, victim/family intake, and assists the team in the interview process. This staff member is also a trained Forensic Interviewer. CARE House has continued to develop partnerships with the multidisciplinary team through this project, including plans to host a regional Anti-Human Trafficking Conference in 2024. CARE House provides advocacy at SANE exams and has coverage for forensic interviews 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. CARE House has seen an increase in the number of referrals around internet crimes against children and cases involving production and distribution of child sexual abuse materials.

**Children's Hospital of Wisconsin – Milwaukee** continued to use funds for three Pediatric Nurse Practitioners and one Advanced Practice Provider to support medical peer review sessions and to offer continuing medical education sessions. Medical peer review helps to ensure medical staff uses best practice in their medical evaluations, allows discussion of complex patients, maintains providers' knowledge of changes in the field of child abuse pediatrics, and facilitates coordination of patient care between inpatient, outpatient, and on-call child abuse medical providers. Milwaukee CAC serves a primarily urban and multi-ethnic population. Approximately 49 percent of clients served identify as Black or African American and nearly 50 percent of clients served live in economically disadvantaged areas of the city and are medically underserved. In addition, this year the MCAC has seen a need for an increase in the multidisciplinary collaboration around patients seen for concerns of sex trafficking and drug endangerment.

**Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center - Madison** used grant funding for case tracking, coordination, and evaluation of child abuse cases. Data collection includes not only information about families served, but also about offenders and case

outcomes. Data is used to identify underserved populations, service needs, and trends. This was accomplished through a partially funded Data Analyst position and a portion of funding of the Executive Director salary. Data gathered from the last available reporting period indicated that Safe Harbor served 434 children and 446 caregivers, which was an increase from previous years. There was a 11 percent increase in the number of teens served during that time period, which highlighted the need for additional mental health resources, as this continues to be a significant barrier for families experiencing trauma in Dane County and surrounding counties.

**Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin – Kenosha** used funds to support the salaries of the Forensic Interviewer and Nurse Practitioner at the Child Advocacy Center. Throughout the year these individuals participated in numerous quality assurance activities such as weekly peer review, supervision, case review with multi-disciplinary team members, and training to increase and enhance skills. These opportunities also have enhanced community partnerships, including monthly meetings with Anti-Human Trafficking workgroups, Sexual Assault Response Teams, and Organizational Review Committees. The multifaceted impact of the opiate crisis has been demonstrated by the cases seen at the CAC, highlighting continued gaps in mental and behavioral health resources.

**Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin - Fox Valley Child Advocacy Center** used funds to support their Forensic Interviewer and Manager to improve their multidisciplinary response. Enhanced coordinated response to child maltreatment cases leads to improved safety for children. In the last year, FVCAC has moved to a new clinic space that allows for additional capacity, including an extra forensic interview and medical examination room. The program also added a Child Life Specialist. Although the mental health waitlist has decreased for the provider within FVCAC, there continues to be extensive waitlists for external mental health providers. In addition, multi-disciplinary team partners are experiencing high turnover rates, which is impacting the criminal justice and child welfare response and level of training needed from the FVCAC staff. Local court systems are still experiencing significant delays as a result of the pandemic.

**Family and Children’s Center – Stepping Stones** used funds to support their Coordinator of Child Advocacy Center Services to ensure that goals are met through supporting staff, pragmatic implementation and oversight, and providing direct services to children and families as needed. Stepping Stones is designed to ensure that children have their physical, emotional, and mental health needs met during an investigation of child maltreatment. Activities of the Coordinator include providing educational and professional development opportunities for staff and multi-

disciplinary team partners, overseeing quality assurance activities, and increasing knowledge of the benefit of medical evaluations and mental health referrals. This year, the Advocate/Forensic Interviewer was asked to speak at a National Conference. In addition, community partnerships with medical providers were expanded through education on the importance of evidence collection and earlier identification on physical health concerns that may be related to child maltreatment.

