



Commission on
Improving the
Status of Children

Commission on Improving the Status of Children

APRIL 21, 2022

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Consent Agenda
 - a. Minutes from February 2022 meeting
 - b. Appointment of a new co-chair for Child Health and Safety

Agenda

3. Strategic Priority: Juvenile Justice and Cross-System Youth
 - a. Megan Horton, IOCS & Tracy Fitz, IPAC
Juvenile Diversion

Prevention and Diversion Subcommittee

**Juvenile Justice and Cross-System Youth (JJ & CS) Task Force of the
Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana**

Diversion Practices Statewide Survey Summary

CISC Strategic Goal 4:

Improve safety and outcomes of youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system.

Objective 4.

Identify and encourage adoption of effective and promising practices for preventing and diverting youth from entering the juvenile justice system.

Why Diversion?

“The available evidence indicates that arresting young people and formally processing their cases in juvenile court significantly increases their likelihood of subsequent arrests. Arrests and formal court processing also reduce young people’s odds of future success in school and employment.”

- Annie E. Casey Foundation, Report on Expanding the use of Juvenile Diversion

Statutory Options: IC 31-37-8-5

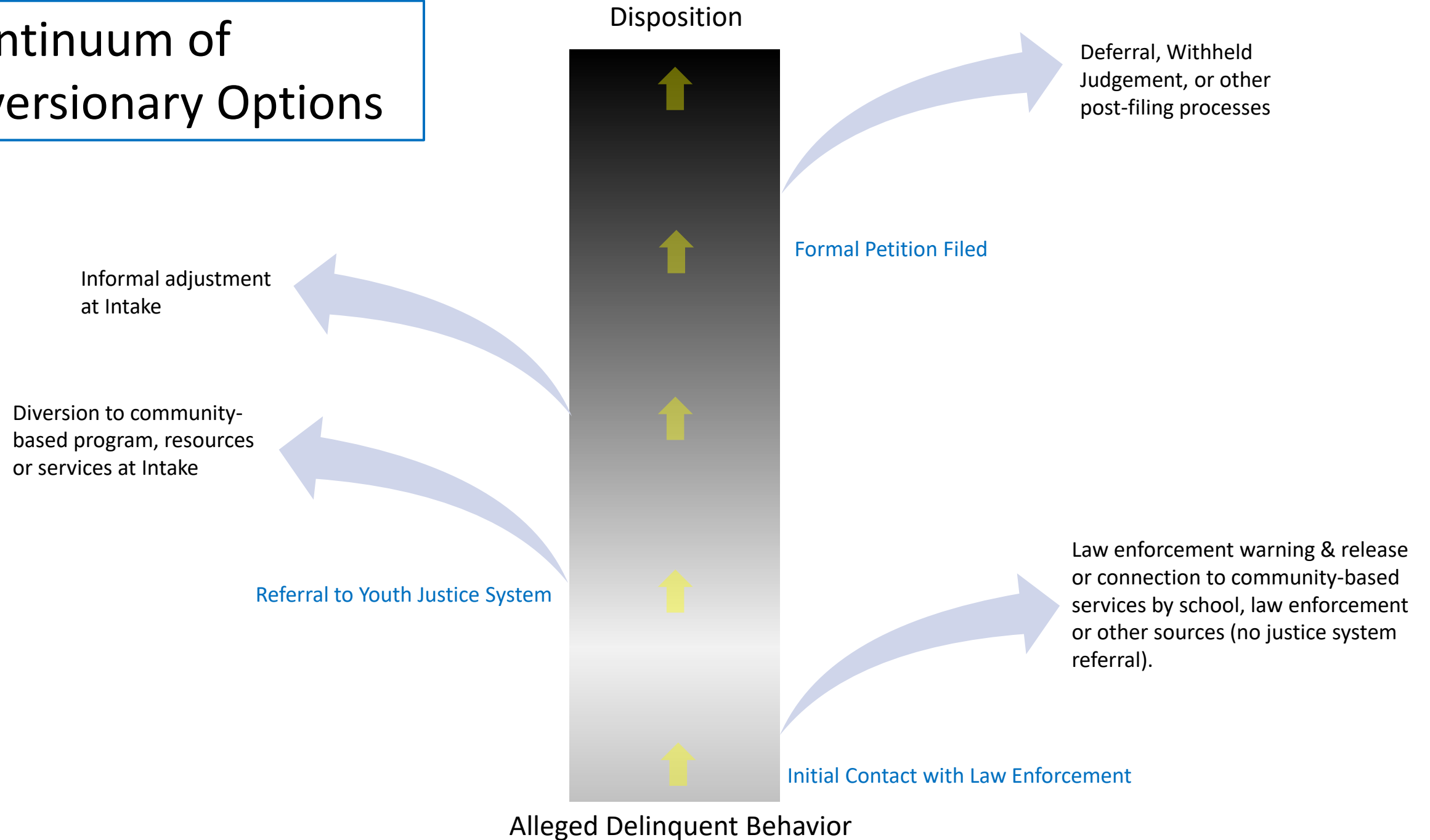
After a preliminary inquiry, the intake officer shall make a recommendation to the prosecuting attorney whether to:

- A) File a petition
- B) File a petition with dual status recommendation
- C) Informally adjust the case
- D) Informally adjust the case with dual status recommendation
- E) Refer the child to another agency; or
- F) Dismiss the case.

Informal Adjustment

- No formal petition filed
- No adjudication entered
- May not exceed six (6) months, however the juvenile court may extend an additional three (3) months
- Monthly fee may be ordered

Continuum of Diversionary Options



First Steps:

