



COMMON PROBLEMS, COMMON SOLUTIONS

LOOKING ACROSS SECTORS AT STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING RURAL YOUTH AND FAMILIES

**2023 Nebraska Community Aid & Juvenile
Justice Conference**
June 14, 2023

Victoria Chamberlin, PhD, Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University
Alexandra Miller, PhD, Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University

OVERVIEW

Background: *Common Problems, Common Solutions Tool-kit*

Barriers & Strategies to Serving Youth in Rural Communities

-Community Spotlights

Q&A

BACKGROUND
: *COMMON
PROBLEMS,
COMMON
SOLUTIONS
TOOL-KIT*

DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOOL-KIT

- Center for Coordinated Assistance to States (CCAS)
- Youth arrests and incarceration on the decline
 - OJJDP increased focus on prevention, diversion, and alternatives to confinement
 - OJJDP has prioritized 1) treating children as children, 2) serving youth in their communities, and 3) developing opportunities for system-involved youth
- Roughly 20% of people in the U.S. reside in rural areas (U.S. Census Bureau)
- Outcome and service disparities based on race and ethnicity are common, and often intensify, in rural communities (NORC, University of Chicago)

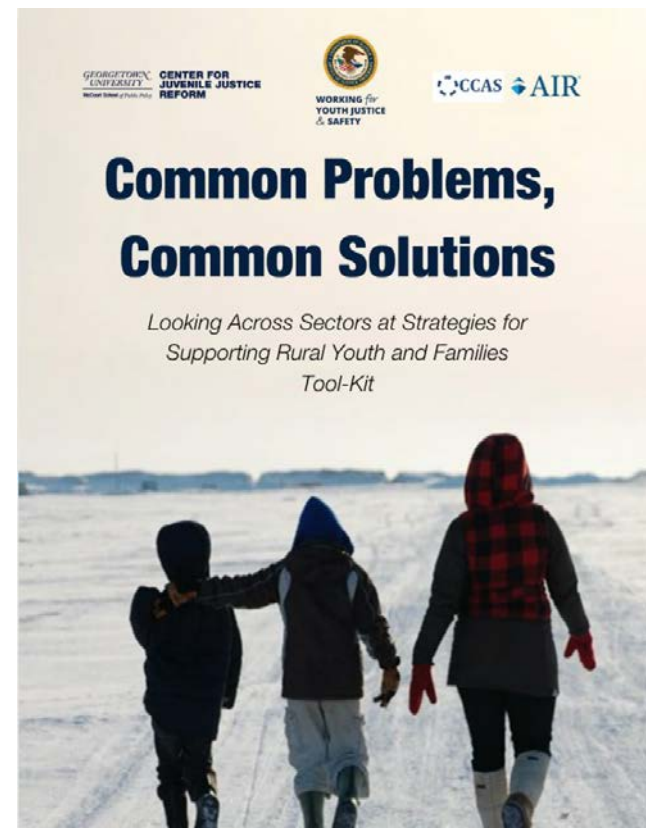
DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOOL-KIT

Information gathering

- Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice
- Feedback form shared with state JJ Specialists and rural jurisdictions affiliated with CJJR
- Existing research and reports

Top issues identified related to:

- Transportation and distances
- Specialized services and training
- Prosocial activities and job preparation
- Resource limitations





BARRIERS & STRATEGIES TO SERVING YOUTH IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

“Rurals would love to not be forgotten. We can't replicate most Blue Prints both because of resources and because everything is so urban-centric.”

– Feedback form respondent

ISSUE #1: LIMITATIONS IN TRANSPORTATION

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

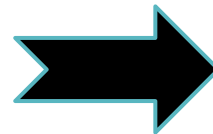
“On site services are difficult to access in our area, mainly due to rural settings and lack of transportation to larger jurisdictions.”

Long distances

Lack of public transportation

Limited private transportation

Results in barriers to services,
clinical care, and natural supports



- Mobile services
- School-based services
- Offer hybrid and virtual services
- Supplement public transportation
- Adjust caseload capacities

“In our large rural county, we are reliant on schools to provide most resources. Transportation is a big issue to get kids to services.”

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: COLORADO



OVERCOMING LIMITATIONS IN TRANSPORTATION COLORADO

HopSkipDrive

Provides youth with transportation to:

- prosocial activities
- school and summer school
- therapeutic services
- probation meetings
- community service
- family homes
- court hearings

- Similar to Uber or Lyft
- Collaboration of 12 agencies: The IMPACT Partnership
- Funded by OJJDP

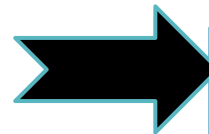
<https://www.hopskipdrive.com/>

ISSUE #2: LIMITED POSITIVE ACTIVITIES

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

“YLSI scores indicate that most youth we work with score at risk in [the] recreation and leisure category. We have no funding to address [this] with families.”

