ATTACHMENT 3

King County, Washington Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, Juvenile Division

Juvenile Detention Safety and Security Analysis

Final Report

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Submitted by
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Thank you, one and all, for helping us advance safety and security in juvenile detention.

—DSG Project Director Elizabeth Spinney

Contents

Background and Introduction

In summer 2022, King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention (DAJD) published Request for Proposals (RFP) No. KC000655 for an interested and qualified supplier to conduct a safety and security analysis of the County's juvenile detention facility, which is housed within the Judge Patricia H. Clark Children and Family Justice Center. Preliminary analysis of DAJD data had shown that although the overall number of young people in detention had decreased, there had been an increase in the frequency of aggressive and assaultive behaviors by young people in detention toward their peers and detention staff. DAJD determined that it would be beneficial to obtain an assessment by an external contractor. DAJD subsequently released the RFP to perform an analysis of the facility's safety and security and provide recommendations.

According to the RFP, the average number of young people in detention per day decreased by 15 percent from 2020 to 2021. During those same years, however, youth physical assaults on staff doubled, youth verbal assaults on staff increased by 33 percent, and youth assaults on other youths rose by 17 percent. In 2021, there were 91 incidents of youth-on-youth physical assault and 38 incidents of youth-on-staff physical assault. The increase in youth-on-youth and youth-on-staff assaults occurred at a difficult time when three situations converged: 1) the COVID–19 pandemic; 2) legislatively mandated changes to operations such as limitations in the use of restrictive housing (e.g., King County Ordinance 18637; Washington State House Bill 2277); and 3) a shift in the needs and experiences of young people in detention (i.e., young people are now staying in detention longer, have more acute needs, and require enhanced therapeutic and programmatic interventions to manage risks).

When the RFP was released, young people in detention were facing disrupted programming, periods without family visits, and high levels of stress and instability stemming from the economic and health impacts of the pandemic. Although the average daily detention population declined by more than 50 percent (from 52.7 to 22.4) between 2018 and 2021, the average length of stay in secure detention significantly increased. In 2021, the average length of stay was 38.2 days, nearly double the average of 19.2 days in 2018. The increase in the average length of stay was caused by a decrease in the number of youths with lower-level charges who receive shorter detention stays.

Staff also faced increased stress and health risks from the virus during this time, and staff shortages due to COVID–19 and high turnover meant demands on staff were greater. All these factors, plus others including the County's commitment to closing the youth detention center by 2025, have likely contributed to shaping an environment where some staff feel significant additional stress and uncertainty.

King County is not the only jurisdiction that has been confronted with increasingly frequent and persistent violent incidents in their youth detention facilities as the population of young people has decreased. Other jurisdictions in the State of Washington and other states have experienced similar challenges. Additionally, during the pandemic a rise in violent crimes involving young people—most notably gun violence and domestic violence—has led to an increase in the number of young people in the detention facility.

Through a competitive process, Development Services Group, Inc. (DSG), was chosen to conduct the analysis of safety and security in King County's juvenile detention center. DSG's two partners in this effort are Rolluda Architects, Inc., and Hyzer Group, LLC. The kickoff meeting was held on Dec. 12, 2022. The purpose of the *King County Juvenile Detention Safety and Security Analysis* is to analyze, identify, and recommend practical opportunities to decrease the number of violent incidents toward detention staff and young people in the detention facility. There are four tasks: 1) Review the history of threats and assaults at the detention facility since 2020; 2) review existing policies, procedures, and practices in the detention facility; 3) review national best practices and emerging promising practices from peer youth detention facilities; and 4) create recommendations to improve safety and security in the detention facility.

From Dec. 12, 2022, through Aug. 31, 2023, DSG developed data collection tools, met regularly with DAJD leadership, and collected and analyzed data and information related to safety and security. We reviewed and analyzed 1) DAJD policies, procedures, training modules, and reports; 2) data related to the youth population, behavioral incidents and responses, use-of-force events, and youth assaults on staff; and 3) staff demographics, tenure, training, turnover, and salaries. We also interviewed DAJD staff and administrators, young people in detention, other King County interested parties, and juvenile detention center leaders in seven peer jurisdictions.

Eight DSG team members visited the detention center for 5 days (Feb. 28–March 4, 2023). During the site visit, we held a second site kickoff meeting with DAJD leadership. We interviewed youths, staff, managers, and administrators. We reviewed videos of physical interventions. We observed shift tie-in meetings, meals, and unit/living hall programming. Additionally, we observed the 2-day defensive tactics training.

Overall, we completed 60 in-person and virtual interviews. We interviewed the following staff: eight corrections supervisors/shift supervisors, seven juvenile detention officers (including the president of the Juvenile Detention Officers [JDO] guild), three teachers, two restorative justice coordinators, one policy and procedures officer, one training coordinator, one mental health counselor, and one recreation coordinator. We interviewed 11 detained youths. We also interviewed administrative and managerial staff including DAJD Director Alan Nance, Interim Division Director Quanetta West, the chief of operations, the interim deputy division director, the juvenile program manager, and

the nurse manager. Other interviewed King County stakeholders and decisionmakers included the division chief and the juvenile operations manager of the juvenile division of the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the King County labor negotiator assigned to the King County juvenile detention center, the special projects manager of the *Care & Closure* initiative, and an investigator from the King County Internal Investigations Unit. Finally, we interviewed 14 individuals from juvenile detention centers in seven other jurisdictions. (For more information about the methodology, see the appendices.)

We held monthly meetings with the DAJD project team and leadership and submitted monthly reports to update DAJD on our progress. We submitted a draft final report on Sept. 25, 2023, which fulfilled the requirements for deliverable no. 9 (a "final report that identifies the process and the findings to assess and analyze safety and security practices," including "updated recommendations that are designed to improve safety and security within the CFJC detention facility"). This final report, deliverable no. 10, is the revised final report, which incorporates additional feedback from DAJD.

Major Findings

DSG presented the major findings of the safety and security analysis to King County on May 19, July 15, and August 18, 2023. The findings include both strengths and areas for improvement.

STRENGTHS

Many strengths related to safety and security in the King County juvenile detention facility emerged from our interviews, data analysis, and policy review.

Most youths reported feeling safe in the facility.

We interviewed 11 youths during our site visit on March 28–April 4. We asked several questions about safety. Overall, most youths reported feeling "very safe" in the different parts of the facility (see Figure 1). However, some youths only felt "somewhat safe" in certain parts of the facility, including on the living hall/unit and in the classroom, gym, and hallway. All youths indicated that they felt "very safe" in their own rooms. We asked, "Is there anyone you are afraid of here?" Ten of the 11 youths said they were not afraid of anyone.

Most youths reported having a staff member who cares about them.

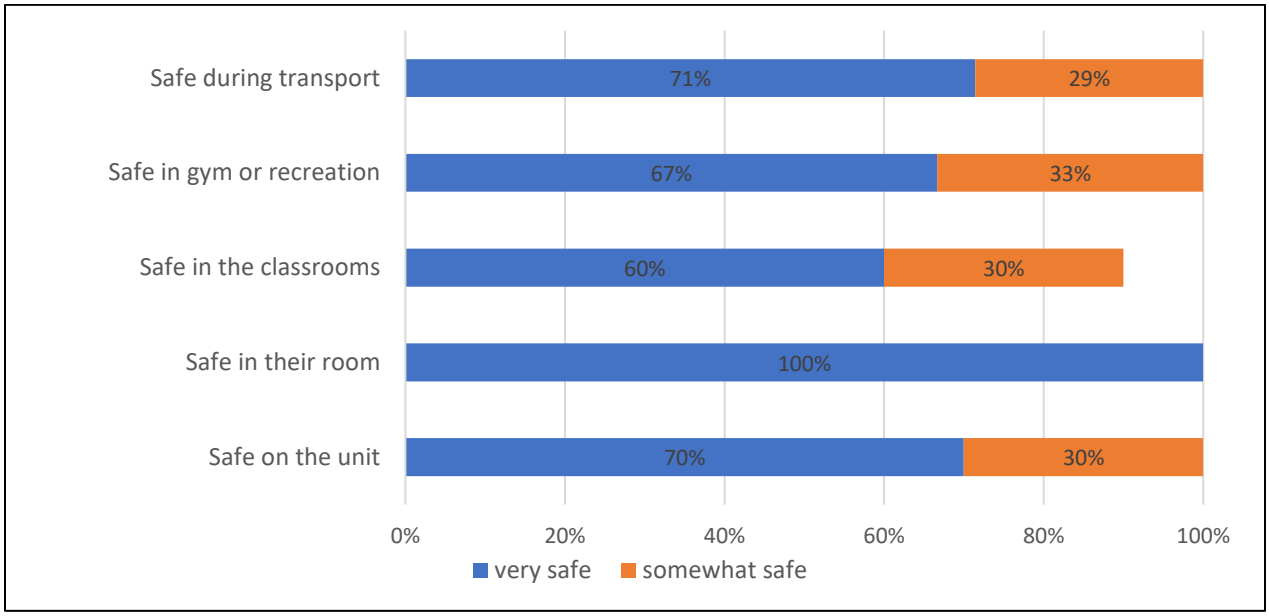
When asked, "Do you think the staff here care about you?" 64 percent of the interviewed youths said "most of them" care, and 36 percent said "a few of them" care. Positive comments included:

- "They come by and check on you, even if you're not on the unit. Staff are cool."
- "XXXX[1] is fair and engages with the kids. He shows the kids he cares."
- "XXXX talks to me about life lessons and give me advice."
- "I've never had run-ins with staff. Only a select few are only here for paychecks. Most are here because they want to be here."

Most youths indicated that they feel comfortable talking to staff and that they specifically prefer speaking with a JDO, professional supervisor, or mental health professionals.

[1] The staff person's name was omitted to maintain confidentiality.

Figure 1. Percent of Interviewed Youths Who Said They Feel Safe



N = 11 youths. The interviews were conducted in 2023.

The new Jail Management System that was installed to strengthen electronic recordkeeping is readily accessible and easy to navigate.

The implementation of the new Jail Management System (JMS) can potentially expedite the dissemination of critical information to staff. As with all new software programs, JMS should be refined to work out the "bugs," but it may substantially improve communication between staff by providing them with more immediate access to information essential for handling the youths. JMS was designed by one of the facility supervisors who understands the facility's unique needs, which should enhance the software's relevance and usability.

Staff are generally happy with their salaries and benefits.

Salary levels are competitive for the area, although similar opportunities with higher pay exist at other facilities, especially when the cost of living is considered (see Table 1). When we asked staff what they enjoy most about their work and why they stay at the King County juvenile detention facility, many respondents cited the pay/compensation, benefits, and manageable workload and hours.

DSG's analysis of human resources data found that JDOs employed by King County earn more in nominal dollars than juvenile detention staff with similar duties employed by other Washington State and County agencies. When accounting for the cost of living (using 2022 data from the Council for Community and Economic Research), King County JDOs have a base pay that is 59 percent higher than JDOs employed by the Washington

State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) who work at state-run facilities in areas near King County. In nominal dollars, however, King County JDOs have a slightly lower pay (10–14 percent) than juvenile detention staff employed by other western counties in the State of Washington (Pierce and Clark).

Table 1. Salaries in King County and Other Jurisdictions

	King County JDO	DCYF (King County) JRSO 1 (Security Officer)	Pierce County (Tacoma) JDO 2 (Swing Shift)	Clark County (Vancouver) JDO
Base Pay	$64,812.80	$40,812.00	$58,905.60	$52,062.40
COLI Figure	1.499	1.499	1.226	1.038
Adjusted Salary	$43,237.36	$27,226.15	$48,046.98	$50,156.45
Pay Difference from JDO Average Base (COLI-Adjusted Dollars)	–	- 37%	+11%	+16%

JDO = Juvenile Detention Officer; JRSO = Juvenile Rehabilitation Security Officer; DCYF = Department of Children, Youth and Families; COLI = National Cost of Living Index

Most staff who work with the youths report that they enjoy this work.

We asked staff what they enjoy most about their work and why they stay at the King County juvenile detention facility. Many staff whose shifts entail direct interaction with youths (e.g., on the living halls/units during the first and second shifts) mentioned working with the youths, interactions with youths and families, being a positive role model to youths, and helping youths change their lives.

One of the interviewees said:

> I've always liked working with the kids. I've never wanted to work with the adults. I like to see the change in the kids. I like to give them another perspective. Many of them have never been out of the state or had different experiences. Many of them don't even understand the different things they can hope for or experience.

The defense tactics training is well-run and helpful for new staff.

The Training Academy classes may not be available at the time new staff members are entering the system. In response to this issue, the facility developed on-site training that is delivered in a timely manner, so staff are prepared when they are assigned to the units to work with youths.

The defense tactics training curriculum is appropriate and addresses a variety of topics related to managing youths at the center. This initial training is by no means the only

training staff receive. They also complete built-in retrainings and reviews, which are critical for staff development and skill building. This approach to training is consistent with models used in detention centers nationwide.

The defense tactics training does a good job of incorporating the three key elements (prevention, crisis de-escalation, and physical intervention) to assist staff in managing youth behavior. Policies about this process are clear, and they are changed as needed or appropriate. The prevention component focuses on staff self-awareness and peer awareness. The major emphasis is getting to know your kids and building relationships. There are segments on adolescent development, mental health issues, empathy, and behavior management. The crisis de-escalation component focuses on teaching staff to set clear expectations, use appropriate assertiveness techniques, identify activators (also known as "triggers"), and diffuse tense situations. Understanding what is provoking a youth's behavior improves the likelihood of successful de-escalation. The physical intervention component uses a good hands-on approach that explains physical intervention techniques, models them, and provides opportunities to practice them.

It Is important to note that the center has had an excellent post-crisis intervention model, called "Restoration Hall." This model assists young people in moving forward by enabling them to experience a restorative process on a specialized unit. The model is not currently in place, but there has been discussion about reinstituting Restoration Hall, which the DSG research team fully supports.

The directors have experience in other systems, understand the role of trauma, and embrace a developmental approach to juvenile justice. Other managers and administrators also embrace a developmental approach.

When managers and administrators were asked why they believe violence is occurring at the facility, they mentioned the trauma that youths have experienced as well as stressful systemic and communal factors, such as a lack of resources, food insecurity, homelessness, abuse, improper guidance and authority, and parents or guardians who also have been traumatized. These circumstances can hinder the development of a youth's problem-solving skills and ability to address problems in a nonviolent, prosocial manner. Young people often have no one to help them navigate the complexities in their lives. Without appropriate and timely support, young people may spiral into increasingly harmful situations and become dysregulated. Incorporating trauma-informed and trauma-responsive principles, practices, and strategies is a best practice in juvenile justice systems (Baetz et al., 2021; Branson et al., 2017; Decker, 2019; DSG, 2022; Griffin, Germain, and Wilkerson, 2012; Sichel et al., 2019; Zettler, 2021).

Facility leadership understands the needs of the youths in their care and the influence of trauma on their behaviors. They also embrace a developmental approach to juvenile

justice. This approach recognizes that illegal acts committed by adolescents occur in the context of a distinct period of human development, when individuals are more likely to exercise poor judgment, take risks, and pursue thrills and excitement, all of which naturally results in a higher incidence of illegal behaviors (National Research Council, 2013). Facility leadership understands the research on adolescent development and the important role positive social contexts plays in healthy development. They also promote evidence-based approaches.

Another strength of facility leadership is the directors' experience in the King County justice system and in other systems. DAJD Director Allen Nance has three decades of criminal justice experience. In King County, he has overseen adult and juvenile programs, both residential and community based. He served in leadership positions within probation departments in DuPage County and Cook County, Illinois. In San Franciso, California, he led justice policy efforts and later served as Chief Probation Officer of the City and County of San Francisco. Interim Juvenile Division Director Quanetta West served as Deputy Director, Juvenile Division, Adult and Juvenile Detention, King County; as Division Director, Catholic Charities Housing Services, Greater Seattle Area; and as Director of Probation/Assistant Regional Director, Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice Services. Understanding how other systems work is strength: It can greatly enhance a manager's or administrator's ability to problem-solve in their own facility and interact with other systems that may offer services relevant to facility youths. Too often, overseeing the day-to-day operations of juvenile facilities can become an isolating experience, in which administrators and managers have little or no contact with other systems and with their peers in those systems.

The facility has capable staff at all levels, including new JDOs with sports coaching experience.

Given the significant physical, social, emotional, and psychological development that occurs during childhood and adolescence, the quality, expertise, and professionalism of detention staff are critically important (Clark, 2014). Recent hiring challenges in King County have led the center to become creative about recruiting needed staff. One of the positive outcomes seems to be a growing emphasis on hiring staff with experience as athletic coaches. Much like good teachers, good coaches are skilled at helping youths engage and develop in a positive direction. They tend to be goal directed and action oriented in their approach. Also, coaches often have the confidence and the reassuring presence that other new staff may lack. The National Institute of Corrections'(NIC's) *Desktop Guide to Quality Practice for Working with Youth in Confinement* lists the following characteristics of effective staff: leadership, flexibility, action oriented, balanced perspective, ability to express oneself clearly and authoritatively, strong listening skills, and ability to collect and analyze information that forms an overall long-range view of

priorities (Clark, 2014). Sports coaches most likely have developed these characteristics. As a result, they may be especially well equipped to assist facility youths in finding, and taking, practical steps to improve outcomes.

A dedicated team of teachers work with the youths.

When asked about school, most youths generally reported that it was helpful. Some mentioned that it was "easy," but only one felt that this was unhelpful. Some youths responded that the teachers were "empathetic" and "cool." Another youth said: "It's easier to do school here because I can focus. There are smaller classes and easy credit transfer." Another said: "They don't make us feel bad for not knowing certain things." Most of the youths want to be in school and shared that they are unhappy when the school day is shortened. One of the youths said: "School should not be optional." One interviewee said: "The teachers are cool. They are helpful. I have my GED, but I participate in school so I am not in my room." DSG obtained the perspectives of three teachers, who participated in an on-site focus group. The information we gathered indicated that the detention center teachers are dedicated to the youths and their educational progress.

Strong nursing, mental health, and psychiatric teams support the youths and staff.

The nursing, mental health, and psychiatric teams in place at the center are strong and are critical to meeting the youths' needs. They have been enhanced by a new behavioral health provider, replacing one that did not seem to meet the youths' needs. Many young people entering the center have not had adequate medical or mental health services in the community and have multiple problems. From assessment to intervention, these support services assist in stabilizing the youths and in preparing them for community-based services.

The nursing, mental health, and psychiatric professionals address everything from screenings for sexually transmitted diseases to medication management for mental health issues, to substance use screenings—which have proven to be particularly important given increased fentanyl use in the community. Medical and mental health issues may be at the heart of a young person's challenges and assaultive behaviors at home, in the community, or at the center. These teams play a crucial role in helping all staff understand the issues the youths are facing and how best to assist the youths in moving forward.

The building is new and clean.

Some of the interviewees described positive aspects of the facility's structure and accommodations that can help to foster a supportive and creative environment for the youths. The space is welcoming, with artwork displays. There is a great deal of sunlight. There is a large library. Small courtyards can be accessed from each unit.

The detention center is close to court.

One of the benefits of the facility in its current location is that it is attached to the courthouse, which makes getting youths to court far safer and easier. Most detention centers are separate from the courthouse, and youths must be transported in vehicles to and from court. Leaving a secure facility always opens the door for young people to consider possible ways of escaping or to act out when they are in a less controlled environment. Walking with staff through the secure corridor leading from the center to the courtrooms is clearly preferable to using outside transportation. When youths were asked in interviews how safe they felt going from one place to another, none of them said they felt "unsafe." Five of the seven youths said they felt "very safe" when being escorted, and two of the seven said they felt "somewhat safe."

A second benefit of this proximity to the courthouse is that young people can get to and from court in a very timely manner. This factor is important because going to court is the activity that elicits the most anxiety for youths, particularly when learning about the outcome of their case. Anxiety can easily turn to anger and aggression if they hear they will be returning to detention. Quickly moving youths back to the center where a host of staff and resources are available to assist them in managing the fallout of court decisions is far preferable to a meltdown in a cruiser on a highway.

CHALLENGES

Along with many strengths, DSG's analysis of safety and security at the juvenile detention facility identified several areas for improvement.

A strong 'us versus them' dynamic exists between management and Juvenile Detention Officers.

One of the more salient findings from interviews with staff, administrators, and other King County stakeholders is that there is a poor relationship between the Juvenile Detention Officers (JDOs) and the management. The staff have a pronounced issue with communication and trust. This problem has been referred to as an "us versus them" dynamic primarily between the JDOs on the one hand and the administrative and management[2] staff on the other, but the dynamic also involves some shift supervisors.

[2] "Managers" and "administrators" (and "management" and "administration") are used interchangeably in this section.

For example, staff feel administrators do not care about them and do not value their opinions. During interviews, DSG heard several times from JDOs that managers and administrators do not listen to them, or that when they do listen, the JDOs' opinions are not valued or acted upon. One of the JDOs said: "We have input, but it has no weight, and it is not valued." Another interviewee said:

> It's hard to respect the idea that you are an admin or a higher-up in management and you don't even come here to see or hear or listen. I'm not looking for a pat on the back. They should just know what's happening. They say this is their floor, but it's a lie. It's our floor. It would be nice if the people up there would come down here. [The new directors] don't even ask us how it's going. I can never voice our concerns with the management.

However, many of the administrators said that they *do* listen to staff, but staff do not acknowledge it. One administrator said: "They said they want us to spend more time with them, but then when we do, they complain that we're there." Also, administrators mentioned instances when they acted on JDO input, but after the input was implemented, the JDO guild fought against it.

Daily operations lack sufficient order and structure.

Staff do not do enough to manage the orderly movement of young people in the housing units and in other parts of the building. Staff are constantly dealing with disruptions because there is a lack of routine control. Doors are left open, and youths get out of their chairs without permission. Lack of orderly youth management leads to chaotic behavior, which can lead to conflict. One of the interviewees said:

> One of the biggest safety and security issues is that the kids shouldn't be wandering around the dayroom. The JDOs that do follow the rules are targeted because the others don't. This is not OK.

When asked, "How much have things changed since you first started working here?" another interviewee responded: "It was more enjoyable when they had more order." A supervisor said: "Everyone should train about what needs to be done and not what they want to do. There needs to be more consistency and expectations." Another supervisor said: "Kids need to know you are firm, fair, and consistent. Then the kids feel safer."

The youths even acknowledged the dangers of insufficient structure. For example, one of the youths who participated in a listening session in February 2023 (not led by DSG) said: "I'd rather be at a boot camp; that has a better structure than here. Detention has structure but it is the wrong kind of structure. We need structure."

Youths also noted the lack of consistency among staff members. Some youths commented that rule enforcement changes based on the staff member. The majority felt that rules were enforced inconsistently with contrasting expectations depending on the shift and

the staff. When asked, "Are rules enforced the same way by all staff members?" eight youths said "no," two said "yes," and one did not answer. One of the youths said:

> Every staff has different expectations. They are never consistent. If you're going to the library, one supervisor may say yes, but another may say no. Then it becomes an issue. Then staff gets played. It's chaotic.

