



Multnomah County Juvenile Reception Center

History:

The Reception center started in 1998 as a pilot project funded through the Annie E Cassie Foundation. After a year as a pilot, the Reception Center proved it's worth to the community and was subsequently funded by Multnomah county DCJ.

Why the project started:

In 1998, over 2000 non-detainable youth a year were being brought to the Mult Co Detention Center where they were exposed to more delinquent youth and behavior.

As Mult CO. embraced the JDAI, County officials started talking with community stakeholders about how to eliminate unnecessary incarceration and prevent less delinquent youth from moving further into systems and further engaging in criminal behavior.

Creating a public –private partnership, four main stakeholders, Multnomah County Juvenile Justice, Portland Police Bureau, Portland business Alliance, and New Avenues For Youth, came together to support the creation of the Reception Center. Each of these partners had different interest at heart.

For Multnomah County, the Reception Center was a way to reduce the number of non-detainable youth incarcerated, to increase community prevention and to prevent youth from needing deeper services through the Juvenile department.

For the Portland Business Alliance the Reception Center was an innovative way to support community policing and to assist in addressing livability issues affected by youth behavior.

For Portland Police the Reception Center was a way to reduce the time an officer would be off the street dealing with Juvenile intake processes, a tool to support officers engaging with non-detainable youth to assess for safety and risk factors, and an opportunity for officers to participate in a social service intervention.

For New Avenues for Youth, a homeless and high-risk youth services agency, the Reception Center offered an opportunity to prevent youth homelessness by providing prevention services for high-risk youth and families.

History of locations:

During the Reception Center's first year of operation the program operated out of an office inside the Portland Police Central Precinct. This early attachment to a law enforcement facility was crucial to the overall success of the project. Through co-location with police, both the social service agency and police officers were able to better understand each other and forge an effective partnership.

In 2000, a Memorandum Of Agreement was signed between Multnomah County law enforcement agencies, the DCJ and New Avenues for Youth, directing police officers to take all non-detainable youth offenders to the Reception Center in lieu of Juvenile Detention. Shortly after the signing of the MOA, New Avenues re-located out of the Central precinct and into a stand-alone site. The MOA also resulted in the number of youth served by the Reception center more than doubling.

Most Recently the Reception Center has re-located to 738 NE Davis. At the new location the Reception Center is collocated with Harry's Mother, a Janus Youth program serving runaway and court referred youth. Although the Reception Center and Harry's Mother work very closely together, the programs remain distinct, and occupy different areas within the facility.

The Reception Center model:

Eligibility:

Youth 11-17 years of age, who have been arrested for a status offence (curfew, runaway, MIP tobacco/alcohol), city Ordinance, a non-person to person misdemeanor (theft III, criminal trespass III, criminal mischief II, and III and disorderly conduct) or Behavior Conditions and Circumstances

Youth not eligible for Reception center services:

Youth whom are over 17years old, have been arrested for a person to person crime, have a warrant, or an out of

Eligibility/Special Conditions:

Drug /alcohol: Youth brought to the Reception Center by police that appear to be drug or alcohol affected will be evaluated for acceptance prior to admittance. If the intake counselor questions the medical safety of an intoxicated youth, or the youth is too intoxicated to participate in the social service screening, the officer will be referred to a Hospital Emergency Room for further evaluation of the youth.

Mental health: Similar to alcohol and drug affected youth, youth presenting with acute mental illness (delusion, active suicidal/homicidal ideation, non-responsive, etc..)will be deferred to Emergency services.

Gang Affiliated Youth: Since the Reception Center is not a locked facility and is staffed by counselors rather than corrections or law enforcement officers, Police are asked to be cautious not to bring rival gang members to the Reception Center at the same time.

Behavioral: The Reception Center can only effectively serve youth who are willing to participate in services. If a youth refuses to sign consent for services and/or is behaviorally threatening or violent, they will not be admitted into the Reception center. In these cases, the Reception Center counselor will work with Police to support an alternative option (transport to JDH if permissible, or direct transport home by police).

Banned from services: If a youth has a history of aggressive behavior toward Reception Center staff, they may be banned from further services. When this happens New Avenues Supervisors will coordinate with DCJ Supervisors to place the youth on a list authorizing them to be transported to JDH if they are arrested for a non-detainable violation.