- Lack of prosocial activities
- Limited positive youth development opportunities
- Restricted opportunities toward workforce development, career and trade awareness
- Low engagement can lead to risky behaviors



Youth development, education, and job training programs

Opportunities for civic engagement and leadership development

Volunteer programs and outlets

Afterschool, recreational, and summer sports, clubs, and programs

Connect youth to mentors and role models

“Rural areas tend to be under resourced with limited access to prosocial activities outside of school. If a young person is struggling within the school setting, there are limited opportunities needed for healthy development, meeting their needs for mastery, social connectedness, healthy risk taking etc.”

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: OREGON



OVERCOMING LIMITATIONS IN PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES

OREGON

Heart of Oregon Corps (HOC)

- Offers:
 - YouthBuild and Americorps programs
 - Central Oregon Youth Conservation Corps
 - summer camps
- Partners with local school districts for transportation
- Leverages rural location through offered activities
- Collaborates with local nonprofits
- Provides youth development opportunities

ISSUE #3: DEARTH OF RESOURCES

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Obstacles to identifying, accessing, and applying for funding

Lack of awareness of what is available across sectors

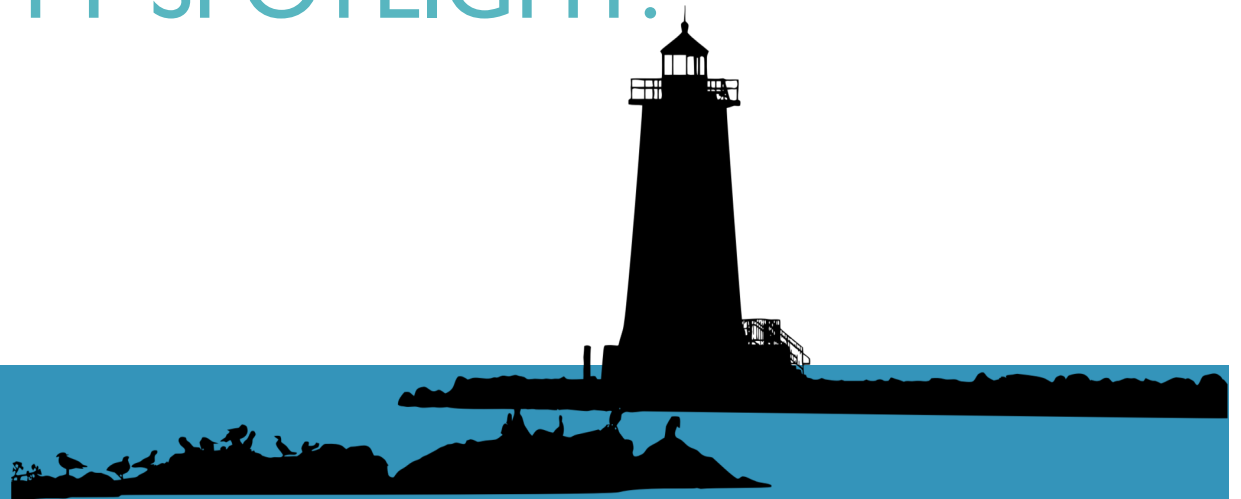
Operating in siloed modalities prevents resource and information sharing



- Leverage federal and private funds
- Community asset mapping
- Engage community organizations and faith-based entities
- Collaborate across agencies to organize and expand services
- Use data and local knowledge to inform efforts
- Engage volunteers
- Educate policymakers

“If the [one] provider [we have] has a personal conflict, we have no one. We need good quality mental health, developmental disability, drug treatment and mentors. We really need a positive mentoring program. We live in a beautiful mountain area, but [there are] no free or reduced cost programs for kids to get out and learn the outdoors and all it has to offer.”

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: MAINE



OVERCOMING LACK OF RESOURCES

MAINE

Regional Care Team (RCT) Initiative

- RCT Initiative in three Department of Corrections regions intended to:
 - Share accountability for the well-being of youth;
 - strengthen cross-system, provider, and community involvement;
 - inform local resource development; and
 - break down systemic barriers and silos.
- Multidisciplinary team meets once a month to identify services for unmet youth needs

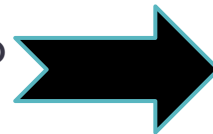
<https://placemattersmaine.org/regional-care-teams/>

ISSUE #4: LACK OF SPECIALIZED SERVICES

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

“Rural areas are left out of the dialogue and pool of resources.”

- Lack of qualified providers
- Inadequate training and professional development opportunities
- Difficulty recruiting providers to rural areas
- Distances reduce time professionals can spend with clients
- Lack of culturally appropriate services and delivery modalities



“Hub and spoke” models

Offer provider incentives

Invest in technology at micro and macro levels

Establish or connect to specialized training opportunities

Allocate specialized staff regionally

Offer cultural competency training and support

“We have large turnover in our professional services because professionals can make more money in metro areas so continuity of care is difficult. We need more funding to entice professionals to stay in our community.”

