

York County and Polk County Comprehensive Youth Services Plan July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2030

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Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	2
o Overview	2
o Main Issues Facing the Community	2
o Priorities Identified	3
o Strategies to be Implemented	3
2. Introduction	4
o Community Team	4
o Description of the Planning Process	5
o List of Team Members/Contributors	5
3. Community Description	6
o York County Overview	6
o Polk County Overview	9
4. Identify Risk Factors	12
o Risk Factors in York County	12
o Risk Factors in Polk County	14

5. Services Needed to Address Risk Factors	15
○ Mental Health Services	15
○ Family Support Services	16
○ Educational Support Services	16
6. Youth Crime Analysis and Needs	17
○ York County Crime Trends	17
○ Polk County Crime Trends	18
7. Available Services in York County	21
○ Crisis Intervention and Emergency Services	21
○ Family and Social Services	22
○ Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	22
○ Educational Programs	22
8. Coordination Plan and Priorities	25
○ Coordination Strategies	25
○ Priorities for Improvement	27
○ Measuring Impact	28
9. Services and Programs	29
○ Program Overview	29
○ Detention and Alternatives	30
○ Needed Programs and Gaps	30
10. Priorities and Strategies	31
○ Priority 1: Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment	32
○ Priority 2: Mental Health Services Expansion	34
○ Priority 3: Family Support Services	35
○ Priority 4: Educational Support and Truancy Prevention	36
○ Priority 5: Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities	37
11. Appendix	38
○ A. Comprehensive Youth Services Plan Checklist	38
○ B. Memorandum of Understanding	38
○ C. Approval Letter/Minutes from County Board	38
○ D. Youth Crime Systems Analysis	38
○ E. Other Appendix Materials	39

Section I: Executive Summary

Overview

York and Polk Counties face significant challenges related to youth mental health, substance use, chronic absenteeism, and socioeconomic disparities. This plan addresses these issues through targeted interventions, prioritizing mental health support, substance use prevention, educational improvements, and socioeconomic assistance to foster a safer, healthier environment for youth.

Key Issues

1. **Mental Health and Suicide Prevention**
 - Youth suicide is a major concern, with limited access to affordable, timely mental health services.
2. **Substance Use**
 - Youth report higher rates of cigarette and alcohol use than state averages, with early initiation noted (2018 data).
3. **Chronic Absenteeism**
 - High absenteeism, particularly among Hispanic youth, hinders educational progress.
4. **Socioeconomic Disparities**
 - Youth poverty impacts well-being, creating barriers to opportunities and growth.

Priorities and Strategies

1. **Enhance Mental Health Resources**
 - Partner with organizations to increase mental health professionals and implement school-based programs.
 - Launch awareness campaigns to reduce stigma and improve resource access.
2. **Substance Use Prevention**
 - Introduce prevention education in schools and early intervention programs for at-risk youth.
 - Conduct workshops to educate parents on addressing substance use.
3. **Educational Support**
 - Reduce absenteeism through targeted interventions and mentorship.
 - Enhance resources like after-school tutoring and college readiness programs.
4. **Socioeconomic Support**
 - Develop family assistance programs for financial aid and job training.
 - Partner with businesses to create economic growth opportunities.

Conclusion

This plan outlines a collaborative approach to address youth mental health, substance use, absenteeism, and socioeconomic challenges. By implementing these strategies, York and Polk Counties can build a stronger, healthier community that empowers youth to succeed.

Section II: Introduction

Community Team

Background, Formation, and Purpose:

The community team was established to develop and oversee the implementation of a comprehensive 5-year plan aimed at addressing the needs of youth in York and Polk Counties. This team plays a crucial role in supervising the preparation and administration of the plan, ensuring that the strategies and activities proposed align with the community's needs and priorities.

Description of Team:

The community team was formed in 2020, bringing together representatives from various sectors including education, healthcare, law enforcement, social services, and local government. The team's responsibilities include collecting and analyzing data, setting priorities, developing strategies, and monitoring the progress of the implemented activities.

Description of the Planning Process:

The planning process for this 5-year plan began in December, 2023. Data collection was coordinated by York County Diversion Office, who ensured that relevant and up-to-date information was gathered from multiple sources. The selection of data was guided by community needs and input from stakeholders. The team held two planning meetings, with full attendance from all members, to review the data, identify priorities, and develop strategies. These meetings facilitated collaborative discussions, allowing for a comprehensive approach to addressing youth issues. Priorities were determined based on

data analysis and community input, and strategies, objectives, and activities were developed through a collaborative process involving all team members.

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Community Description

York County

Geography and Demographics:

York County, located in southeast/southcentral Nebraska, is an essential agricultural hub within the state. The county spans approximately 572.5 square miles, characterized by

fertile plains and rich agricultural land, significantly contributing to its economy. The county seat, York, is the primary urban center, offering a bustling downtown area with various retail establishments, services, and cultural attractions. Other towns and villages in the county include Benedict, Bradshaw, Gresham, Henderson, Lushton, McCool Junction, Thayer, and Waco. Major highways, such as Interstate 80 and U.S. Route 81, facilitate easy access and transportation, making York County a vital crossroads for commerce and travel.