This lack of structure has many implications, including risking safety and sacrificing opportunities for learning and programming. One of the interviewees said the following about restoration work with youths after a disciplinary incident:

> The JDOs aren't really doing it. The JDOs can't even control the unit, how can they do restoration? What took some of us years to learn, they are supposed to learn way too quickly, and they can't really keep up.

Youths do not receive enough programming.

Too often, young people are not engaged in enough programming, and staff place them in their locked rooms to keep them safe. Interviewees attributed this practice to insufficient staffing to run programs or supervise youths while they participate in them. Unfortunately, insufficient staffing is currently a challenge for juvenile justice systems and other youth-serving systems across the United States (e.g., Beard, 2023; Lyons, 2022; Miller, 2022; Person, 2023; Tab, 2022; The Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2023). Some other jurisdictions have specifically identified insufficient staffing as a contributing factor to worsening safety and security in detention facilities (Bischoff, 2023; Burton, 2023; Kentucky Tonight, 2023; Swift, 2022).

Before DSG's site visit, a series of listening sessions were held with youths and community partners to inform detention programming. Each session revealed the need for more programming. For example, one of the youths said: "I want to do stuff to better myself here; besides jail or downtime, I want things to help me grow; here we just play games and wait and chill; I don't learn anything, it doesn't help you." Another youth said:

> There should be request forms where you determine what you want to [do] while in detention and then they go find someone and reach out to people to help; people start programs but then they don't come back; there was someone who did art with us and I made this beautiful clay rose and I was proud of it, but then I never saw that rose again. I have done journal class but then haven't seen that again, art classes but then we never get the stuff.

Similarly, during DSG's site visit, staff and youths consistently mentioned a lack of programming, modified programming, and split programming as challenges to safety and security. One of the supervisors said: "It's frustrating for me to do a shift and see a

short schedule. This affects the kids on the unit because they have to do modified programming." One of the youths said:

> We go to school and participate in activities. But it is not at all predictable. Staffing can impact the schedule. We were in our rooms yesterday. School should not be optional. We need more programming.

A lack of programming can contribute to aggressive and assaultive behaviors in many ways. Programming serves a variety of purposes, including keeping young people busy so that they do not have time to think of unhealthy ways to express hostility. Programming can include activities that release emotional and physical tensions and can result in better interactions and relationships between youths and staff (Clark, 2014). Without these opportunities, young people have too much unstructured time, too much time alone in their rooms, and not enough opportunities to learn and grow, which can all increase tension and result in emotional outbursts and physical aggression.

Staff do not receive enough supervision and mentoring.

Analysis of JDO tenure suggests a potential loss of experienced JDOs with institutional knowledge. Also, experienced JDOs are more likely to work the third and fourth shifts and ARV, leaving more inexperienced staff to work directly with youths during the first and second shifts. New staff, who are most likely to work directly with youths, do not have enough supervision or mentoring. Also, most supervisors receive limited supervisory training other than PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act)-related training.

Similarly, interviews with JDOs and correctional supervisors indicated that correctional supervisors seem to have too many administrative duties to provide active, ongoing mentoring and supervision for staff, particularly new staff. Some of the interviewed supervisors said:

> We try to coach the staff that they can't be together in one spot; they need to split up. But we spend a whole lot of time as supervisors programming the kids as much as we can, and we don't have as much time to sit down and coach the staff.

> Supervisors are being drowned in paperwork (well, it's on the computer now). Administrative stuff takes us off the floor. There are too many clicks in the system for everything. When we do the restrictive housing, the supervisor has to enter the information, call the nurse, then the nurse writes a note, then the supervisor has to call mental health, then the nurse emails back to supervisor, then that information goes into the restrictive housing program. They won't give the mental health staff access to JMS.

> Yesterday we had 12 kids on restrictive housing. The supervisor has to check in individually with each of those kids.

> We have FTOs [Field Training Officers] that have been here only 1 year. Some of them are scared of the kids, and they're passing on the strategies that worked for them, but [they're] not great. These kids can feel the vibe. If they feel you're afraid of them, they will threaten them.

In the absence of routine supervision, staff tend to seek feedback from co-workers. This situation often leads to shortcuts and bad practices. It also creates an environment of low accountability for performance. Correctional supervisors should be a facility's best, most accessible, and most reliable sources of teaching and supervision. They should maintain an appropriate and consistent level of treatment for youths, and they should ensure that critical situations within the facility are handled effectively and consistently.

Experienced staff are unlikely to choose shifts requiring that they work directly with the youths.

Generally, the more experienced JDOs (i.e., those with 10+ years' experience) work the third or fourth shifts, or are assigned to the ARV (or other posts requiring little interaction with youths), leaving less experienced staff to the often more demanding and youth-focused work of the first and second shifts. The current shift assignment procedure allows JDOs to request shifts, with more experienced JDOs receiving priority. Findings from interviews indicate that a JDO with more seniority rarely or never chooses to work on a unit during shifts involving a great deal of youth interaction. Similarly, analysis of JDO shift assignments indicated that JDOs with more tenure are less likely to work on the first and second shifts, when a higher percentage of staff time is spent working directly with the youths. We found that 95 percent of staff with fewer than 2 years of service are working directly with youths on the first and second shifts. In contrast, only 23 percent of the staff with more than 20 years of service are working on the first and second shifts. (See Appendix 6 for more information about staff schedules.)

Too many youths are held for too long in the detention facility.

During the first 4 months of 2023, the facility's total average daily population was 38.1 young people, including 4.6 youths involved in adult court. The average length of stay for young people involved in adult court was 272.7 days.

Interviews suggest that defense attorneys intentionally attempt to continue, delay, and/or prolong cases to keep juvenile clients charged with serious offenses at the juvenile detention center, in an effort to avoid long-term placement in a state correctional facility. It appears that defense attorneys delay the cases of youths in juvenile detention who have been waived to adult court so they can make an argument for time served or a return to juvenile court jurisdiction for trial and sentencing under juvenile law and practice.

The fact-finding and resolution processes in court are taking much too long. There is a sense that defense attorneys must be more prepared than in the past, given the more

serious nature of the charges and the backgrounds of the young people being held in detention. Because of these factors, defense attorneys tend to spend more time on their cases; they may hire investigators and expert witnesses so they can put together a package that they hope will convince the prosecutors to reduce the charges or agree to a less consequential disposition. Sometimes, the outside experts do not provide more information than would a probation officer. However, waiting for their input delays the whole process. One of the interviewees said: "It's hard when a defense attorney is saying, 'I need this continuance because I need to do XY and Z to represent my client.' It's hard for a judge to jump in there and say, 'No, I'm not going to let you do that.'"

Although this practice may have some merit for clients under certain circumstances, in many cases it deprives clients of the longer-term treatment planning, ongoing mental health treatment, vocational opportunities, and individualized education services they would receive in a residential treatment center that is designed to provide rehabilitative services (usually run by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families for youths in King County). Young people who remain in detention for longer periods are in a state of continual limbo that frequently leads to regression in the areas of psychological maturity, mental health, and education. The detention facility only offers limited programming, which is geared toward the youths with short-term stays, who are the facility's target population. Juveniles should only be held in detention pending adjudication, disposition, and ultimate placement. In many cases these "strategic" delays are not in the best interests of juvenile clients. Attorneys may be "winning the battle" for these clients but "losing the war" as the youths are harmed by the very due process steps designed to protect them. The detention facility is also burdened with the care of these youths with longer-term needs, which interferes with the facility's ability to serve the young people completing short-term stays for whom the facility was designed.

Staff do not implement the behavior management system consistently.

Many of the JDOs and supervisors feel that there is a lack of meaningful consequences and not enough learning opportunities for young people who misbehave. Many interviewees commented that they felt powerless to address youths' misbehavior. For example, one of the supervisors said:

> Give us back our ability to work better with them on the floor. Back in the day, they would spend a few days in their room (though they would still come out for school, meals, and gym). But now they say that's not healthy for kids. When that was taken away, the staff assaults started happening. Give us back at least some kind of room isolation.
>
> When they said we couldn't use restrictive housing, we were able to take them to the Restoration Hall. We wanted them to focus on the issue separately [away from the other youths], so they weren't screaming through the vents, etc. They just need time to calm down. But then they said that was restrictive housing. But we never viewed it as

> punishment. It was our solution, and they took it away. Now, we have to work with them on the unit. It's too hard when the other kids can see and hear the kid [who has to go through the restoration process].

The well-discussed, recently established limitations on the use of room restriction/isolation have contributed to a feeling of "there is nothing that I can do" among many of the staff, which appears to have contributed to some staff ultimately feeling intimidated by and/or afraid of the youths. This dynamic is especially unsafe because empowered youths will take advantage of the situation. They will extract favors from other youths and assert their will in the units. The resulting lack of clarity about "who is running the unit" is extremely dangerous in a correctional environment.

Several architectural concerns adversely affect safety, security, and functionality.

Outdated design concepts and a constricted footprint have produced unfortunate consequences, including the following:

- The gymnasium is undersized, has a low ceiling, and is equipped with only one basket. Also, there is a protruding water fountain that should have been recessed.
- Living halls/units are well positioned in proximity to each other, but they have an elongated design with a dangerous double-tiering of bedrooms (see Figure 2). There are blind spots on every unit because of the location of the stairs leading to the second tier. Youths are situated far away from the staff desk when they are at their tables, which makes auditory supervision almost impossible.
- Group seating for meetings and television viewing on the units is arranged in a semi-circle of adjacent curved chairs, which encourages inappropriate physical contact and "horseplay." Youths are constantly going back and forth to their rooms for various reasons and their room doors often remain open.
- The lack of a designated dining space and the limited table space have led to youths sometimes eating with their plates on their laps in the units. Young people should be able to eat in an adequately designed and furnished dining hall that allows them to get out of the confines of their unit. Staff should be able to eat with the youths. Youths should not have to be locked down for staff meal breaks. These lockdowns for staff meals are written into union contracts and are an ongoing problem. Eating with the young people is a standard detention practice that enhances socialization and positive staff–youth interaction.

Figure 2. King County Detention Center

- Classrooms are contained within each living hall/unit because there is no aggregation of classrooms that would allow youths to get out of the units into a proper school environment where teachers could collaborate, and staff could readily supervise and interact with school activities as deemed appropriate. Teaching should only be done on the unit when assembling students in a designated school area would create potentially dangerous acting out.
- Units are too far away from the intake/visitation area (ARV) and nursing area.

Many unresolved maintenance issues adversely affect safety, security, and functionality.

The facility has experienced an unusually high number of physical problems for such a new building. Essential physical features and pieces of equipment break down or do not operate correctly (e.g., walls with holes, inoperable locks, malfunctioning doors, flooded units, showers that do not drain, broken phones, broken tables, nonfunctioning copiers). Consistent delays in addressing work orders means that fixing these issues takes too long.

Clarity is lacking about how the *Care & Closure* plan will affect staff.

In response to community calls for transformation within the legal system, King County launched a *Care & Closure* plan. One of the plan's goals is to close the juvenile detention facility. However, the *Care & Closure* plan's effects on staff are the "elephant in the room"; they are not being talked about in a meaningful way. As the projected closure date approaches, most staff are unaware of the status of the closure efforts. There is a lack of transparency regarding the direction the efforts are taking and the progress being made. Facility staff and non-facility staff at all levels are either uncomfortable talking about these issues, or they are unable to provide much detail about what will happen to staff. Serious doubt exists among staff concerning whether closing the facility is a realistic or even achievable goal. The lack of transparency about the looming closure is a significant barrier not only to program development, but also to staff recruitment and retention. Staff do not know whether they will have a job in the future. If staff are not made aware of how the facility's closure will affect them, and if they do not feel confident that King County is committed to their future, there is little hope of solving the significant issues facing the facility.

Incident reports in 2022 document situations in which staff on the units did not anticipate and prevent risky situations that eventually led to assaults on staff.

DSG examined data records and narrative reports for 11 youth-on-staff assaults in 2022. All resulted in the use of force to respond to the youths' aggression. In 8 of the 11 episodes, JDOs behaved in ways that either facilitated the escalation-of-force events, or at a minimum, failed to minimize the potential for violence and use of force. For example, the reports refer to youths running up to the top tier of the unit without permission,

youths violating the "red zone" with impunity, failure by JDOs to maintain lines of sight, and issues with the controls for opening and closing room doors (e.g., the controls are too easily accessed by the youths, who simply lean over the JDO's desk to activate them).

A pattern of blame, rather than ownership, appears prevalent within the facility.

Staff, administrators, and managers have many similar opinions about the major challenges in the facility. One of the managers/administrators said: "We do keep a lot of data ourselves and do analyze data ourselves. We can tell you a lot of our issues. We know we need training, staffing, and programming improvements." However, during the confidential interviews, many of the interviewees engaged in finger-pointing, thereby suggesting a lack of ownership for the facility's problems. When asked about the causes of the increase in youth-on-staff assaults, interviewees consistently found someone or something else to blame, and these causes were different depending on whether the interviewee was an administrator, manager, supervisor, or JDO; or held another role. Objects of blame included, among others, the guild, the administrators, politicians, defense attorneys, state laws, county laws, being short staffed, lack of consequences for youth misbehavior, not being able to use room confinement as a consequence, staff being too new and untrained, staff being too old and not wanting to work with the youths on the units, COVID–19, PREA, lawsuits, trauma, fentanyl, and "kids are different nowadays." A pattern of blame, rather than ownership, can be common in organizations facing stressful circumstances. However, this pattern greatly hinders an organization's ability to solve its problems effectively and accomplish its goals.

Recommendations

DSG has eight major recommendations for improving safety and security in King County's juvenile detention facility.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase the structure and predictability of youths' movements and activities.

To improve safety and security, the detention center must establish more order, structure, and predictability in day-to-day operations. Every shift should conduct daily operations and implement the behavior management system in the same way. Predictability in the schedule and in rule enforcement constantly reinforce that the staff are in charge.

Currently, the young people's daily lives are not structured enough, and staff have to deal with the youth misbehavior that results from this lack of structure. A residential program cannot provide a therapeutic or trauma-informed environment without providing the amount structure and order needed to create a sense of safety and a feeling of security for the youths.

Many of the comments made during interviews with peer jurisdictions related to structure, order, and consistency. One of the peer interviewees said: "The structure of the unit is crucial." Interviewees also mentioned the importance of using the behavioral management system consistently. One interviewee said: "Those are your bibles for survival, right? And it only takes one staff to waiver from that to impact your entire team." Additionally, the peer jurisdiction interviewees noted the importance of using staff meetings, shift-change meetings, and every other opportunity to rally the team and ensure consistency in implementing the behavioral management system. Peer jurisdictions sometimes referred to this emphasis on creating or restoring order and structure as a "back-to-basics" approach.

Staff running the units must be proactive to create the type of environment that will cause assaultive behaviors to decrease. The day-to-day movements of young people and staff on the units should be choreographed and coordinated so that every shift conducts the day-to-day operations in the same way. The day needs to be planned better and be more predictable. Daily operations should be documented in written protocols, and the protocols should be followed consistently. If youths feel that the schedule changes all the time and rule enforcement differs from shift to shift, they will experience a sense of uncertainty. By contrast, predictability in the schedule and in rule enforcement creates a sense of stability and constantly reinforces that the staff are in charge.[3]

[3] This daily routine may begin to negatively affect young people who are in the facility for very long periods. Such youths need individualized, evidence-based services and a schedule of more in-depth, diverse programming. Detention is not designed for long-term stays. Thus, we recommend a process for decreasing the time that youths with serious charges spend in detention (see Recommendation 5).

Some examples of specific recommendations to increase order are as follows:

- Youths should be assigned seats on the units. They should ask permission to get up.
- Seating arrangements should keep youths somewhat separate from each other and all facing in the same direction.
- Staff need to place themselves where they can effectively monitor youths. Direct supervision requires both visual and auditory monitoring, which is accomplished by placing staff correctly.
- Youths need time for normal adolescent activities as well. However, "horse play" on the units is unacceptable. Exercise and normal adolescent recreational activities should occur away from the units and away from school. Thus, programming opportunities must be expanded, especially large-muscle activities (see Recommendation 4). Youths cannot be expected to stay calm on the units if they are not provided opportunities elsewhere to engage in exercise and other normal adolescent development behaviors.

To successfully implement a more structured and orderly environment, more mentoring and supervision from shift supervisors are needed (see Recommendation 3). Staff understand this need as well. For example, one of the staff interviewees said:

> The FTOs [Field Training Officers] are too new. It's not just about the kid not being seated; it's having that confidence to enforce those rules. It's managing and having the structure. It takes a seasoned staff to create that structure. You need that consistent piece. You can't have rules you can't enforce. You need to build the skill set over time.

2. Make a concerted effort to improve management–staff relationships, especially between Juvenile Detention Officers and administrators.

The King County juvenile detention center is staffed by qualified professionals at all levels, but a healthy workplace culture and climate between JDOs and administration does not currently exist at the facility. A cloud of negativity hangs over the facility, created by a lack of communication, support, and engagement and by a significant "us versus them" dynamic between management and staff. One of the King County interviewees made the following comment about the JDOs: "There are some real morale and cultural things that come out as generalized frustration and distrust." Also, the guild's presence creates a certain inflexibility that hurts the administration's ability to react quickly to problems that arise.

A section on union and non-union staffing in secure juvenile facilities in NIC's *Desktop Guide to Quality Practice* states:

> The most significant issue in an effectively operating facility is not whether or how the staff is represented, but whether there is a positive culture that encourages collaboration between management and direct care staff and between staff and youth (Nelsen, 2014).

Research conducted on youth-serving programs has found that organizations function better when staff are satisfied with the workplace's culture and climate; and have meaningful opportunities to contribute to decision-making, share ideas, and voice concerns (e.g., Brown, Walters, and Jones, 2019; Dir et al., 2019). Input into decision-making, organizational fairness, and workplace cooperation all have a positive effect on staff morale (Minor et al., 2014).

One of the peer jurisdiction interviewees said:

> The time spent with the staff around getting them to a place of feeling better and feeling more empowered is really worth it…You're never going to get out of the gerbil wheel until your culture feels supportive and safe, and the staff feel that they have the tools and structure.

One characteristic of a healthy and successful program is management's ability to create a safe, caring, and supportive organizational culture that helps both youths and staff grow to meet their full potential. Policies, procedures, and practices should all be viewed through the lens of the culture that they create. Management must articulate the vision and model behavior through highly visible actions, so all staff are clear about what they are collectively trying to accomplish. Everyone—including the director, administrators, supervisors, JDOs, and support staff—should focus on meeting the needs of the youths in the program.

We recommend the following steps for administrators:

a) **Substantially increase the amount of time administrators and managers spend with the young people and staff on the floor, especially with staff.** This action would send a message to everyone about the administrators' priorities and commitment. It would give leaders firsthand information for assessing progress. It would also demonstrate to the staff that administrators have a genuine interest in the day-to-day life and well-being of the staff. The increase in shared time with staff can also give administrators and managers the opportunity to provide a broader view of the facility's goals and operations. Staff, administrators, and managers together should set goals for how many hours each week administrators are on the floor and together should track progress toward reaching these goals as well as any positive changes occurring from the increased interaction.
b) **Make efforts to create an environment that fosters open communication within every level and across levels.** Everyone needs to have a voice and an avenue to communicate. This communication needs to be direct and not filtered through the

guild. This open communication would empower everyone and would create a comfort level that would foster teamwork and unity.

c) **Form a staff advisory committee charged with providing ideas for improving facility conditions, youth safety, and staff well-being.**
This group should meet regularly to make suggestions to administration, and these gatherings should be in addition to the labor management meetings. The committee meetings should focus only on agenda items related to improving facility conditions, youth safety, and staff well-being; and should result in clear documentation of requests, responses, and progress made (similar to the current format for the minutes of labor management meetings). Requests and responses to requests should be clearly documented in writing. During interviews, DSG heard several times from JDOs that administration does not listen to them or that when they do listen, the JDOs' opinions are not valued or acted upon. However, many of the administrators said they do listen to staff, but staff do not acknowledge this. It is important that there be clarity about and buy-in for the staff advisory committee and its process. There must be roles for both administrators and JDOs.

d) **Create opportunities to highlight the successes, contributions, and ideas of JDOs and supervisors.** Staff morale plays an important part in the youths' success at the facility. Staff need to know that the administrators support them. Acknowledging the staff and highlighting their successes, contributions, and ideas would be a powerful driver in helping staff best meet the youths' needs. Several of the peer jurisdictions mentioned the importance of a morale committee or sunshine committee.

e) **Ensure similar interaction and engagement with support staff** (e.g., medical, mental health, educational). They must feel that they are equally vital team members whose voice is heard and valued and whose contributions are acknowledged.

These steps would represent a significant shift and would rely heavily on leadership's commitment to create a different vision for the future regarding the facility's workplace culture. The guild leadership should be involved as well. It is important to note that the steps are a long-term effort that requires commitment and consistency. One of the interviewees from a peer jurisdiction said: "None of this happens overnight. There's no magic." Administrators should not be discouraged if setbacks occur. (For more specific guidance from the peer jurisdictions, see Appendix 3.)

3. Ensure that experienced supervisors spend most of their time coaching and supervising staff.

Each of the seven peer jurisdictions identified good supervision as one of the most important strategies for keeping young people and staff safe, especially when facilities are coping with staffing challenges such as personnel shortages and the onboarding of new personnel. At the King County facility, however, supervisors are too often burdened with other responsibilities, such as redoing schedules for modified programming and completing reports related to youth disciplinary events.

The success of youths at the facility relies heavily on the JDOs and the supervisors who work with them. Supervisors should spend most of their time on the units coaching and supervising staff. An examination of the shift supervisors' duties is needed with the goal of freeing up their time so they can provide staff with the ongoing training, mentoring, and supervision that seem to be lacking. Supervisors should have enough time on the units as well as time to meet one-on-one or in smaller groups regularly. In addition, supervisors should perform formal yearly evaluations and provide their JDOs with feedback on an ongoing basis (not just during yearly evaluations).

Some of the peer jurisdictions recommended that middle managers or other administrators support the supervisors whenever possible and that some of the supervisors' administrative responsibilities be reassigned to middle managers. These steps would help ensure that the supervisors have enough time to coach staff, troubleshoot, and problem solve on the units.

Administrators may also want to consider assigning a specific supervisor to each JDO, thereby creating teams consisting of a supervisor and several JDOs. The purpose of these teams would be to facilitate supervision (for both the supervisors and the JDOs) and increase staffing consistency. Additionally, supervisors in some jurisdictions partner with other supervisors, working in two-person teams; and JDOs in other facilities work with a consistent teammate. Such measures can also help make staffing more consistent the units and should be considered by King County.

4. Make youth programming a priority.

Research on best practices and findings from interviews with youths, staff, senior managers, and peer jurisdictions all emphasize the importance of robust programming for young people in secure settings. Programming needs to become a top priority at the King County facility. It also must be implemented consistently and predictably. Modified programming is too common, due to lack of staff to supervise youths, and programming modifications sometimes include shortening the school day. During DSG's site visit, staff and youths consistently mentioned a lack of programming, modified programming, and split programming as challenges to safety and security. One of the supervisors said: "It's

frustrating for me to do a shift and see a short schedule. This affects the kids on the unit because they have to do modified programming." One of the youths said:

> We go to school and participate in activities. But it is not at all predictable. Staffing can impact the schedule. We were in our rooms yesterday. School should not be optional. We need more programming.

