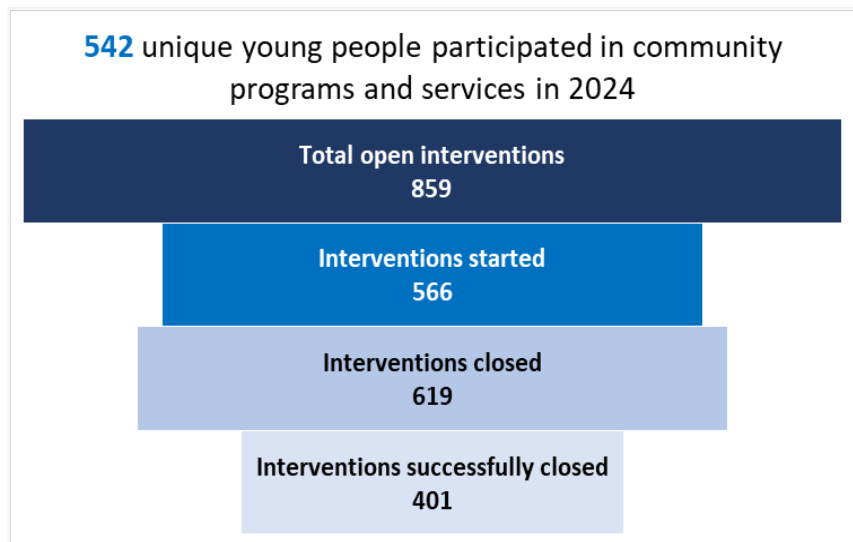


# Community Programs and Services for Justice-Involved Young People: A Partnership for Success

September 2025

## Our commitment to community programs and services

For young people who are court-ordered to community supervision, a strong connection among the young person, their probation officer, and community service providers is essential to getting interventions that support and are aligned with the goal of successful completion of supervision and desistance from criminal behavior. The Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCCR) offers a continuum of internally provided and contracted interventions to move clients to safety and stability. DOCCR probation officers provide young people support through growth-focused case management and individual and group cognitive behavioral interventions while also connecting them to mental health services, housing, education, and employment resources. The needs of young people in the justice system are wide and complex, so DOCCR partners with community providers to connect young people and their families to additional services and programming. In 2024, **542** young people participated in at least one contracted community program or service as part of their supervision or pre-trial services. A total of 859 interventions were active in 2024, with 566 of those interventions starting in that same year.



This report focuses on young people up to 24 years old who are supervised by DOCCR. The data highlight the positive short-term and long-term impacts of their participation in services and programs offered by community organizations through contracts funded by DOCCR.

## Contracts with community providers

DOCCR awards contracts to community providers through an open and competitive selection process. In 2024, DOCCR funded **30** different interventions for young people through our contracted community providers. Interventions can focus on a specific demographic or on a specific issue that needs to be addressed. This report focuses on 25 contracts that fall under the following categories:

- Male/male identified interventions (4 programs)
- Female/female-identified responsive interventions (3 programs)
- Youth inventions (7 programs)
- Family-focused interventions (5 programs)
- Domestic violence interventions (4 programs)
- Intensive community support programs (2 programs)

In addition to offering interventions, DOCCR partners with four community providers to offer prevention and early intervention services: One program focuses on youth at risk of sexual exploitation, and three programs support young people and their families at risk for justice system involvement.

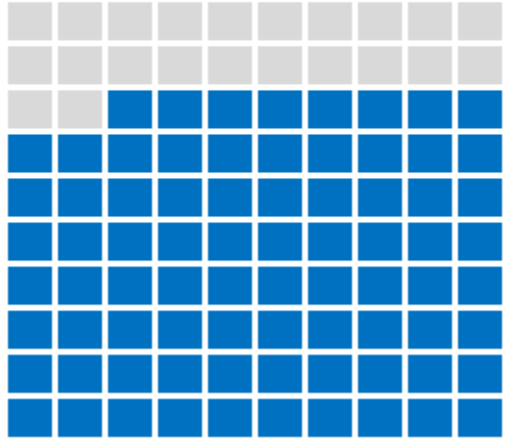
## 2024 participant engagement and completion

Young people become involved with community programs and services through various means, such as a court order, a recommendation from their probation officer, or a self-referral. Engagement in programming decreased during the height of the pandemic, with a daily average of 169 individuals in community programs and services. Currently, participation is stabilizing at pre-pandemic levels, with a daily average of 239 young people engaged in a contracted community program or service in 2024. **78%** of young people on probation in 2024 were referred to at least one community program or service.