**Family Service of Waukesha** used funds to support the Program Director and Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Coordinator positions. Due to some program transitions, the Program Director has had to engage in direct services over the last project period. The MDT Coordinator position was restructured this year to elevate skill requirements and increase pay. Together these positions provide educational presentations, coordination of appointments with the multi-disciplinary team, and program direction. The Program Director facilitates monthly multi-disciplinary case reviews and recently reviewed and updated the Memorandum of Understanding for the Waukesha County multi-disciplinary team. Family Service of Waukesha completed the Drug Endangered Children Protocol in the last year and is working towards training multi-disciplinary teams on this protocol across the service area. This program is also seeing increased identification of mental health needs coupled with a shortage of resources and providers. In addition, they are seeing a rise in the percentage of children served who have a developmental disability.

**Children's Service Society of Wisconsin – Wausau** used funds to support one Forensic Interviewer and one Advocate Case Manager who provide support for children alleged to be victims of child abuse or maltreatment in Marathon County and North Central Wisconsin. These positions also participate in peer review, case review and multi-disciplinary team meetings, provide advocacy to children and families including mental health and medical referrals, and provide training and technical assistance to multi-disciplinary team members, professionals who work in the field, and the community. This Child Advocacy Center sees approximately 400 children a year from more than 18 counties or tribes and 48 different investigative agencies. Wausau is continuing to see an increase in children experiencing drug endangerment and exposure to domestic violence. Due to a rise in identified mental health issues, the CAC model was restructured to better integrate mental and behavioral health services.

**Children's Service Society of Wisconsin – Chippewa Valley Child Advocacy Center** used funds to support the salaries of a full-time Forensic Interviewer and Advocate Case Manager/Forensic Interviewer. These positions provide children and youth who may have been victimized with an opportunity to disclose their experience

in a comfortable, child-friendly, trauma-informed environment. The facilitation of a cohesive multi-disciplinary child abuse investigative and response team promotes the best care for children and their families during a crisis in their lives. Children and families benefiting reside in the northwestern part of the state of Wisconsin—primarily Eau Claire, Chippewa, and Dunn counties—as well as an additional 13 surrounding counties. In the last available reporting period, 231 Forensic Interviews were conducted at this Child Advocacy Center, despite a long period of vacancy for this position. Advocacy services were also provided during almost all of these appointments. CVCAC has seen an increase in the number of children seen for sexual abuse against female identifying children. During the reporting period, 66 percent of children seen were females with a concern for sexual abuse.

**Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, Inc.** used funds to support the salaries of the Program Supervisor/Forensic Interviewer in addition to funding training opportunities for staff on child maltreatment and supplies to support programming and forensic interviewing. This project also covered membership to the National Children’s Alliance and CACs of Wisconsin, prevention education materials, and supplies for crafts for children to use while waiting during appointments. The Program Supervisor is responsible for facilitating specialized local trainings for staff and multi-disciplinary team members as well as monthly case review and bi-weekly peer review to improve investigations of child maltreatment. Willow Tree Child Advocacy Center averages around 500 forensic interviews and 200 medical evaluations each year, provides prevention education to over 9,000 students, and reports seeing a decrease in the average age of children served, with a majority of children served being five-years old or under. In addition, this CAC is committed to serving the Oneida and Menominee Tribes.

**Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin – Racine** used funds to support the Forensic Interviewer and Health Tech/CAC Clinic Assistant positions to enhance provision of trauma-informed care throughout the appointment process. Quality assurance activities under this project included time for the Forensic Interviewer to participate in and coordinate peer review, multi-disciplinary team meetings, and case review. The Clinic Assistant is responsible for safety rounding, information sharing, and checking in and providing support and comfort in the waiting room. The Racine CAC is continuing to see statewide trends in the impact of the opiate crisis on child maltreatment and also the gaps in access to mental and behavioral health services.

**Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin – Walworth** used funds to support the Program Manager position and efforts to explore, identify, and overcome the relationship obstacles faced by the Walworth County multi-disciplinary team. Due to

challenges faced with leadership turnover at partner agencies, there has been an identified need for re-establishing communication and coordination efforts. Over the next year, this CAC will be working on building a joint protocol that will outline best practice standards with the multi-disciplinary team. Despite the challenges faced by Treehouse CAC, staff continue to provide trauma informed forensic interviews, advocacy, and medical evaluations. The Forensic Interviewer at this CAC is a member of the statewide training team for the Wisconsin Forensic Interview Guidelines. This CAC is also identifying a trend of identification of drug endangered children (DEC). To address this, in November, Walworth County hosted the National DEC Alliance for a statewide training.

**Green County Human Services** used funds to support the center's Child Advocacy Center Coordinator position. This position strengthens collaboration with the multi-disciplinary team consisting of the District Attorney's Office, medical professionals, law enforcement, social services, and victim advocacy providers in response to allegations of child abuse, domestic violence, trafficking, and child witnesses to crime. This coordinated effort helps to ensure that children receive services that are trauma-informed, child-focused, and conducted in a timely and professional manner. The coordinator also performs forensic interviews, manages training for forensic interviewers, facilitates case reviews and peer reviews, and attends Wisconsin Chapter meetings. In the last year, Green County CAC expanded their physical space and capacity to serve their community and surrounding communities, demonstrated by a 41 percent increase in referrals. They have also improved the medical response to child maltreatment by adding another hospital system to their protocol. This CAC is also experiencing an increase in the number of children seen for internet crimes related to sexual abuse.

**Marshfield Clinic – Child Advocacy Center** used funds to support the Triage Coordinator position that tracks and maintains quality standards within the CAC. Tracking of efforts and services provided in the MCAC and Hayward Satellite helps to identify unique needs of vulnerable populations in the service areas, variation in outcomes in these populations, and the impact of quality improvement initiatives. A new tracking system was developed and utilized over the last project period to ensure that services provided are high quality and have positive impact on the community. This county is also experiencing an increase in identification of children impacted by drug endangerment.

**Lakeshore Regional Child Advocacy Center** used funds to cover rent of leased space, which is required to provide the core CAC services of advocacy, forensic interviews, and medical evaluations. Lakeshore CAC has already served over 3,000

children since its inception in 2015 and is seeing an increase in the volume of cases referred from the Manitowoc County regions. This CAC covers and serves a four-county area of the state. During the grant period, the CAC collaborates across a variety of efforts within these counties, including sexual assault and domestic abuse response teams, human trafficking task forces, and drug endangerment task forces. During the project period, Lakeshore CAC worked to finalize the Washington County Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Protocol. Over the next year, Lakeshore CAC will be working to transition the Sheboygan Police Department satellite into a full CAC.

**Beat Patrol Officers Grants, Wis. Stat. § 165.986**

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(a) The amount of each grant awarded in the previous year.**

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(b) The grant recipient to whom each grant was awarded.**

\$121,434	Beloit Police Department
\$121,434	Green Bay Police Department
\$121,434	Kenosha Police Department
\$126,714	Madison Police Department
\$121,434	Manitowoc Police Department
\$126,714	Milwaukee Police Department
\$121,434	Racine Police Department
\$121,434	Sheboygan Police Department
\$121,434	Wausau Police Department
\$121,434	West Allis Police Department

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(c) The methodology used by the department of justice to choose grant recipients and to determine the level of grant funding for each grant recipient.**

As directed by statute, eligible grant recipients are identified based on the highest rates of violent crime index offenses in the most recent full calendar year for which data is available under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, among cities with a population of 25,000 or more. Funds may only be used to support the salary and fringe benefits of officers assigned primarily to conduct beat patrol operations. The amount of each award was originally established by the two largest eligible cities. Milwaukee and Madison were each awarded the maximum amount permitted in the legislation (\$150,000) with the remaining funds divided among the remaining eight eligible jurisdictions. Subsequent state budget reductions resulted in prorated cuts to each of the eligible jurisdictions.

Beat Patrol project eligibility for calendar years 2022, 2023, and 2024 were established in 2021, using 2020 Uniform Crime Report data.



**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(d) Performance measures created by the department of justice for each grant program.**

The Department requires each grant recipient to report the identity of the officers assigned to receive the funding from the grant award on a quarterly basis, and attest that they are performing beat patrol activities.