A robust programming schedule was also identified by all seven peer jurisdictions as an important strategy to keep facilities safe. One of the peer jurisdiction interviewees said:

> For some of these kids who are here for weeks or months or in some cases even years, this is their entire community. It's their local restaurant. It's their church. It's their school. It's their hospital. It's their doctor's office. Whatever, you name it. So, we have to keep our kids moving around the program and engaged with different individuals. If you start shutting the door to that because of staffing, you're really creating more problems than you're solving.

Interviewees felt that strong programming—designed to keep youths busy in meaningful, age-appropriate, and satisfying ways—is an important part of keeping the facility safe. One of the interviewees said that providing engaging programs "hopefully makes the staff's job easier and makes everybody else's job easier."

Finally, in each of the four listening sessions with community partners and youths that DAJD conducted in 2022 and 2023, comments were made about the need for more youth programming (see Figure 3).

Programming is important for many reasons. Among them are the following benefits listed in NIC's *Desktop Guide to Quality Practice:*

- Good programs keep youth so busy that they do not have time to think of ways to negatively vent hostility. Youth give less thought to harming themselves, others, the building, and equipment and more thought to the positive outcomes of the program.
- Through programs, youth are placed in many social situations that serve to alter their distorted views of themselves and their situation. The more aggressive and impulsive behavior of youth is controlled partly by the rules and expectations of

Figure 3. Ideas for Youth Programming from Community and Youth Listening Sessions

- Drug counseling groups
- Life skills
- Anger management groups
- GED
- Vocational training (e.g., cosmetology training)
- A group to help us make better decisions and think about things like gratitude
- Healthy decision-making
- How to get a degree
- Things that focus on transitions back to the outside
- Family groups, including sibling participation
- Parenting groups (for young parents)
- Movie nights for young women
- Learn how to work together
- Start a team for something
- Boxing
- Basketball camp
- More outside time
- More books in the library
- More access to tablets

the program activity, partly by the close supervision of staff, and partly by the opinion of their peers.

- Programs provide for interaction among the youth and staff, which give staff more opportunity for a quick evaluation of a youth's strengths and shortcomings.
- Confined against their wishes and afraid of their surroundings, their associates, and their future, many youths experience increasing tension. Good programs provide an array of activities and opportunities for the release of emotional and physical tensions.
- Delinquent youth often have little regard for their ability and worth and lack confidence in themselves. Good programs can help them discover hidden abilities, develop new skills, learn basic facts, and develop new feelings about their ability and responsibility to improve. They can come to a more positive and realistic appraisal of themselves and their capabilities.
- The success of staff working in a confinement facility is greatly dependent on their ability to effectively engage in a genuine and caring relationship with youth. It cannot be overemphasized that programs are one of the best means available for establishing such a relationship.
- Building teamwork between staff and youth (Liddell, Clark, and Starkovich, 2014).

Programming needs to be supported by the entire staff. However, community groups who start implementing programming in the facility often quit because they are frequently told that they cannot run their groups owing to staffing shortages. Volunteers from the community are a vital resource and connection for youths after they have been released from the facility. Tutoring, GED classes, and even animal rescue are all available to help the youths look toward their future and explore their options. Increases in programming should also include more opportunities for youth to engage in large-muscle activities.

Administrators and staff should form a working group dedicated to developing and accomplishing specific goals and objectives for increasing programming. Examples of measurable objectives are below.

- Reduce the number of days per week or per month with modified programming
- Increase the number of activities provided each week by:
    - Outside volunteers
    - Staff[4]
    - Paid outside organizations
- Increase the number of youths participating in all activities offered each day.

This working group should meet regularly and ensure that continual progress is being made toward reaching these goals. Although NIC's *Desktop Guide to Quality Practice* states, "Even unexceptional and limited programs serve to reduce the number of

[4] Staff-run programs have the added benefit of tapping into staff's interests and increasing their engagement with their work.

problems youth experience in confinement," it desirable to develop a programming schedule that is goal oriented, engaging, and consistent with adolescent development. When developing a programming schedule, goals should be identified (e.g., enable creative expression; facilitate the healthy release of emotional tension; provide a constructive outlet for physical energy; keep youths busy and stimulated). Most important, programming must be implemented consistently and predictably, so youths experience an enhanced sense of order and structure each day (see Recommendation 1).

5. Establish a process with judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys to find a solution for youths being kept in secure detention for long periods of time.

The purpose of secure detention is to hold young people while they await court decision-making. It is designed for short-term stays. Although detention centers provide programming and other services to youths, the purpose of secure detention is not treatment. Treatment is the role of post-adjudicatory placements, generally run by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) for youths in King County (or by the House of Corrections, depending on the charges). The DCYF secure post-adjudication facilities seek to address the individual youths' needs and aim to prevent recidivism by means of an integrated treatment model that uses different treatment approaches, such as Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT). DCYF residential placement programs are designed to provide more tailored educational opportunities as well, given their longer-term focus.

However, findings from interviews with staff, administrators, and other King County stakeholders indicate that it is a common practice for defense attorneys to attempt to continue, delay, and/or prolong cases, resulting in very long lengths of stay for some youths. During the first 4 months of 2023, the average length of stay for youths in secure detention with adult charges[5] was 272.7 days.

Unfortunately, researchers have identified negative educational, mental health, employment, and legal outcomes for youths who are held in secure juvenile detention (e.g., Austin, Johnson, and Weitzer, 2005; Dishion and Dodge, 2005; Holman and Ziedenberg, 2006; Koyama, 2012; Walker and Herting, 2020). Also, while youths are in secure detention, they are not receiving the more individualized services they need.

It is important for DAJD leadership to advocate for youths who are in secure detention for long periods. Administrators should continue to examine data on these youths. The rules of the court should also be examined to identify policy solutions for reducing lengths of stay. It is important to lay this matter before the King County juvenile court judges, the Bar Association of King County, the State Bar, and the Trials Lawyers

[5] The average daily population of youths with adult charges was 4.6 during the first 4 months of 2023 (out of the 38.1 total average daily population).

Association as part of the search for solutions consistent with best practice in providing clients with due process while enhancing their opportunities for a successful transition to adulthood.

An on-going committee or working group composed of judges, prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys, and facility administration (and possibly probation officers and representatives from DCYF) should be formed and should meet regularly to explore meaningful ways of addressing the problem. They should especially consider ways of meeting the educational, treatment, and other developmental needs of youths with longer stays. It is inappropriate to keep children in a short-term detention center for long periods of time, and this practice often has serious unintended consequences.

While solutions are being developed, administrators may want to consider creating a unit specifically for youths with longer stays. The unit should deliver enhanced services and use a behavior management system that is more appropriate for young people with longer stays. This approach is being used at the Salt Lake Valley Youth Center (Utah), which has several youths in detention with serious charges. The youths are placed in the same unit and receive enhanced programmatic, educational, and vocational opportunities.

6. Ensure that administrators provide clear and timely communication about the *Care & Closure* process; and advocate for staff throughout this process.

Communication about the *Care & Closure* process, including what it means for staff positions should be clear, consistent, and up to date. Also, it is important for staff to know that administrators "have their backs" during this process. This support from administrators could mean that administrators advocate for the detention facility to stay open and emphasize the facility's importance in the community or that they advocate for staff to be considered for other positions within the County if the facility closes.

However, no firm commitments have been made to help current staff who will be affected by the juvenile detention facility's closing. Staff feel that their elected officials do not value the facility. A survey conducted with King County detention facility staff in 2022 found that only 6 percent of non-supervisory staff felt that elected officials communicate an inspiring vision for the future (DAJD, 2022). Similarly, the *2020 Juvenile Legal System Family Handbook* stated:

> Decades of research shows that putting youth in jail does not promote public safety and instead harms youth, their families, and their communities. We can and must do better so that children, families, and communities are happy, healthy, safe, and thriving.

This negative view of detention is common in other jurisdictions as well. NIC's *Desktop Guide to Quality Practice* makes the following point:

> Juvenile detention is a critically important part of the juvenile justice system. It has long been ignored, criticized, and deprived of the support and assistance that is regularly made available for other juvenile justice functions.

Administrators should determine the staffs' options and communicate with them on a continual basis, because the *Care & Closure* plan is likely to be modified over the next 2 years. Not clearly communicating with staff about the plan's status and about their options could allow their uncertainty and fears to manifest in unproductive ways. To do their best work and keep the facility safe, employees must feel valued.

7. Provide additional training in anticipating, preventing, and de-escalating crises.

Staff would benefit from additional training in early identification and prevention of crises, including training in recognizing activators/triggers or precipitating factors (i.e., stressors) that are likely to affect youths based on their length of stay, adverse life experiences, anticipated length of stay, circumstances surrounding their detention, or experiences while in detention. Staff trained to identify activators proactively can create long-term strategies or short-term tactics to help youths prepare for, cope with, or avoid adverse circumstances that routinely confront young people in detention. Staff can also assist youths with finding healthy ways to relieve frustration. This kind of training should reduce the need for behavioral interventions.

Several approaches for crisis prevention have been successfully used in juvenile justice programs. *Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI)* provides a guide for conducting an inventory of youths' precipitating factors for acting out. CPI's approach involves training staff members to review their population *each day* and ask: "If each youth in my charge were to act out today, what would be the youth's likely precipitating factor?" In response to this question, staff create a list or inventory of potential factors and use this inventory to address potential problem behaviors ahead of time, by providing youths with appropriate support and opportunities for choosing positive behaviors. Typical precipitating factors include the following:

- **Fear.** More common in new arrivals or youths who have recently been assaulted.
- **Failure.** More common in young people being introduced into a classroom or activity for the first time.
- **Displaced aggression.** More common in youths who will be going to court that day or who are likely to have a disappointing family or attorney visit.
- **Maintenance of self-esteem.** More common in young people who should never be corrected publicly and need to be pulled aside and respectfully corrected in private.

- **Loss of personal power.** More common in youths who are older and have been living unsupervised, who need recognition of their more mature circumstances compared with other youths.
- **Attention seeking**. More common in young people who only know how to express anxiety or needs by acting out.
- **Psychological/mental health issues.** More common in youths with diagnosed conditions or those whose reactions always seem to be inappropriate for the present circumstances.

Being proactive by anticipating the reasons that youths may act out and mitigating potential violent behaviors by offering them support and positive alternatives will make the facility safer. As with any new skill, developing this proactivity will require a greater emphasis on staff supervision, mentoring, and coaching (see Recommendation 3). The recommended additional training would align well with the 8-hour block dedicated to the CPI approach that is already delivered as part of the New Employee Orientation (NEO) program. Another approach to preventing and addressing crises is the *Mandt Model,* which has been helpful in some of the interviewed peer jurisdictions.

8. Improve the restorative justice process after significant youth misbehavior.

Many of the JDOs and supervisors feel that there is a lack of meaningful consequences and learning opportunities for youths who misbehave. Some of the interviewees commented that they felt powerless to address youths' misbehavior.

Given the success of Restoration Hall, its subsequent removal as a resource—due to the interpretation that it is a type of seclusion—has led to disappointment among staff. One of the interviewees said: "It was our solution, and they took it away." During the restoration process, staff assist the young people in taking responsibility and repairing the harm that was done. Staff ask the youths what caused the harm and help them to become comfortable apologizing. The apology may occur using written materials or through a conversation. For the young people, processing with staff is important. For example, staff will ask, "what do you mean here?" in their worksheets; or probe, "what did you feel like when that happened?" during one-on-one conversations. The average length of stay on restoration status is about 3 days. Staff pointed to the benefit of having a hall dedicated to the restoration process: "The benefit of it was that we had the attention to do the work." Going through the restoration process with youths while they are on their regular units is more difficult, especially for less-experienced JDOs. Doing restoration work on the units is confusing, because staff are unable to focus fully on the youth's restoration process since they have additional duties and are responsible for supervising other youths.

We recommend reinstating Restoration Hall, with supervisory safeguards to prevent misuse. Facility administrators should ensure that this hall is used in ways that will not be considered seclusion. Also, measures are needed to ensure that young people do not act out on purpose to receive a stay in Restoration Hall. According to one of the interviewees, youths were given more attention while in Restoration Hall, which motivated some young people to misbehave deliberately so they would be placed there.

Several publications describe best practices, including physical separation to provide space for youths to calm down, as part of a de-escalation approach that prevents physical incidents and interventions involving physical force. These publications indicate that cool-off rooms or calming rooms can be helpful (e.g., Deitch, 2014; Udesky, 2021). Some publications advocate for releasing youths from cool-off rooms once they are calm and ready to discuss what led to the aggression (Deitch, 2014). However, other reports suggest that it is important for youths to receive highly individualized and intensive behavioral supports after the cool-down period, including "possible separation from the general population of youths in order to facilitate these intensive interventions" (Deitch et al., 2013).

NIC's *Desktop Guide to Quality Practice* makes the following points about special units:

> Longer-term management of violent youth may require ongoing separation of these teens from their peers in the facility through use of special housing units. The risk of these units, however, is that they may become forms of punitive segregation rather than a therapeutic housing placement designed for safe operation of the facility (Deitch, 2014).

The *Desktop Guide* recommends that youths who are removed from the general population and placed in special housing units so their behavior can be better managed should:

- Spend most of their day engaged in activities or treatment (rather than in seclusion).
- Be given a clear plan and path for restoration to the general population.

In addition, the *Desktop Guide* states that:

- Administrators should have a clear vision and purpose for the unit.
- Staff should be adequate in number and qualified to deal with this challenging population.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

9. Assign someone in a leadership position to ensure that maintenance issues are addressed quickly.

The facility has experienced an unusually high number of physical problems for such a new building, and there are significant delays in completing work orders (e.g., to fix broken phones, inoperable locks, flooded units, showers that do not drain, broken tables, nonfunctioning copiers, walls with holes). Although the research literature on this topic is limited (e.g., Rodriquez and Waggoner, 2023; Wildeman et al., 2018), the maintenance issues and delays in addressing them can adversely affect safety, security, and functionality as well as staff morale and job performance. Allowing broken fixtures and other problems to remain unrepaired for a long time could be interpreted by youths and staff as a message that administrators do not care enough to expediently rectify the issues. This interpretation may be unfair; it may be that administrators care very much but do not have the power to address the problems in a timely manner. However, allowing maintenance issues—including inoperable units—to persist is symptomatic of a poorly functioning system. In addition, the lack of access to all units limits the resources available to staff for separating acting-out youths. DAJD should consider hiring contractors if the issues cannot be resolved in a timely manner by using the current process.

10. Improve the use of data and quality assurance measures.

A survey conducted with staff of the King County juvenile detention facility in 2022 found that only 15 percent of non-supervisory staff thought their work unit used data to improve their performance. However, one of the findings from the peer interviews was that using data, tracking quality assurance measures, and sharing progress with staff are important. In many of the peer interviews, push-back from staff during times of change was mentioned. But administrators felt the approach that worked best to elicit staff support for changes was sharing information about 1) why the changes were happening (e.g., "it's not just the administration's crazy idea; it's based on research and best practices nationally"); and 2) how the changes were improving things. A large quantity of data is already being collected and tracked by the Juvenile Division. Increasing the use of this body of data and collecting additional, relevant data points can help track positive changes as they occur and can enhance staff buy-in for changes in policies and procedures.

To reduce data entry errors and facilitate analysis, we recommend that DAJD a) use a check-the-box format for all data elements; b) formulate variables requiring yes/no responses, followed by a narrative section (if necessary); c) distinguish between discharge from any supervision and temporary release; and d) capture and preserve data elements

that may be relevant to future analytic question. Appendix 5 provides more information about our recommendations for improving the use of data.

11. Enable youths and staff to share some meals together.

In many of the peer detention centers, staff and youths eat together. These experiences help youths learn to share and talk during meals, acquire life skills, and build positive relationships with each other and with staff. At the King County facility, JDOs and supervisors should discuss the benefits and logistics of integrating staff–youth meals into the monthly schedule. To increase staff buy-in, the initiative should be staff driven and coordinated. Once they have a plan, they should share it with facility administrators. We recommend starting small; for example, a shared meal could be organized once or twice per month. The meals could be set up in the gym or another space outside the units. During the meals, staff and youths could discuss issues on the units and ideas for addressing them.

12. Provide staff with comprehensive training in cultural competency.

Comprehensive training in cultural competency is essential for all staff members in detention centers. Everyone at all levels in the King County facility should receive this training, and training requirements should increase as staff advance to positions of increasing responsibility. Building on the already required basic instruction that all personnel complete to work at the facility, comprehensive training in cultural competency should give professionals who interact with young people (e.g., JDOs, teachers; nursing, medical, mental health, and psychiatric team members) a deep understanding of implicit bias, cultural sensitivity, and equity-centered trauma-informed care. Additionally, modules should be included on effective communication strategies to help staff bridge potential cultural and generational gaps. This comprehensive training would empower facility personnel to manage a wide variety of situations and duties with increased empathy and insight—from calming stressed youths to bonding over shared meals (as suggested in Recommendation 11).

13. Develop and implement inclusive policies and practices.

Positive changes in the facility's culture should be ongoing. To support the beneficial changes that cultural competency training can foster, policies are needed that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. It is essential to craft and implement policies that not only state these values but also specify the everyday practices through which the values will be expressed. Such policies can help ensure that biases are constantly challenged, and that staff grow continually in cultural competency. We also recommend that policies and practices be regularly reviewed and updated so unintended biases or barriers can be identified and addressed in a timely manner. A proactive approach to effecting positive

culture changes will increase the likelihood that everyone in the facility feels seen, heard, respected, and valued.

14. Enhance staff training in responding to identity-specific trauma activators or stressors.

Many youths come into detention facilities with life experiences that most people cannot fathom. These experiences affect individuals differently, and their impact on young people often results in complex trauma. Implementing trauma-informed practices is a necessity for all detention centers. As mentioned in Major Findings, King County facility leaders understand the needs of youths in their care and the influence of trauma on their behaviors. Additionally, information about trauma is incorporated in staff training sessions such as "Contraband and Critical Incidents" and "Suicide Prevention." However, it is crucial for King County personnel to receive enhanced training in detecting and responding to identity-specific trauma activators. Cultural nuances heavily influence how trauma manifests and how it is experienced. These identity-specific activators or stressors can elicit trauma responses stemming from race-based trauma, insidious gender identity-based trauma, or acculturative stress. Although staff may not understand a youth's experiences, being able to recognize normal stress responses to demonstrate appropriate empathy are essential. Addressing these stress responses with sensitivity, care, and skill not only helps to prevent a crisis; it also enables staff to acknowledge the individual's experiences and provide the support they need.

Conclusion

This report presents findings and recommendations related to improving the safety and security of King County's juvenile detention facility. Having determined that it would be beneficial to obtain an assessment by an external contractor, the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention (DAJD) published a request for proposals. DAJD subsequently contracted with Development Services Group, Inc. (DSG), to provide an independent assessment of the facility's safety and security.

Between Dec. 12, 2022, and Aug. 31, 2023, DSG, with subcontractor partners Hyzer Group, LLC, and Rolluda Architects, Inc., conducted the analysis. The DSG team identified more than 20 major findings. These findings included strengths such as the facility's location near the court, capable detention staff and senior managers, a strong team of support staff (e.g., teachers; nursing, medical, and mental health professionals), youths feeling safe and valued in the facility, staff feeling satisfied with their salaries and assigned shifts, well-run defensive tactics training, and incorporation of a developmental (non-punitive) approach to working with the youths. Along with the many strengths, DSG's analysis identified several areas for improvement, mostly related to the "us versus

them" dynamic that exists between senior management and detention staff, insufficient structure and order in day-to-day operations, insufficient daily programming for youths, and a need for more mentoring, coaching, and supervision for new staff.

The eight major recommendations, which should improve the facility's safety and security, are:

1. Increase the structure and predictability of youths' daily movements and activities.
2. Make a concerted effort to improve management–staff relationships, especially between administrators and Juvenile Detention Officers (JDOs).
3. Ensure that experienced supervisors spend most of their time coaching and supervising JDOs.
4. Make youth programming a priority.
5. Establish a process for collaborating with judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys to find a solution to the issue of youths being kept in secure detention a long time.
6. Ensure that administrators provide clear and timely communication about the *Care & Closure* process and advocate for staff throughout this process.
7. Provide additional training in anticipating, preventing, and de-escalating crises.
8. Improve the restorative justice process after significant youth misbehavior.

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Appendix 1. Findings from Interviews with Youths

During DSG's March 28–April 4 site visit to the King County juvenile detention facility, five DSG analysts conducted individual interviews with 11 youths. These interviews occurred on Wednesday, March 1 (two interviews), Thursday, March 2 (two interviews), Friday, March 3 (three interviews), and Saturday, March 4 (four interviews).

Demographics and Other Characteristics

The 11 youths ranged from age 13 to age 17. Eight of the interviewees were boys, and three were girls. When asked about the duration of time they have been in the program, responses ranged from 43 days to 1 year and 6 months, with an average of 177 days (6 months). For half of the youths, this was their first time in the program, and for the other half it was not, with one respondent saying that s/he had been there for four other separate times. Seven youths answered the question, "Have you been to any other secure or nonsecure residential facilities before?" Three out of seven reported that they had been to additional facilities. At the time of the interview, two youths were on Sapphire level, one was on Diamond level, three were Honor-Level Silver, and three were Honor-Level Gold. One youth did not answer this question.

Schedules, School, Programming, and Predictability

When asked whether there was a predictable daily schedule, three of the youths said "yes"; four said "sometimes," or "yes and no"; and 1 said "no." Many of the youths mentioned that modified schedules due to staff shortage was the reason for unpredictability. One of the youths said:

> We go to school and participate in activities. But it is not at all predictable. Staffing can impact the schedule. We were in our rooms yesterday. School should not be optional. We need more programming.

When asked about school, most youths generally reported that it was helpful. Some mentioned that it was "easy," but only one felt school was unhelpful, noting that the work is the same regardless of grade level. Some youths responded that the teachers were "empathetic" and "cool." Another youth who said school was "easy" said: "It's easier to do school here because I can focus. There are smaller classes and easy credit transfer." Another said: "They don't make us feel bad for not knowing certain things." Most of the youths want to be in school and shared that they are disappointed when the school day is shortened. As mentioned above, one of the youths said: "School should not be optional." One interviewee said: "The teachers are cool. They are helpful. I have my GED, but I participate in school, so I am not in my room."

INTAKE, INFORMATION SHARING, FEELING SAFE, AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAFF

Six of the youths answered the question, "Do you think staff got enough information to take care of you?" Only one said "yes" while three said "no." The others were unsure. Some felt that the staff just used information from their charges, even though they reported being assessed initially for placement. One youth said: "When assessed, they only asked if I got along with some of the other girls." Another said: "Any relationships need to be built over time."

Most youths did report, however, that they felt most of the staff showed respect and cared about them. When asked, "Do you think the staff here care about you," 64 percent said "most of them" care, and 36 percent said "a few of them" care. Positive comments included:

- "They come by and check in [on] you, even if you're not on the unit. Staff are cool."
- "XXXX[6] is fair and engages with the kids. He shows the kids he cares."
- "XXXX talks to me about life lessons and give me advice."
- "I've never had run-ins with staff. Only a select few are only here for paychecks. Most are here because they want to be here."