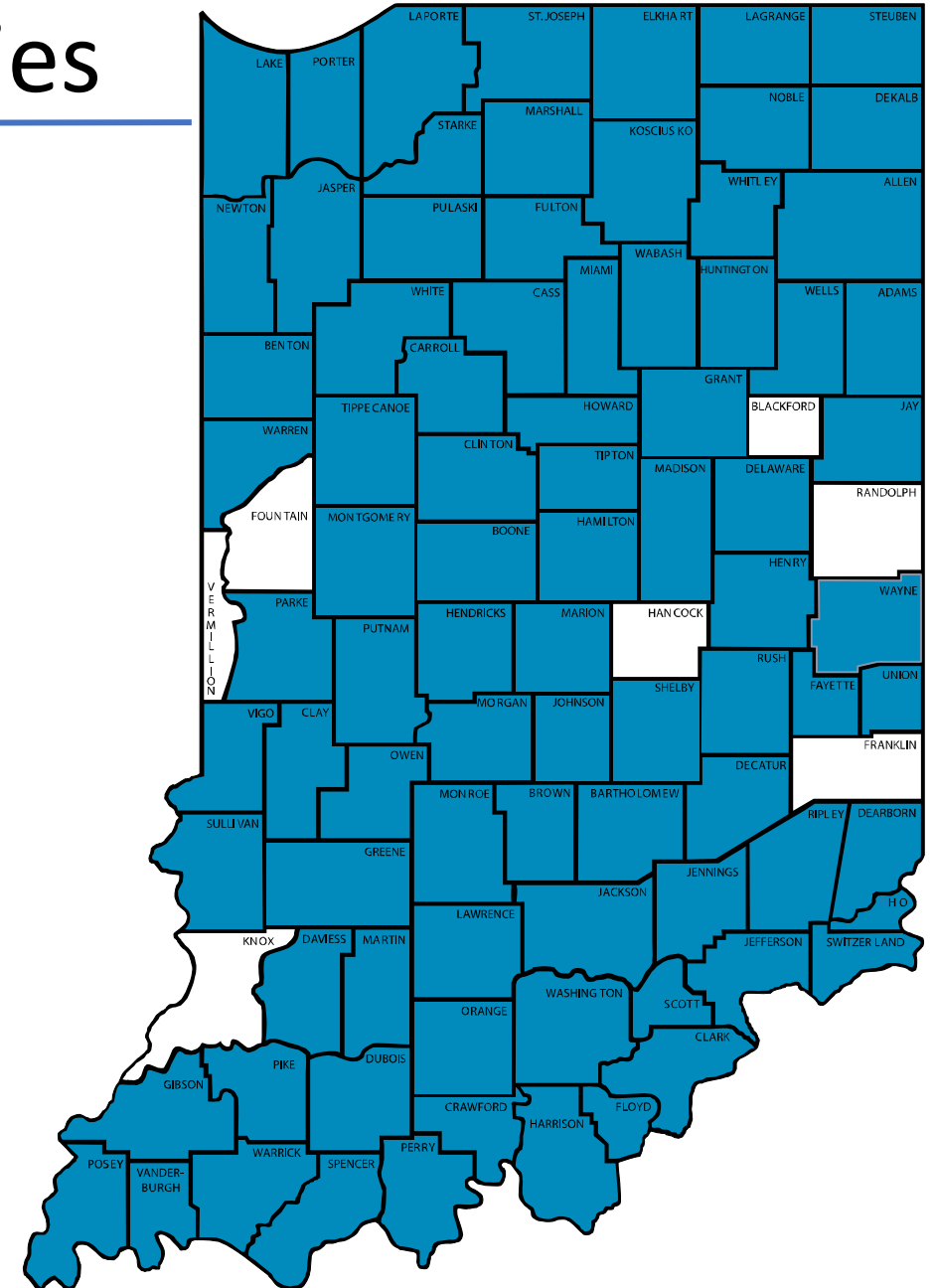
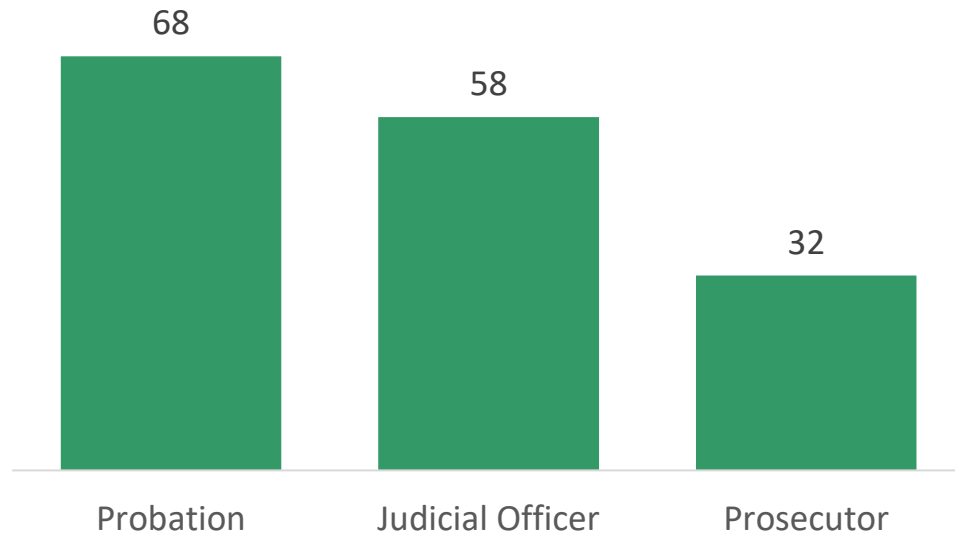
- Informal adjustment is the current statutory option
- Our subcommittee was aware that counties utilize additional forms of diversionary practices
- We knew we needed to learn about the different ways youth are being diverted from the system
- Started with information-gathering surveys to get a “snapshot”

Survey Responses Across Counties

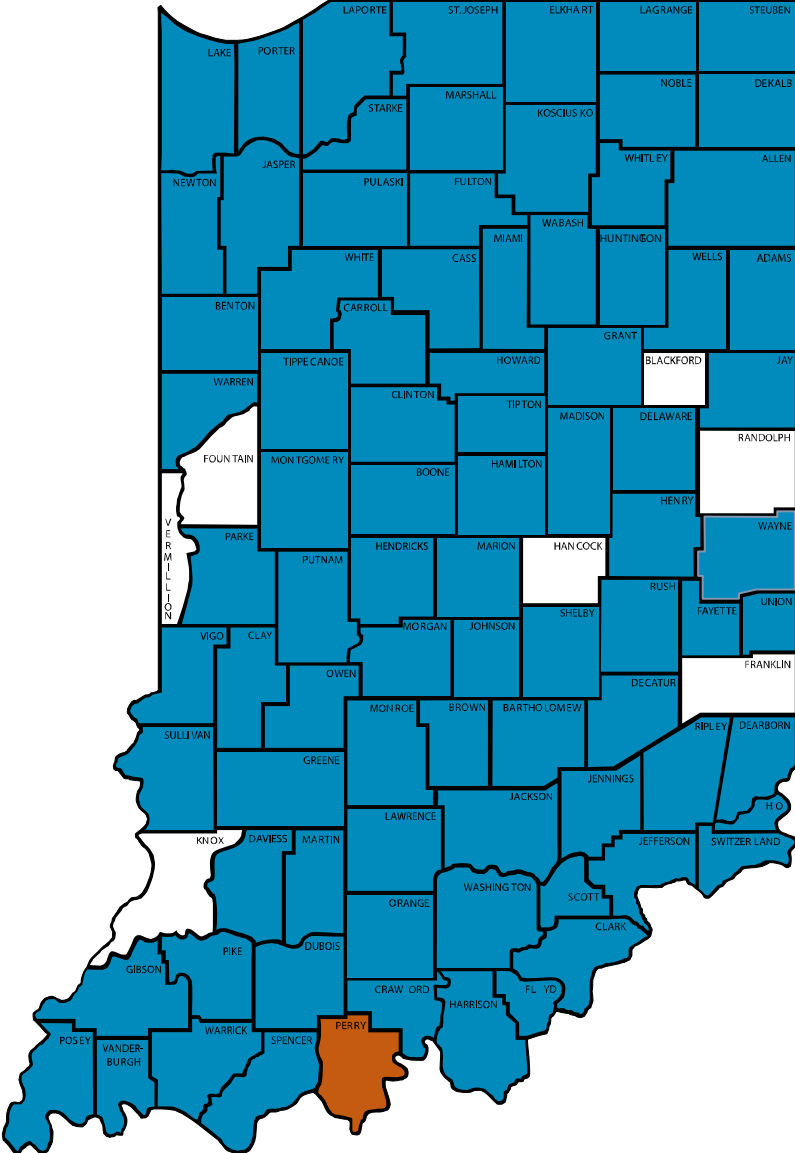
Surveys were distributed to three stakeholder groups: Judicial Officers, Probation Officers, and Prosecuting Attorneys.

We received 175 individual responses.