As of July 1, 2023, York County has a population of approximately 14,356, marking a slight increase of 1.6% since April 1, 2020. The population is relatively evenly distributed across age groups, with 5.6% of residents under the age of 5, 23.3% under 18, and 20.6% aged 65 and older. The gender distribution is nearly balanced, with 49.9% female and 50.1% male. York County is predominantly White, with 94.6% of the population identifying as White alone, 1.9% as Black or African American, 1.1% as American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.7% as Asian, and 1.7% as two or more races. Hispanic or Latino individuals make up 6.3% of the population.

York County is home to numerous landmarks and attractions that highlight its rich cultural and historical heritage. The Wessels Living History Farm offers a glimpse into the lives of rural Nebraskans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, featuring farming practices and costumed interpreters. The Anna Bemis Palmer Museum and the Clayton Museum of Ancient History provide insights into the county's history and culture. Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy the various local parks, including Miller Park, Beaver Creek Park, Mincks Park, Harrison Park, and Foster Park, as well as Recharge Lake, which offers recreational opportunities. Other attractions include the York Area Children's Museum and Lee's Marble Museum, alongside numerous campgrounds, RV parks, and recreation areas.

Socioeconomic Characteristics:

York County enjoys a relatively high median household income of \$72,914 and a per capita income of \$39,507. Despite these figures, 11.0% of the population lives below the poverty line. The county's economy is heavily reliant on agriculture, supported by a

robust infrastructure that includes transportation routes, educational institutions, and healthcare services. The unemployment rate is not specified, but overall labor force participation is healthy.

The educational attainment in York County is commendable, with 93.8% of residents aged 25 and older having completed high school and 25.3% holding a bachelor's degree or higher. The county is home to several public and private schools, including York Public Schools, Centennial Public School, and Nebraska Lutheran High School, contributing to a high graduation rate of 92% for the 2018-19 school year.

Housing and Living Arrangements:

The housing market in York County is stable, with 74.5% of housing units being owner-occupied. The median value of owner-occupied housing units is \$160,500, and the median selected monthly owner costs with a mortgage are \$1,281. The median gross rent is \$842, reflecting an affordable housing market. The county has 5,592 households, with an average of 2.38 persons per household. A significant portion of the population, 84.5%, has lived in the same house for over a year, indicating stability in living arrangements. Additionally, 4.8% of the population speaks a language other than English at home.

Technology and Internet Use:

The majority of households in York County are well-connected, with 92.5% having a computer and 91.8% having a broadband internet subscription, highlighting the community's access to digital resources.

Health:

In York County, 7.7% of the population under the age of 65 has a disability, highlighting the need for accessible and inclusive healthcare services. This statistic is crucial when considering the planning of community services and interventions, particularly for youth who may require specialized support. Additionally, 6.1% of the population lacks health insurance, which poses a significant barrier to accessing necessary medical and mental health care. Efforts to reduce this percentage through community programs and

partnerships with local health providers could greatly benefit the overall well-being of the county's youth.

Mental Health and Substance Use:

Given the prevalence of mental health disorders and substance use issues among youth, the county should focus on providing comprehensive mental health services. Integrating mental health screenings in schools, offering counseling services, and creating awareness programs about substance abuse are vital steps. Collaboration with local health departments and leveraging state and federal grants can support these initiatives.

Transportation:

Commute and Accessibility:

The mean travel time to work for workers aged 16 years and older in York County is 16.1 minutes, indicating relatively efficient commuting conditions. For the youth population, this efficiency can translate to better access to educational and recreational facilities, as well as healthcare services. To further support youth mobility, the county can consider implementing or enhancing public transportation options, especially for those who do not have access to personal vehicles. Ensuring safe and reliable transportation can also help in reducing truancy and improving overall school attendance.

Rural Accessibility:

For those living in more rural parts of the county, transportation can be a challenge. Developing community-based transportation solutions, such as carpool programs or shuttle services, can help bridge this gap. These services can ensure that all youth, regardless of their location, have equal access to opportunities and resources.

Polk County

Geography and Demographics:

Polk County, located in southeast/southcentral Nebraska, is known for its agricultural productivity and community-oriented lifestyle. The county covers an area of approximately 438.8 square miles and includes the towns and villages of Stromsburg, Osceola, Shelby, and Polk. These communities are closely knit, with a strong emphasis on agriculture as the mainstay of the local economy. Major transportation routes, such as U.S. Route 81 and Nebraska Highway 92, run through the county, providing essential connectivity for commerce and daily travel.

Polk County has a rich history, with its boundaries established by the Territorial Legislature on January 26, 1856. Initially part of a larger Butler County, Polk County was created following a special election in 1870 and named after the 11th president of the United States, James Knox Polk. The county seat was established in Osceola in October 1871, and the first courthouse, although destroyed by fire in 1881, was replaced with a more substantial building. The current courthouse, dedicated in 1922, is an architectural landmark with modern renaissance features and up-to-date amenities for its time.