Some of the negative comments included:

- "All the kids hate XXXX. She is very strict and very punitive and curses at the kids."
- "It depends which staff. Some treat us like criminals. Some staff like some kids, but they don't like others. Some staff only listen to the aggressive and loud kids."

Youths were asked, "Are you aware of who the administrators and supervisors are?" If they answered "yes," then they were asked, "Do they spend time on your unit?" and "Do they talk with you?" Youths also responded that they were aware of who the administrators are, but some reported that they do not spend time with the youths or talk with to them. The majority of the youths did not answer this question.

When discussing how they felt on first arriving in the facility many youths reported feeling "nervous," "anxious," "worried," and even "scared," with one youth talking about the fear of getting beaten up, which did occur in the first few weeks. Other responses included "afraid of telling my parents," "disappointed in myself," "lonely," "embarrassed," and "disconnected." However, a few youths said that they were not scared and that their experience at the facility was not as bad as they had expected it to be.

Most of the youths indicated that they felt comfortable talking to staff, preferring to speak with a juvenile detention officer (JDO), professional supervisor, or mental health professional specifically. When asked to describe the process for talking about problems

[6] Staff name is omitted.

with staff, youths responded that they must request to speak with a mental health professional and wait until that person is available.

DSG asked several questions about safety. Overall, most youths reported feeling "very safe" in the different parts of the facility. However, some of the youths only felt "somewhat safe" in certain parts of the facility, including on the unit and in the classroom, gym, and hallway. All youths indicated that they felt "very safe" in their own rooms. We asked, "Is there anyone you are afraid of here?" Ten of the 11 youths said there was no one they were afraid of.

Rules and Behavior Management System

We asked, "When you first got here, did the staff explain to you about what would be expected of you (like rules for behavior, rewards, consequences, that kind of thing)?" Most youths reported that the staff did not explain the rules and that they had to learn things from other youths and from their own experiences. However, all felt that the rules were clear. Some youths did not know that the rules were written down or did not think they were, while a few others reported that expectations were written on papers on the wall and two youths also referenced a handbook.

Some commented that rule enforcement changes based on the staff member. The majority felt that rules were enforced inconsistently with contrasting expectations depending on the shift and depending on the staff. One youth stated, "Sometimes you get in trouble for something that was OK in another shift." When asked, "Are rules enforced the same way by all staff members?" eight youths said "no," two said "yes," and one did not answer. One of the youths said:

> Every staff has different expectations. They are never consistent. If you're going to the library, one supervisor may say yes, but another may say no. Then it becomes an issue. Then staff gets played. It's chaotic.

When asked about the process of earning level placements, some youth reported appreciating the process because of the benefits commissary items being more affordable. One of the youths said:

> It's a good process. It helps you to change your behavior to get rewards. They report to the court what I'm doing here and when I'm doing well. I don't like that you don't earn any points if you mess up.

However, a couple of residents reported that they had reached the highest level and were disappointed that there were no higher levels they could achieve, "There is nothing to work towards. We need more."

We asked, "What do staff do if residents start to get into a conflict with each other?" Most of the youths mentioned that the "good staff" can talk them down. They mentioned that staff help with problem solving and coming up with group solutions. They also said that

some staff just make things worse. Some mentioned that when there are conflicts, the staff will call a code, use split programming, or put kids in their rooms. One of the youths said: "They call a code first. Then someone comes and talk to us to calm down." Also, seven youths said that they had seen staff use physical force, while one had not seen that. When asked how much force was used, all but one said it was "appropriate force."

WHAT YOUTHS LIKE ABOUT THE PROGRAM AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

When asked what they liked the most about the program, the youths gave the following responses:

- "It's not that hard to be successful, and it's not a daily challenge to not get in trouble."
- "I like the staff. I never felt targeted by the staff."
- "I appreciate staff that give us stuff to do (e.g., trivia, coloring, movies)."
- "Video games. Library. Also, XXXX and XXXX work Thurs.–Monday. They do activities with us."
- "Friends."
- "Freedom to engage—play cards and watch TV. We follow the program and earn or lose privileges."
- "The gym."
- "Nothing."
- "The food."
- "It helps you think about what you've done wrong. It helps you become stronger."

When asked about changes the youths would like to implement or suggestions they had for improvement, most youths responded with "needing more staff" and having "less room time." They explained that by having more staff, they can be outside of their rooms more and get more opportunities for engagement. Some youths remarked on the poor maintenance of the facility and wished that this situation could improve. They mentioned that they see "cracks on the wall" or "things break all the time, it is cold, and water is unpredictable." Furthermore, some youths remarked that staff behavior and programming were issues. One youth said: "They should treat us like humans. They should have more empathy." Other youths asked for more art and crafts, sports, and even school. Some felt that there should be more consequences for youths who act out.

Appendix 2. Findings from Staff and Administrator Interviews and On-Site Observations

DSG conducted interviews with DAJD staff during a 5-day site visit (Feb. 28–March 4, 2023). We also conducted interviews virtually, using Microsoft Teams or Zoom. We developed and used interview protocols specific to the different interviewees' roles. We conducted interviews with 31 administrators, managers, and staff (see Table 2.1).

In most of the interviews, a DSG team member met with just one DAJD staff person. In a few of the interviews, we met with more than one person. Most interviews lasted about 1 hour, though some took as long as 2 hours and others were shorter than 1 hour.

Table 2.1. DAJD Staff Interviews

Direct-Care Staff *(Generally work on first floor)*	Administrators and Managers *(Generally work on second floor)*
• 8 corrections supervisors/shift supervisors • 7 juvenile detention officers (JDOs), including the president of the JDO guild • 3 teachers • 2 restorative justice coordinators • 1 policy and procedures officer • 1 training coordinator • 1 mental health counselor • 1 recreation coordinator	• Director of DAJD, Alan Nance • Interim Division Director, Quanetta West • Chief of Operations, Belenda Wilson • Interim Deputy Division Director • Lisa Hymes–Davis • Juvenile Program Manager, Ashley Mareld • Nurse Manager, Anthony Karanja

The interviews provided a wealth of information, and they are the source of much of the information presented in the main report. The information in this appendix supplies additional details, but it is not intended to be a comprehensive summary of the information gathered during the interviews. We present the information under the specific themes that emerged from the interviews, starting with responses to the questions related to interviewees' perspectives on why there has been an increase in youth-on-staff assaults in the juvenile facility.

Why Have Youth-on-Staff Assaults Increased?

When asked why they thought there was an increase in the frequency of aggressive and assaultive behavior by young people in detention toward their peers and toward staff, some interviewees focused on the changes in the type of youths being served in detention now (due to policy changes leading to higher-need and higher-risk youth in the facility or just that "kids are different today") and others spoke mostly about frontline staff

lacking the capabilities to keep the units safe, primarily because most of the staff are new. Many interviewees mentioned both factors.

Specific comments included the following (some are slightly rewritten for clarity):

> Kids are different now. I don't think I've ever seen a situation where a male youth would walk up to a female staff and punch her in the face. It's just a new reality.
>
> Kids fighting has always happened. I don't think it's because the kids are worse. I think it's because of new, inexperienced staff not being able to deescalate properly. They don't get great training.
>
> I think the increase in violence is more of a community, systemic, mental health, trauma, type of situation where the people that are being presented to us are just more violent cases. There are more felony cases. There has been a significant population shift. And since 2019–2020 with status offenders not being able to be locked up, there is a greater concentration of violent offenders and higher-need kids in detention. You don't have that balance of mild and moderate youth.
>
> There's been a lot of transition of new staff that are coming into detention, people who have never worked in detention ever before in their lives, and so they don't necessarily have the skills, they don't have the experience, and they don't have the acumen that they need to be most effective in that environment. It takes time and, in my opinion, it takes probably a good two to three years before you really get your sea legs as a juvenile detention officer. And yet we are putting people into those jobs after a matter of weeks of training. Of course, we send them to the Academy and give them an opportunity to get additional training in that setting. But there is no substitution for the on-the-job experience that is required to become good at that work. So, every time we cycle in new people, we see that they're not as good as they need to be in setting boundaries. They're not as vigilant of behaviors that can escalate quickly into problematic situations.

BUILDING-RELATED ISSUES

Interviewees mentioned various problems that affect culture, climate, and safety within the building:

- Major pipe issues
- Sprinkler issues
- Water in showers not working
- Washers and dryers not working
- Toilets do not flush
- Locks always breaking
- Blind spots on every unit due to location of stairs to the second tier

The other main problem is that these maintenance issues are not addressed within an acceptable timeframe. One of the correctional supervisors said:

> We put in work orders, but we can't get the materials because of Covid. The building looks pretty, but there are some underlying issues that aren't great. And the blind spots make things difficult.

Another interviewee shared disappointment about the space available to the youths:

> There is a lot of grass not being used, and we could have used that. It's wasted space. They could have given us the full gym. My kids need to run and play. The kids want basketball, and we can't even do that.

Many of the interviewees commented on the need for more space for better classification and separation, when needed. One of the support staff said:

> We need more units. I would like one unit for lower functioning and developmentally delayed. Then we need more units to prevent restrictive housing. Maybe create a unit for those to prevent restrictive housing.

Two respondents, however, remarked on how they enjoyed some aspects of the new building. One interviewee said:

> The floorplan is nice because we don't have the stairs like we did before. This is why response times are quicker than they used to be. Don't have to go too far from the living halls to the gym.

Another interviewee expressed appreciation for the newness of the building: "I like coming into a cleaner, nicer facility."

PROGRAMMING

We asked staff and administrators, "How well do you think youth programming aligns with the youths' needs?" Most felt that there are major deficits in the programming being offered. One interviewee said: "I don't know what happened with the programming. It stopped in the old building." Some said that youths are not interested in the programming being offered.

However, a small group of interviewees that felt the young people have too much programming. One interviewee said:

> There is too much programming. Their needs are being met with school, gym time, meals. I think they are out of their rooms too much. With the new laws and stuff, we can't force a kid to do something if the kid doesn't have to participate. If the kid doesn't want to do programming, we can't make them do it, but we can't put them in their room. It's disruptive. A lot of structure was lost.

Others made comments related to specific aspects of programming. One respondent said:

> Offering kids the same thing, especially in education, limits success. They become stuck.

> Getting into the other, more specialized programs takes a long time. Girls especially have limited options.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

We asked staff about the behavioral management system, and many interviewees shared their opinions about its effectiveness. Many respondents felt that the system is ineffective and needed improvements.

Several reasons were given as to why the system is ineffective. One reason shared by many interviewees is the level of discipline JDOs give to children when they must face consequences. A few respondents felt that JDOs are too punitive and need more training in how to handle youths who have experienced extreme trauma. One said: "We give consequences but no rewards." Another said: "[The] mentality is not, 'let's talk about it'; it's more like 'just do what I say.'" Many interviewees felt that when one is dealing with youths who have such a high degree of trauma, a more therapeutic response that includes providing more care is necessary.

In contrast, some felt that the JDOs are too lenient because they are afraid of upsetting the youths.

> People are mixing accountability with punishment. We are being unjust by not upholding that. It's almost disrespectful to the kids. They say they don't want to punish them, but kids enjoy boundaries.

Thus, an interviewee pointed out that when a behavioral issue presents itself, some JDOs do not give consequences. This approach does not help deter the children from engaging in the behavior; rather, it leads to them to repeat the behavior. One respondent said:

> Some are afraid to give a consequence because it will make youth mad, and they want to avoid that. The people following the rules get more backlash.

A reluctance to give consequences also affects how the youths earn points (called "stars") in the behavioral management system. Some respondents reported that JDOs give stars to youths just because they do not want to provoke them into reacting explosively. The fear of a negative reaction affecting how stars are earned creates an inconsistent behavioral management system. The youths also observe this, and it affects them. One interviewee said: "Kids need to know you are firm, fair, and consistent. Then the kids feel safer."

According to some respondents, restorative practices are not helpful because of the way they are being implemented and the fact that staff no longer have access to Restoration Hall. Many staff respondents reported that youths on restoration need to be separated from those who are not, so that they can focus on the issue separately and deescalate. Having to do restoration on the same unit as the other youths leads to more disruption.

Furthermore, the current approach to restoration is impersonal. Many staff reported that JDOs just hand a packet of information to the youths, but many of the young people do not complete the exercises meaningfully, so this approach is ineffective. Mention was also made of confusion about what is expected of JDOs regarding restorative practices.

Some administrators felt that JDOs do not receive adequate training and do not have the ability to effectively participate in restorative practices. One interviewee said: "The thing is, whatever the workload the JDO feels is put on them, they want their breaks, and they feel like the work is too much." Some administrators responded that JDOs just do not care to implement the practices better and are a bit hostile toward restorative justice coordinators; since the JDOs feel that the restorative justice coordinators should be taking the lead on implementing restoration practices, the JDOs are not taking the time to work more with the youths outside of making sure the restoration packet is complete. One respondent noted: "When they don't really understand or buy into what rehabilitation is, there isn't much you can do."

Interviewees also commented that the incentive program should be better and more meaningful and that there should be more incentives.

Finally, interviewees mentioned the lack of appropriate options in the behavior management system for youths who spend extended lengths of time in the facility. One of the correctional supervisors said: "For kids who are here for very long times, they just don't care anymore. How long can you just stay on gold status? They're bored and tired."

Relationships Between Juvenile Detention Officers, Correctional Supervisors, and Administrators

Each type of staff (e.g., JDO, correctional supervisor, specialty staff [teachers, mental health, nurses], administrators) mentioned the strained relationship between JDOs and administrators.

Comments from Juvenile Detention Officers, Specialty Staff, and Correctional Supervisors

Most of the comments from JDOs, specialty staff, and some of the correctional officers related to not feeling heard or respected by managers, administrators, and other King County leadership. Many felt that the administrators were just not interested in the staff's experiences.

One of the interviewees said:

> It's hard to respect the idea that you are an admin or a higher-up in management and you don't even come here to see or hear or listen. I'm not looking for a pat on the back. They should just know what's happening. They say this is their floor, but it's a lie. It's our floor. It would be nice if the people up there would come down here. [The new directors] don't even ask us how it's going. I can never voice our concerns with the management.

When asked whether staff had input into decisions made about the detention center, one of the interviewees said: "We have input, but it has no weight, and it is not valued."

One of the specialty staff members said: "This is the most unhappy I've seen the JDOs. They always talk about "upstairs" in a derogatory way and blaming them for things."

A few respondents reported that interaction only occurs with management when staff are being reprimanded. An interviewee said: "We have no contact with management unless we are in trouble. There is some discomfort among line staff interacting with them." This belief was repeated by another respondent, who pointed out that "the manager comes down here, but only in bigger situations."

Another respondent reported feeling like staff have no support: "King County—people operate with good intentions, but we are pretty much here by ourselves." Another respondent just wanted answers for why they are not being valued: "If you're going to make a decision, you need to get input. And if you don't use their input, they need to be open and honest about why."

Comments From Administrators and Correctional Supervisors

Comments from administrators and some correctional supervisors were more focused on the poor communication overall and on the unrealistic expectations that staff have of the administration. When talking about some of the input that staff give to administration, one of the interviewees said:

> Some of their ideas are not feasible. There was a group addressing the restrictive housing rule changes. They spent so much time just venting that we didn't get to solutions. They blamed managers for not stopping the law changes. We don't have the power to stop a law from changing in the state of Washington.

They also feel that sometimes they are just too busy to spend time with the staff. One administrator said:

> We get so caught up with emails and meetings and reports that a lot of times, we may go a week or two weeks and not even get to the unit. I talk to them and check in with them, but I may not have time.

Another said: "They come with us with problems but not solutions." Another respondent remarked: "We're not as good at closing the communication loop." Although the staff say consistently that they do not feel heard by the administrators, the administrators feel that they do listen. They mentioned the engagement surveys, suggestion boxes, and engagement meetings that are held. One of the administrators said:

> I think staff are very open and very entitled to communicate everything to us. I think we've created a safe space for that. We definitely hear it. What needs to happen more is…we're not as good at closing the communication loop for them. We need to say, 'I heard you, and how what are we doing about it?' We don't always close the circle.

Historically, administrators tended to communicate through the labor management groups, but interviewees felt that the labor management group's priority is not always effective communication. Some interviewees pointed out that a communication specialist was recently hired to help, and said they were hopeful about this.

Administrators also mentioned that they sometimes hear mixed messages from the staff. For example, one administrator said: "They started to ask for more presence. Then when we show up, they ask 'Why are you here? Are we in trouble?'" Another interviewee said that staff originally did not want Restoration Hall, but then when it was taken away, the staff were upset. There were several similar examples.

Administrators were also concerned that the negative attitudes of some of the more experienced staff were affecting the new staff. One interviewee remarked: "Older staff so negative to newer staff that they are chasing them away."

WHAT JUVENILE DETENTION OFFICERS AND SUPERVISORS LIKE MOST ABOUT THEIR JOBS

We asked staff what they enjoy most about their work and why they stay at the King County juvenile facility. They mostly mentioned working with the young people, interactions with the youths and their families, the compensation and benefits, their coworkers, having a manageable workload and hours, having new experiences, and being a positive role model to youths and helping or guiding youth to change their lives.

One of the interviewees said:

> I've always liked working with the kids. I've never wanted to work with the adults. I like to see the change in the kids. I like to give them another perspective. Many of them have never been out of the state or had different experiences. Many of them don't even understand the different things they can hope for or experience.

New Juvenile Detention Officers' Readiness and Skills in Working With Youths

Many comments were made about the newness of the unit staff (who work with the young people) and their lack of skills. Interviewees mentioned that the staff were just too new, including the field training officers (FTOs) who are charged with training the new staff while on the units.

One interviewee who had more than 5 years of experience made this comment about the unit staff:

> Now the program sucks. They are all new. They are new staff training other new staff. We had some senior staff in there, but then the senior staff don't want to do it anymore because they didn't like how the training was going.

Some felt that the JDOs' training opportunities should be improved. An interviewee said: "Training is lacking here. Turnover is also a problem." One respondent noted that the JDOs lack training because their workload is too big: "They are supposed to learn way too quickly, and they can't really keep up. It's hard to get training done and the refresher training done." Another interviewee commented about not having time for handling the increase of children with traumatic experiences: "Staff don't get enough training. Not enough time or staff." Others felt that staff needed better training in communication.

Still, other respondents felt that JDOs just lacked confidence and time, and that their training was fine. According to one interviewee, "They are pretty well-trained, but it could take about a year for them to get confident." Another interviewee said:

> There's been a lot of transition of new staff that are coming into detention, people who have never worked in detention ever before in their lives, and so they don't necessarily have the skill, they don't have the experience that they need to be most effective in that,

When we asked JDOs how they felt about training, they responded that they were happy with it and were excited to do more.

Opinions About *Care & Closure*

Staff do not feel that they are being meaningfully engaged in the *Care & Closure* process. One interviewee said: "I haven't gone to a lot of the meetings. One of the reasons I don't is that I don't think they care about what we say. They don't really listen to us."

Staff also feel that not being meaningfully engaged in the *Care & Closure* process negatively affects staff hiring and retention. An interviewee remarked: "We've had a lot of new staff, and then they try to get out of here. Or they stay 5 years until vested and then they are gone." Another said:

> If we are going to close in 2 years, how much can we do? The closure has destroyed morale. Staff feel as if they are not supported. They are leaving. We are losing good staff, and it's getting rough.

However, several interviewees felt that the facility would not really close in 2025 and that they were not worried.

WHAT IS CONTRIBUTING TO TURNOVER?

When asked what is contributing to turnover, interviewees mentioned not feeling valued by the County, HB2277, the *Zero Youth Detention (ZYD)* and the *Care & Closure* initiatives, not being able to hold the youths accountable, feeling that they cannot do their jobs the way they feel they should do them, feeling overworked, and the "mounting negativity" in the facility.

Appendix 3. Findings from Interviews with Non-Staff

In addition to staff, managers, and administrators at DAJD, DSG interviewed the following stakeholders:

- February 23, 2023. Andre Chevalier, King County Senior Labor Relations Negotiator.
- February 24, 2023. Emily Johnson, Special Projects Manager, King County Department of Community and Human Services.
- March 21, 2023. Jimmy Hung, Juvenile Unit Chair, and Stephanie Trollen, Legal Services Manager, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.
- March 27, 2023. Jennifer Schneider, King County Internal Investigations Unit.

The interviews with these other interested parties involved with young people in detention provided important information and context for DSG's findings and recommendations related to safety and security in King County's juvenile detention facility. To maintain the four stakeholders' anonymity, summaries of these four interviews are not included in this appendix. Given the very different role of each interviewee, such summaries would enable the reader to easily identify who said what. However, we incorporated the interviewees' comments throughout the main report.

Appendix 4. Findings From Interviews With Peer Jurisdictions

King County's RFP to conduct a juvenile detention safety and security analysis required that DSG interview youth detention staff in five comparable jurisdictions (i.e., resembling King County in total population size, demographics, and number of detained youths). These interviews were intended to address DSG's findings from its data collection and analysis in King County and focus on practical solutions to the issues identified as well as opportunities for improvement.

DSG reached out to and inquired about detention centers in several other jurisdictions, to learn about their practical solutions to the issues that King County is struggling with. Interviews were held on the following dates:

- *Feb. 16, 2023*. Interview with Al Estrada, Associate Director, Colorado Division of Youth Services (DYS).
- *June 7, 2023*. Interview with Kristen Withrow, Associate Director, Colorado DYS, and Ashley Tunstall, Director of Behavioral Health and Medical Services, Colorado DYS.
- *June 13, 2023*. Interview with Jason Houtz, Director, Fairfax County Juvenile Detention Center (Virginia).
- *June 12, 2023*. Interview with Lisa St. Louis, Assistant Program Director, Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services, Salt Lake Valley Youth Center (Utah).
- *June 15, 2023*. Interview with Johnitha McNair, Executive Director, Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center.
- *June 15, 2023*. Interview with Jason Druxman, Deputy Chief, Youth Transition Campus, Youth Institutional Services (San Diego, California). *June 19, 2023*. Interview with Ron Hermes, Administrator, Division of Juvenile Corrections, Wisconsin Department of Corrections; Klint Trevino, Superintendent, Lincoln Hills School and Copper Lake School (Irma, Wisconsin); Earl "Dru" Heier, Deputy Superintendent, Lincoln Hills School and Copper Lake School; Richard B. Nybakke, Division of Juvenile Corrections, Wisconsin Department of Corrections (four individuals).
- *June 22, 2023*. Interview with Nancy Carter, Director of Residential Operations, Massachusetts Department of Youth Services
- *July 14, 2023*. Interview with Nancy Carter; Juvenile Justice Youth Development Specialist, Dorchester Youth Center; Program Director, Dorchester Youth Center (three individuals).