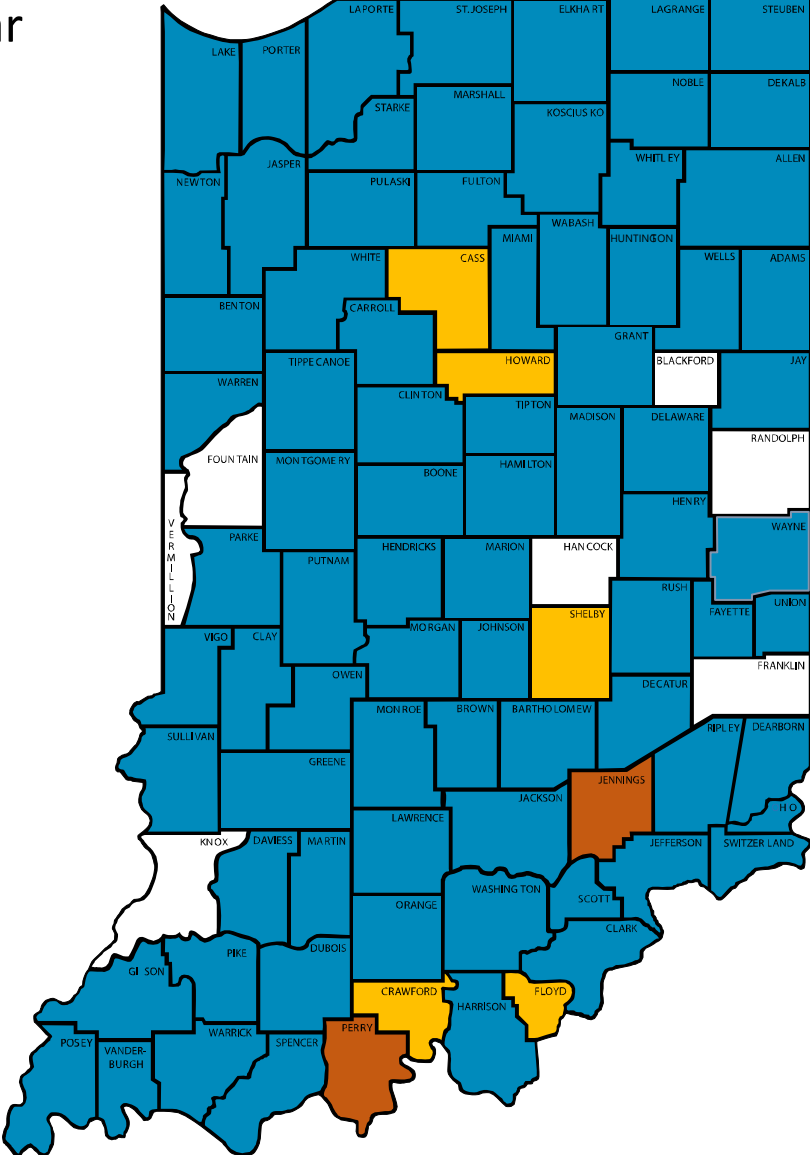
Responses were received from 85 **counties**. Aggregated by county, the stakeholder response breakdown as follows:



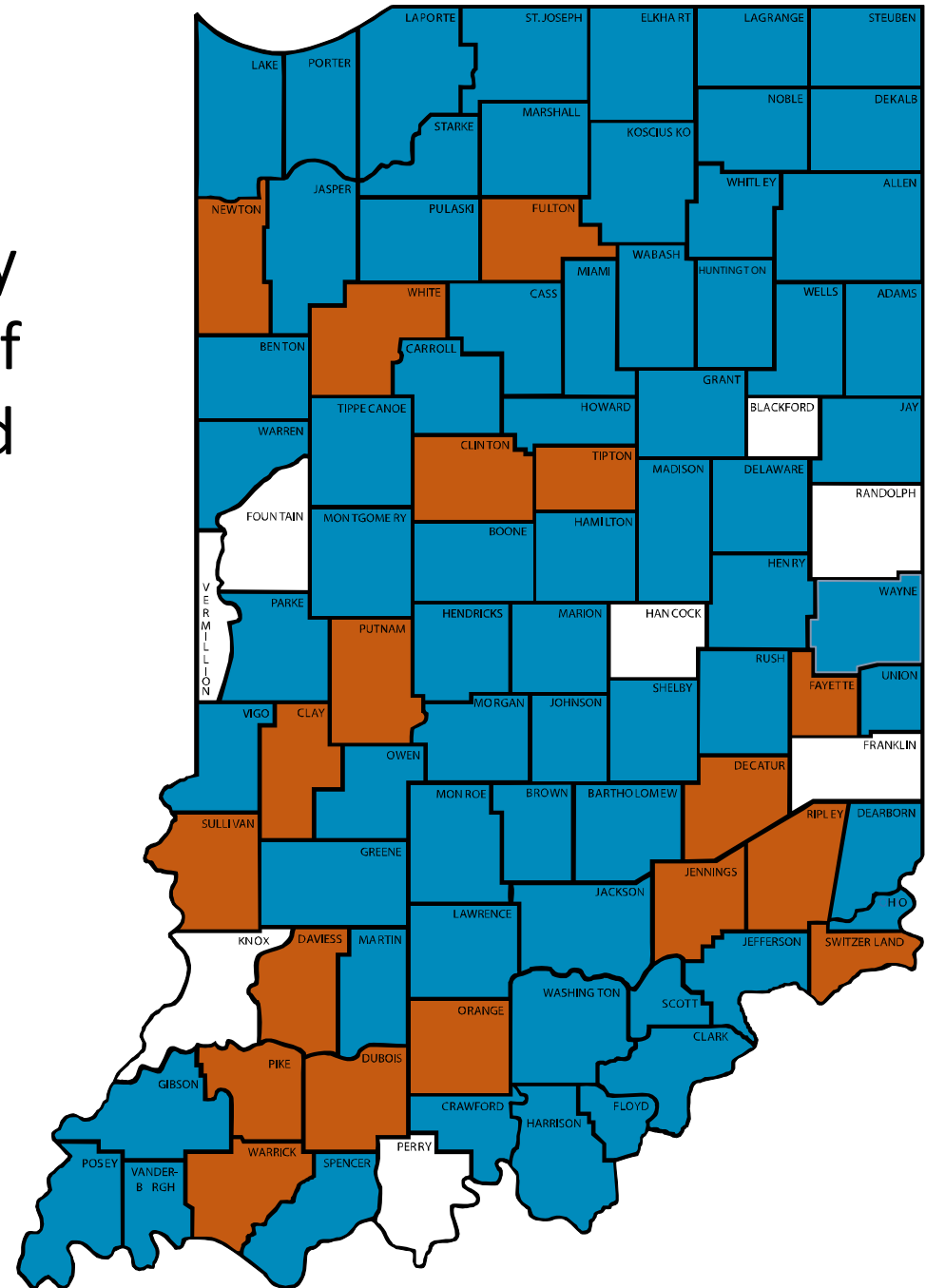
84 of the responding **counties** indicated that they use some type of diversionary program, practice or policy. Only one **county** indicated they do not.



78 of the responding **counties** indicated that they use Informal Adjustments. Two **counties** indicated they do not. Five **counties** gave responses that were unclear