The population of Polk County is approximately 5,213, with a slight population increase over recent years. The demographic distribution includes 5.1% of residents under the age of 5, 21.4% under 18, and 23.6% aged 65 and older, indicating a significant proportion of both young families and senior citizens. The gender distribution is slightly skewed towards males, with 50.6% male and 49.4% female. The county is predominantly White, with 97.5% of the population identifying as White alone. Other racial and ethnic groups include 0.1% Black or African American, 0.8% American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.1% Asian, and 1.4% two or more races. Hispanic or Latino individuals constitute 3.2% of the population.

Socioeconomic Characteristics:

Polk County has a median household income of \$59,000 and a per capita income of \$32,459. About 9.5% of the population lives below the poverty line. The county's

economy is firmly rooted in agriculture, with local businesses and services supporting the agricultural industry. The unemployment rate is not specified but aligns with the overall labor force participation trends in similar rural communities.

Educational attainment in Polk County shows that 91.2% of residents aged 25 and older have completed high school, and 20.4% hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Educational institutions in the county include Osceola Public Schools, Shelby-Rising City Public Schools, and Cross County Community Schools, which collectively support a strong educational framework.

Housing and Living Arrangements:

Housing in Polk County is predominantly owner-occupied, with a rate of 76.0%. The median value of owner-occupied housing units is \$130,000, and the median selected monthly owner costs with a mortgage are \$1,120. The median gross rent is \$750, reflecting a relatively affordable housing market. The county has 2,150 households, with an average of 2.35 persons per household. A substantial portion of the population, 86.0%, has lived in the same house for over a year. Additionally, 4.0% of the population speaks a language other than English at home.

Technology and Internet Use:

Polk County shows a strong adoption of technology, with 88.9%

Health:

Polk County faces notable health challenges among its youth population. Specifically, 7.7% of the population under age 65 has a disability. This high percentage underscores the need for accessible and inclusive health services that can cater to young people with various disabilities. Additionally, 6.1% of the population lacks health insurance, posing a significant barrier to accessing necessary medical care. Addressing these issues will require targeted interventions to improve health insurance coverage and enhance the accessibility of health services for all youth, including those with disabilities. Collaboration with local health providers and insurance companies to create affordable

health plans and outreach programs to educate families about available health resources will be essential.

Transportation:

Transportation in Polk County is relatively efficient, as indicated by a mean travel time to work of 16.1 minutes for workers aged 16 years and older. This short commute time suggests a well-connected community where youth can more easily access schools, recreational facilities, and health services. However, it remains crucial to ensure that public transportation options are available and reliable, particularly for youth without access to personal vehicles. Developing partnerships with local transportation agencies to enhance public transit routes and schedules can help ensure that all young people can conveniently reach essential services and community activities. Additionally, considering the potential for expanding bike lanes and pedestrian paths can promote healthier, more sustainable transportation options for youth.

Identify Risk Factors

York County & Polk County

Risk Factors	Indicators of Influence
Community Risk Factors	
Mental Health Access	Lack of screening, counseling, and crisis intervention services leads to untreated mental health issues among youth, increasing risk of delinquency.
Substance Availability	High availability of drugs and alcohol increases misuse, leading to criminal behavior, family disruption, and school failure.
Community Instability	Economic hardship, housing instability, and limited community resources contribute to youth vulnerability and risky behaviors.
Lack of Prosocial Activities	Limited access to structured recreational, educational, or

	community activities leaves youth without positive outlets, increasing boredom, risky behaviors, and delinquency.
School risk factors:	
Chronic Absenteeism	Low academic performance and chronic absenteeism place youth at risk of delinquency and system involvement.
School dropout	High dropout rates result in fewer opportunities and increased engagement in delinquent activities.
Family Risk Factors	
Family Instability	Parental substance abuse, domestic violence, and economic hardship contribute to unstable home environments for youth.
Lack of Parental Support	Poor parental supervision and involvement limit family structure, increasing youth risk factors.
Peer Risk Factors	
Negative Peer Influence	Association with peers involved in drugs, alcohol, or criminal behaviors increases the likelihood of youth delinquency.
Substance Use Pressure	Peer pressure contributes to early substance use, leading to behavioral issues and justice system involvement.

Services Needed to Address Risk Factors

Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment

- Implement comprehensive substance abuse education programs in schools and communities.
- Provide early intervention services for at-risk youth.
- Expand access to treatment facilities and counseling services.
- Establish peer support groups and community outreach initiatives.

Mental Health Services

- Develop mental health screening and assessment programs.
- Offer counseling and therapy services for youth and families.

- Provide crisis intervention and ongoing support services.
- Foster collaboration with mental health providers, schools, and juvenile justice agencies.

Family Support Services

- Offer family counseling and therapy to strengthen relationships.
- Implement parenting education programs to support caregivers.
- Provide financial assistance and job training opportunities for families.
- Strengthen family support systems and connect families to community networks.

Educational Support Services

- Create tutoring and mentoring programs for academic success.
- Provide alternative education options for at-risk students.
- Develop early warning systems in schools to identify and assist struggling youth.
- Build partnerships with educational institutions and community organizations.