We selected the peer jurisdictions to resemble King County not only in population size, demographics, and number of detained youths, but also in operation (e.g., locally operated), experience with recent legislative changes, seriousness of youths' charges, staff

involvement with organized labor groups, and experiences with new staff and staff vacancies (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Characteristics of Peer Jurisdiction Detention Centers

Characteristics in Common with King County^	Boston, Mass.	Colorado	Fairfax County, Virg.	Irma, Wisc.~	Northern Virginia	Salt Lake Valley, Utah	San Diego, Calif.
Locally operated			X		X		X
Recent legislative changes*		X		X			X
Similar average daily population/capacity		X	X			X	
Youths with serious charges	X	X				X	X
Mix of long stays and short stays	X	X	X	X	X	X	
New building							X
Unionized staff	X			X			X
Similar demographics	X	X	X				
Challenges with hiring new staff, staff vacancies	X	X	X		X		X

^ If a characteristic is not identified for a specific jurisdiction, that does not necessarily mean that the jurisdiction does not have the characteristic. It could also mean that this topic was not discussed in the interview.
* Policy changes in Colorado related to state policies that changed room confinement rules. Policy changes in San Diego related to sending young people to the youth detention center who previously would have gone to the state-run adult system.
~This facility is a commitment (treatment) facility. It is not a detention center. It is included because of its relevant experiences with unionized staff, recent legislative changes, culture change, and improving relationships between line staff and administrators.

DSG researchers gave the interviewees information about some of the main challenges facing King County's juvenile detention center, and asked questions about how they would address these challenges and how they keep their facilities safe. Each interview took 1–2 hours. In some of the interviews, more than one person participated. There was one interviewee from Fairfax County, Virginia; Northern Virginia; Salt Lake Valley, Utah; and San Diego, California. There were two or more interviews from Boston, Mass; Colorado; and Irma, Wisconsin.

In response to our questions, the interviewees described many similar strategies. The main strategies shared by the peer jurisdictions for keeping their facilities safe were: 1) maintain a consistent and predictable schedule on the unit, 2) hire good staff, 3) provide good training, 4) enhance coaching and supervision when staff is inexperienced, 5) provide engaging youth programming and ensure youths move around often, 6) use therapeutic (not punitive) approaches), and 7) establish and nurture a productive and respectful relationship between administrators and direct service staff. DSG agreed that each of these factors contribute to the safety and security of a secure juvenile detention facility.

Figure 4.1. Map of Interviewed Peer Jurisdictions

We incorporated the findings from the peer jurisdiction interviews throughout the main body of this report to King County. Interviewees also made other important points that we wish to share. We categorized and presented this information in the tables below. Some of the quotes have been reworded slightly for clarity.

Table 4.2. Relationships Between Administrators, Managers, and Staff:
Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

Regular interaction occurs between administration and direct care staff.

- We want our managers wandering around, dropping on to units (even if they're not getting a break), sitting down, and talking to staff about what's going on in the dynamics, because we want to create a supportive culture from our managers to our staff.
- Just like I don't want my staff having the "foot-on-the-back-of-the-neck" approach with kids, I don't want my managers and supervisors to have the foot on the back of the neck" approach with staff. It should be really one of support, one of collaboration. I feel in general that we have a pretty friendly environment in our program, and I think some of that comes from that team approach.
- I think it's really important that if staff have ideas for initiatives and things they want to do, that they feel would benefit the program, that we should be open to hearing that sometimes you have to educate them about the limitations, whether that's a regulatory limitation or whether that's a legal limitation or whether it's a financial limitation. You should be open to hearing that and getting that feedback from staff. Hopefully there are comfortable enough to say, 'Hey, wouldn't it be great if we did this?'

- When you're really present and showing them the respect that they earn by giving them the proper training, by really giving them an outlet to give feedback.
- As a director, a lot of it comes down to how staff are feeling about being there and how they're feeling about the support that they receive, the training, and the mentoring and the empowerment right.
- One of the things that we did that I think we've had a lot of success within the last 6 months is we've implemented a 90-day mandatory follow-up with all of our new employees with our Office of Staff Development and then members of our leadership team specific to really hearing from new employees. The purpose is to discuss what's working, what's not working, etc. For example, "If you could go back to your first day, what would have been helpful? What was helpful?" We've revamped even our training program based on their feedback. I think our employees are starting to feel more heard, which I think is creating more empowerment.
- We've started to do stay interviews. Our supervisors are facilitating (on a regular basis) and our directors and assistant directors are meeting with employees around what what's making them stay here because by the time an employee resigns and we get an exit interview, it's not particularly helpful.
- The assistant director's office is on the floor.
- I [the director] am on the floor a lot more than my staff will probably want me to be! But this way, my finger is on the pulse of what is happening. I know the kids know me. I know them. I go during visits so I can talk to the families. Visitation was yesterday. I didn't leave here till after 7:00 PM. It was a long day, but I just want to be here. I talked to the parents as they're coming in to see their kids, and I speak to them because that gives them an opportunity to say, "Hey, by the way, my kid isn't getting this thing or my son needs this or, you know." I want them to feel comfortable.
- Do the managers and the director come and mingle with people and walk around and talk to people and get to know their staff? If not, that is a problem. I'm really far removed from the officers on the food chain, but I go and I chit chat with them. I have conversations with them. They can tell me what's going on, what they like, what they don't like, and that has changed over the years. I can tell you when I was a line staff, this never happened. But we all try to do this now. Chiefs are constantly talking to the staff, like it's open door.
- They're gonna have to mingle with these people. They're going to have to get to know them. They're going to have to like, do a BBQ for them. They're gonna have to recognize them. If they don't do any of that, that will never change.
- Validate what's valid. Speak to it. It kind of takes the steam out of some of their sails. It doesn't work for everybody, but it seems to help the people who would otherwise be getting on board to help them get on board.

Administrators and managers are increasing the amount of time they spend on the floor (with the youths and staff).

- Sometimes, even give people a heads up, like, "Hey, I'm going to come down in a little while. If you need something, think about it before I get down there." It kind of gives people a little bit more comfort.
- Go into the team meetings and to whatever group, especially if they seem to be a vocal group that's kind of clicking up in a negative way and kind of encouraging people in negative ways. Just going to those team meetings and letting those self-appointed people know that you're listening.

- Let people know you're just out doing rounds, you're not trying to catch them doing something wrong.
- Our office sits up higher than the facility, but they're constantly down there doing stuff. They go to the briefings. I don't know if those officers or JDOs do briefings, but like our division chiefs, what you would call a superintendent come to the briefings almost every day. They often show up at what we call huddles, where we're talking with our medical staff and our behavioral health services staff like if they're not even doing that, these people hate them, right?
- The building is very long. I have a nice office. It's probably the best one I've ever had. It's a safe place for people to come to. I want to make sure my staff can always come up. It is a way, but it will help them if they need to come out and talk and I want go out to them too. That's huge, but to have a safe place, it doesn't feel like the principal's office. That's we always say I don't want them to feel like they're in trouble when they come here, that we talk about good things and get ideas.

Administrators and managers convene town halls.

- I do town halls also. Every quarter I will come and do a town hall with all the staff. It's institutional staff and we will shut it down for that because I want every staff as possible there. I shut it down for an hour or an hour and a half, and we'll treat the kids as something nice for that. I'll say, 'Hey, guys. Sorry, we're gonna shut it down. We got pizza for you tonight' or something. That is an incentive so that they know that we're not just ignoring you; it's operational. We try to brief out ahead of time and then the division chiefs do a town hall. I think once a quarter, once every couple of months, also I don't go to that town hall, but they come to my town hall and then I'll talk to the staff and see what's going on. It's time for them to vent to me. I tell them, 'Tell me whatever they want to tell me, You can say whatever you want as long as it's respectful. If you're upset about something, now is the time to vent. Go for it.' It was interesting. I guess last time I knew staff were going to be upset over some things that had occurred, and I was kind of upset. I was kind of at my wits end about some of the things that were going on and you know, even as a deputy chief, I don't have control over everything. So, I went in there and I'm like, 'Hey, you guys can vent. You can curse. Do whatever you want, just be respectful. You know, don't curse at people." And I went through this whole thing about getting it off your chest. And after the meeting, the supervisors came up to me and said, 'Hey, because I was expecting huge blowback on stuff, but I didn't get a lot of blowback.' And they said the way you started that, they said it diffused the situation, because you went in there already saying, 'It's effed up everybody.'
- I just invited everybody to the Town Hall, and it was open, and I was like, 'Here, give it, throw it all at me.' And they were rough at first. And then what I noticed after about 2 years, it slowly started to transform from just a complete complaint session and how we suck to when somebody would bring up a legitimate best practice and ask, 'Hey, can we do this?' I would really validate them, and it would be something as simple that we could do that didn't affect our mission. It showed staff that we were willing to listen, and we started to get those little wins and then staff started to see that we're willing to listen to some ideas. They do have good ideas. They just have to be in line with our philosophical change. Now we're at the point where it was like people are showing up recently and there's no complaints. We were doing a monthly and now we're doing them quarterly.

Table 4.3. Organizational Change:
Comments and Direct Quotes from Peer Jurisdictions

Administrators seek buy-in from staff.

- If administrators can identify some stars and can get them to buy into what you're doing, when you show them the data and stuff like that, then things are shared by word of mouth, and then more people buy in. So, if you get some subordinate supporters (like some key players or people that you think are influential within the organization) and they know the line staff and really try and get them on board, that helps out. And you reward them, you know, you let them know, 'Hey, job well done. You know, I'm really looking to you to help move this. We really need to do this. Look at the data here.' When the data really shows that what you are doing is working, staff is more likely to buy in.
- You have to have a really robust quality assurance process, so when we go out and we say that incidents are down, assaults are down, things of that nature, we actually have data to back that up and to show them. 'OK, you know from last year at this time we had this many assaults versus we have this many now too.'
- In some cases, you have to flip the naysayers. Once you flip those people, everyone else is going to follow. Find out who they are. It's like a gang in some ways. Sometimes you have to take the head off the main gang member. Now another one may grow, but I'm going to take that head off. But I've tried to always engage. It's always better to engage the naysayers (if you can) and get them to be trainers and run the new programs because people follow them. I think those are some of the most important people to engage and to work with because those are the people that everyone else is looking to. They may think, 'How are they going to react to this? Oh, they don't like it? I don't like it either.'
- The [managers and administrators] have to validate the concerns that the staff are expressing to them even though they feel like it's complaining, and they may not want to hear it. They have to validate it because it's real to their staff. Your primary job is to be the coach. I think that that's helped influence other things along with a lot of pieces, the 'us versus them' mentality, breaking through that. You have to learn it. It's something that I struggle with at times, especially when it's somebody who's saying something that I think it's crazy. But you can't say, 'You're way off in left field.' You have to figure out some delicate way to dance around it and validate some piece of it to help deflate their emotions so that they're able to hear what you have to say afterwards. And hopefully you have some backbone and have something that you can reference that's evidence based (or there's some data to go along with it) related to the changes you are trying to make. But if you just try to go back and forth with them, then it just increases that emotion and it's not a productive conversation at all.
- It's challenging, especially because you know you're going out to pick a fight. You know that one employee that's always giving you a hard time, who wants to argue about whatever in front of their peers or in front of the youth. You pull them off to the side to have those tough conversations.
- I started doing a lot to try to win back staff morale. I started putting out surveys (like SurveyMonkey), and I would ask them for their ideas and input, and I'd see what they said back to me. So, I didn't tell them, 'Hey, I'm switching your uniform' but instead I sent out a survey asking, 'If you could pick the color of your shirt, what colors would you pick?' And maroon and green was the highest voting one. So, I said, hey, you can have choice of two. I got rid of the DLC patch that was on the chest (more correctional or law enforcement oriented), and we replaced it with a mascot that was more school oriented. They voted. They picked a gray charcoal shirt, and we put the school logo on it.

- During our monthly supervisors' meetings, we'll take two really good videos and then two really not-so-great videos, and we show the supervisors. And that's where a lot of the buy-in for Mandt is coming in the middle management because we're looking at the video, and you're seeing what Mandt techniques are implemented. The incidents just come down. The injuries are down, the tempers are down, and it's just more of a mellow, no, I don't want to say mellow, but it's more of a controlled environment, if you will. And then the not-so-great ones, "What could we do to improve this?" And so, at first if you put body cameras out on the floor, boy, oh boy, are you gonna hear about it! But we did it. And now our staff love them. They love them, you know? Because they understand. If we get a pre-allegation, for instance, staff aren't really scared of that anymore. But before, if you get a pre allegation you're like, "Oh my God, I'm gonna get investigated by IA and all this is going to happen!" But we are able to clear a PREA allegation within a matter of half hour now because of those body cameras. If you don't have them, it might be something that you want to consider.

Leadership works with unionized staff.

- We had to make the union part of the process.
- We have an association; it's a pretty good association. It's a pretty strong association, but we've always kept very good relations. The president [of the union] can call me anytime, and we can chat. He can say, 'Hey, I don't like this. I don't like that. What happened?' Then I'll explain to him if there's negotiation that we can have on it or sometimes it's like, 'Hey, I'm sorry, this is just the way it is. Let your members know' or 'Hey, that's a great idea, and I'll make the change.' If they have a good idea, I will roll with it, and I will give the membership their credit. We've benefited from having a good relationship.
- We are going through some big transitions right now and we include [union representatives] in all the meetings. Patch it enough to come to the table and say, 'We're going to make decisions together.' But then management has to be strong enough to say, 'Sometimes we will make the decision.' That's what we do.
- You have to have a good relationship with the association, because otherwise your officers are going to hate you. If that relationship isn't already good, I would probably engage the President first, with whoever is in charge. . . gets that level of respect to meet directly with the chief and they do get to meet directly with the chief on a regular basis in trying to get their buy-in to even bring the board and them together, then to meet with the executive team.

Table 4.4. Other Staffing Information: Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

Administrators and managers acknowledge good work by staff.

- We really tried to highlight staff's efforts and the morale committee is big. If you can't do financial rewards, which working for the government, we can't do anything pretty much, but [what] we can do is just really make sure that people are highlighted, that you pull them aside, that you talk to him. It just makes a huge difference with retaining staff and if they move on and you find a better place for them that they appreciate. This is something that I think most facilities and programs have, where it's a group of one representation from each unit and each admin area to sit together and highlight every month who is just extraordinary. Who's going above and beyond? Who's been really reliable and sharing those stories? So, we have a kudos board where they put those stories up, just like, 'Hey, thanks for helping me with this.' And 'that was really great when you were when this happened and you had the security in mind,' or whatever it may be. So those kudos are always nice to have up, but then we give that Employee of the Month every month. Sometimes this is a team. Sometimes you have to think about your support staff, so our kitchen staff, our maintenance staff, people that are really supplying like our office specialists, the people up front that are taking and doing visiting like those are the people that are working super hard that sometimes don't get, they get overlooked and you need those poor people to be successful as a facility to run. So I think that morale committee was just more about giving people voices, cause I can't know everything you know, it's a lot of people and a lot of backgrounds. I rely on my staff to share that feedback. So, then we can reward them.

Table 4.5. The Physical Facility: Comments and Direct Quotes from Peer Jurisdictions

Help staff get used to a new building.

- You move into an environment of chaos because the staff are just as lost as the kids are. You took them from another facility where things ran in a completely different way to a brand-new model and nobody knows what to do. I don't know what the leadership looks like there and what preparation that they put in place for that, now it's never too late to fix that, of course, because that's what my team had to do; we had to come in in and fix that and put some things in place. It's not like, 'Hey I'm the new sheriff in town you're gonna do everything my way.' Not at all. It was helping them understand where the direction that we're going and also getting them to buy in.

Have a calming room with comfortable furniture where youths can take a break.

- We have some places that are really nice. This is an older facility, so they have some with padded rooms or really calming rooms. I would love to have those in the units, but we just don't have space. So, what I did was take the empty space, basically anything could be something productive, and we made it into something that we could use. We have another unit that was emptied that we made into a calming kind of like got bean bags, got chairs.

That's where you could do videos, watch a movie on the big screen, things like that. Just little things that people can calm themselves down if they need some space because they do get sick of each other. It's hard. It's hard living with the same others, just like your siblings. You know, in some ways, you know you're living, you're seeing the same people every day. And so, I think they sometimes need that space. So that's been really good to help deescalate.

Have a library and a safe weight room.

- We have a library. A lot of these kids have found reading to be an outlet for them. They really advanced in their reading capabilities. A lot will do a placement test: they'll be at first grade and then when they leave, they'll be at 6 or 12th grade. It's remarkable what they can do with some of that time. We have reading tutors that help with that. We also have an area that was an empty unit that I made into a weight room, but they're safe weights. They're not like free weights, so they're just like if you go to the gym and using those ellipticals. Getting that physical exercise has been huge, especially when we have construction going on outside and the kids weren't actually outside in the yard. That was really hard for them.

Table 4.6. Recruiting, Hiring, Training, and Retaining Staff: Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

- The pay is important, but it is not the most important thing to somebody's overall happiness and how long they stay with the position.
- When we moved, we didn't bring over the existing staff from the previous facilities. We wanted to use the Youth in Custody model (Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice Reform). We wanted to make sure people had the right mindset. We wanted to make sure people were committed to this process. If you didn't want to be a part of it, you could go down to [a different facility] and maintain that kind of older mentality.
- We have serious staffing issues right now, so there there's still a lot of things that we're struggling with and working through, and CJJA [Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators] is helping us with that. But I think as long as you keep a good attitude and you're working with your staff, we're going to continue to grow and evolve and get better.
- In the past we looked primarily for former military folks or people interested in law enforcement and corrections. But now we're looking for something different. More problem-solving skills (less 'everything is black and white' and 'that's not what the policy said').
- Sometimes people look amazing on paper and it's a role of the dice, honestly. And so one thing that I won't do is keep staff because we need a body. I mean, if it's apparent that they're not doing well or if they come and say this isn't working out, I'm gonna quit. I'm not talking them into staying because they're saying, 'I don't like it here.' The difference with me is everybody that comes in here, everybody, no matter what their position is, gets trained to be direct care, just in case. I'm talking about dietary nurse, housekeeping, and maintenance. Very real in my assistant, who wears a three-piece suit every day to work but has been pulled to run the Control Center because the Control Center person needs to go into coverage. And I have relieved the shift supervisor so that the shift supervisor can, because that's what I'm going to do before I put kids behind the door because I don't have staff.

- In training, there is a strong emphasis on addressing expectations for staff, but also behavioral expectations for the kids. We can't work on anything with a kid if we don't have staff that are equipped to. The staff themselves cannot be the trigger. The key is that we spend a lot of time in training. It's a huge amount of hours in training. They're never allowed to supervise kids by themselves or even get keys in the facility before they have the training. 'Have you responded to an upset resident? Have you demonstrated that you understand how to deescalate? Do you know how to handle your keys or what to do?' You know, just all of the things. So, we spend a lot of time equipping staff, even though it's painful when we're short because we want to hire them today and put them on the floor tomorrow. But we know that's not going to benefit us, and it's just going to hurt us in the long run if they don't know the expectations and the culture.
- We did a lot of mediation training, client engagement.

Table 4.7 Supervision, Coaching, Supporting, Training, and Mentoring Staff: Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

- Supervision is important, and supervision in a residential program can be harder. You can't provide supervision and critical feedback and training to someone in front of a population of kids. You have to have the ability to pull that person off the unit and have meaningful time to sit down and talk to them about their performance. 'What's going on? What are your career goals?' I mean, those things shouldn't just happen once a year. They should happen throughout.
- We require monthly supervision. We call it *reflective coaching* or something like that. We do it all the way through our agency. The supervision is really for the employee. The employee comes up with the topics. Even if it's just 15–20 minutes on the fly, it's important.
- All of our staff have safety plans. They have self-care plans, and they do that the second they walk in. This is important. We want you to have a work–life balance. I'm not saying we're always able to do it, but at least we're having conversations about it. We ask, 'What do we have to provide them to help them be successful?'
- Time spent with the staff around getting them to a place of feeling better and feeling more empowered is really worth it. It's so easy to focus in on, 'This kid is so bad; let's do split programming.' He comes out for 40 minutes, the other kid goes in for 40 minutes. You're never going to get out of the gerbil wheel until your culture feels supportive and safe, and the staff feel that they have the tools and structure. Give them an outlet. Share your experience because some of these staff have come from circumstances where they could have been on that same road and they want to really help.

Table 4.8. Structure and Consistency: Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

- Focus on structure. Kids need to know what to expect. If every day you respond to them differently or if you change the schedule every day, then they are a step ahead of us. The workforce needs to work collaboratively. Programming is not optional for the residents. Programming is programming. If we're supposed to go to school at 8:30, guess what? We're going to school at 8:30. If we're supposed to go to the gym at 12:30, we're going to the gym at 12:30.

- Your behavioral management systems are your Bibles for survival. And it only takes one staff to waiver from that to impact your entire team. So, using staff meetings, shift-change meetings, every opportunity to like rally the team just to really it's together, generate that consistency.
- You've got to fix the chaos. You've got to make the staff feel safe and fix the chaos before you can do anything else. That was the first thing I did when I went to _____. Nobody will do anything we ask of them until we fix the chaos, and we make them feel somewhat safe and like they have control. They really don't know who's in charge. And until you do that, I'm not sure you can move forward with anything else because nobody wants to feel unsafe. Nobody wants to feel out of control.
- The behavior management program is bought and sold on the implementation by staff. Staff must follow the same behavioral expectations.

Table 4.9. Specific Programming Examples
Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

School and other specific programming examples

- We're still looking for and would hope to, one day, get a good vocational education program in here.
- The kids really expressed this summer they love these outdoor contests that we would do. It was like kind of a Summer Olympics, but the best part they loved was the water. So, we got water slides. He used tarps and little kiddie pools that were big and pink, and kids that are with very serious charges are sitting in these big kiddie pools and just acting like kids. Just having those outlets of working together, the kids have really bonded. They may think, 'OK, I am sick of you, but you're also still my peer and someone I can rely on when I'm here.' Just creating those opportunities for them to connect has been really helpful.
- We run school outside of summer for our detained kids. And we have a really structured programming. I think one of the things we do try to do is diversify what we are offering the kids, particularly around that structured time. Every single month by policy we have activities during those times and that changes all the time.
- What do we have to provide them to help them be successful? School is always going to happen. Our biggest partner in terms of programming is our schools. It's really, really, really important for these kids. A lot of these kids, they are not going to school in the community. It is a great opportunity and it's really, really cool to see how we can really reconnect kids back to education.
- They go to a gym, a huge full size, high school gym or go outside. I have a basketball court and a soccer court outside. The kids have this stimulation outside of the housing unit that really allows them to breathe. This movement helps ease some of that angst and some of that "fight or flight" for kids because they feel caged.