Flow through the Reception Center:

The process at the Reception Center begins with police officers bringing youth to the 738 NE Davis location. The entry for the Reception Center is located on the back-side of the building and provides police officers with a designated parking space in front of the door. A doorbell is located at the door to notify Reception Center staff that the police officer and youth have arrived. An Intake Counselor will then admit the police officer and youth through a locked entrance.

Once youth are escorted into the building, an Intake Counselor begins the process of explaining the Reception Center to the youth and assessing if the youth will comply with service. It is a goal of the Reception Center to provide Police with an easy and quick place to release juveniles, allowing the officer to get back on the street. This Intake counselor will ask the police what the charges against the youth are, what the youth's behavior has been during arrest and transport, and if the youth is being cooperative to remove the handcuffs. The Intake Counselor will make a copy of the Police custody report, which is retained at the Reception Center. Before concluding that a youth can be served at the Reception Center, the Intake Counselor will then look up the youths name in the Juvenile Justice Database. If the youth has an open record at Juvenile Detention, The Detention Intake staff are contacted and approval to serve the youth at the Reception Center is requested. On some occasions, Juvenile Intake may require the youth be transported to Detention rather receive services at the Reception Center. If necessary, the police officer is asked to transport the youth to Detention for services.

If the youth is cleared for Reception Center service, the youth's belongings are locked up and the youth is escorted into a counseling room. At this time the Police officer is able to leave the facility.

Due to limited staffing, when multiple youth arrive at the Reception Center simultaneously, an officer may be asked wait until a youth's paper work is fully processed before leaving the facility.

Once the officer has left, the Intake Counselor begins the screening process. A thorough assessment of the youth's mental health, physical health, drug & alcohol use, family, education, employment, legal and social service history is explored. Through conversation with the youth, the Intake Counselor develops a picture of the youth's family life, where there are unmet needs, what resources the family could benefit from, and most importantly, how the youth and family can address the youth's delinquent behavior. This phase of the screening process can last anywhere from one to several hours. Once the screening interview is completed, the youth's parent or guardian is contacted and arrangements are made to have the guardian pick the youth up from the Center. While awaiting their guardians arrival, youth are led to a milieu area where Reception Center counselors continue to engage and counsel.

Upon the arrival at the Reception Center, the youth's guardian meets individually with the Intake Counselor to discuss the youth's current situation. The Intake Counselor provides a list of referrals to the parent or guardian and discusses

a plan for addressing the youth's behavior. Upon completion of the discussion, the Intake Counselor and guardian are joined by the youth for a family session to address the youth's delinquent behavior.

The RC intervention:

Family work

When a youth is reunited with their parent or guardian, family counseling is provided by our Intake Counselors. The goal of counseling is to offer supportive services that develop and improve parenting skills, address techniques for acting out, attend to communication challenges, and to rebuild family relationships. Common issues addressed in family counseling are youth refusal to follow parent rules, drug or alcohol use, truancy, theft running away, over sexualized behavior, problems related to divorce or separation, as well as grief and loss issues. Families are also provided information and referrals for drug and alcohol treatment, long-term residential treatment, education and employment services, mental health services, theft and gang diversion, teen parent programs, and domestic violence programs.

Individual and family counseling is also offered to high-risk youth who are recidivist and/or participating in delinquent behaviors. Counselors' work with individuals and families using a strengths-based, solution focused framework. The counseling program provides in-home and office based sessions determined by family needs and accessibility to services.

Partnering with JCC

At times youth that are brought into the Reception Center may already be assigned a Juvenile Court Counselor by the Department of Community Justice. If Juvenile Detention clears this youth for Reception Center Services, the Reception Center counselor will follow up with the assigned J.C.C to coordinate a plan to address the youth behavior.

Child welfare referral

Often a youth engaging in delinquent behavior is a sign of deeper problems residing in the family system. During the Reception Center screening, youth are asked questions about their family functioning and it is common for youth to disclose about abuse or neglect. When this occurs the Department of Human Services (DHS) is notified and together DHS and the Reception Center counselors assess whether it is safe for the youth to return home. If it is not safe for the youth to return home, alternative place is sought through foster care, Harry's Mother or a relative placement.