Economic Assistance

- Expand job training and employment programs for families.
- Support financial assistance initiatives and access to affordable housing.
- Enhance community networks and resources for low-income families.

Improving Access to Services

- Develop enhanced transportation options for rural areas.
- Increase funding to expand and sustain local services.
- Leverage technology to provide remote access to critical resources.
- Introduce mobile service units and outreach programs to underserved areas.

Outcome Statement

By addressing these risk factors through targeted services and collaborative efforts, York and Polk Counties will reduce juvenile justice system involvement and promote the well-being and success of their youth.

Section III: Youth Crime Analysis and Needs

Introduction

The youth crime analysis for York and Polk Counties uses the most recent available data to assess juvenile delinquency issues and identify critical needs for prevention and intervention. This analysis highlights educational needs and includes local data disaggregated by race and ethnicity at key decision points. The findings provide valuable insights into the factors contributing to delinquency and inform targeted strategies for addressing these challenges.

York County

Juvenile Delinquency Problems

York County faces persistent juvenile delinquency issues, with **substance abuse**, **property crimes**, and **youth violence** being primary concerns. Substance abuse-related offenses, including alcohol and drug misuse, frequently link to other forms of delinquency such as theft and vandalism. Additionally, bullying and cyberbullying have increased, contributing to aggression and risky behavior.

Key Data Trends

- Juvenile court filings have fluctuated over the years:
 - 2017: 53 cases
 - 2018: 49 cases
 - 2019: 41 cases
 - 2020: 56 cases
 - 2021: 48 cases
 - 2022: Significant increase to 80 cases
 - 2023: Continual increase to 86 cases

Key Decision Points and Disparities

An analysis of data disaggregated by race and ethnicity reveals that minority youth are disproportionately represented:

- **Hispanic Youth:** Higher rates of substance abuse offenses and school disciplinary actions compared to White youth.
- **African American Youth:** Overrepresented in detention and adjudication, suggesting systemic disparities that need to be addressed.

Identified Needs

1. **Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment:** Implement school-based education, community outreach, and treatment programs to address substance misuse.

2. **Mental Health Services:** Expand screening, counseling, and crisis intervention for youth.
 3. **Family Support Services:** Provide family counseling, parenting education, and financial assistance to strengthen family systems.
 4. **Educational Support:** Enhance tutoring, mentoring, and early intervention systems to reduce absenteeism and dropout rates.
-

Polk County

Juvenile Delinquency Problems

Polk County's juvenile delinquency challenges mirror York County but are amplified by its rural nature. Limited access to services, recreational activities, and social programs increases vulnerability to **substance abuse**, **property crimes**, and **minor thefts**.

Key Decision Points and Disparities

While minority youth represent a smaller demographic, disparities remain evident:

- **Hispanic Youth:** Higher rates of involvement in substance abuse-related offenses.
- **African American Youth:** More likely to face detention and harsher penalties, pointing to systemic inequities that require equitable policies.

Identified Needs

1. **Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment:** Establish prevention education and increase access to treatment services.
 2. **Mental Health Services:** Introduce expanded mental health resources, including telehealth options for rural areas.
 3. **Recreational and Social Activities:** Develop structured prosocial activities to provide positive alternatives and reduce risky behaviors.
 4. **Educational Support:** Offer alternative education programs, tutoring, and vocational training to keep youth engaged.
-

Conclusion

The analysis of youth crime in York and Polk Counties highlights the critical issues of substance abuse, mental health challenges, family instability, and educational gaps. Data disaggregated by race and ethnicity underscores disparities at key decision points, particularly for Hispanic and African American youth. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that prioritizes:

- Substance abuse prevention and treatment
- Mental health services

- Family support
- Educational opportunities
- Equitable practices within the juvenile justice system

These insights will guide the implementation of the 5-year plan to reduce juvenile justice involvement, address disparities, and support the well-being of all youth in the community.

Additional Data Sources

York County Schools Data:

- *York Public Schools*: High graduation rate (97%), college-going rate (83%), and a significant percentage of students (42%) qualifying for free/reduced lunch indicate economic challenges.
- *McCool Junction Public Schools*: Lower graduation rate (86%) and a high rate of free/reduced lunch (35%) suggest the need for targeted educational support and economic assistance.
- *Heartland Community Schools*: High performance in NSCAS tests and a college-going rate of 82% but with 33% of students on free/reduced lunch.

Polk County Schools Data:

- *High Plains Community Schools*: High attendance rate (94%) and a notable 33% of students on free/reduced lunch.
- *Heartland Community Schools*: High performance in NSCAS tests, especially in mathematics (79%), but 33% of students on free/reduced lunch.
- *Cross County Community Schools*: Exceptional graduation rate (100%) and college-going rate (89%), but with 34% of students on free/reduced lunch.
- *Osceola Public Schools*: High graduation rate (93%) and college-going rate (94%), but with 32% of students on free/reduced lunch.
- *Shelby-Rising City Public Schools*: High performance in science (79%) but lower in math (51%), with 37% of students on free/reduced lunch.