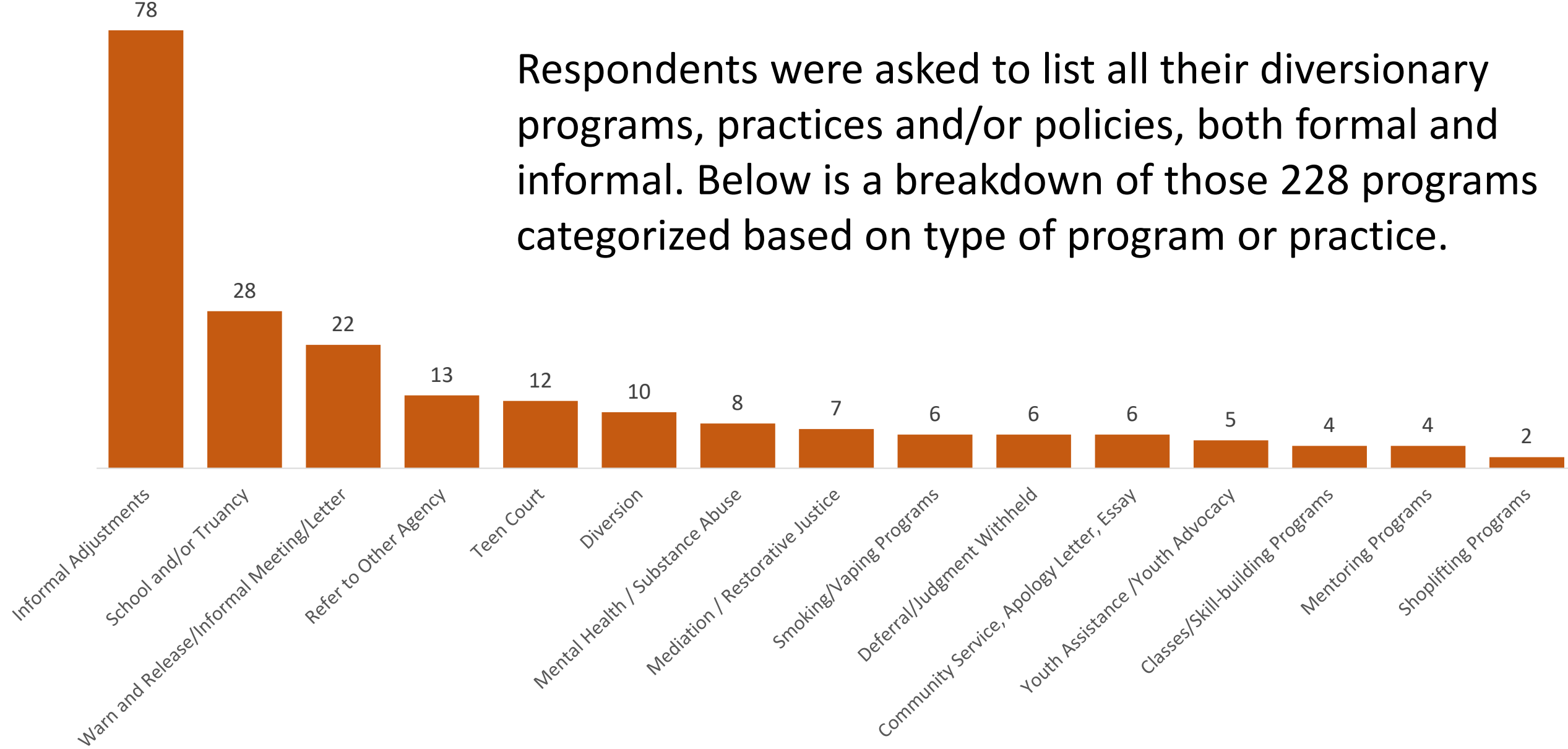


68 **counties** reported that they implement some type of diversionary program, practice or policy outside of Informal Adjustment. 17 **counties** did not list any programming other than Informal Adjustment



Survey Responses Across Programs

Respondents were asked to list all their diversionary programs, practices and/or policies, both formal and informal. Below is a breakdown of those 228 programs categorized based on type of program or practice.



Some programs were listed by only one county and were not easily categorized based on the information provided.

Be Someone Now Program

SOCAP (Status Offender Court Alternative Program)

Gang Free Life Program

Fire Setters Program

Unity in the Community

Cite-ins

Point of Incident

Point of Intake

Back on Track

CHANGE Academy

First Offenders Program

Family Resource Program

“Cooling off Period”

Reception Center

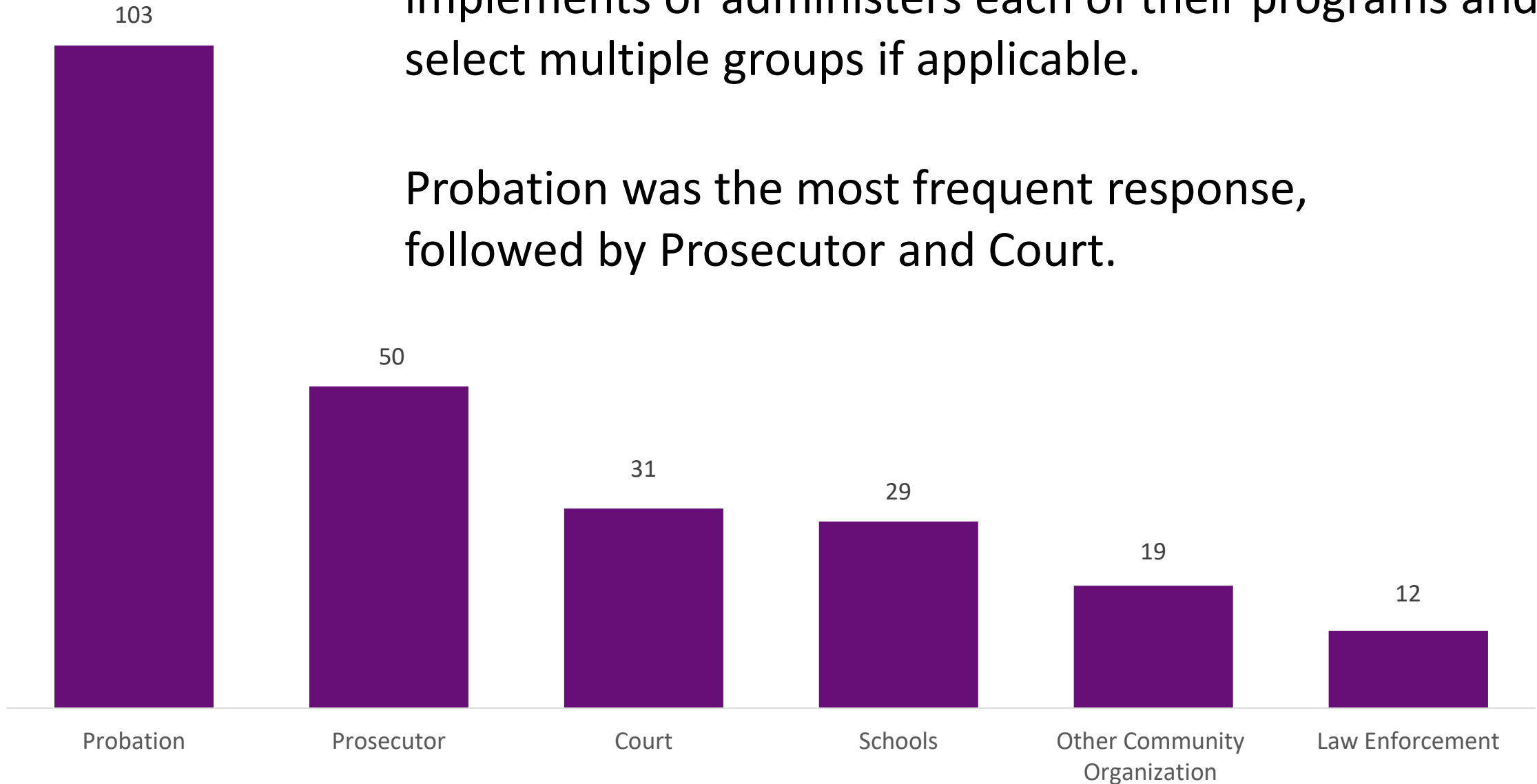
“Prevention”

Wraparound

Safe Place/Crisis Response Calls

Probation Officers and Prosecutors were asked who implements or administers each of their programs and could select multiple groups if applicable.

Probation was the most frequent response, followed by Prosecutor and Court.



Community Organizations Identified

Community Corrections

Youth Service Bureau

Center for Community Justice

Harrison County Youth Advocacy Center

Community Justice and Mediation Center

Big Brother/Big Sisters

Scott County Partnership

Youth Services

Chances and Services for Youth (CASY)

