



**JJPOC Diversion Work Group  
Raising the Lower Age Limit Subgroup  
November 12, 2019  
11:30-1:00pm**

State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103

## Meeting Summary:

- **CSSD Data Deep-Dive**
  - The subgroup reviewed the data provided by Bryan Sperry from CSSD. The data was an overview of all court referrals for youth under age 13 from the years 2010-2019.
  - The data included demographics, charges, information about the sources of referrals, treatment interventions, dispositions/outcomes & rates of recidivism.
- **Update on States with higher Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (MACR)**
  - Data was compiled that analyzed the MACR around the country. Currently, 28 states have no minimum age. It was suggested that this is because those states might be making decisions on a case-by-case basis or using other informal age boundaries.
  - Of the 22 states with a MACR over half of them currently have a MACR of 10 years old.
  - The Subgroup reviewed recent legislation passed in California, Nebraska, Massachusetts, and Vermont.
- **Updated International Standards**
  - The subgroup reviewed the research on International Standards for MACR. Globally, the most common MACR is 14, with an average age of 12.
  - Certain countries, such as France and New Zealand, have specialized police officers that are dedicated to the juvenile population. These officers have a strong focus in social work and child psychology. It was also noted that either police officers or a juvenile judge has the power to make diversionary decisions for youth. There was further discussion of the New Zealand model and restorative justice practices used in the young population.
- **Alternative Options for Children Under the MACR**
  - Options for youth under the MACR is a variety of informal processes. It includes family hearings, restorative justice practices, and conferencing. These informal methods are designed to keep youth out of the formal system while accounting for the problem(s) observed. Other popular alternatives include the use of family and other municipal child welfare courts. These civil courts keep juveniles out of the criminal court system.
  - In regards to noncompliant children and families, there was discussion on emphasizing the family's responsibility for their child and leaning on the child welfare system in cases where families are not in compliance and under the MACR.
- There was discussion on next steps to draft a recommendation, including overview of carve outs, language choice, and timeline.

- December 4<sup>th</sup> Diversion Meeting – The Subgroup will present their draft recommendation and data to the larger Workgroup for review
- December 13<sup>th</sup> Executive Meeting – The co-chairs of the Diversion Workgroup will present their draft recommendation for review/revisions.
- December 19<sup>th</sup> JJPOC Meeting – The co-chairs of the Diversion Workgroup will present the data and recommendation to the JJPOC for review/feedback
- Next Steps
  - December 2<sup>nd</sup> Subgroup Meeting - Language will be crafted with potential carveouts, and data will be ready for use in support of the recommendation
    - Sue Hamilton will draft legislative language for the next meeting. She will also look at NJDC for resources.
  - Bryan Sperry will provide data that is broken down for the 7 to 11-year-old population, as well as the 12-year-old population. He will also will ask Probation to provide a roadmap of cases handled judicially and non-judicially, in order to review services available to youth through the juvenile court in comparison to equivalent services in the community.
  - Fran Carino will provide the Subgroup with a Delinquency Flowchart that maps out their process, in order to use as a template flow chart for the entire juvenile system process as it currently stands and what will be proposed.
  - Carl Jiang will compile a list of tough questions that may be asked regarding any suggested change to the current system. The questions will consider pushback from those in the community.
  - Lauren Ruth will gather information regarding competency of adolescents to support raising the MACR.
  - The Subgroup suggested possibly looking at DCF's array of treatment options to see if the population under the MACR can be handled through DCF. It would also be beneficial to know how many children under the age of 12 have DCF involvement, as well as court involvement.

**Next Meeting:** December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 @ CSSD Central Office