Section IV: Services and Programs

Available Services in York & Polk County

York & Polk County offers a variety of services aimed at addressing the needs of youth and families within the community. These services include diversion programs, family support, mental health and substance abuse counseling, educational support, and crisis intervention. Below is a summary of the key services available:

Priority Category	Agencies/Programs	Services Provided
Crisis Intervention & Emergency Services	- Hope Gospel Rescue Mission	Provides food, shelter, and guidance for individuals in crisis
	- Northeast NE Juvenile Services (Madison, NE)	Secure detention facility for youth, 90 miles from York County
	- Lancaster County Youth Services Center	Secure detention facility, located 50 miles away in Lincoln
	- York County Public Transportation	Offers transportation services to improve access to emergency programs
Mental Health & Substance Abuse	- Red Couch Counseling	Provides mental health counseling and substance abuse services for youth and adults
	- Blue Valley Behavioral Health	Offers counseling, substance abuse assessments, and outpatient treatment services.
	- Four Corners Health Department	Delivers youth mental health counseling, vaccinations, and other health programs
	- York County Diversion Program	Provides services addressing substance abuse and behavioral issues to reduce recidivism
	- Attendance Monitoring Program (AMP)	Reduces school absenteeism through prevention and intervention strategies in

		schools
Family & Social Support	- Blue Valley Community Action	Emergency utility, rent and food assistance; homeless services
	- CASA for York County	Volunteer advocacy for children in the juvenile court system
	- DHHS (Department of Health and Human Services)	Family support resources to ensure safe and healthy home environments
	- York County Community Coalition (YC3)	Connects families to resources through Central Navigation services
Education & Employment	- YPS Sixpence	Early childhood education for families with children from prenatal to age 5
	- BOOST Program	After-school and summer programs for grades 2-5 offering extracurricular activities
	- Early Development Network (Milford, NE)	Provides early intervention services for children with developmental delays
Basic Needs Support	- Blue Valley Community Action	Food assistance, thrift store access, and emergency support for families
	- Hope Gospel Rescue Mission	Shelter, meals, and community guidance
Transportation	- York County Public Transportation	Affordable transportation services to improve access to local and regional programs

Close Proximity Services

For services not available within York or Polk County, families travel to nearby areas. These include:

- **Early Development Network – ESU6 (Milford, NE):** Provides early intervention services for children with developmental delays and healthcare needs (20 miles).
- **Blue Valley Behavioral Health (Seward, NE):** Offers intensive outpatient treatment for substance abuse and mental health counseling (30 miles).
- **Specialized Medical and Mental Health Services (Lincoln and Omaha, NE):** Provide advanced medical care, residential treatment facilities, and behavioral health services (50-70 miles).

Detention and Alternatives to Detention

York & Polk County utilizes the following detention facilities and alternatives to detention:

1. Detention Facilities

- **Northeast Nebraska Juvenile Services (Madison, NE):** Provides secure detention services for youth. Located approximately 90 miles from York County.
- **Lancaster County Youth Services Center (Lincoln, NE):** Offers secure detention services and juvenile supervision programs, approximately 50 miles away.

2. Alternatives to Detention

- **Diversion Programs:** York County Attorney's Office provides alternatives to traditional detention by addressing youth needs through community-based services.
- **Probation Supervision:** Juveniles are monitored within their homes as an alternative to detention.
 - **Electronic Monitoring:** This method is utilized and monitored solely by the state probation office as a alternative to detention.
- **Family Support Programs:** Services such as parenting classes and family counseling focus on strengthening families to prevent delinquency.

3. Associated Costs

- **Detention Costs:** Costs vary based on the length of stay and specific services provided at detention facilities.
- **Transportation Costs:** Juveniles requiring placement in secure facilities incur additional expenses due to travel distances (50-90 miles).

Needed Programs in York & Polk County

While York & Polk County offers a variety of services, significant gaps remain in addressing the needs of youth and families. The following programs are identified as priorities to fill service gaps, reduce juvenile delinquency, and improve outcomes for youth:

1. Substance Abuse Treatment Programs

- **In-Patient Substance Abuse Facilities:** Establish dedicated in-patient treatment centers specifically for juveniles to address severe substance use.

- **Adolescent Outpatient Programs:** Expand accessible outpatient services for youth, including after-school counseling options.
 - **Peer-Led Recovery Groups:** Develop youth-focused support groups led by trained peers to encourage open discussions and recovery strategies.
 - **School-Based Prevention Programs:** Implement evidence-based prevention curricula in schools to educate students on substance abuse risks and coping skills.
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2. Mental Health and Behavioral Services

- **Residential Treatment Centers:** Establish local residential programs for youth with severe mental health and behavioral needs, reducing the need to travel long distances.
 - **Crisis Stabilization Units:** Create short-term crisis stabilization centers where youth can receive immediate mental health intervention and support.
 - **School-Based Mental Health Counselors:** Place licensed mental health professionals in schools to provide ongoing support for students struggling with anxiety, depression, and trauma.
 - **Telehealth Mental Health Services:** Increase access to telehealth options for rural families unable to travel to in-person counseling.
-