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(e) Reported results from each grant recipient in each fiscal year as to the attainment of performance measures the department of justice developed for the grant recipient.**

Each agency reports crime and arrest data to the Uniform Crime Report program, but no specific performance data has been developed. As this program is based on violent crime rates and not linked to specific performance or outcome measures, no results are directly attributable to the officers funded by the beat patrol program.

**Youth Diversion Programs Grants, Wis. Stat. § 165.987**

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(a) The amount of each grant awarded in the previous year.**

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(b) The grant recipient to whom each grant was awarded.**

\$96,200	Boys and Girls Club of Green Bay: Brown County Ties
\$96,200	Kenosha County Department of Human Services: Gang Reduction Project
\$320,400	Social Development Commission (Milwaukee): Youth Services Gang Diversion Program
\$281,600	Social Development Commission (Milwaukee): ATODA and Mental Health Services Program
\$96,200	Racine Family YMCA: Young Leaders Academy
\$63,400	City of Racine Police Department: Mayor’s Gang Collaborative

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(c) The methodology used by the department of justice to choose grant recipients and to determine the level of grant funding for each grant recipient.**

The recipients of these grants have been historically established in the legislative process. The legislation establishes the original amount to be awarded. Subsequent budget rescissions resulted in a pro-rated reduction to each project as reflected in the award amounts identified above.

**Wis. Stat. § 165.25(10m)(d) Performance measures created by the department of justice for each grant program.**

Performance measures for recipients of this grant program cover multiple factors that protect against risk behaviors such as delinquent behavior. Protective factors measured include increased school attendance, improved family relationships, and decreased substance abuse. Additional measures are determined by each recipient specific to the goals and objectives they set at time of application and reported to DOJ in program reports.

**165.25(10m)(e) Reported results from each grant recipient in each fiscal year as to the attainment of performance measures the department of justice developed for the grant recipient.**

### **Boys & Girls Club of Green Bay: Brown County Ties**

The Brown County Ties project is a gang diversion initiative targeting Brown County youth that involves close collaboration between a local youth service agency and law enforcement. The Boys & Girls Club of Green Bay's professional youth development staff identify at-risk youth and link them to structured programs that provide positive social activities. Project activities include educational, recreational, and employment readiness programs. Programming emphasizes good character, leadership, health, and life skills while developing resilience to gang influences, alcohol, drugs, and other risk behaviors. Special outreach efforts are made to engage youth populations who are susceptible to recruitment by gangs. The Boys & Girls Club partners with the Green Bay Police Department to establish a positive relationship between youth and law enforcement officers during community-based activities.

This year, the project included hands-on activities that targeted a variety of risk and protective factors for delinquency and gang involvement. Youth participated in activities that taught them life skills related to mental, emotional, and physical health including ways to cope with stress, how to be a good friend, and how to explore their values. Other programs provided education related to science, technology, engineering, art, and math; and programs to support youth education and careers including homework help and job readiness. A total of 2,457 youth participated in the program during the last fiscal year.

One of the goals of the program was to engage high-risk teens in project-based group work designed to develop protective factors, skills, and increase community connections. Towards this goal, the Boys & Girls Club facilitated several service-learning projects at local nonprofits for participating youth. As a result of the service-learning projects, 83 percent of participating youth stated they could see themselves in a helping career and 67 percent believe they can change their community.

Three challenges arose during the project. Organizationally, the agency experienced staffing challenges due to growing enrollment and high participation from returning youth. The Boys & Girls Club raised their starting wages and prioritized attracting and hiring high-quality youth development professionals. The community in which the Club is located experienced an increase in gun violence. As a response, the Green Bay Police Department invested in technology to detect gunfire, the City of Green

Bay planned to develop a violence interrupter model, and the Club installed fencing around the outdoor play areas and green spaces to provide a safer environment for participating youth. Lastly, project staff observed high intensity emotional and behavioral needs among project youth during the latter half of the year. In response, project staff complete a trauma-informed intensive training and have developed an action plan to provide trauma-informed responses, increase family engagement, and expand therapeutic services.