Hamilton Center

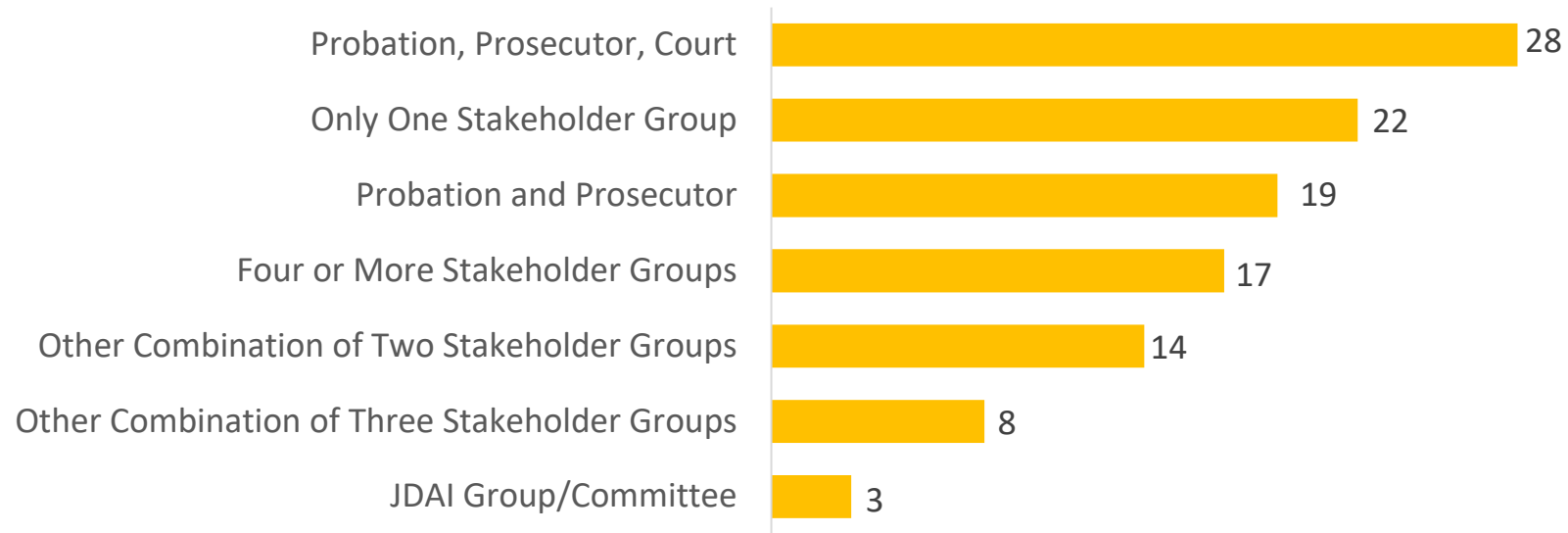
Check and Connect Program Staff

Local Fire Department

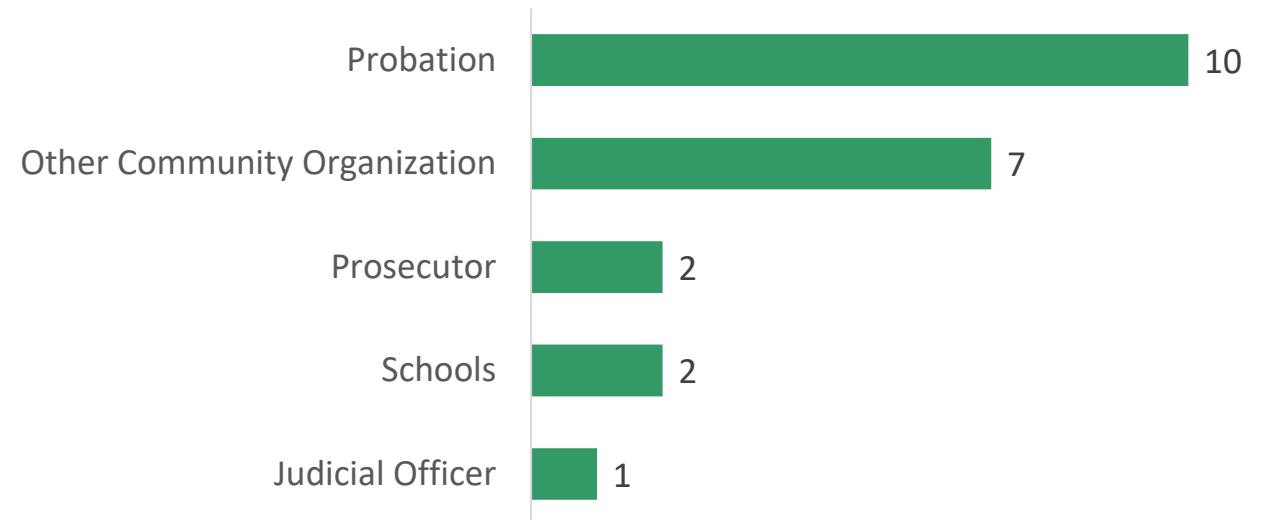
Local Health Department

Local Service Providers

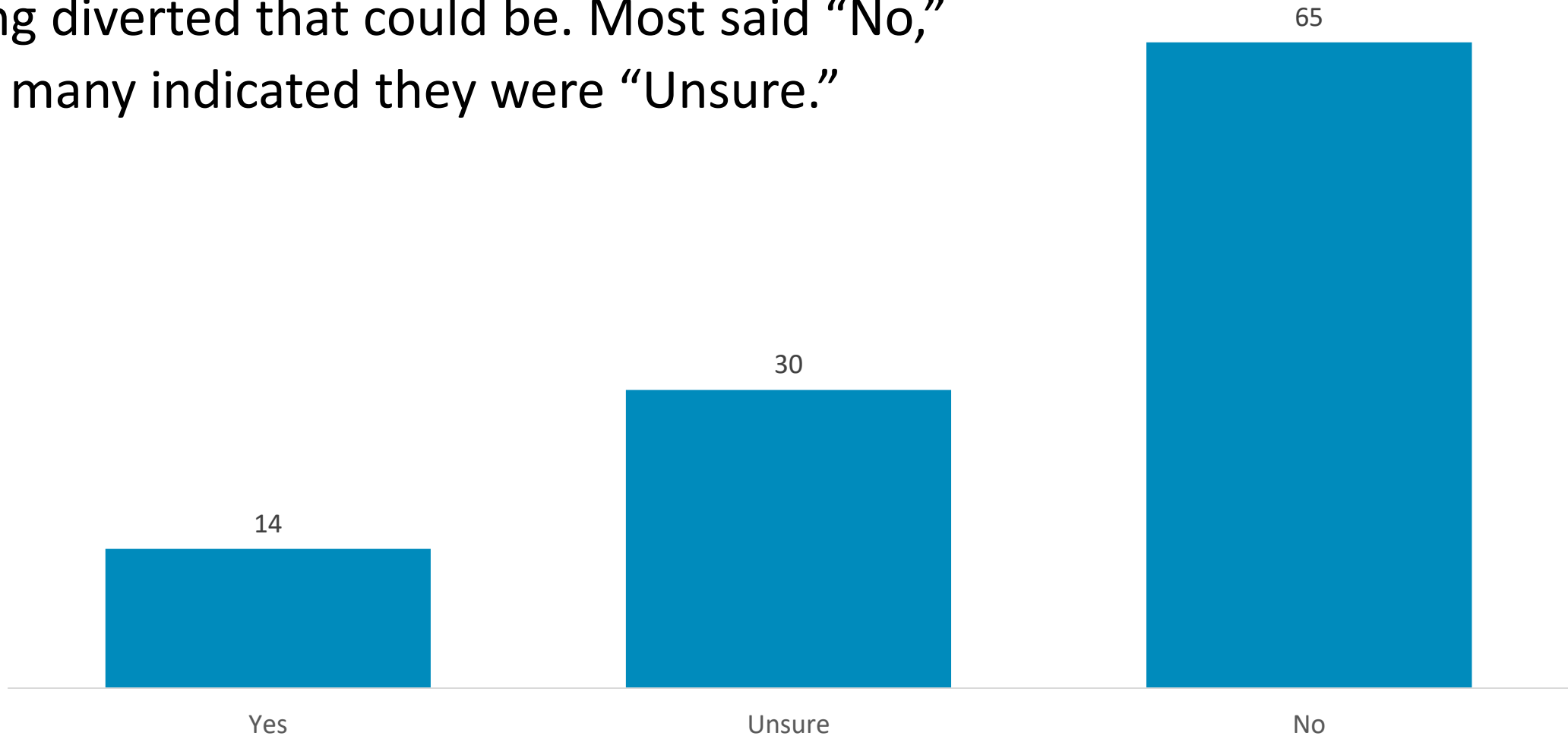
Survey responses indicate that program development is largely a collaborative effort among multiple stakeholder groups.