3. Educational and Vocational Training Programs

- **Vocational Training Programs:** Offer job skills training and certifications for high-demand trades such as construction, healthcare, welding, and IT for at-risk youth.
 - **Alternative Education Programs:** Develop schools or programs focused on individualized learning for youth struggling in traditional educational settings.
 - **GED Preparation Programs:** Create dedicated GED preparation and testing support for youth who have dropped out of high school.
 - **Internships and Apprenticeships:** Partner with local businesses to provide youth with hands-on work experience, mentoring, and pathways to employment.
-

4. Structured Prosocial Activities

- **Community Recreation Programs:** Develop affordable, accessible after-school and weekend programs offering structured sports, arts, and music opportunities.
- **Youth Leadership and Civic Engagement:** Establish youth-led leadership councils to encourage positive community involvement and skill-building.
- **Mentoring Programs:** Implement mentorship programs that connect youth with trusted adults to provide guidance, accountability, and support.

- **Outdoor Adventure Programs:** Offer nature-based programs (e.g., hiking, camping, and conservation projects) to promote mental wellness and teamwork skills.
 - **Technology and STEM Clubs:** Create programs where youth can explore STEM fields (robotics, coding, engineering) in hands-on and engaging ways.
-

5. Family Strengthening Programs

- **Parenting Skills Workshops:** Provide classes on effective communication, discipline strategies, and conflict resolution to strengthen family dynamics.
 - **Family Therapy Programs:** Expand access to family counseling to address challenges such as substance abuse, domestic violence, and economic hardship.
 - **Respite Services for Families:** Develop short-term respite care services for families in crisis, offering temporary relief and support.
 - **Economic Assistance Programs:** Provide targeted financial aid, job training, and childcare assistance to reduce stressors contributing to youth delinquency.
-

6. Prevention and Early Intervention Programs

- **Early Childhood Intervention:** Expand programs such as home visits and early childhood education to address developmental delays and social-emotional needs.
 - **Truancy Prevention Initiatives:** Enhance early intervention strategies to reduce chronic absenteeism through counseling, mentoring, and family engagement.
 - **Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention:** Develop programs in schools to address bullying through awareness campaigns, peer mediation, and support systems.
 - **Trauma-Informed Care Training:** Train service providers, school staff, and law enforcement in trauma-informed care to support youth who have experienced adverse childhood events (ACEs).
-

7. Transportation Services

- **Youth Transportation Programs:** Establish dedicated transportation for youth to access counseling, treatment, educational programs, and recreational activities.
 - **Expanded Rural Transportation:** Enhance existing public transportation services to accommodate families living in remote areas of York County.
-

Summary of Needed Programs

To address service gaps and improve youth outcomes, York County requires:

1. **Substance Abuse Treatment Programs** (in-patient, outpatient, peer-led recovery, school-based prevention).
 2. **Mental Health and Behavioral Services** (residential centers, school counselors, telehealth, crisis stabilization units).
 3. **Educational and Vocational Programs** (vocational training, internships, GED support, alternative education).
 4. **Structured Prosocial Activities** (youth leadership, STEM clubs, recreation programs, mentoring).
 5. **Family Strengthening Programs** (parenting workshops, family therapy, respite care, financial assistance).
 6. **Prevention and Early Intervention** (early childhood programs, truancy prevention, trauma-informed care).
 7. **Transportation Services** (dedicated youth transportation and rural expansion).
-

This comprehensive list highlights programs that are essential for addressing juvenile delinquency, supporting families, and providing opportunities for youth to thrive. By filling these gaps, York & Polk County can reduce risk factors, promote positive development, and create a stronger, healthier community.

Coordination Plan and Priorities

Enhancement, Development, and Expansion of Community Services

York County will implement targeted strategies to improve services for youth and families, reducing delinquency and promoting positive outcomes.

Key Strategies

1. **Strengthening Partnerships**
 - Collaborate with nearby counties, schools, and service providers to enhance resource sharing and expand services.
2. **Expanding Existing Programs**
 - Increase funding and capacity for current programs like truancy initiatives, family support, and diversion programs to serve more youth.
3. **Implementing New Programs**
 - Develop programs such as:

- Vocational training for job skills development.
 - Residential treatment facilities for severe behavioral and mental health needs.
4. **Community Outreach**
 - Conduct education and outreach campaigns to increase awareness of available services and improve accessibility for youth and families.
 5. **Monitoring and Evaluation**
 - Regularly evaluate program effectiveness, using data and feedback to adjust and improve strategies.
-

Coordination Priorities by Service Area

1. Education and Truancy Programs

- **Alternative Schools:**
 - **Goal:** Establish an alternative school to support at-risk youth by 2025-2026.
 - **Impact:** Address dropout rates and provide a supportive learning environment.
 - **School Truancy Programs:**
 - **Goal:** Reduce absenteeism by 20% within two years.
 - **Impact:** Improve academic engagement and performance.
-

2. Family Support Services

- **Family Preservation and Counseling:**
 - **Goal:** Increase families served by 30% over the next two years.
 - **Impact:** Strengthen family stability and reduce juvenile justice involvement.
 - **Parents Anonymous Support Groups:**
 - **Goal:** Launch three support groups by mid-2025.
 - **Impact:** Prevent family breakdown and reduce child neglect through peer support.
-