On a community scale, the project and its partnerships contributed to decreased gang involvement and an overall reduction in criminal and risk behaviors among the population of high-risk youth served. Throughout state fiscal year 2023, more than 2,400 youth accessed project activities and programs. Project youth logged over 980 hours of volunteer service to make their community a better place, all while forming positive connections with local nonprofits including, We All Rise, the Golden House, and the Wisconsin Humane Society. 100 percent of project teens completing the annual survey reported that they abstained from using marijuana, and 97 percent abstained from drinking alcohol. A total of 85 percent or more of project youth reporting having meaningful relationships with positive adults, and 92 percent felt accepted for who they are. Additionally, 72 percent of project teens believe they will finish college. Moreover, 54 percent stated that they feel safer at the Club than anywhere else, along with the 40 percent of project youth who feel as safe at the Club as other places in the community.

### **Kenosha County Department of Human Services: Gang Reduction Project**

The Kenosha County Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services partnered with two community-based organizations to provide gang prevention and intervention services to at-risk or gang-involved youth. Services are designed to reduce gang risk, involvement, and delinquent behavior, and increase participation in prosocial activities. Local youth serving agencies including schools, juvenile intake services, law enforcement, and family members referred youth to the program. Program staff assessed youth's risk of gang involvement and provided gang diversion programming, educational and recreation activities, and family engagement services.

Parents were apprehensive about home visits from program staff this year. The program provided other options including in office and telephone visits to maintain parent engagement and address their concerns. Additional challenges stemmed from the lack of structure in homes during the summer months. Staff increased their

outreach and calendar coordination efforts to ensure that clients continue to participate in the program during the summer months.

A total of 55 youth were served by the program during the past state fiscal year. 26 of the youth exhibited an increase in school attendance and 10 had improvements in their employment status. Through its educational and incentive-based programming, the project continues to successfully create positive change. 96 percent of participating youth did not commit a new offense while in the program. Of the 31 youth that successfully closed out of the program, 94 percent reduced or did not increase their gang risk score, 87 percent improved attendance at school, and 80 percent increased their grade point average. In addition, 82 percent of all youth enrolled participated in incentive-based recreational activities, 29 percent participated in employment-related activities, and an average of 15 percent obtained employment while in the program.

### **Social Development Commission: Youth Gang Diversion**

The Social Development Commission (SDC) Youth Services Division implements best practices and evidence-based models to benefit youth who are involved or at-risk of becoming involved in the juvenile justice system. SDC continues to work with schools and community groups to offer a series of prevention workshops in small groups and through virtual meet ups. The workshops are designed to encourage youth engagement and conversations about how behaviors affect the lives of individuals, families, and the community. SDC's strategy is to develop alternative approaches that keep youth safe, healthy, and positively engaged as they cope with trauma.

SDC provided multiple services to youth throughout the year. In the summer, SDC organized recreation opportunities for youth and their peers including basketball leagues. In the fall, SDC hosted a workshop series on Youth Empowerment for youth and parents. The workshops included discussions about gang diversion as well as positive alternatives to gangs such as employment, positive social groups, and business start-ups. Gang prevention workshops within schools teach topics like decision-making skills, conflict resolution, and self-care.

In addition to regular workshops, SDC provided court advocacy and support to youth. SDC helps young people complete their community service projects as a form of diversion.

A total of 2,239 youth were served by SDC's Youth Gang Diversion programming. 54 percent of participating youth reported that they had a greater understanding of the negative impacts of gangs. (While this number appears somewhat low, a number of

youth opted not to complete the survey, thus decreasing the percentage of youth reporting benefits—*i.e.*, 46 percent of youth either did not respond to the survey or reported that they did not learn anything from the workshop).

### **Social Development Commission: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Abuse Prevention**

The Social Development Commission provides prevention and intervention programs. The program provides youth with information and resources that help them avoid substance abuse. This is especially important due to the disconnection youth continue to experience because of the pandemic. SDC's Counseling and Wellness Clinic, along with its Youth Services staff, plan and implement interactive workshops that help youth develop resilience and address substance abuse issues.