Table 4.10. General Programming: Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

Programming in general

- Our goal is to have youth out of their rooms from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM every day.
- We also have a whole separate volunteer program that goes on. For some of these kids who are here for weeks or months or in some cases even years, this is their entire community. It's their local restaurant. It's their church. It's their school. It's their hospital. It's their doctor's office. Whatever you name it. So, we have to keep our kids moving around the program and engaged with different individuals. If you start shutting the door to that because of staffing, you're really creating more problems than you're solving. So, we want to keep those people coming.
- We're doing a mural this summer with one of the artists that's coming from_____, and they're going to get credit for doing the mural. So, it's just giving them incentives along the way. Opportunities to interact with people, educators, mentors, university fellowship, just volunteers, people that can be outside of their realm and they know they care about them. And so, they learn from them. And that becomes their incentive to do well, because if you're not doing well, you're not going to be able to participate in some of these groups.
- We look for any little touch point that we can create with kids when they come in our program to make them better when they walk out than when they walked in. We hope to have, even if it's just a little touch, sometimes it might be bigger and greater. I think it's really important to have respect [for] those programming partners in your facility that are meeting those specialized ends of that. These kids need it, and it's a unique opportunity, while you have, for lack of a better word, that captive audience, you got these kids here. So let's take advantage of that to try and work on whatever we can and get those resources engaged with them while they're here and hopefully some of it sticks. And then that hopefully makes the staff's job easier and makes everybody else's job easier.
- Honestly, programming is huge. If you don't have something to occupy their time, they're going to put something else in place of that. So, really just having them strive for things and activities and be part of it.
- Well, when it comes to shutting it down (or what we call “modifying”), maybe we can't get programming for all the units one day, but we're going to modify and we're going to make sure these units get programming today. We're going modify it, and we're going to shift staff around.
- Kids have to be out of those housing units. They've got to be out of those cells. They're in there to sleep.
- Just keeping the kids busy [with] the daily schedule, we try to keep them busy, busy, busy. They have a little bit of free time, but it’s a lot less than an hour a day.

Table 4.11. Getting to Really Know Youths and Their Needs; Classification Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

- We want to spend a period of time really assessing that kid at admission and figuring out who they are, what's going on with them, and hopefully learning as much as we can so we can make those decisions around classification. This is something that I'm sure everyone is struggling with, including ourselves, because we have a pretty robust classification system and it's not scientific because there's so many variables that can play into who may or may not be a good mix. When you look at age, size, criminal history, mental health, education, vulnerable factors, you know whether someone is a smaller in stature, someone maybe who has some sort of gender issues that were either known or unknown, gangs, all of those things can play in. For us, because of the declining population over the years there are fewer units. So, I have the numbers on the books of staff to open another unit, another male unit, but I don't have the physical people to open it. I don't have the ability to do much with it other than maybe identify what those unique factors might be in kids and then to say to the staff working the unit now keep an eye on that. The best thing to do is to separate out those problems when you know they exist.
- We take everything into account in their background, their IQ, sometimes how they've done in school, if they have an IEP, really their cognitive, they've been diagnosed previously with mental health issues and diagnosis. We want to make sure their medications get stabilized. Those long-term kids that are here for serious charges, we really try to see what the reasoning was behind the behavior.
- What are you screening for? How are you understanding the issues before you when youth are physically present in the buildings? Because if you're lacking information, you're going to need to figure out in order to know what to work on with the youth and in programming. We know that those youth who are left in detention today are the most difficult.

Table 4.12. Behavioral Health and Therapeutic Approaches: Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

- We've added psychoeducation curricula.
- We are not here for anything when it comes to punitive. We are here for service provision. If you have anger management, we're going to work on your anger management. If you have substance abuse issues, we're going to work on drug treatment and substance abuse issues. We talk about healthy relationships and, you know, 'How did I get here? What can I do better?'
- There's a lot of verbal and rapport, and I don't like to say 'relationship' because I don't want staff building a relationship with our youth. I want them to build a rapport, professional rapport with them, because relationships can turn into things you don't want them to.
- Everything we do is based on DBT and then we've really built up from there. We've implemented a new system of care. The basis of everything is building trusting relationships with the youth, which means staff have to engage youth. They can't just stand and guard the youth, right? You have to engage. I guess that's our foundation.
- We support family-style eating and staff sitting with the kids at the tables.
- They've got some kind of significant trauma. They don't know you, and then there's mental health issues there. On top of that, so initially when they first come, of course, there's gonna be some inhibitions about how they listen to you, but part of building that trust is you've gotta

get out. And whether it's just a one-minute conversation every day, you know they have to do that. It's like putting money in the bank. Those little conversations add up, so when it comes time to have that big conversation, when you have to deescalate and stuff like that, they're gonna listen to you.

- From a behavioral health perspective…we no longer distinguish between detention and commitment. In our history, we would say, 'we don't do treatment in detention, but we do on commitment.' We still have people who like to think that way, but fundamentally we've done away with that. It is a matter of the type of service and the length of service and what service is appropriate. Phase 1 of our model development in detention was about looking at the resources we had. We had a lot of resources being provided on a contract basis, and one of the decisions that we made is that the hybrid nature of that just did not work for us. So, we converted the contracted mental health services to state-provided services so we can have everyone under the same umbrella and then develop together under the same model. And then we expanded detention behavioral health services to include all psychiatry services. Those are not provided differentially between detained and committed youth. Everyone has full access to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of on-call psychiatry care, and we increased the number of behavioral health specialist positions. Also, our milieu staff ratios have changed over time. We've added psychoeducation curricula and expanded monitoring of chronic care services because that allows us to know what the likely individualized needs of youth are, even if they're with us for a short period of time.
- We don't judge them for the behavior or try to punish them for that because the judicial system will do that. The secret, I think, to delinquency is empathy, and it's so hard to create empathy with someone that never had empathy for them. They never had anyone show that empathy for them. So, the fact that our staff show that in the care (not that they feel sorry for them) and they show them, 'I care about you as a human being. I care that you graduate. I care that you go to school. I care that you have this and this or this talent.'
- We have two clinicians that do crisis management that really helps a lot. They're a huge part of our team because kids are usually coming off something or there in a mental health crisis or they're in active psychosis. Just having those mental health professionals here has been essential. They've been really great.
- Once the parents exit and leave, we take the kid through the metal detector. We pat them down; they don't do a whole strip search, which is pretty invasive. Nobody likes that. If there's not a safety or security issue, then you don't have to re-traumatize the staff or the youth with the strip search, because a lot of times these kids, I don't know about the exact percentage now, but we have 75 percent that report that they've been sexually abused or physically abused previously. So, we don't want to traumatize him.
- Dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) is what we do as groups, and those are all just skills for how to stop your emotions from taking over. So, we go over some of those skills that they can use, like a stress ball to hold on to, or if they need it for court, just kind of knowing those that really need that. We had a kid that completely dysregulated during court because the victims were talking, and it was horrific. It was a really hard sexual offense case. They put ice packs on his neck just to bring him back because he was just checked out. He couldn't really emotionally take in everything that was happening, but having those DBT skills like that it just it helps the kids hopefully process a little bit and during that time.
- We see our staff not as security officers or as correctional officers; our staff are direct care staff. We call them youth specialists and work on the engagement pieces.

- This is not a model of non-engagement. This is a strengths-based model. Where are the strengths and how can we pull them out? What can we do to create a more home-like environment?
- The youth are learning from the adults. So, if you're short with kids, or if you're disrespectful or you cuss, then kids learn to be that way when they're upset with you. So just getting staff out of that, 'I'm the boss. I'm in control. You're the kid that's locked up, and I'm the correctional staff.' That's not the dynamic that we have here or that's always the dynamic that I'm working against. If I feel like that's cropping up because that creates an 'us versus them,' a power struggle environment [between the youth and the staff].
- There needs to be some level of attention to specialized needs with regard to their existing stabilization practices and interventions. What is the level of the skills development of the staff: What individual services are they able to provide? The needs of youth are certainly rising and are more acute in that regard. I think the acuity of the kid that we see today looks so dramatically different than it did 5 and 10 years ago.
- When the staff has to confront a youth and even just the discussion, we try to create the environment so that there's not confrontation, where there's a conversation and they're all there together. I don't have staff sitting at a desk away from the youth completely, unless they're working on paperwork and then there's typically another staff on the floor with them. So, it's just trying to create more of a symbiotic relationship between being there with the kids and completing the work like it's all you know.

How things used to be

- When we came on board, it was just really adult oriented, and it felt like we got all the same training as an adult institution. We treated everything in the same manner as an adult institution. What was really the big transition is it seemed like, at that time, there was this culture of 'us versus them.' It was just like a militaristic approach that some adult facilities do in training in that.

Table 4.13. Responding to Behavior Incidents: Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

- You can't just lock a kid up because they're driving you bananas. You can't just lock the kid up all day long because they got into a fight. There has to be some level of intervention, and really this is how the country is moving.
- One of the things I'm a big proponent of is asking, 'Do we own any of this? Did we make mistakes in how we were operating that maybe created a scenario where this kid did what they did?' If so, we need to own that and so we're not going to be punitive against this kid or these kids for their behavior when we set the stage for it, we allowed it, or some cases, maybe even we provoked it. So, we have to own that. That's hard for staff sometimes to swallow, but that's part of it.
- I would definitely advocate for removing the youth after an incident, if they could have anything, whether it's a library or school room, as long as it's on camera and they have the staff to do so. That's probably the safest bet you can do, because you have to process where the kid feels safe to talk because you're never going to resolve whatever issue is going on between the two if you don't.

Table 4.14. Youths with Long Lengths of Stay
Comments and Direct Quotes From Peer Jurisdictions

- I have one who has been here for 4 1/2 years, and we have another 3 1/2 years, 2 1/2 years. I have five that have been here 2 1/2 years. I have six that are 2 years. Still waiting, I think with COVID, it really slowed the system down. The adult system is not set up the way the juvenile system is, meaning that they don't have as many advocates or people that are following their case or following through with court dates. So, a lot of times these kids are being continued and continued and continued without talking to their attorney. They didn't really have someone to navigate with as far as their legal charges. So, we made our A1 unit, which is it's a unit full of all of these kids are here for a really serious charge. Most of which (except one) has murder offense that they're facing. So those kids are the ones that have been here for a long time. And what helped? We've been able to give them opportunities where they feel as if they graduate high school, we've given them that opportunity. They've had a ceremony. Here they got to have their family be present. They've got to really feel like they're actually moving towards something in the world when their court cases is kind of been and just limbo. It's really striving for them to understand that we respect you, we respect your time. We know that this may or may not count towards whatever happens to you in court, but they know that we're fierce advocates, so they know I'll go to court, and my staff will go to court, and we will see how they're doing, whether it's good or bad. That really helps kind of give them a sense that we are there for them. We call the staff 'mentors.' Every youth will be assigned a mentor when they come in, and that changes every 30 days, so they'll have one mentor and then I'll switch to another mentor. It's to make sure there's no favoritism. But it also helps the youth and the staff understand each other way better because once you're in charge and helping each other as a mentor, that staff sees that child differently, and that child sees that staff differently. And there's that cohesiveness of respect. So, we've done that in our A1.
- We fought really hard with legislation. We really advocated for those kids to get higher education opportunities, just like secure care. So, we now have it in our legislation starting this year. We just started offering higher ed. classes. One of the universities funded it, so our kids can get their general education in college while they're here. That's a huge incentive. I mean, some of these kids struggled in school previously, right? They weren't in school, so we do placement tests, but it's not having them sit in the same classes for 4 years because that just showed it broke their spirit, and they weren't learning anything new. The teachers were the same teachers they've had for years, and they're still trying to, you know, teach a curriculum from a very low 8th grade level. We emptied one of our units and made it into an educational center and that has more high-tech electrical, like where they can do Webex classes and really nice chairs.
- Motivation can be a really big challenge when someone's facing a large DOC sentence or something, but there is that longer view with those youth in terms of what we're able to do with them. For youth who are there for those longer periods of time (and we know are going to be based on charges and things of that nature), we have now a modified treatment plan that applies to detention. So, they are getting a longer-oriented focus on their individualized needs because we do have more time with them.
- Those longer-term detention kids need to be put to work for you. Help them co-facilitate community meetings. Put them on a co-advisory board. Start to give them opportunities to engage in a positive way to make things better for all youth in the placement. The kids are getting older, tougher, and they are staying longer. You have to start thinking about tiered

systems for kids staying for the longer periods of time. What does this look like for a 20-day kid versus the long-term cases where the kid is staying with us for almost a year? It has to look different. We engage them at different levels. We may let them have more things in their rooms. Additional phone calls. You have to think about the experience that the youth will have. Need incentive to do better. Maybe special breakfast with management team? Need to think outside the box. We don't separate long-term and short-term detention kids.

- You can have a special unit with different behavior management system for them. They have to work their way to this other system, right. 'Hey, you want to be over here, and you want more incentives and things like that, this is what you need to do.' You could transfer those kids into that unit, and then when they don't do well, you move them back.

Table 4.15. Other Relevant Comments From Peer Jurisdictions

- From my youth in the past to my youth now, when I say it's like night and day, it is. It's totally different. They don't have respect for life. They don't care about authority.
- We really focus on pod/unit size and staffing. We make sure that our pod sizes are between 8 and 10 and always have two staff (whether we have the ability by PREA ratio to have one to eight). I think the acuity of the kid that we see today looks so dramatically different than it did 5 and 10 years ago. We have those kids that stay with us for a year also. We have tons of kids in our system that are pending adult charges or will become aggravated juvenile offenders within our system. So, we keep pod sizes small, and we also ensure 1:4 or 1:5 staffing.
- We have staff that would love to work control and the overnights also. And so, we really kind of talk about the kind of facility we need when it comes to our organizational structure.
- We're not typically shutting down units for them to get breaks. We do that once a shift where we shut it down for maybe half an hour or something, but most of the time the kids are out of their rooms as much as possible because that's our state law. But we do have a process to put kids in their room if they're not behaving or they're violent until they have calmed down. It's not for punishment. They could be in their room from anywhere for 10 to 15 minutes to up to four hours, and then we can extend it with the proper paperwork and approvals, showing that the youth should not come out.
- We really encourage (on both ends) a partnership in that classroom with the teacher and with the staff members. We really try and encourage strong communication between the two to make sure that they feel supportive of one another. We get that some teachers don't like staff being too involved in the classroom dynamic. Others really love that support from the staff. So, you'll have staff in the classroom sitting at a desk, helping a kid work on his science project, while the teachers over here are working with other students. But when it comes to the behavioral management, ultimately we want the decision about whether a youth needs to be removed from the classroom to come from the teacher, and then the staff member then initiates that process. My principal he tries to be at our staff shift change in the mornings so he can hear what's going on in the program. And then if that gives an opportunity for the shift administrator and the principal to engage and talk about maybe the principal has testing going on that day. And, 'Hey, is there any way I can get a staff member to sit in the multipurpose room so we can do testing with this kid?' Or maybe we have a staff shortage that day and we have to say to the principal, 'Hey, we're going to have to combine these classes or we're going to spread unit 6 out over here.'

Appendix 5. Findings from Review of Use-of-Force, Behavioral-Response, and Population Data

King County's RFP to conduct a juvenile detention safety and security analysis required that DSG analyze existing data on:

- The detention facility's youth population (charge level, length of stay, age, duration of case processing).
- The use of force (including times of incidents, number of young people involved, and number of staff involved).
- Behavioral response/historical program modifications and restrictive housing.

This appendix includes our findings from these analyses.

FACILITY POPULATION DATA CHANGES

Between 2017 and the first 2 months of 2023, there were a total of 5,079 admissions to the detention facility, ranging from a high of 1,507 in 2017 to a low of 368 in 2021[7]. As shown in Table 5.1, a dramatic reduction in the total use of the detention facility occurred between 2017 and 2021.

Table 5.1. Admissions to Detention by Year, 2017-2023

Year	Number of Admissions
2017	1,507
2018	1,183
2019	1,017
2020	577
2021	368
2022	383
2023*	44
Total	**5,079**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

Other types of shifts become apparent when we examine the demographic characteristics of youths admitted to the facility across those years. First, we can consider changes in the gender mix of detention admissions. From 2018 to 2023, there has been an increase in the percentage of admissions involving female youths, as Table 5.2 indicates.

[7] Data were not available for all of 2023 at the time of this analysis.

Table 5.2. Gender Composition by Year, 2017–2023

Year	Court		Total	Percentage	
	Female	Male		Female	Male
2017	333	1,174	1,507	22%	78%
2018	226	957	1,183	19%	81%
2019	222	795	1,017	22%	78%
2020	140	437	577	24%	76%
2021	96	272	368	26%	74%
2022	102	281	383	27%	73%
2023*	14	30	44	32%	68%
Total	**1,133**	**3,946**	**5,079**	**22%**	**78%**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

One might reasonably expect this increase in the admission of female youths to change the composition of the facility's overall population and increase the number of beds assigned to female youths. However, another trend influenced the composition of the facility's overall daily population. In Table 5.3, we examine the length of stay, by gender. The average length of detention for female youths dropped dramatically between 2018 and 2020, more than offsetting the increased percentage of incoming youths who were female.

Table 5.3. Average Number of Detention Days, 2017–2023

Year	Males	Females	Total
2017	82.63	90.32	84.33
2018	89.31	99.91	91.33
2019	80.72	65.57	77.41
2020	74.84	32.38	64.54
2021	76.89	47.28	69.16
2022	12.70	5.62	10.83
2023*	0.83	3.14	1.57
Total	**77.01**	**67.93**	**74.98**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

Moving from gender to race and ethnicity, we find more shifts in the characteristics of incoming youths. Table 5.4 shows us the racial and ethnic composition of incoming youths by year. The patterns are not quite so clearcut, but there is no doubt that changes are underway. In 2017–2019, for example, 44–49 percent of youths admitted to the facility were identified as Black, but this figure jumped to 51 percent in 2021 and 58 percent in 2022. At the same time, the proportion of youths who were identified as Hispanic dropped steadily from 23 percent in 2017 to 16 percent in 2022. The proportion of youths who were identified as White increased from 21 percent in 2017 to 23 percent in 2021, decreased to 18 percent in 2022, and rose to 24 percent in 2023. Race and ethnicity data will need to be monitored over the next few years to determine whether the already

observed slow increase in the number of White youths (2017–2021 and 2022–2023) represents an ongoing trend.

Table 5.4. Racial and Ethnic Classification of Persons Admitted to King County Detention Facility, by Year (2017–2023)

Year Admitted to King County Detention Facility	Native American	Asian and Pacific Islander	Black	Hispanic	White
2017	3%	9%	44%	23%	21%
2018	4%	6%	49%	20%	20%
2019	3%	8%	47%	22%	21%
2020	3%	10%	45%	19%	25%
2021	4%	6%	51%	15%	23%
2022	2%	5%	58%	16%	18%
2023*	2%	7%	53%	13%	24%
King County General Population (2022)^	0.6%	20.6%	6.8%	10.3%	56.1%
King County Youth Population Ages 12–17 (2020)#	1%	21%	10%	16%	52%

^Source: USAFacts.org, 2022 #Source: Puzzanchera, Sladky, and Kang, 2021. *Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

For comparison purposes, the last two rows in Table 5.4 present the composition of King County's general population in 2022 and its youth population in 2020. It is clear that White and Asian youths are substantially under-represented within the detention population. In addition, Black youths are dramatically over-represented. Native American youth are also over-represented. For Black youths, moreover, that over-representation appears to be increasing.

It should be noted that the preceding presentation of data and discussion of trends was based on treating each detention admission as a unique event. However, many youths were admitted more than once. There were 2,315 unique youths who entered detention during 2017 through 2022. The data bring to light several facts of interest. During 2017 through 2022, the average number of detention admissions per youth was 2.19. As Table 5.5 indicates, the average number of detentions admissions for male youths was substantially higher (2.34) than for female youths (1.81). As shown in Table 5.6, the number of admissions also varied significantly by race/ethnicity, with Black youths having the highest number of repeat admissions.

Table 5.5. Average Detention Admissions per Youth by Gender, 2017–2023

Gender	Mean	N
Female	1.81	626
Male	2.34	1,689
Total	**2.19**	**2,315**

Table 5.6. Average Detention Admissions per Youth by Race/Ethnicity, 2017–2023

Race/Ethnicity	Mean	N
Native American	2.03	78
Asian and Pacific Islander	2.37	158
Black	2.41	1,002
Hispanic	2.33	444
Other	2.40	10
White	1.73	623
Total	**2.19**	**2,315**

The number of repeat admissions is declining over time, as Table 5.7 illustrates. Sufficient data are not yet available on the number of youths admitted in 2022 and 2023 who will repeat (if any). However, the decline between an average of 2.66 repeat admissions for youths entering in 2017 and an average of 1.69 repeat admissions for youths entering in 2021 is striking. This shift may have implications for facility management if youths who are admitted more than once have different needs and pose different challenges related to facility operations and staff training compared with youths who are admitted only once.

Table 5.7 Average Number of Detention Admissions

Year of First Admission	Mean	N
2017	2.66	820
2018	2.43	434
2019	2.09	410
2020	1.74	228
2021	1.69	151
2022	1.27	241
2023*	1.03	31
Total	**2.19**	**2,315**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

An alternative way of examining this change is to ask what proportion of detention admits in each year are 'new' admissions, youth who have no prior detention experience in King County. That information is presented in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8 Previous Detention Experience by Year

Year	Previously Admitted to Detention		No Previous Detention		Total
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
2017	935	62.0%	572	38.0%	**1507**
2018	723	61.1%	460	38.9%	**1183**
2019	550	54.1%	467	45.9%	**1017**
2020	282	48.9%	295	51.1%	**577**
2021	164	44.6%	204	55.4%	**368**
2022	81	21.1%	302	78.9%	**383**
2023*	1	2.3%	43	97.7%	**44**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

Note that prior to 2020 over half of the youth coming into the facility had prior detention experience. By 2022 over three fourths of the youth had no prior experience in a King County detention facility. That is a massive switch, which has implications for orientation needs of incoming youth. It also has implications for management and control issues, since those youth who have prior detention experience may be presumed to understand the staff expectations and discipline processes.

USE-OF-FORCE EVENTS, 2017 THROUGH EARLY 2023

Data reflecting the staff's use of force in response to youth behavior was assessed from 2017 through the first portion of 2023. Our primary concern in addressing the use of force was to understand what groups were at a safety risk that led to the use of force. The rationale for the use of force was assessed in three separate areas. The first was youth-on-youth violence. In some instances, these events were classified as an assault, in which the officers were apparently able to identify a clear aggressor and victim. In other instances, the record simply reflects a fight. We combined the two sets into one category of response to youth-on-youth violence. A second area was youth assaults on staff. In many instances the records indicated that youth used violence against both staff and other youths. We classified those events both as violence against staff and violence against youth. Finally, there were instances in which staff used force in response to non-compliance with orders. In a few instances the records indicated that an assault on officers occurred in conjunction with non-compliance. In those events we classified the use of force as attributable to both non-compliance and to maintaining officer safety.

During the 6-year period we examined, 927 use-of-force events occurred involving 1398 youths. (Later, when we examine the course of youths' lives while in detention, we will treat each of those 1398 events individually, but in this section we focus on the events,

rather than the youths.) Table 5.9 shows the distribution of use-of-force incidents across those years.

Table 5.9. Use-of-Force Events, 2017–2023

Year	Event	Percent
2017	171	18.4
2018	157	16.9
2019	177	19.1
2020	113	12.2
2021	121	13.1
2022	148	16.0
2023*	40	4.3
Total	**927**	**100.0**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

The number of use-of-force events appears to decline from 2017–2019 to 2020–2023 at relatively the same rate as the total number of youths detained. One of the hypotheses put forward in our discussions with facility leadership was that the "problem kids" remained in detention as the total detention population decreased. These numbers do not seem consistent with that hypothesis.

When we examine the proportion of use-of-force events involving youth fights or assaults seen in Table 5.10, we see a shifting pattern in which youth assaults clearly predominate during some years (2018 and 2022), while other years (2021 and the first part of 2023) are characterized by fewer use-of-force events consisting of such assaults. Youth assaults were particularly frequent in 2022 (95 incidents occurred that year), reaching the level experienced in prior years (2017, 2018) when the population count was much higher.