3. Mental Health and Substance Abuse

- **Mental Health Services:**
 - **Goal:** Expand access to counseling, crisis intervention, and screenings.
 - **Impact:** Address untreated mental health issues contributing to delinquent behavior.
- **Drug and Alcohol Counseling:**

- **Goal:** Develop a specialized youth substance abuse treatment program by 2025.
 - **Impact:** Reduce relapse rates and provide comprehensive support for recovery.
-

4. Volunteer and Community Programs

- **Volunteer Programs:**
 - **Goal:** Recruit 100 new volunteers by July 2025 through community campaigns.
 - **Impact:** Enhance youth programs through increased community involvement.
 - **Community Outreach Initiatives:**
 - **Goal:** Increase awareness of youth programs through workshops, marketing, and resource fairs.
 - **Impact:** Ensure families and youth are connected to critical services.
-

5. Diversion Programs

- **Program Expansion:**
 - **Goal:** Divert 25% more youth from formal justice system involvement by 2025.
 - **Impact:** Reduce recidivism and promote restorative alternatives to detention.
-

6. Addressing Racial and Ethnic Disparities

- **Cultural Competency and Bias Training:**
 - **Goal:** Implement training for law enforcement and service providers to reduce systemic disparities.
 - **Impact:** Decrease minority youth contact with the justice system by 15% by 2026.
 - **Equitable Access Programs:**
 - **Goal:** Develop programs tailored to meet the unique needs of minority youth.
 - **Impact:** Promote fairness and improved outcomes for underserved populations.
-

Clear Implementation Strategies

1. **Evidence-Based Practices:**
 - Use proven programs to ensure positive outcomes for youth and families.
2. **Impact Measurement:**
 - Regularly evaluate programs using attendance, participation, and outcome data.
3. **Community Feedback:**
 - Collect input from stakeholders, families, and youth to refine and improve services.

Summary of Priority Areas

1. **Education and Truancy**

York County faces high dropout rates and significant issues with absenteeism. Solutions include establishing alternative schools for at-risk youth and expanding truancy prevention programs to improve school attendance and academic performance.
2. **Family Support Services**

There is a lack of comprehensive family preservation services. Expanding family counseling, parenting education, and launching Parents Anonymous support groups will strengthen family stability and reduce the risk of delinquency.
3. **Mental Health Services**

Insufficient access to mental health services is a major concern. Expanding crisis intervention, mental health counseling, and regular screenings will address untreated mental health issues that contribute to delinquent behavior.
4. **Substance Abuse Programs**

High rates of youth substance abuse demand specialized programs. Developing comprehensive treatment services, including in-patient options and counseling, will help reduce substance misuse and relapse rates among juveniles.
5. **Community Involvement**

Increasing community volunteer participation is critical to supporting youth programs. York County will launch campaigns to recruit new volunteers and promote community outreach to ensure families are aware of and connected to services.
6. **Racial and Ethnic Disparities**

Minority youth are disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system. Implementing cultural competency training for law enforcement and creating equitable access programs will promote fairness and reduce systemic disparities.

Conclusion

By implementing these strategies and focusing on clear priorities, York County will enhance coordination among services, expand programs, and address identified gaps. This approach ensures youth and families receive the support they need, reducing juvenile delinquency and fostering a stronger, healthier community.

Section V: Priorities and Strategies

Priority 1: Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment

Description: Substance abuse among youth in York and Polk Counties is a significant issue, contributing to juvenile delinquency. Addressing this through prevention and treatment programs will reduce offenses and improve overall safety.

Key Strategies

1. **School-Based Substance Abuse Education**
 - **Action:** Partner with schools to integrate prevention curricula, hold workshops, and distribute educational materials.
 - **Timeline:** Within 12 months.
 - **Impact:** Increased awareness, reduced substance abuse incidents.
 2. **Juvenile Substance Abuse Treatment Program**
 - **Action:** Establish a treatment program with counseling, peer support, and follow-up care.
 - **Timeline:** Within 18 months.
 - **Impact:** Decreased substance use and relapse rates.
 3. **Community Outreach and Family Support**
 - **Action:** Launch outreach campaigns, support groups for families, and provide treatment referrals.
 - **Timeline:** Within 6 months.
 - **Impact:** Increased awareness, reduced stigma, and more community engagement.
-

Priority 2: Mental Health Services Expansion

Description: Insufficient mental health services leave many youth without support, increasing the likelihood of delinquency. Expanding access will promote early intervention and better outcomes.

Key Strategies

1. **Mental Health Screening in Schools**
 - **Action:** Partner with schools to conduct screenings and train staff to identify and refer students.
 - **Timeline:** Within 12 months.
 - **Impact:** Early identification and intervention for mental health issues.
2. **School-Based Counseling Services**
 - **Action:** Hire additional school counselors and implement comprehensive mental health programs.

- **Timeline:** Within 18 months.
 - **Impact:** Increased access to counseling and improved student well-being.
3. **Crisis Intervention Teams**
- **Action:** Develop crisis teams to respond to emergencies and provide follow-up care.
 - **Timeline:** Within 12 months.
 - **Impact:** Rapid crisis response, reduced incidents of self-harm and violence.