In addition to providing youth with access to prevention and treatment, SDC hosts activities for parents and family members to learn mindfulness strategies. These strategies help parents cope with stressors, support their children, and navigate the changes in the world today.

During the past fiscal year, the project provided prevention educational sessions to community organizations as well as in middle and high schools. The workshops provided youth with an in-depth look at how alcohol and other drugs impact individuals, families, and communities.

A total of 2,154 youth were served during this past year. These youth received educational resources and information concerning alcohol use disorders and their impact on individuals, families, and communities. SDC provided workshops in schools on topics such as anger management and conflict resolution.

In consultation with the youth advisory board and other program youth, SDC developed programming to meet the needs of youth, including healthy vs. unhealthy relationships and job readiness programs. Client surveys were conducted and showed that more than 89 percent of clients rated SDC's services "excellent" and that they learned something new that could assist them. SDC's prevention services educate youth and families about the destructive impact of substance abuse on individuals, families, and their community. The services provide tools to individuals to advocate for improved treatment services.

### **Racine Police Department: Youth Gang Diversion**

The City of Racine partners with SAFE Haven of Racine and Racine Vocational Ministry (RVM) to provide specific intervention services to mitigate the adverse

impact of gang membership and affiliation. RVM and Safe Haven provide specific gang diversion services. Through a collaboration with school administrators, human services staff, and youth counselors, the program develops a network of services to strategically engage the target population. RVM assists with cognitive intervention to abate antisocial cognition and supply employment opportunities for at-risk youth and gang members who are released back to the community from the Department of Corrections.

RVM tailored its programs so that clients are directed toward the program that will serve them best. Core services are intake, case management, life skills training, job search training, transportation assistance, employment advocacy and placement, education support, and resume assistance. The Second Chance program offers cognitive interventions specifically directed to high and medium-high risk gang-affiliated clients. Those who are lower on the evidence-based risk scale receive walk-in services geared towards job readiness, employment, understanding U.S. business culture, and healthy civic engagement. All services are geared towards achieving outcome measures that reduce crime and recidivism. The goal of the practices is to foster prosocial activities and relationships through employment, a healthy circle of associates, and supporting client participation in community events and family building activities.

Over the summer, at-risk and system-referred youth were engaged in strength-based leadership programming both in groups and one-on-one. Early in the year, the number of clients that returned for service and that gained employment increased. 87 percent of participants served during the past year were employed during their participation. Hiring levels were strong and employers were open to hiring people with issues in their background. Those who took the effort to get their soft skills in order were successful at getting jobs and maintaining employment.

While overdoses, suicides, and domestic violence situations rose in March and April 2019, they subsided during the project period. The program's emphasis on increased personal contact and coordination with probation and parole may have played a role in helping people stay safe and free of criminal habits. Program staff have intentionally maintained connections with clients, especially those with higher levels of mental health challenges.

The Racine Police Department's Youth Gang Diversion program has significantly reduced recidivism for participants. The program served a total of 222 youth this past year. RVM has maintained recidivism rates well below 50 percent of the state average for more than a decade, even though RVM only serves high and medium-high risk

offenders. In addition to reduced recidivism, the program assessed and identified other areas of positive change for their participants. RVM participants saw positive improvement in clients' education, employment and financial situation, peer associations, and criminal attitudes and behavioral patterns. These areas of growth demonstrate the efficacy of RVM's strong support system and tools. The SAFE Haven youth diversion programming has similarly produced long lasting and positive benefits through mentoring relationships and guidance. The youth increased their confidence, problem solving skills, and active-listening techniques.