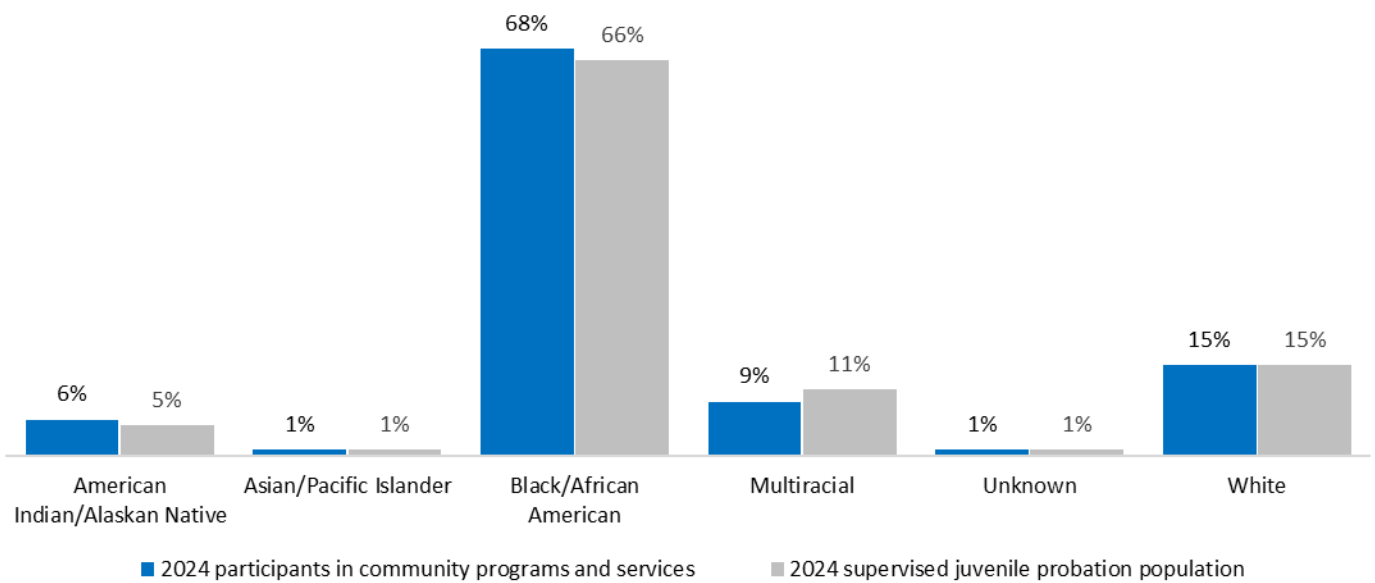
Given the overrepresentation of young people of color in the justice system, DOCCR is committed to working with community organizations that offer programming that is culturally responsive, trauma-informed, focused on trauma recovery, and responsive to the developmental needs of young people.

In addition, DOCCR is committed to providing clients with equitable access to community programs and services across racial demographics. Programs contracted through DOCCR recognize and respect the diverse backgrounds, values, and traditions of the young people they serve, which can foster a sense of belonging and contribute to more meaningful and effective outcomes. An analysis of participant data shows that the racial composition of young people participating in community programs closely mirrors that of the entire juvenile probation population.