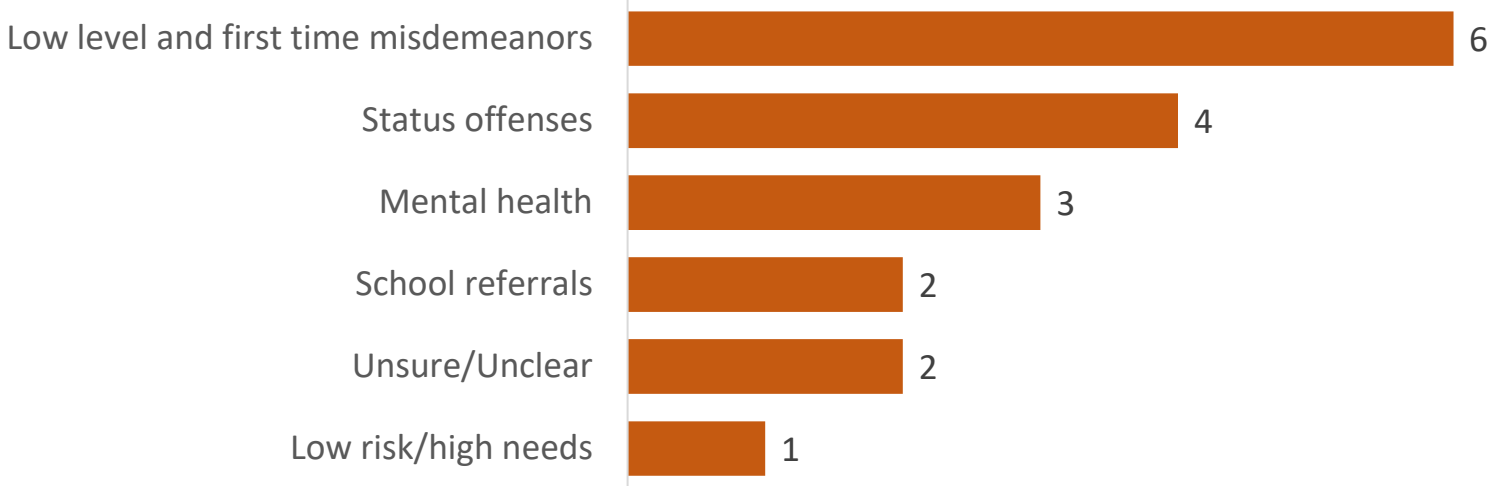
Of the programs that were developed by only one stakeholder group, that group was primarily probation or a community organization.



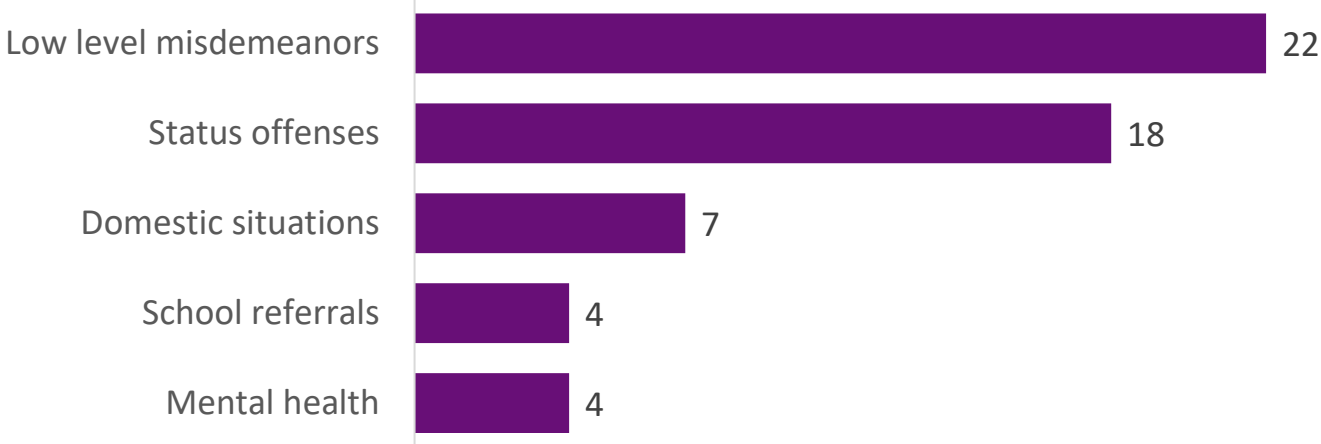
Probation Officers and Prosecutors were asked if they believe there are cases that are not being diverted that could be. Most said “No,” and many indicated they were “Unsure.”



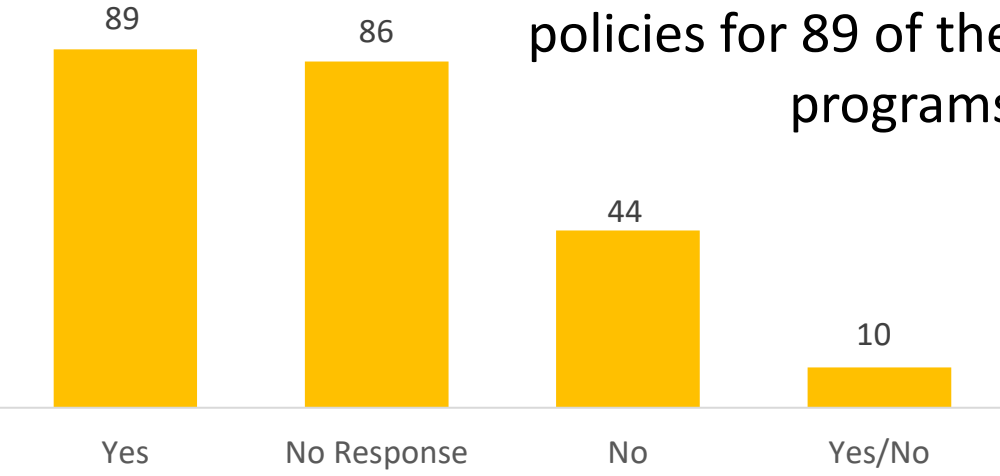
Probation Officers and Prosecutors that responded “Yes” to the previous question described the types of cases they believe could be diverted that are not being diverted currently.



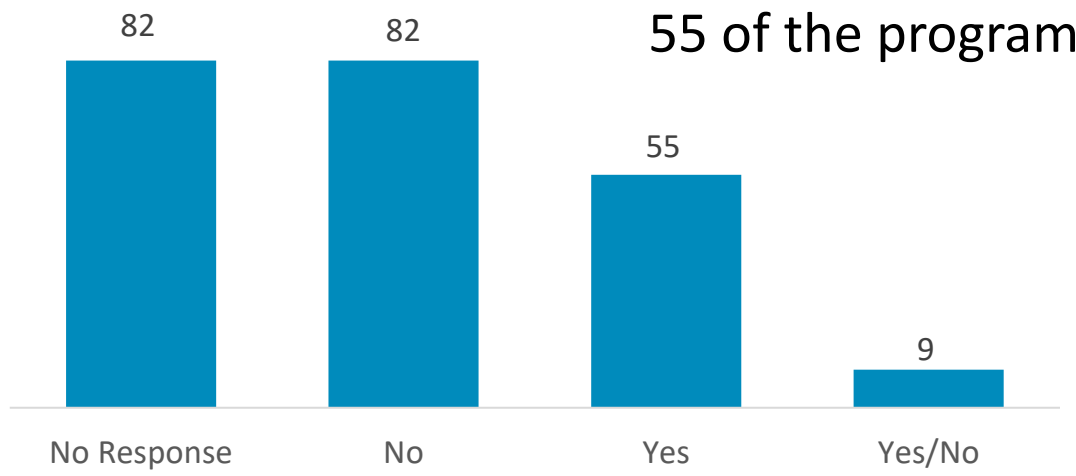
Judicial Officers were asked what types of cases they see in court that they believe could instead be diverted.