Programs provided within secure institutions saw strong attendance, good partnership with the institutional staff, and a desire from participants to genuinely engage in programming. The advantage of pre-release interventions is the increased opportunity to build prosocial relationships that increase the odds of youth incorporating prosocial cognitive growth as a part of their recovery post-release. RVM's cognitive services deeply intervene in the processes of anti-social thinking and behavior which are the pathways to criminal activity. RVM's recidivism data shows that the participants in this project are returning to prison at lower rates. In general, RVM participants are not committing new crimes, not returning to prison, and instead investing in their families and their local neighborhoods. Many are participating in several pro-social activities they have never participated in before (church, jobs, children's lives, etc.). Clients are becoming part of the fabric of our pro-social community, one participant at a time. RVM's recidivism rates for the past year were 1 percent for one year, 4 percent for two years and 13 percent for three years. State averages are 15 percent, 23 percent and 32 percent, respectively.

The funds for this project introduce and immerse at-risk youth in strength-based programming and mentorship, providing opportunities to build themselves, emerge as a leader, avoid risky behaviors, dedicate themselves to increasing education and vocation levels—thus positively impacting their homes, school, peers and community. This funding investment for at risk youth provides a positive impact on other system improvement strategies to make the community and residents safer.

### **Racine Family YMCA: Young Leaders Academy**

The Young Leaders Academy (YLA) is an annual, year-round academic, character development, and leadership training program for youth. The program consists of three age-based components dedicated to reversing the negative trend of low academic achievement and poor behavior of youth ages 7-18 from low-income communities in Racine. The YLA's mission is to nurture the development of leadership abilities and build the life skills of at-risk youth, empowering them to



improve the quality of their lives and assist them in becoming productive citizens. The YLA uses the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets as the foundation of its education and leadership philosophy. The Assets are a defined set of skills, experiences, relationships, and behaviors that help enable young people to develop into successful and contributing adults.

The program made significant progress towards achieving their goals and objectives during the past state fiscal year. Staff prioritized homework assistance during afterschool program sessions. The YMCA received positive feedback from parents and school instructors on the improvement of participant youth on their homework assignments. The Youth Leaders Academy staff utilized tools that promoted constructive use of time and commitment to learning. The program taught principles of personal responsibility throughout the school year and challenged youth participants to take a pledge to be in school except for illness or emergencies. Youth participated in group discussions to identify examples of good support and how support impacts young people's futures and explored topics including effective communication, boundaries, and expectations. Participants' parents reported significant improvement in at-home behavior and communication among siblings. The YLA program promoted personal responsibility, positive character, academic achievement, and goal setting. As a result, 100 percent of program participants participated in extended learning time programming after school and a majority of participants developed career-ready soft skills.

The YLA program partnered with the Credible Messengers program to help prevent youth from committing a criminal or delinquent offense. Credible Messenger staff engaged participants during after school program time to create positive relationships and discourage negative behaviors. YLA leadership worked to stay connected within the community to share extracurricular activities with program staff and families.

YLA identified two challenges: improving academic achievement and improving parental involvement. To improve academic achievement, the YLA program and Knapp Elementary partnered to create a new academic tutoring program that will take place during the day with YLA staff and after the school day, with honor society students acting as tutors. To improve parental involvement, YLA staff continued to provide program update reports, make themselves available to participate in parent-teacher conferences if invited, invite parents to observe the YLA program or meet to discuss their child's progress in the program, and participate in Open House events. YLA staff created additional family activities to increase parental engagement with

the YLA program and provide opportunities for parents to meet and develop positive relationships with other parents.

A total of 287 youth participated in the program this past year. 195 youth exhibited an increase in school attendance and 155 youth exhibited an improvement in family relationships. The Young Leaders Academy continued to grow its reputation for academic and leadership excellence as a premier after school program. The program reached its goal of improving the academic achievement of youth participants: 43 percent of Knapp Elementary School participants excelled in their schoolwork, including turning in schoolwork daily and improving or maintaining grades in core subjects. 92 percent of YLA participants had fewer than 5 percent absences during the 2022-2023 school year. The YLA achieved its second goal of promoting appropriate behavior of youth participants in school, home, and community settings. As a result of the program, 93 percent of YLA participants demonstrated appropriate behavior. The program helped provide a safe, structured environment for at-risk students in low-income communities to excel academically. The program provided educational support to the youth while helping to minimize behavioral issues at home and in the community.