Table 5.10. Use of Force Due to Youth Fight or Assault, 2017–2023

Year		Use of Force due to Youth Fight/Assault		Total
		Yes	No	
2017	Count	98	73	171
	% Within Year	57.3%	42.7%	100.0%
2018	Count	101	56	157
	% Within Year	64.3%	35.7%	100.0%
2019	Count	85	92	177
	% Within Year	48.8%	52.0%	100.0%
2020	Count	54	59	113
	% Within Year	47.8%	52.2%	100.0%
2021	Count	49	72	121
	% Within Year	40.5%	59.5%	100.0%
2022	Count	95	53	148
	% Within Year	64.2%	35.8%	100.0%
2023*	Count	15	25	40
	% Within Year	37.5%	62.5%	100.0%
Total	**Count**	**497**	**430**	**927**
	% Within Year	**53.6%**	**46.4%**	**100.0%**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

Use-of-force events may also be precipitated by an officer's observation of problem behavior or by a young person's continued non-compliance with officer commands. During 2017 through 2023, non-compliance appears to constitute roughly one quarter of the use-of-force events, as seen in Table 5.11. The increase in such events in early 2023 may be the product of greater staff vigilance and earlier intervention, which should create greater safety for both staff and youth. Another way of stating this is that the high levels of youth-on-youth violence in 2022 may have resulted in increased attention by staff in 2023. Continued data collection and analysis will enable the facility to determine if that pattern persists.

Table 5.11. Use of Force due to Non-Compliance Only, 2017–2023

Year		Use of Force due to Non-Compliance Only		Total
		Yes	No	
2017	Count	41	130	171
	% Within Year	24.0%	76.0%	100.0%
2018	Count	20	137	157
	% Within Year	12.7%	87.3%	100.0%
2019	Count	50	127	177
	% Within Year	28.2%	71.8%	100.0%
2020	Count	27	86	113
	% Within Year	23.9%	76.1%	100.0%
2021	Count	26	95	121
	% Within Year	21.5%	78.5%	100.0%
2022	Count	26	122	148
	% Within Year	17.6%	82.4%	100.0%
2023*	Count	22	18	40
	% Within Year	55.0%	45.0%	100.0%
Total	**Count**	**212**	**715**	**927**
	% Within Year	**22.9%**	**77.1%**	**100.0%**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

Shifting to events driven by assaults on staff, some interesting patterns become evident. The highest proportion (28.1 percent) of use-of-force events precipitated by assaults on staff occurred in 2021, as did the highest absolute number of events driven by assaults on staff (34 such assaults on staff took place, resulting in the use of force to control the youths), seen in Table 5.12. It is somewhat comforting to note that the number of assaults on staff, and the associated use-of-force events, declined in 2022 to 22 percent and 14.9 percent, respectively, and that this decline appears to continue into early 2023.

Table 5.12. Use of Force Due to Assault on Staff, 2017–2023

Year		Use of Force Due to Assault on Staff		Total
		Yes	No	
2017	Count	8	163	171
	% Within Year	4.7%	95.3%	100.0%
2018	Count	18	139	157
	% Within Year	11.5%	88.5%	100.0%
2019	Count	24	153	177
	% Within Year	13.6%	86.4%	100.0%
2020	Count	21	92	113
	% Within Year	18.6%	81.4%	100.0%
2021	Count	34	87	121
	% Within Year	28.1%	71.9%	100.0%
2022	Count	22	126	148
	% Within Year	14.9%	85.1%	100.0%
2023*	Count	3	37	40
	% Within Year	7.5%	92.5%	100.0%
Total	**Count**	**130**	**797**	**927**
	% Within Year	**14.0%**	**86.0%**	**100.0%**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

One additional pattern needs to be explored, the relationship of day of the week to the number and type of use-of-force event. We again split the 6-year timeframe into two periods, 2017–2019, and 2020–2023, because 2020 seems to be the dividing point between higher and lower detention population levels.

Overall, from 2017 up to (but not including) 2020, the total number of use-of-force events was lowest on Saturday and Sunday. That pattern was particularly true for events caused by assaults on staff, which were lowest on Saturdays. In the period 2020 and following, assaults against staff were lowest on Thursdays, Saturdays, and Mondays. Youth-on-youth fights and assaults do not appear to vary as much across days of the week as the other types of violence.

As Table 5.13 indicates, use-of-force events caused by non-compliance seem to be highest at midweek, both before and after 2020. Use-of-force events associated with protection of victims, handling of emergencies, and similar situations also seem to be highest at midweek during this time.

Table 5.13. Use-of-Force Events by Day of the Week and Year, 2017–2023

Number of Events pre-2020 vs. 2020–2023			Use of Force due to Assault on Staff	Use of Force due to Youth-on-Youth Fight or Assault	Use of Force due to Non-Compliance	Total Use of Force due to Violence	Other	Total
2017–2019	**Day of Week**	SUN	7	36	8	51	5	56
		MON	8	49	22	79	8	87
		TUE	7	37	9	53	6	59
		WED	7	43	25	75	13	88
		THU	13	46	20	79	7	86
		FRI	6	39	20	65	4	69
		SAT	2	34	21	57	3	60
	Total		50	284	125	459	46	505
2020–2023*	**Day of Week**	SUN	13	29	6	48	3	51
		MON	9	33	13	55	2	57
		TUE	14	25	12	51	2	53
		WED	14	37	22	73	8	81
		THU	7	28	18	53	5	58
		FRI	15	26	17	58	3	61
		SAT	8	35	16	59	2	61
	Total		**80**	**213**	**104**	**397**	**25**	**422**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

We now shift from looking at events to looking at the young people involved in use-of-force events across all study years. Table 5.14 presents the results of that analysis.

Table 5.14. Number of Youths Involved in Use-of-Force Events, 2017–2023

Number of Youths in Each Event	Number of Events	Percent
1	388	41.9
2	432	46.6
3	61	6.6
4	27	2.9
5	9	1.0
6	6	.6
7	1	.1
8	2	.2
9	1	.1
Total	**927**	**100.0**

In most of the use-of-force events, the participation of youths is limited to one (41.9 percent) or two individuals (46.6 percent). For the analysis that follows we treat each youth involved in a use-of-force event as an independent actor.

Again, we look at the pattern over the years. In Table 5.15, perhaps the clearest pattern is the drop between 2019 and 2020, as well as the following jump in 2020.

Table 5.15. Number of Youths Involved in Use-of-Force Events, 2017–2023

Year	Total Youths Involved	Percent
2017	304	18.4
2018	300	18.1
2019	304	18.4
2020	199	12.0
2021	200	12.1
2022	291	17.6
2023*	58	3.5
Total	**1,656**	**100.0**

*Data was for the first two months of 2023 only.

We look at the relationship of race and gender to the specific types of use-of-force events in the following two tables. In each table we calculate the rate of use-of-force event type per 100 youths admitted to the facility during that calendar year. Table 5.16 shows fairly marked differences in the rates of involvement of males and females in all types of use-of-force events, except those derived from non-compliance, in which the rates for females are nearly at the same level as for males.

Table 5.16. Gender and Types of Use-of-Force Events, 2017–2023

Gender	Assaults on Staff	Assaults on Youth	Non-Compliance	Other Events	Total Events	Total Youths Detained
Female	13	88	58	11	170	1,013
Rate per 100	1.3	8.7	5.7	1.1	16.8	
Male	178	937	247	124	1,486	3,608
Rate per 100	4.9	26.0	6.8	3.4	41.2	
Total	**191**	**1,025**	**305**	**135**	**1,656**	**4,621**
Rate per 100	**4.1**	**22.2**	**6.6**	**2.9**	**35.8**	

In the case of race and ethnicity illustrated in Table 5.17, Black youths clearly experience the most use-of-force events, except for events classified as "other" (i.e., those involving placing a victim in a secure setting, addressing emergencies, and similar situations). In particular, the rate at which Black young people are subject to use-of-force events owing to assaults on staff is 6.8 such events per 100 Black youths detained, a rate that is three

times higher than the rate for Hispanic and Asian youths detained and more than four times higher than the rate for White youths detained.

Table 5.17. Race/Ethnicity and Type of Use-of-Force Event, 2017–2023

Race	Assaults on Staff	Assaults on Youth	Non-Compliance	Other Events	Total Events	Total Youths Detained
Native American	4	16	7	1	28	149
Rate per 100	2.7	10.7	4.7	0.7	18.8	
Asian/Pacific Islander	7	75	15	15	112	354
Rate per 100	2.0	21.2	4.2	4.2	31.6	
Black	146	555	182	54	937	2,159
Rate per 100	6.8	25.7	8.4	2.5	43.4	
Hispanic	19	243	43	34	339	968
Rate per 100	2.0	25.1	4.4	3.5	35.0	
White	15	134	58	31	238	984
Rate per 100	1.5	13.6	5.9	3.2	24.2	
Total	**191**	**1,025**	**305**	**135**	**1,656**	**4,621**
Rate per 100	**4.13**	**22.18**	**6.60**	**2.92**	**35.84**	

Assaults on Staff Leading to Use of Force, 2020–Early 2023

One of the concerns driving the study of King County's detention facility is the number of threats to employee safety, specifically the increase in such incidents since 2020 as documented by use-of-force data. We therefore analyzed the use-of-force events from 2020 through early 2023. The use-of-force data file contains information on 267 use-of-force events in 2020, 2021, and the first quarter of 2022. The use of force occurred in response to one of the following situations: youth-on-youth assault, assault on staff, non-compliance with staff orders, protection of victims, and "other" (e.g., an emergency).

In each year, the most use-of-force events occurred in response to youth-on-youth fights or assaults. Across the 27 months, responding to assaults on staff (69 incidents) accounted for one quarter of all use-of-force events. That percentage (denoted in red in Table 5.18) increased markedly from 2020 (19 percent) to 2022 (33 percent).

Table 5.18. Reasons for Use of Force, 2020–2023

	Assault on Peers	Assault on Staff	Non-Compliance With Staff Orders	Protect Victim	Other	Total
2020	55	21	25	11	1	113
	48.7%	18.6%	22.1%	9.7%	0.9%	100.0%
2021	48	37	26	8	2	121
	39.7%	30.6%	21.5%	6.6%	1.7%	100.0%
2022	19	11	2	1	0	33
	57.6%	33.3%	6.1%	3.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	**122**	**69**	**53**	**20**	**3**	**267**
	45.7%	**25.8%**	**19.9%**	**7.5%**	**1.1%**	**100.0%**

Table 5.19 shows the times of day the 69 events occurred.

Table 5.19. Assaults on Staff by Time of Day, 2020–2023

Time	Number of Events	Percent
1:00 AM	1	1.4%
8:00 AM	4	5.8%
9:00 AM	2	2.9%
10:00 AM	4	5.8%
11:00 AM	2	2.9%
12:00 PM	5	7.2%
1:00 PM	6	8.7%
2:00 PM	4	5.8%
3:00 PM	2	2.9%
4:00 PM	9	13.0%
5:00 PM	7	10.1%
6:00 PM	4	5.8%
7:00 PM	5	7.2%
8:00 PM	13	18.8%
9:00 PM	1	1.4%

The most assaults on staff took place in the early evening, between 4 and 6 p.m., and around 8 p.m.

As Table 5.20 shows, the days of the week characterized by the fewest assaults on staff were Saturday, Thursday, and Monday. The most assaults occurred on Friday. We cannot speculate as to reasons for these differences.

Table 5.20. Assaults on Staff by Day of the Week, 2020–2023

Day	Number	Percent
Sunday	11	15.9%
Monday	6	8.7%
Tuesday	12	17.4%
Wednesday	11	15.9%
Thursday	6	8.7%
Friday	15	21.7%
Saturday	5	7.2%

Table 5.21 shows that three residence halls—Kubota, Rimrock, and Seattle—and Orientation Unit, experienced higher numbers of assaults on staff than other locations. However, since we have not simultaneously looked at the daily populations of the cell blocks, we are unable to draw conclusions about reasons for the difference in assault levels.

Table 5.21. Location of Assaults on Staff, 2020–2023

Living Unit & Other Locations	Number of Incidents	Percent
Adams	6	8.7%
ARV	3	4.3%
Baker	3	4.3%
Gym	1	1.4%
Kubota	14	20.3%
N Hall	1	1.4%
Orientation	8	11.6%
Post 4	1	1.4%
Puget	2	2.9%
Restoration	1	1.4%
Rimrock	11	15.9%
Rover Station A/B Hallway	1	1.4%
Seattle	15	21.7%
Vashon	2	2.9%

The detention facility uses a code system to rank the perceived severity of assaults on staff or other events requiring the mobilization of staff resources. Table 5.22 shows the range of codes used across the 69 assaults on staff.

Table 5.22. Severity Codes of Assaults on Staff, 2020–2023

Codes	Number of Incidents	Percent
1	8	11.6%
1 then 2	9	13.0%
1 then 3	3	4.3%
2	29	42.0%
3	15	21.7%
No Code	5	7.2%

Each code event calls on additional staff to respond to the incident in order to regain control of the situation. We can gauge the event's severity not only by the code that was issued, but also by the number of staff who responded. Table 5.23 shows the range of staff responses. Across the 69 events, responses from a total of 362 staff were recorded; an average of slightly more than five staff responded to each event.

Table 5.23. Number of Staff Responding to Staff Assaults, 2020–2023

Number of Staff Responding	Number of Incidents	Percent
1	4	5.8%
2	7	10.1%
3	6	8.7%
4	12	17.4%
5	15	21.7%
6	4	5.8%
7	7	10.1%
8	5	7.2%
9	3	4.3%
10	4	5.8%
11	1	1.4%
12	1	1.4%

Table 5.24. Number of Youths Involved in Assaults on Staff, 2020–2023

Number of Youths	Number of Incidents	Percent of Incidents
1	54	78%
2	9	13%
3	5	7%
4	1	1%

Table 5.24 shows that relatively few youths are involved in these events compared with the number of staff.

The incident involving four youths was called with a code 3 and 12 staff members responded. Staff generally respond in numbers sufficient to maintain a tactical advantage when aggression is directed toward other staff. We cannot discern from the available data whether mobilizing staff to achieve that tactical advantage leaves other portions of the facility and other staff shorthanded and at some risk.

Threats to Staff Reflected in the Data on Restricted Housing and Behavioral Responses

Restrictive Housing Attributed to Staff Threats

The data sets we received indicate that the facility uses two types of restrictive housing. The first type is in-room confinement, which holds the youth in their living quarters, and the second is isolation, which places the youth in a separate confinement area. In addition, there appears to be an option of combining isolation with one-on-one programming with a correctional officer.

The restrictive housing file has a relatively large commentary section in which officers describe the behavior that prompted the use of restricted housing. We carefully reviewed those commentary fields and determined that youths' behaviors can be sorted into five categories.

1. Conduct or credible threats posing a potential danger to staff safety. (Example: "Youth refused to follow staff directions. Youth became escalated and physically violent: punching a staff member.")
2. Conduct or credible threats posing a danger to other youths.
3. Generalized threats, usually to engage in disruptive behaviors.
4. General disruptive behaviors, which we distinguished from simply threatening to engage in disruptive behaviors.

5. Conduct resulting in damage to the facility.

The categories are not perfectly clear-cut, mutually exclusive classifications, but they give some sense of the range of behaviors that could lead to a youth being placed in a restricted setting.

In this section, we focus on behaviors posing a threat to staff safety. Generally, room confinement was the predominant form of restriction youths received in response to behaviors threatening staff safety. Only 29 percent of behaviors other than threats to staff were resolved using isolation. In contrast, 64 percent of threats to staff resulted in isolation. Clearly, threats to staff safety are more likely to be dealt with by means of isolation.

Table 5.25. Types of Behaviors Leading to Restrictive Housing

Reason for Restrictive Housing	Type of Restrictive Housing		Total
	Isolation	Room Confinement	
Threats to staff	32	50	82
Assaults or threats to peers	72	229	301
Generalized threats only	4	40	44
General disruptive behaviors	20	50	70
Damage to facility	5	16	21
Total	**127**	**367**	**494**

A threat to staff on average nearly doubles the length of restriction, as shown in Table 5.26. Moreover, the standard deviation of lengths of restrictions for threats to staff is much greater, indicating that the threats-to-staff category includes some much higher lengths of restriction (up to 11 days).

Table 5.26 Average Length of Housing Restriction

Hours in Restricted Housing	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Threat to Staff	13.9756	82	34.76481
Other Reasons	6.9242	409	11.29058
Total	**8.1018**	**491**	**17.68794**

Restrictive housing may (or may not) include the additional component of one-on-one programming with a correctional staff member. As noted in Table 5.27, of the 32 cases in which isolation was chosen as the restrictive housing option (see Table 5.25), 22 involved one-on-one programming with a correctional staff member. Although we do not have outcome measures for those sessions, it is safe to say that they reflect a great concern for helping the youths strengthen their reasoning capacity and thought processes. The

feedback we received from young people in the facility (through interviews) indicates that they generally appreciated the attention they received, and the concern staff expressed during periods of isolation.

Table 5.27. Use of One-On-One Programming During Isolation After Threat to Staff, 2020–2023

Restrictive Housing Type	Confinement Type	No. of Instances of Assault or Threat to Staff
Isolation, 1:1 Programming	1:1 Programming with Correctional Facility Staff	22
Isolation, No Programming	Restrictive Housing (In-Dorm)	10
Room Confinement	Restrictive Housing (In-Dorm)	50
	Total	**82**

Behavioral Response Actions Attributed to Staff Threats

The last file to contain information on staff assaults is the Behavioral Response file. Of the 2,576 behaviors listed in that file, 11 listed staff assault as the rationale for a Behavioral response. The responses listed are noted below in Table 5.28.

Table 5.28. Behavioral Responses to Assaults on Staff

Types of Behavioral Responses	No. of Times Used
No Incentive Day	8
No Extended Bedtime	8
Computer Restriction	0
MP3 Player Probation	0
Problem Solve with Staff	3
Problem Solve with Peers	0
Apology Letter	3
Demoted in Level	10
Total	**11**

In general, the responses were to remove a reward such as an Incentive Day or Extended Bedtime, plus provide a demotion in programming level. All of the youth receiving these sanctions were male, nine were Black, one was White, and one was Native American.

General Observations About the Analysis of Facility Data and Staff Safety Concerns

General observations are as follows:

1. Admissions to the detention facility have dropped markedly, particularly between 2019 and 2020 (see Table 5.1).
2. The proportion of total admissions consisting of female youths has increased from 2020 through the first quarter of 2023, although girls remain under-represented in the detention population (see Table 5.2).
3. The average length of detention decreased from 2017 through 2021 (see Table 5.3).
4. Black youths are clearly over-represented in detention admissions, and they make up a growing percentage of detention admissions (see Table 5.4). Hispanic youths, on the other hand, constitute a decreasing proportion of detention admissions.
5. Many young people are admitted to detention multiple times. Male youths are more likely to be admitted multiple times (see Table 5.5). Nonwhite youths were more likely to be admitted multiple times, compared with White youths (see Table 5.6).
6. In 2020 through the first quarter of 2023, unlike 2017–2019, the majority of detention admissions were youths who had not been in detention previously (see Table 5.8).
7. Use-of-force events related to fights or assaults between youths escalated in 2022 to numbers as high as they were in 2017 and 2018 (see Table 5.10), although the number of young people detained in 2022 was only 25 percent of the number detained in 2017.
8. The number of use-of-force events attributed to assaults against staff members rose from 8 in 2017, peaked at 34 in 2021, and declined to 22 in 2022 (see Table 5.12).
9. Assaults on staff that resulted in the use of force predominantly occurred in the later afternoon and evening (see Table 5.19), and they were somewhat more likely to occur on Friday (see Table 5.20). Three quarters of these events occurred in the housing units (residence halls) [see Table 5.21].
10. Only eight of the 69 events in 2020–2023 were coded level 1 (a less serious event) [see Table 5.22]. Roughly 80 percent of the events involved only one youth (see Table 5.24), and multiple staff responded in most cases (see Table 5.23). In all cases it appears that staff responded in sufficient numbers to give them a tactical advantage and the ability to bring the event under control.
11. In an additional 82 instances involving a threat to staff in 2020–2023, a housing restriction was noted as a response (see Table 5.27). In the majority (50) of those incidents, the youths were restricted to their rooms, and 32 were isolated. The average length of these housing restrictions was nearly 14 hours, double the average restriction for reasons other than a threat to staff.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE STRUCTURE OF THE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

We have attempted in this analysis to integrate data collected in several different data systems from 2017 through the first quarter of 2023. A new Jail Management System (JMS) has been implemented and is evolving. As we worked both with the current version of JMS and the older systems, we made several observations about potential modifications that may increase the system's utility for future analyses.

First, we recommend that, as much as possible, all data elements use a check-the-box format rather than a fill-in-the-blank format, to avoid problems such as variations in the spelling of proper names. We encountered multiple spellings for the name of each housing unit, for example. Each of those variations creates serious inefficiencies and can lead to errors in data analysis. We also encountered sets of important data items that were in a purely narrative form. We attempted to interpret those narratives and place them in coherent groupings to analyze patterns. A better option might be to create variables with the possible attributes of the event, each requiring a yes/no response, followed by a narrative section so that unique elements of the event can be retained.

We recommend a similar approach for creating descriptions of events and similar items. Consideration could be given to formulating a series of narrative elements that present possible characteristics of the event, each requiring a yes/no response, followed by an "Other. Please specify." option with a narrative section to capture unusual events.

We also suggest creating several different data fields to describe when a youth enters or is discharged from detention, and to distinguish between when a youth is discharged from any supervision and when a youth is being temporarily moved out of the detention facility. A release to court or to a temporary care facility is not the same as being discharged from detention supervision. We had difficulty distinguishing those events in the current data at times.

Additionally, we suggest giving careful thought to preserving or capturing items that may be relevant to future questions. For example, in older portions of the data we found very clear National Incident-Based Reporting System-based classifications of allegations against the youth. Those elements were unavailable in the more recent data (at least in the files we received). Some careful consideration of future analytic questions might lead to decisions to include similar data elements.

Appendix 6. Findings from Review of Staffing Patterns

King County provided the DSG Team with a point-in-time data set that included human resources-related information for all staff members working for the King County juvenile detention facility as of March 31, 2023. The file contained data on staff demographics, position, salary, time in service (i.e., tenure), training information, and sufficient information regarding time in service to compute turnover. The following sections present the results of our analysis of this data set.

Staff Demographics

Table 6.1 summarizes demographic information for the Juvenile Detention Officers (JDOs) and Detention Supervisors working at the King County facility of March 31, 2023. The table includes a breakdown of JDO demographics by race/ethnicity. We grouped demographics for the Detention Supervisors and Program/Project Managers because some of the ethnicity categories only include one staff member.