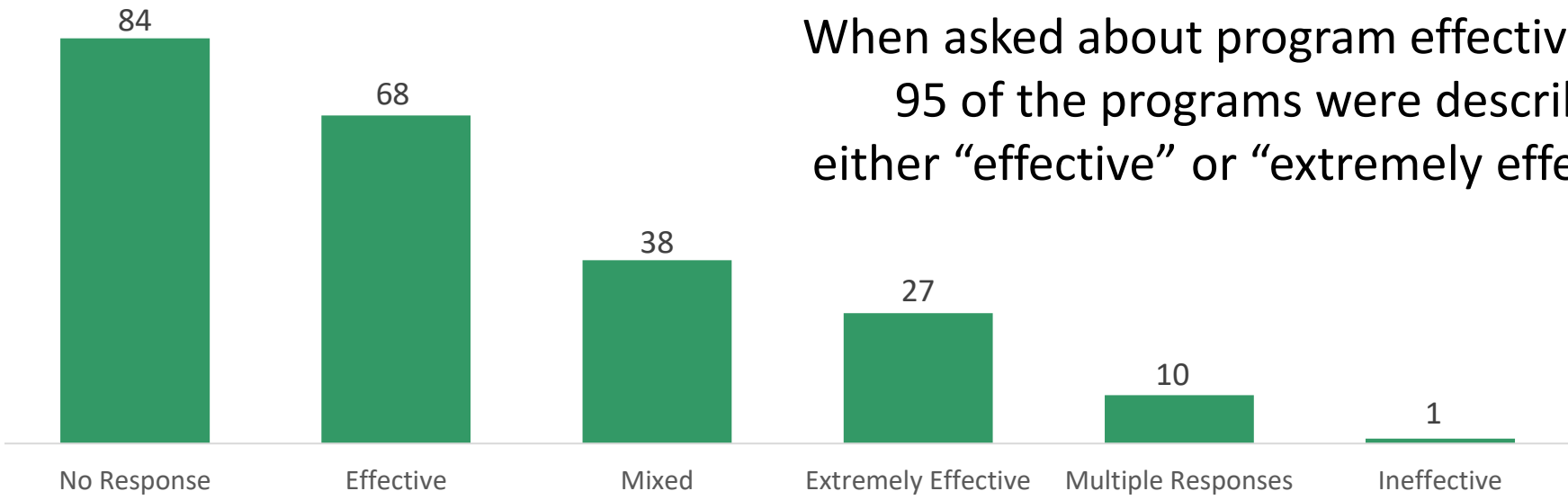
There are documented policies for 89 of the programs



Data is collected for 55 of the programs



When asked about program effectiveness, 95 of the programs were described as either "effective" or "extremely effective"



Next Steps, Areas for Follow-up

Terms, criteria and process for Informal Adjustments

Identifying barriers to diversion

Data, Policies, Criteria

Effective programming

Current funding sources and partners

Recommendation

Communicate our snapshot information with the Juvenile Justice Oversight body to be formed with the passage of HEA 1359.

Our Prevention and Diversion Subcommittee is committed and prepared to continue this work should the new juvenile justice oversight body wish to use us for this work.

Juvenile Justice/Cross Systems Youth Task Force: Diversion Subcommittee:

Co-Chairs: Tracy Fitz, Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council and Megan Horton, Indiana Office of Court Services/JDAI

Members: Jagen Arnold, Delaware County Prosecutor's Office; Magistrate Sally Berish, Boone County; Barbara Gainer, DCS; Trisha Hanes, Wabash County Probation; Allen Kasper, Pike Township Schools; Kay Knorr, Marion County Probation; Chase Lyday, Avon Community Schools – Chief of Police, SRO; Shannon O'Toole, Marion County Public Defender Office; Judge AmyMarie Travis, Jackson County; Kurt Wolf, Lafayette Parks and Recreation

Agenda

3. Strategic Priority: Juvenile Justice and Cross-System Youth
 - b. Julie Whitman
Oversight body and work groups for HEA 1359

HEA 1359

- The Children's Commission shall:
 - Create a juvenile oversight body (appointments made by the CJ)
- The oversight body shall develop/establish:
 - Statewide juvenile justice data plan
 - Procedures, policies, and an implementation plan for the use of risk screening tools, risk and needs assessment tools, and detention tools
 - Statewide behavioral health plan for justice-involved youth (including criteria for diagnostic assessments)
 - Policies & protocols for pretrial diversion and informal adjustment
 - Plan for grant programs to fund the above

HEA 1359

- The judicial conference shall (in consultation with the oversight body):
 - Develop statewide juvenile probation standards
 - Ensure adequate training is provided to all juvenile probation officers on the use of risk screening tools and the new juvenile probation standards
- OJA shall:
 - Administer the statewide data plan
- ICJI shall:
 - Administer the grant programs

HEA 1359 Proposed Work Groups

- Data
- Transitional Services
- Pretrial Diversion
- Behavioral Health
- Screening Tools, Procedures & Policies
- Grant Program Funding/Infrastructure
- *Juvenile Probation Standards*
- Youth & Family Advisory Group

HEA 1359 Timeline

- April 2022—Appointments to the Oversight Body
- May 2022—Appointments to the Work Groups
- Late May/Early June 2022—First meeting of the Oversight Body
- July 2022—First meeting of the Work Groups
- August, October, December—updates as needed to CISC
- December—deadline for grant programs (& any fiscal request)
- Feb, Apr, June 2023—updates as needed to CISC
- June 2023—deadline for remaining plans/products

Agenda

4. Staff Updates

a. Julie Whitman, Executive Director

Progress on current strategic plan & legislative summary

Child Health and Safety

Objective	Status	Product/Action
Wellness in the First Year of Life	In progress	Recommendations to increase access to community-based services
Child abuse prevention	Complete/Ongoing	Framework & Toolkit (Implementation work ongoing)
Safety of children in state care	On hold	N/A
Reducing sexual victimization of adolescents	In progress	Recommendations
Kinship families	Complete/In progress	Access to guardianship forms Recommendations related to child care and education

Child Health and Safety

Objective	Status	Product/Action
Decrease the uninsured children rate	Complete/In progress	Recommendation to eliminate CHIP 90-day waiting period Additional recommendations
Increase developmental screening of young children	In progress	Standardized data collection Consistent messaging

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Objective	Status	Product/Action
Evidence-based practices	Complete/Ongoing	MST Pilot Project
Provider pipeline & retention	Complete/In progress	Licensing legislation Additional recommendations
Parity	In progress	Data report Recommendations
Innovations in service delivery/MRSS	In progress	988 Implementation
Prevention	On hold	Recommendations
Suicide Prevention	Complete	Approved recommendations (need follow up on implementation)

Educational Outcomes

Objective	Status	Product/Action
Early Care & Education	In progress	Staying connected to ELAC, OECOSL
Positive Discipline	In progress	Recommendations, highlighting best practices
School-community collaborations for mental health	In progress	School mental health dictionary
School record transitions	On hold	Recommendations to ease record transfer
Postsecondary education and workforce	In progress	Recommendations

Juvenile Justice & Cross-System Youth

Objective	Status	Product/Action
Dual Status	Complete/Ongoing	Updated manual, training provided, ongoing data collection
CSEC	Complete/Ongoing	Updated manual, trafficking screening tool created in INcite, plans to roll out this summer, provide ongoing training
Shelter Care	Complete	Recommendations on information sharing, training, recruitment (need implementation follow-up)
Diversion	Complete/Ongoing	Diversion snapshot; ongoing work under 1359

Juvenile Justice & Cross-System Youth

Objective	Status	Product/Action
Serious & Violent Delinquency	In progress	Recommendations on evidence-based violence prevention programs
Family Engagement	Complete/Ongoing	Best practices for engaging families; ongoing work under 1359
Transitioning back home	Complete/Ongoing	Reintegration snapshot; ongoing work under 1359
Child & Adolescent Development	In progress	Recommendations

Equity, Inclusion & Cultural Competence

- Common language document
- List of vetted trainings and educational resources
- 7-question equity guide
- Equity in action staffing guide
- “Detailing” members to task forces

Child Trauma & Resilience Committee

- Trauma definitions
- Position statement on the use of ACES
- Guide for trauma screening, assessment & surveillance

Data Sharing and Mapping

- Information Sharing Guide Update (Oct 2021)
- Vulnerable Youth Dashboard in Progress
- Will be involved with 1359 implementation

Other groups

- Communications: ongoing resource & consultation
- Child Services Oversight: held required meetings; reviewed provider staffing issues, rate setting process, Ombudsman report, youth advisory report, birth parent advisory report, FFPSA