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: ALASKA

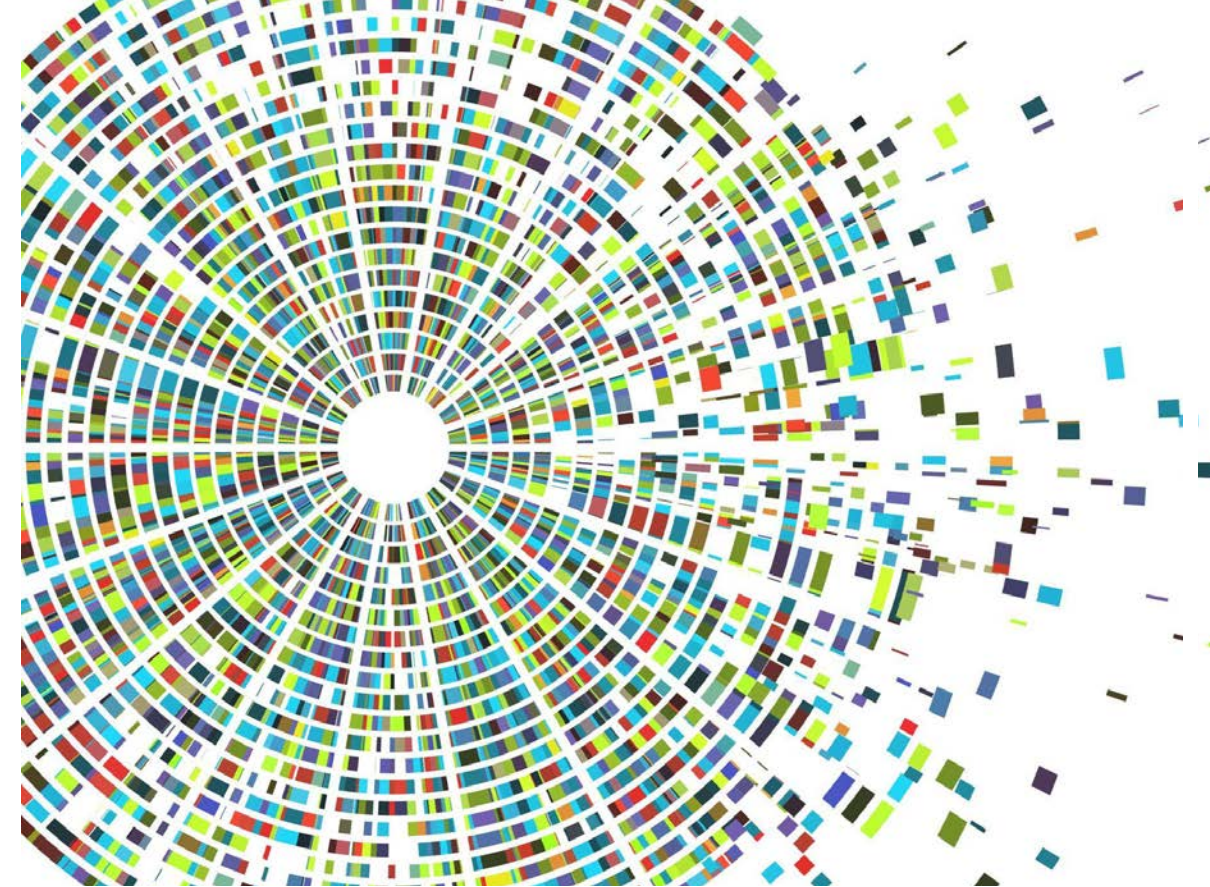


OVERCOMING LACK SPECIALIZED SERVICES ALASKA

Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurAL CAP)

- Provides culturally competent programming through coordination with rural Alaskan communities and Tribal Governments
- Operates culture camps for local youth
- Curriculum and activities are locally driven
- Funded through Title II grant dollars

<https://ruralcap.org/client-services/health-well-being/>



KEY TAKEAWAYS

“MANY TIMES COMMITMENT TO CW OR JJ IS THE ONLY OPTION FOR YOUTH TO RECEIVE NEEDED SERVICES AND SUPPORTS. ACCESS TO SUPPORTS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY IS CRITICAL TO DIVERSION, FAMILY PRESERVATION AND WELLBEING FOR YOUTH.”

Juvenile justice issues are not isolated.

Resource sharing can lift burdens on multiple community sectors.

One size does not fit all: cultural competency is imperative.

Rural jurisdictions are ripe with opportunities for creative collaboration.

QUESTIONS
&
COMMENTS



CONTACT

- Victoria Chamberlin
 - vac54@Georgetown.edu
- Alex Miller
 - am4020@Georgetown.edu
 - <https://cjjr.Georgetown.edu>
- Access the Tool-kit at:
<https://cjjr.georgetown.edu/resources/publications/>

