



The Collaborating for Youth and Public Safety Initiative

Scaling Effective Community-Based Services and Supports for Youth Statewide

The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center has launched the Collaborating for Youth and Public Safety Initiative (CYPSI) to help states develop comprehensive multisystem plans to improve public safety and behavioral health, education, and other outcomes for youth statewide.

Background

Adolescents nationwide **are in crisis**, increasingly experiencing mental health, school, and community violence challenges that can impact their well-being and, ultimately, their risk to themselves or others. Public systems and service providers are struggling to address youth and families' needs given service gaps and workforce shortages. And, without coordinated, cross-systems solutions, many states are reverting to ineffective public safety policies that fail to address the root causes of youth's behavior or are deploying isolated initiatives that have limited potential for impact and don't efficiently maximize available resources. This crisis presents a critical opportunity for states to develop a new vision and interconnected strategies to better protect public safety and improve youth outcomes.

Goals and Key Activities

Through CYPSI, the CSG Justice Center partners with states to develop a statewide action plan to strengthen and scale a continuum of research-informed, community-based services and supports for youth and their families statewide. This continuum of services includes the following:

1. Early intervention services to prevent youth in crisis from unnecessary involvement with the juvenile justice and child welfare systems and with courts and out-of-home placement generally
2. Research-based, cost-effective services and supports to reduce recidivism for higher-risk youth involved with the juvenile justice system
3. Prevention and intervention services to mitigate youth violence, including victim supports

CSG Justice Center staff provide states with cost-free technical assistance to help state teams develop and implement their state plans. Key activities include the following:

- **Coordination and Collaboration:** Assemble and facilitate state leaders across branches of government and service systems to formalize a multisystem team (or leverage an existing one) to develop and oversee their state plan.
- **Education and Strategy Development:** Educate state leaders on a set of policy (legislative and administrative), financing (e.g., Medicaid and Family First), service implementation, and workforce (e.g., providers and staffing) strategies for potential adoption in their state plan. The CSG Justice Center has spent over a year researching these strategies and learning from national and state experts and will share a framework with states to guide an assessment of their efforts.
- **System Mapping and Prioritization:** Conduct virtual system mapping activities and site visits with state leaders, local officials, and providers to help states assess their current strategies and identify priorities and goals for improvement.
- **Action Planning:** States receive dedicated time with CSG Justice Center staff support to develop their action plans for multisystem improvement, which include key priorities and goals; concrete legislative, fiscal, administrative, and practice changes needed to advance these priorities; and specific next steps for implementation. CSG Justice Center staff help states formalize their plans and concrete next steps.

States that participate in CYPPI are eligible for more intensive, multiyear TA from the CSG Justice Center to enact and implement their state plans.

Requirements for States

CYPPI presents a unique opportunity for state leaders to develop a new vision for supporting youth and families, improving public safety, and using resources more efficiently across systems. States that wish to participate in CYPPI must commit to the following:

1. Form, or leverage an already existing, multisystem team to oversee state participation in the initiative, serve as the point of contact for CSG Justice Center staff, and lead development of their state plan. At minimum, this team should include high-level representatives from the governor's office and juvenile justice, behavioral health/Medicaid, child welfare, and education systems; a legislative champion; and a local government or provider representative.
2. Participate in ongoing planning, information sharing, and strategy development meetings with the core team members and the CSG Justice Center.
3. Host a site visit from the CSG Justice Center with participation by the core team and their staff to include system mapping, listening sessions with diverse stakeholders, and strategic planning.
4. Identify goals and develop, formalize, and implement a multisystem action plan for improving public safety and youth outcomes including concrete policy, fiscal, and practice improvement.

Interested states **must, at a minimum, submit a letter to the CSG Justice Center—signed by members of the core team** outlining why they want to participate in CYPPI, their goals for the initiative, and why/how they are positioned for successful participation.

For questions about the initiative or for submitting a letter of interest, please contact jweber@csg.org