Close to **80%** of young people on probation received **community programs**



When looking by race, juvenile probation clients participated in community programs and services **at similar rates** to the juvenile probation population as a whole



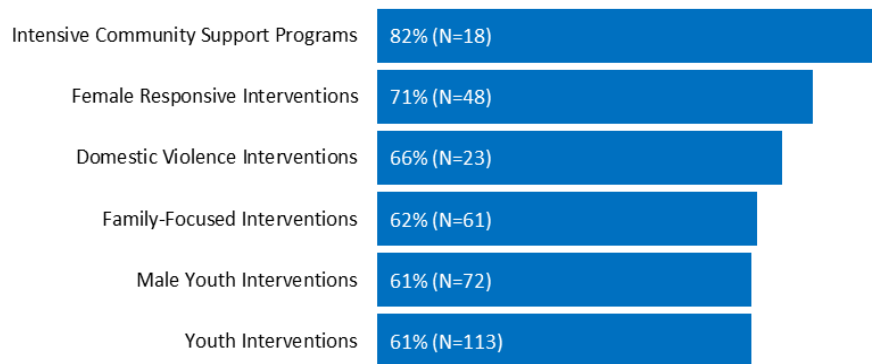
## 2024 participant completion rates

While access to community programs and services is important, so is the opportunity to complete that programming. Contracted community providers offer a wide range of programming and services, and programming can range in intensity, based on the needs of the young people.

Successful completion of programming helps participants develop skills and strengths that can assist with behavioral change by fostering positive self-perception, increasing individual motivation, and improving decision-making and emotional regulation.

Together, this can support young people in taking responsibility for their actions, help meet probation or court requirements, and avoid needing more restrictive services or an out-of-home placement.

Overall, **65% of clients** participating in community programs **successfully** completed the program



Young people can encounter many barriers to successful program completion. These barriers can include a lack of transportation, mental health or substance use concerns, a lack of pro-social support to motivate attendance, and family caregiving and other obligations. DOCCR strives to work with clients and community providers to identify and reduce those barriers and increase completion rates. Strategies include providing funds for transportation,

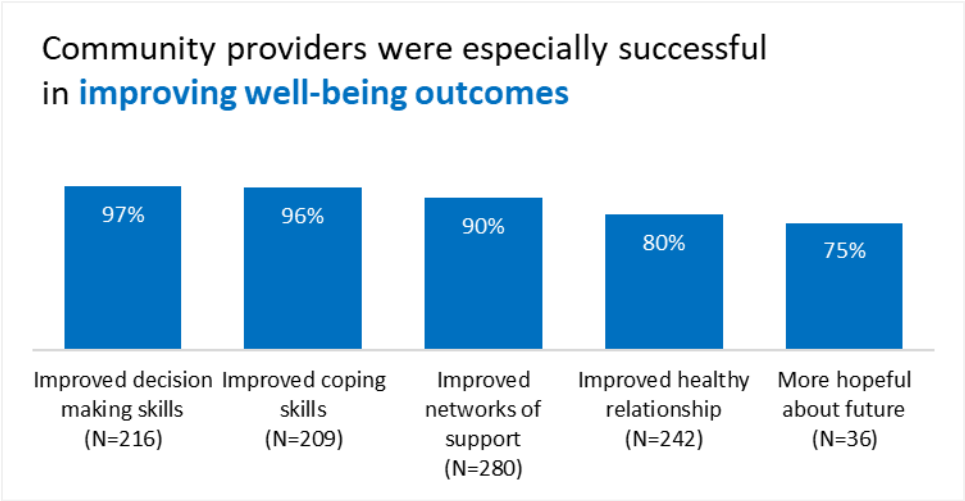
offering programming at various geographic locations, and providing programming in multiple languages. DOCCR offers these programs and services at no cost to families to avoid creating a financial barrier.

Due to the range of programming offered, successful program completion is defined by each provider. Overall, **65%** of young people successfully completed their community program or service.<sup>1</sup>

## Impact of community programming

### 2024 well-being outcomes

Although DOCCR’s community partners aim to address a range of issues and needs, they share a common goal of enhancing participants’ well-being to promote safety and stability. Well-being, including personal and social growth, strong relationships, and networks of support can increase internal self-regulation, which can lower the risk of engaging in criminal behavior.