Legislative Overview

HEA 1214—Eviction Actions

HEA 1306—Housing Task Force

SEA 266—background checks, rate reviews

SEA 155—human trafficking

HEA 1079—elements of rape

HEA 1093—Education (ELAC, SROs, E-learning Days)

HEA 1140—Medicaid for pregnant women

HEA 1313—Screening for lead poisoning

Agenda

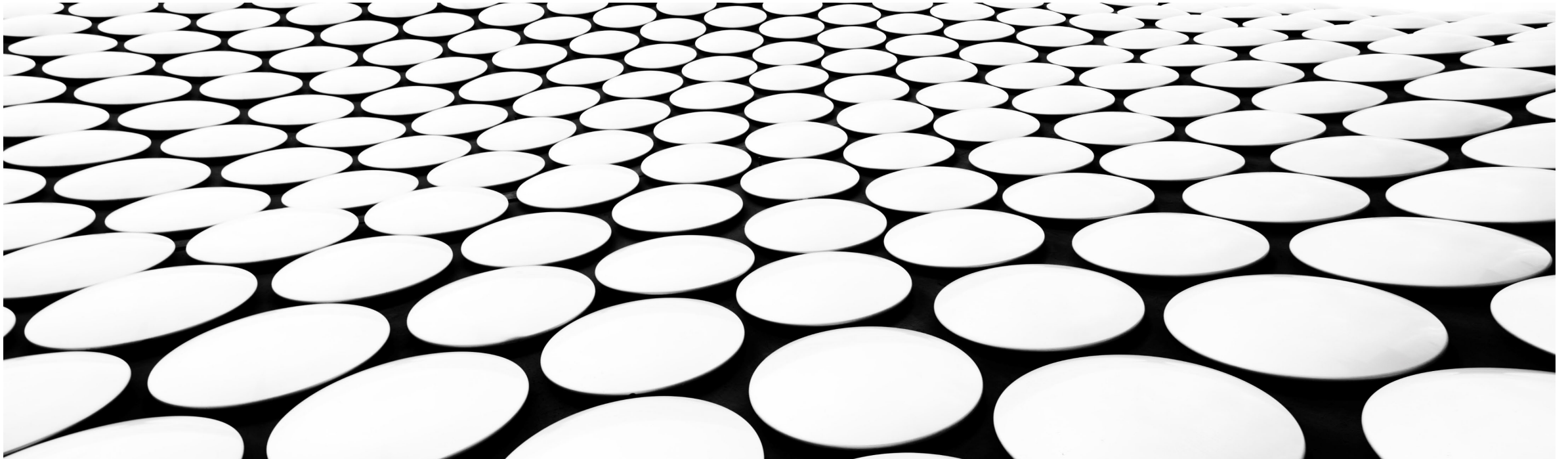
4. Staff Updates

b. Janie Smith

Implementation of Commission Actions

COMMISSION ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILDREN IN INDIANA IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION

JANIE SMITH, UNIVERSITY OF INDIANAPOLIS MSW INTERN



INTERESTING FACTS

50 members since inception

Longest Member: Chief Justice Rush, 2013-Present

Second Longest Member: Susan Lightfoot, Chief Probation Officer, Henry County 08/2013-06/2021

Second Longest Member still participating: Christine Blessinger, Deputy Commissioner of Re-Entry and Youth **Services**, 11/2014-Present

59 direct **tasks**, recommendations and endorsements since being established

41 recommendations have been voted upon since inception



AREAS OF STUDY

ANNUAL REPORTS

STRATEGIC PLAN

MEETING MINUTES

VOTED UPON RECOMMENDATIONS

OTHER COMMISSIONS AROUND THE U.S.

RESEARCH ARTICLES

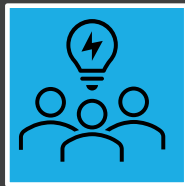
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WHERE ARE WE NOW?



2013

Initiation



2016

First Strategic and
Operational Plan



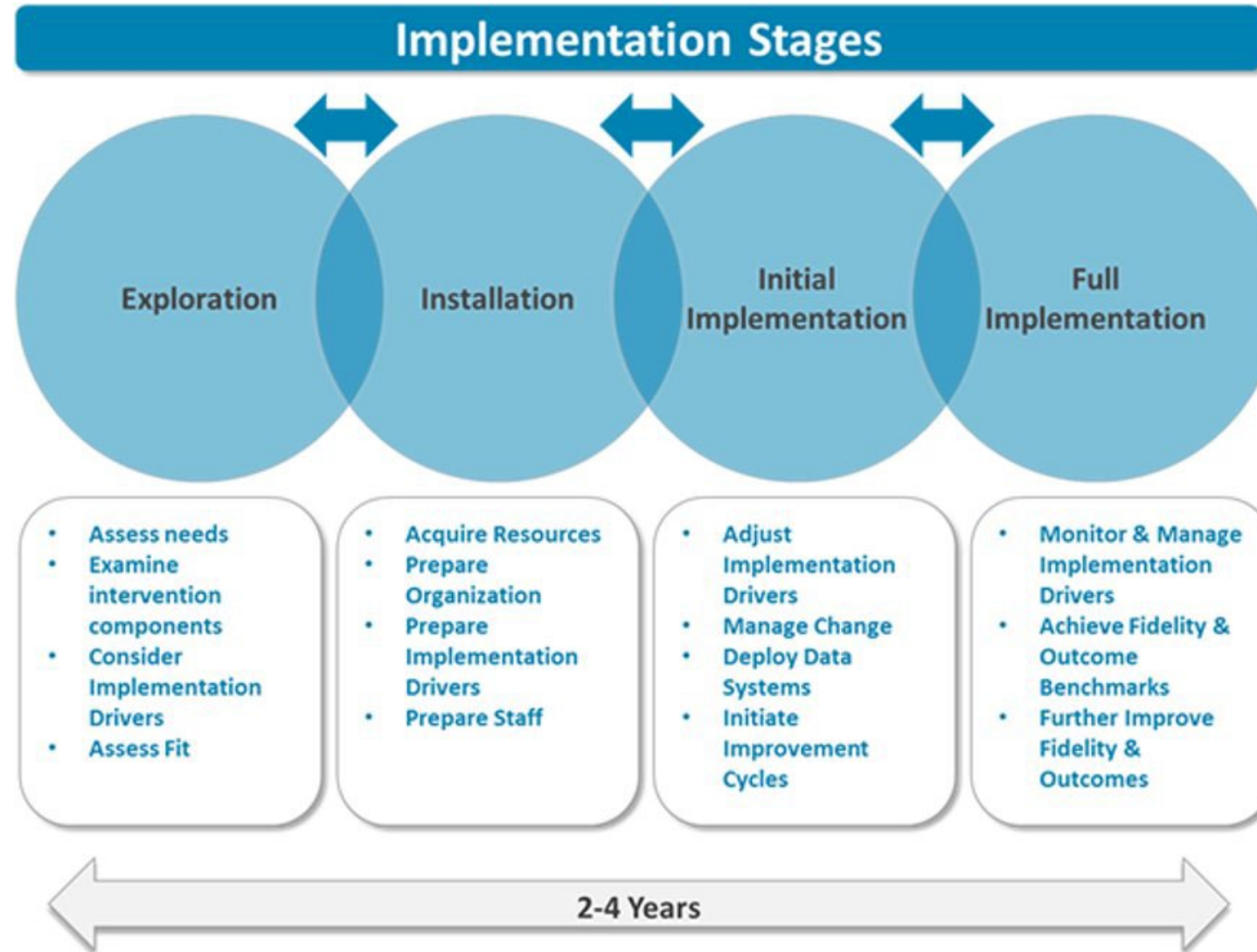
2017

Executive Director
Established



2022

Implementation



NEXT STEPS

- Implementation Tracking
- Accountability
- Documentation
- Support Staff
- Ongoing process evaluation
- Continuous quality improvement



QUESTIONS?



Agenda

5. Discussion: Future Meeting Topics or Other Items
All Commission Members

Agenda

6. Next Meeting

Wednesday, June 22, 2022, 10 a.m. – noon

Indiana State Library, History Reference Room