Table 6.1. Staff Demographics

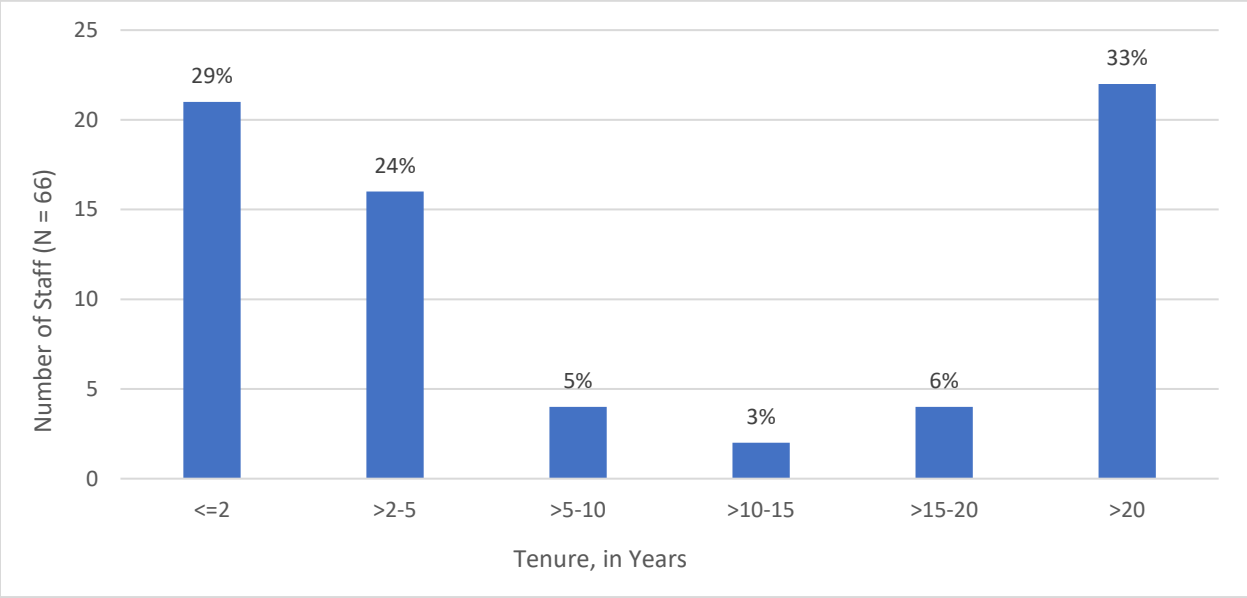
JOB TITLE	RACE/ETHNICITY	TENURE		AGE		BASE SALARY	
		Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median
Detention Officer	Asian, non-Hispanic (*n* = 9)	14.1	15	46	48	$77,288	$75,337
	Black, non-Hispanic (*n* = 28)	12.7	4	46	40	$73,731	$74,472
	Hispanic (*n* = 9)	10.9	3	41	38	$75,120	$73,860
	Other* (*n* = 6)	8.7	3	38	33	$76,100	$75,881
	White, non-Hispanic (*n* = 18)	11.5	6	39	38	$76,191	$75,706
	Overall (*N* = 70)	**12.0**	**5**	**42**	**39**	**$75,203**	**$74,635**
Detention Supervisors	**All Ethnicities (*N* = 11)**	**15.8**	**15**	**45**	**48**	**$102,743**	**$100,997**
Program/Project Manager	**All Ethnicities (*N* = 7)**	**10.5**	**6**	**46**	**40**	**$98,510**	**$94,430**

*Other includes Native American/Alaskan Native (non-Hispanic) and two or more races.

TENURE

To analyze JDO tenure, we calculated each current JDO's total time in service, beginning with their start date (or most recent start date for JDOs who have more than one spell of employment) and ending with March 31, 2023. Figure 6.1 presents the distribution of employee tenure for the 66 JDOs employed as of March 31, 2023.

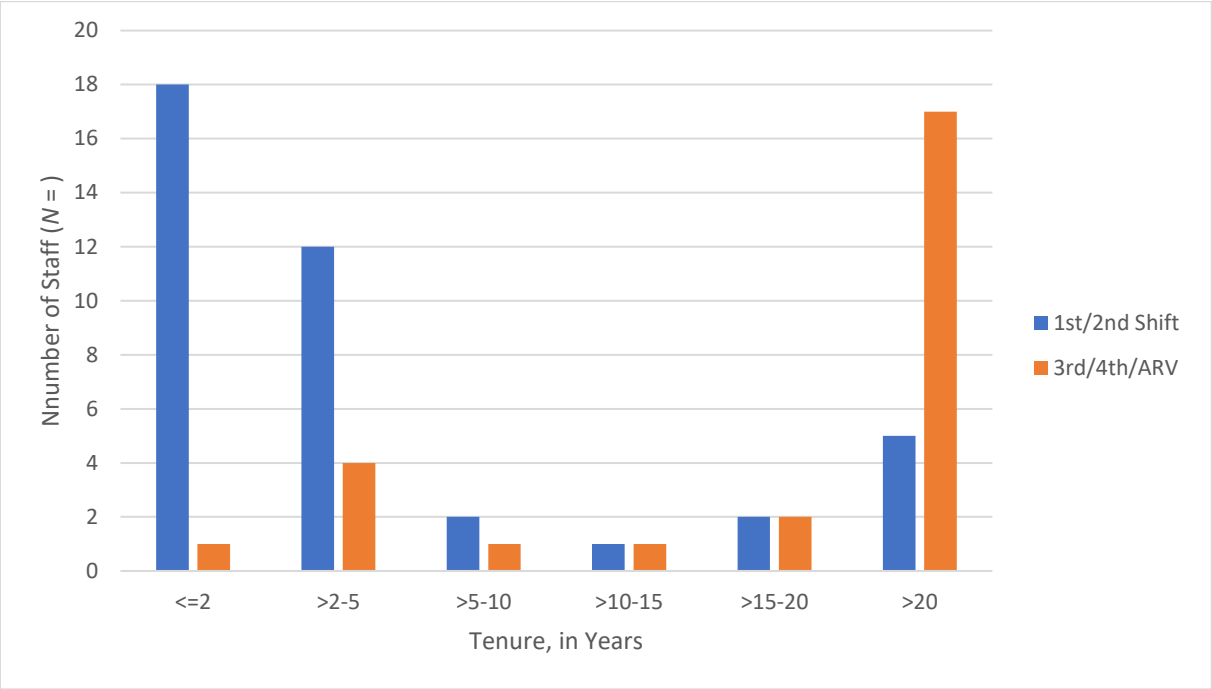
Figure 6.1. Juvenile Detention Officer Tenure



As seen in Figure 6.1, 53 percent of the JDOs have *less than* five years of experience and 33 percent have *more than* 20 years of experience. It is not atypical for juvenile justice and human services organizations to have a large number of staff with minimal experience. However, this situation may unduly strain the more experienced JDOs and the Detention Supervisors because they need to provide regular mentoring and support for less experienced staff. In addition, more than 30 of the JDOs with 20+ years of experience are more than 50 years old, and, as they begin to retire, the County will experience a loss of institutional knowledge.

We next reviewed the tenure of the JDOs relative to their shift assignments. Using the same categories for years of experience in Table 6.1, we examined how staff with various levels of experience were assigned to shifts. Per County policy, staff can request assignment to a particular shift (or the ARV) with the most experienced staff receiving preference in shift assignments. Therefore, reviewing the tenure of staff based on their shift assignments provides information on the shifts preferred by more experienced staff.

Figure 6.2. Juvenile Detention Officer Tenure, by Primary Role (Working Directly with Youth or Not)



As seen in Figure 6.2, JDOs with more tenure are less likely to work on the first and second shifts, which occur during the day and afternoon, when a higher percentage of staff time is spent working directly with the youths. More experienced JDOs—particularly those with 20+ years of experience—are more likely to work on the third shift, fourth shift, or ARV, when there is less regular contact with the youths.

Table 6.2 shows the percentage of staff within various tenure categories and the percentage of staff in each category working directly with youths (first or second shift) versus those not working as closely and regularly with youths (third shift, fourth shift, ARV).

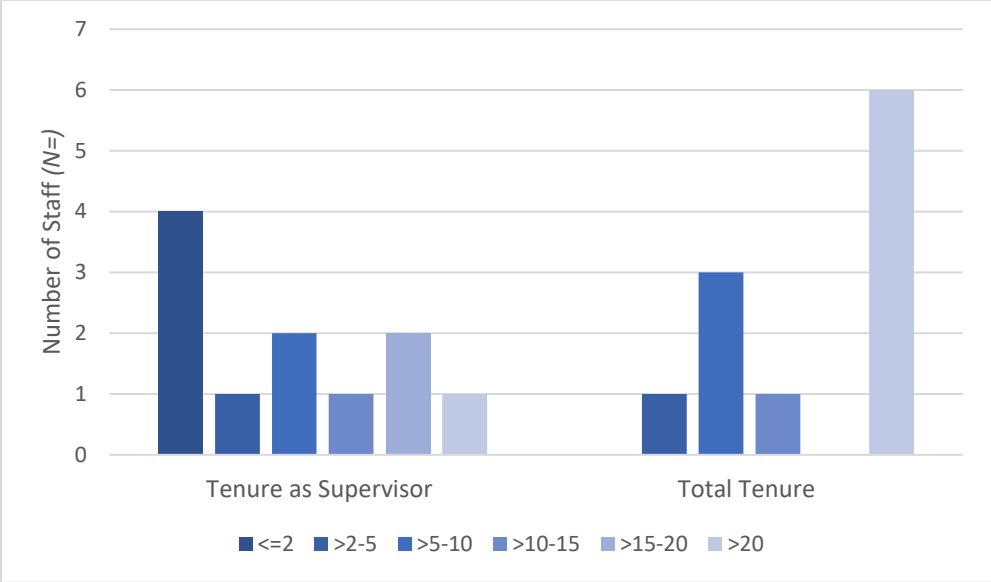
Table 6.2. Percentage of Staff Working Directly with Youths, by Tenure

CONTACT WITH YOUTHS/SHIFTS	<=2	>2-5	>5-10	>10-15	>15-20	>20
Working Directly with Youths (First or Second Shift)	95% (18)	75% (12)	67% (2)	50% (1)	50% (2)	23% (5)
Not Working Directly with Youths (Third or Fourth Shift, ARV)	5% (1)	25% (4)	33% (1)	50% (1)	50% (2)	77% (17)

Figure 6.3 presents the tenure of Detention Supervisors, with breakdowns for tenure as a supervisor and overall tenure with the detention facility (including total time in

service, regardless of breaks in employment history). As seen in Figure 6.3, four supervisors—more than in any other job category—have between zero and two years of experience, illustrating the recent need to hire supervisors as a result of significant staffing changes and turnover since 2020.

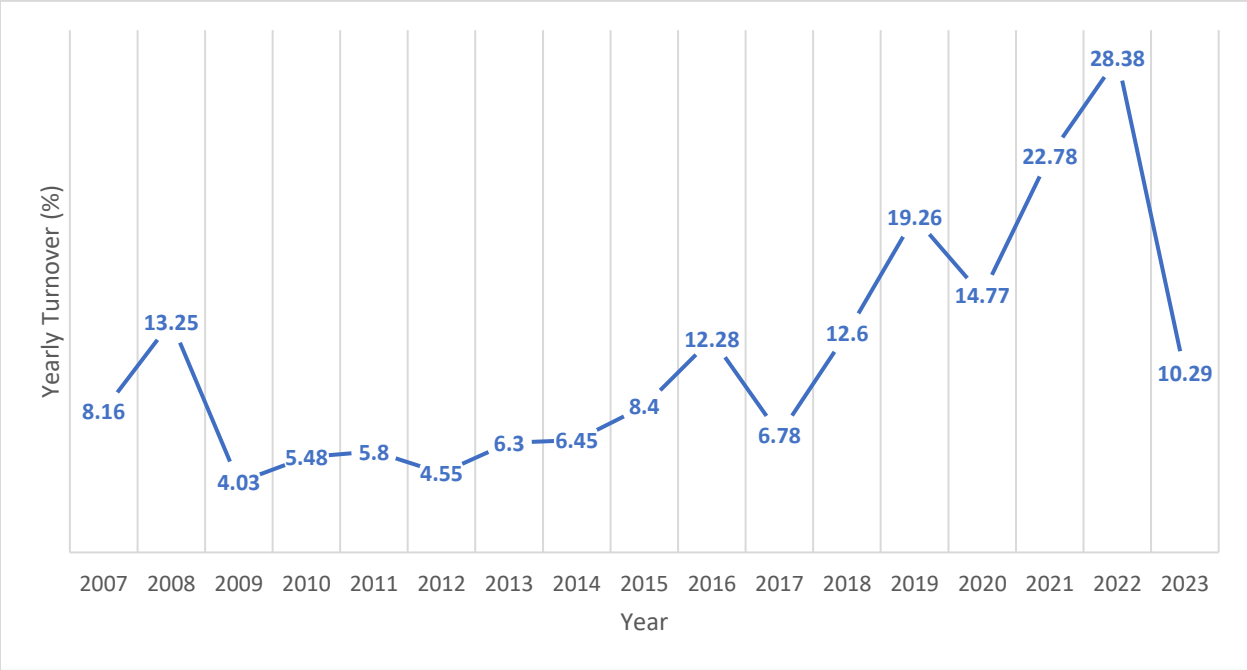
Figure 6.3. Detention Supervisor Tenure



TURNOVER

Using administrative data provided by King County, we calculated the turnover rates of JDOs since 2007, the first year of the dataset. For the calculation, we divided the total number of separations for a given year by the total annualized number of JDOs employed for that year. For example, if a staff member left June 30, their service counted as .5 years for the denominator. Figure 6.4 plots the annual turnover rate for each year between 2007 and the first three months of 2023.

Figure 6.4 Turnover, Juvenile Detention Officers



As seen in Figure 6.4, the turnover rate was fairly constant between 2009 and 2017. It then began to rise, and it peaked in 2021 and 2022. The rate may be stabilizing during 2023, although it is difficult to draw conclusions for the entire year based on only three months of data. During interviews, many staff and facility management attributed the increase in turnover to the uncertainty caused by the COVID–19 pandemic. It is notable that the turnover rate, although high, is not significantly out of line with industry estimates of turnover rates among staff working in the juvenile justice field, which have ranged between 20 percent and 37 percent per year.[8]

Training

Juvenile Detention Officers

Our review of the training records indicated that roughly 91 percent of JDOs receive the New Employee Orientation and defensive tactics training during their first month on the job. King County's policy is that all new employees receive this training before being assigned to a shift. We found that some of the older records (mostly before 2010) do not have any information about employee training, and we believe this lack of information may be the reason the number is not 100 percent.

[8] Minor, K.I.; J.B. Wells; E. Angel, and A.K. Matz. 2011. Predictors of Early Job Turnover Among Juvenile Correctional Facility Staff. *Criminal Justice Review*, 36(1):58–75; Mitchell, O.; D.L. MacKenzie; G.J. Styve; and A.R. Gover. 2000. The Impact of Individual, Organizational, and Environmental Attributes on Voluntary Turnover Among Juvenile Correctional Staff Members. *Justice Quarterly*, 17(2):333–357.

Supervisors

We found that all current and prior supervisors have received PREA Supervisor Investigation Interview Training at some point during their tenure. Other types of supervisory training include:

- Coaching skills for managers, supervisors, leaders (three trainings)
- HR systems training for supervisors (one training)
- First-level supervision for corrections (one training)

SALARIES

Generally, salaries for JDOs compare favorably with the salaries for similar positions offered by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and other juvenile justice organizations in King County. To conduct a salary analysis, we reviewed position descriptions for open jobs (as of April 2023) from state and county human resources and recruiting websites. For the DCYF comparison, we included Juvenile Rehabilitation Security Officers (JRSOs) working in residential settings (both state commitment facilities and community facilities for youths transitioning back to the community). JRSOs provide security services but not counseling or other services that are part of DCYF's treatment program, which is based on Dialectical Behavioral Therapy. For the county juvenile justice agencies, we compared positions similar to juvenile detention officers in two counties in eastern Washington—Pierce and Clark. Table 6.3. presents a comparison of the job responsibilities for the positions included in the analysis.[9]

[9] For the King County JDO position, we used the base salary level as advertised in the County's job description ($64,812.80) rather than the median JDO salary as computed from the HR data ($74.635). Because we did not have average salary data for any other jurisdiction, we used the entry-level salary to ensure a valid comparison.

Table 6.3. Comparison of JDO Positions with Other State and County Agencies

Position Attribute	King County JDO	DCYF JRSO	Pierce County JDO 2 (Swing Shift)	Clark County JDO
Supervisory Responsibility?	No	No	May supervise volunteers	No
Desirable Qualifications	• 21 years of age at date of hire • High school diploma or equivalent • Valid Washington State driver's license • Willingness and availability to work at least 40 hours/week • Ability to work varied shifts • Ability to work mandatory overtime as required Desired: • Experience working with youths • Experience in criminal justice, ideally with youth in a secure environment • Associate degree or bachelor's degree in relevant field	• High school diploma or GED AND • One year of relevant work experience in areas such as social services, security guard, correctional officer, police or police reserve officer, military police or other law enforcement work OR • Successful completion of a basic law enforcement training program approved by the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission OR • Successful completion of a police or reserve police academy or military training program	• Two years of post-high school education in social services, corrections, or related field OR two years of experience (paid or volunteer) in the guidance, discipline, and supervision of youths involved with the Court • One year of experience as a Detention Specialist or comparable position • Completion of the Training Academy at the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission within 12 months	• "All combinations of education and lived life experience will be considered" • Strong desire to work with high-risk/high-needs youth • COVID–19 vaccination (or medical/religious exemption) • Successful completion of the Juvenile Corrections Personnel Academy – Detention (within one year)
Key Responsibilities	• Provides safe and secure custody of juveniles; ensures their access to health, mental health, educational, and recreational services • Maintains proper living standards • Creates positive environment modeling prosocial behaviors and supports juveniles in changing behaviors	• Provides security services and helps ensure the safety and security of residents, staff, and facilities • Conducts required checks (e.g., bed checks, perimeter checks, hourly security calls, room inspections) • Backs-up residential staff and intervenes as needed to diffuse	• Ensures well-being of youths, providing important work in protective supervision, screening, booking, and care for youths • Deescalates conflicts and manages behavior of youths • Identifies destructive behaviors and intervenes appropriately • Provides supervision, coaching, and mentoring while nurturing youths to overcome adversity • Uses skill building and behavioral management	• Performs intake functions per established SOPs • Works with parents, guardians for release on recognizance and to provide information to incoming youth and their families • Receives, searches, and removes personal

Position Attribute	King County JDO	DCYF JRSO	Pierce County JDO 2 (Swing Shift)	Clark County JDO
	to achieve positive goals • Manages behaviors and diffuse disruptive behaviors • Monitors and documents juvenile movement and locations • Provides educational/ recreational structured programming • Attends to individual considerations • Uses appropriate physical defensive interventions and restraint techniques • Ensures constitutional and other rights are upheld • Conducts inspections of the facility, juveniles, visitors, and packages	emergent situations • May distribute medication to youths • May assist with cooking and cleaning duties • Uses verbal de-escalation techniques • Supports case management goals, including motivating and coaching youths toward targeted behavioral change • Maintains a written account of activities conducted during shift	techniques in individual or group interactions • Supervises on-call volunteers	property from detained youths • Searches and maintains records pertaining to behavioral and personal history; complete files and routine forms • Provides for safety, health, and recreation needs of juveniles in detention • Monitors visiting hours and visitors • Assists with preparation of daily evening snacks • Operates and maintains security and integrity of the detention center • Performs janitorial functions
Pay Range	• $64,812.80–$82,076.80	• $40,812 – $54,492	• $58,905.60 – $73.694.40	• $52,062.40 – $66,643.20

Position Attribute	King County JDO	DCYF JRSO	Pierce County JDO 2 (Swing Shift)	Clark County JDO
Benefits	• Medical, dental, vision, progressive vacation leave (starting at 12 days), sick leave (12 days), personal holidays (2), annual tuition reimbursement ($5,250), life and disability insurance, retirement, transportation programs/ORCA transit pass, paid parental leave, multiple paid leave types (e.g., family, parental, bereavement, volunteer service, military), flexible spending accounts, wellness programs employee giving program, employee assistance program	• Medical, dental, vision, basic life insurance, flexible spending accounts, long-term disability insurance, dependent care assistance, employee assistance program, retirement, deferred compensation, public service loan forgiveness, holiday leave, sick leave, vacation, various additional leave (military, bereavement, parental, FMLA, LWOP) and ability to participate in a leave sharing program	• Medical, dental, vision, life insurance, flexible spending accounts, long-term disability insurance, retirement, deferred compensation, public service loan forgiveness, holiday leave, sick leave, vacation, various additional leave (military, bereavement, parental)	• Medical, vision, dental, paid leave, flexible spending accounts, life insurance, long-term disability, retirement, deferred compensations

JDO = Juvenile Detention Officer; JRSO = Juvenile Rehabilitation Security Officer; DCYF = Department of Children, Youth and Families; ORCA = One Regional Card for All; FMLA = Family and Medical Leave Act; LWOP = Leave Without Pay; SOP = Standard Operating Procedure

Table 6.3 suggests that King County JDOs earn a significantly higher average salary than their counterparts at other agencies. However, given the high cost of living in King County, we used a cost-of-living adjustment factor to compare salaries using real dollars. We used cost-of-living data from the National Cost-of-Living Index (COLI), which is produced by the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER), a leading non-profit organization that conducts national, state, and local-level labor market analysis. The COLI provides cost-of-living estimates for local areas based on factors including housing, groceries, utilities, transportation, and health care.

COLI data for Washington State include adjustment factors for both Pierce and Clark counties, allowing us to compare the positions from other jurisdictions in real dollars (the DCYF positions were posted for King County, so no adjustment was used). The factors are expressed relative to the national average of 100 percent. For example, the Seattle composite index is 149.9, indicating that the costs of living in Seattle are 49.9 percent greater than the costs of living in the "average" American city. Similarly, the composite numbers for Pierce County and Clark County were 126.6 and 103.8, indicating the cost of living in those counties is, respectively, 26.6 percent and 3.8 percent higher than the

average American city. The factors used for this analysis represent the cost of living during the fourth quarter of 2022, the most recent data available.

Table 6.4. Salary Comparison Adjusted for Cost of Living

	King County JDO	DCYF (King County) JRSO 1 (Security Officer)	Pierce County (Tacoma) JDO 2 (Swing Shift)	Clark County (Vancouver) JDO
Base Pay	$64,812.80	$40,812.00	$58,905.60	$52,062.40
COLI Figure	1.499	1.499	1.226	1.038
Adjusted Salary	$43,237.36	$27,226.15	$48,046.98	$50,156.45
Pay Difference from JDO Average Base (COLI- Adjusted Dollars)	—	**– 37%**	**+11%**	**+16%**

JDO = Juvenile Detention Officer; JRSO = Juvenile Rehabilitation Security Officer; DCYF = Department of Children, Youth and Families; COLI = National Cost of Living Index

As seen in Table 6.4, there are discrepancies in salary levels between the jurisdictions when viewed in real dollars. Although King County JDOs make significantly more than their DCYF counterparts, they also make less in real dollars than similar juvenile detention officers in Pierce and Clark counties. Of note, however, is that King County appears to offer the most generous benefits package of the organizations considered in this review, including a tuition reimbursement program of up to $5,250.