Providers report the participants’ well-being outcomes based on the particular nature of their interventions. Programs that focus on coping and decision-making are especially successful, with over **9 in 10** participants reporting an improvement in these skills. About **9 in 10** reported improved support networks, and **8 in 10** reported improved healthy relationships. Nearly **8 in 10** reported being more hopeful for the future.

### Long-term outcomes: recidivism and out-of-home placement rates

In addition to looking at the shorter-term impact of young people’s participation in community programming on their well-being outcomes, DOCCR looks at longer-term outcomes, such as recidivism and out-of-home placement. Recidivism is when a justice-involved person commits a new crime. DOCCR measures recidivism as a conviction for a new misdemeanor or higher offense within 12 months of starting a community program. Out-of-home placement is when a court determines that a young person’s treatment needs can best be met in a setting outside their home. DOCCR measures whether out of home placement occurs within 12 months following the start of participation in a community intervention.<sup>2</sup>

An analysis of the long-term outcomes of young people on probation in DOCCR who participate in community programs shows that they are successfully staying in the community and desisting from criminal behavior. This is even more true for those who successfully complete programming<sup>3</sup>.

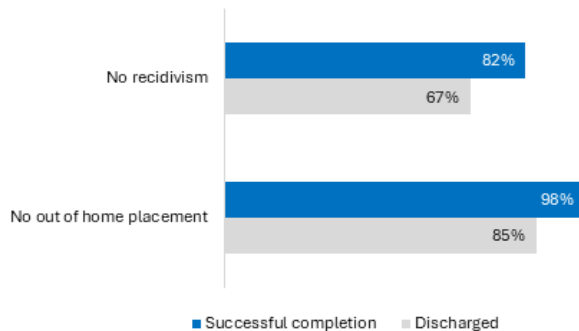
<sup>1</sup> While DOCCR’s domestic violence interventions serve adults as well as young people, the completion rate reported here only includes young people to remain consistent with the report’s focus on young people.

<sup>2</sup> In the interest of providing the most reliable and accurate information, data is only available for 2022 and 2023 to allow sufficient time for court cases to resolve.

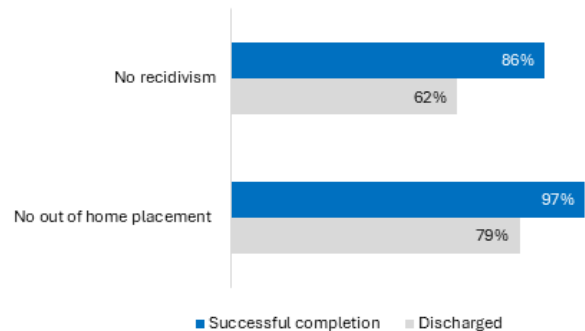
<sup>3</sup> Young people who are discharged did not successfully complete the program. Discharges happen for a variety of reasons, such as a move out of the area, a lack of attendance, behavior during programming.

Young people who successfully completed their program were **more successful in avoiding subsequent justice involvement** than young people who were discharged.

2022 youth and young adults



2023 youth and young adults



## Conclusion

For young people involved in the juvenile justice system, engaging in community programs and services is an evidence-based practice to support well-being and reduce criminal behavior. The majority of young people on probation in Hennepin County are participating in community programs and services. Their resulting access to positive supports and relationships, along with increased opportunities to improve their skills, leads to improved well-being outcomes. Young people who successfully complete their community program achieve lower rates of recidivism and out-of-home placement.

DOCCR is committed to contracting with community providers to support safety and stability, promote accountability, support well-being, and head off deeper involvement in the justice system. DOCCR continues to monitor the needs of young people on probation to ensure access to appropriate services, support their families, and explore ways to improve program completion rates. We also remain committed to collaborating with and supporting community providers to enhance services and amplify the positive impacts on Hennepin County's young people, their families, and the broader community.