

**Kansas Juvenile Justice Workgroup
Law Enforcement Roundtable Executive Summary
August 18, 2015**

On August 18, 2015, the Kansas Juvenile Justice Workgroup held a roundtable discussion with Kansas law enforcement officers. The meeting was facilitated by Ed Klumpp, a Workgroup member and the legislative liaison for the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police and the Kansas Sheriffs Association. The officers in attendance were:

- John Kyle, Riley County Police Department
- Fred Whitman, Russell County Police Department
- Kent Z. Karlen, Rose Hill Police Department
- Daryl Reece, Johnson County Police Department
- Travis Rakestraw, Wichita Police Department
- Sean Kochanowski, Saline County Sheriff's Office
- Todd Ayer, Emporia Police Department
- Brad Jones, Shawnee County Sheriff's Office
- Jon Culley, Reno County Sheriff's Office

➤ ***Strengths of the Juvenile Justice System:***

- **Good Relationships Often Exist Between Law Enforcement and Juvenile Intake and Assessment (JIAC):** Some officers reported good relationships between local law enforcement and Juvenile Intake and Assessment Centers (JIACs), which are responsible for conducting intake assessments with a youth following arrest. Some jurisdictions, primarily those in larger population centers, reported that disagreements do arise between the JAIC and local law enforcement over decision-making about whether a youth should remain at home after an arrest or be placed at a Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF). However, most officers present stated that JIAC and law enforcement usually agree on the most appropriate response. Officers reported that some JIACs make determinations based upon type of offense (i.e. felony versus runaway offenses), while others use a standardized assessment to determine which youth are eligible to return home.
- **Good Relationships Often Exist Between Law Enforcement and Local Community Corrections Officers (CCOs):** Officers generally reported good relationships between local law enforcement and the CCOs who supervise youth in the community on Intensive Supervision Probation.
- **Higher-Level Offenders:** At least one officer reported that he felt the juvenile justice system responded well to more serious offenders.

➤ ***Areas in Need of Improvement:***

- **Lack of Services for Youth Returning from Out-of-Home Placement:** Officers reported that there are not enough supports for youth returning from residential placement in the custody of the state's Department of Corrections (KDOC). Officers stated that youth return home to challenging family situations without services to support the youth or their family in order to avoid old habits and prevent reoffending. In addition, officers reported that CCOS and Court Services Officers (CSOs) often had large caseloads of

youth on conditional release supervision and that can lead to difficulty in keeping tabs on youth appropriately.

- **Lack of Immediate and Appropriate Responses for Low-Level Offenses:** Officers reported difficulty in soliciting immediate interventions or responses for youth who commit less serious infractions such as shoplifting, graffiti, and other low-level offenses.
 - Officers reported inconsistent practices across jurisdictions regarding whether officers file a report or investigate offenses further after a victim/business declines to prosecute.
 - In some but not all districts, low-level cases are reviewed by a detective or other police officer to determine if a youth has had prior offenses.
 - There was concern that municipal misdemeanors are frequently not prosecuted by county or district attorneys, resulting in no accountability for the juvenile.
- **Inconsistent School Referrals:** Many officers stated that school administration policies regarding which types of behavior to refer to law enforcement are inconsistent across schools and school districts and often shift when a new school administration take over.
- **Transportation in Rural Areas:** Officers reported variation in whether or not they are responsible for transporting youth to residential placement. In rural areas, officers report driving long distances to drop youth off in the middle of the night, only to have to return within 72 hours in order to bring the youth to court. In other counties, CCOs transport youth except when youth are placed in a JDC.
- **Variation in Detention Decision-Making:** JIACs use different policies to determine what to do following a youth arrest. In part, these practices vary based on available staff and on relationships between JIACs and local law enforcement.

➤ ***How Pieces of the System Interact:***

- Officers reported that response times by JIAC staff are generally good and that JIAC staff frequently maintain good relationships with the local law enforcement officers with which they interact after every youth arrest.
- Officers frequently stated that youth who return home to local CCO or CSO supervision from KDOC custody do not receive adequate services and as a result, often return to similar family challenges and peer influences without the supports necessary to keep from reoffending.
- Officers reported inconsistency across schools and school districts in the types of behaviors referred to law enforcement.

➤ ***Other:***

- When issues of abuse or malpractice arise in residential placements such as foster care or out-of-home facilities, law enforcement officers reported that they generally make a report to the Department for Children and Families (DCF).
- Officers spend significant time investigating low-level sex offenses such as sexting, but prosecutors often will not prosecute those offenses, in part because of a reluctance to charge such behaviors as felony-level sex offenses requiring sex offender registration. Some officers stated that their departments have had success with these issues through education outreach programs in schools and by referring behaviors back to schools for disciplinary action.
- Officers reported differing levels of discretion in determining whether to file a report on youth behavior. For violations of probation such as curfew infractions, officers reported

sometimes declining to file a report when there is a high number of other more serious calls on a given day or night. For reports of criminal activity, officers stated that discretion is less of a factor. However, one officer stated that officers in his district have a greater degree of leeway regarding whether to file reports for fights that breakout in schools.

➤ **Notable quotes:**

- **On the lack of services for youth returning home from out-of-home placement:**
 - “There’s not enough treatment to get them back to where they come back to. They do well in placement and then they come right back to their old habits doing the same thing. And that happens all the time.”
 - “The biggest issue I see is when they get out of the system, how do we get them back so they’re not doing the same things over and over again?”
- **On effective responses to runaway youth:**
 - “I’ve found there’s a reason the kid ran away, and you’ve got to get down to why, [whether it is] abuse, defiance, [or] neglect...”