Priority 3: Family Support Services

Description: Strengthening families through counseling, education, and support services will reduce risk factors for juvenile delinquency.

Key Strategies

1. **Expand Family Preservation Programs**
 - **Action:** Increase program capacity through funding and partnerships with community organizations.
 - **Timeline:** Within 12 months.
 - **Impact:** Strengthened family stability, reduced delinquency risk.
2. **In-Home Counseling**
 - **Action:** Implement in-home counseling programs with trained professionals to support families.
 - **Timeline:** Within 18 months.
 - **Impact:** Improved family dynamics and reduced household stressors.
3. **Parenting Education Workshops**
 - **Action:** Launch workshops to equip parents with tools for effective communication, discipline, and support.
 - **Timeline:** Within 12 months.
 - **Impact:** Stronger parent-child relationships and improved family outcomes.

Priority 4: Educational Support and Truancy Prevention

Description: High absenteeism and academic failure increase delinquency risk. Educational support programs will keep youth engaged and improve school outcomes. Reduction of 4% in truancy rates in both York and Polk county is our goal by the time this plan is due for renewal.

Key Strategies

1. **Truancy Prevention Programs**
 - **Action:** Develop early warning systems, targeted interventions, and family engagement strategies.

- **Timeline:** Within 12 months.
 - **Impact:** Reduced absenteeism and improved school engagement.
 - 2. **Tutoring and Academic Support**
 - **Action:** Establish after-school tutoring programs and partner with organizations to provide resources.
 - **Timeline:** Within 6 months.
 - **Impact:** Improved academic performance and reduced dropout rates.
 - 3. **Alternative Education Programs**
 - **Action:** Implement flexible, personalized learning options and vocational training programs.
 - **Timeline:** Within 18 months.
 - **Impact:** Higher graduation rates, improved academic success, and increased job readiness.
-

Priority 5: Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities

Description: Minority youth are disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system. Addressing this requires targeted strategies to promote equity.

Key Strategies

1. **Cultural Competency Training**
 - **Action:** Train law enforcement, juvenile justice staff, and service providers to reduce systemic biases.
 - **Timeline:** Within 12 months.
 - **Impact:** Increased understanding of cultural issues and reduced disparities in justice system outcomes.
 2. **Community Outreach Programs**
 - **Action:** Develop outreach initiatives to build trust, provide resources, and engage minority families.
 - **Timeline:** Within 6 months.
 - **Impact:** Improved service accessibility and increased community trust.
 3. **Data Collection and Monitoring**
 - **Action:** Enhance systems to track and analyze racial and ethnic disparities, using data to inform policy changes.
 - **Timeline:** Within 12 months.
 - **Impact:** Improved equity and accountability in the juvenile justice system.
-

Anticipated Outcomes

By implementing these strategies, York and Polk Counties will:

- Reduce juvenile delinquency through early intervention and support.

- Improve access to critical services such as mental health care, substance abuse treatment, and family support.
- Promote equity by addressing systemic biases and ensuring all youth have access to the resources they need to succeed.

This coordinated approach will create a safer, healthier, and more equitable community for youth and families.

Appendix

- A. Comprehensive Youth Services Plan Checklist
- B. Memorandum of Understanding
- C. Youth Crime Systems Analysis
- D. Other Appendix as identified by the community team

Comprehensive Youth Services Plan Checklist

Each county shall develop a Comprehensive Youth Services Plan (Community Plan). Plans may be developed by individual counties, multiple counties, federally or state-recognized Indian tribes, or by any combination of the three. Plans must be submitted to the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice and must be updated no less than every five years.

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stats. §43-3504, §43-3505, and §43-2404.01, and Title 75, Chapter 1, 005.02, these are the elements that must be included in a Community Plan.

Community Team Members (§43-3505):

Juvenile justice system stakeholder representation, including but not limited to:

Stakeholder Representation:	Name(s):
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Courts	Gary Olson, County Attorney
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement	Captain Josh Gillespie, Sheriff's Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community service providers	Avery Blum, YC3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schools	Beth Ericson, YPS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detention or shelter care	Hope Gospel Rescue Mission
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County elected and administrative officials	LeRoy Ott & Andrew Bowman, County Commissioners
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Probation officials	Morgan Campbell, District 5 Probation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health and human services representatives	Brandee Nice, DHHS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State officials or agency representatives	Allison O'Neil, York County Court
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Similar committee or group of individuals	York County Community Coalition
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other	Kayla Lathrop, Region V/Apace
Page number(s) in the plan: 5-7	

Plan Components

1. Data (43-2404.01)	
Notes:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data is relevant to juvenile and family issues
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Includes an examination of racial and ethnic disparities
Page number(s) in the plan: 8-17	
2. Identification of the County Risk Factors (43-3504)	
Notes:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Risk factors for delinquency that exist in the county or counties
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services needed to address risk factors
Page number(s) in the plan: 13-15	
3. Identification of juvenile services available within the county or counties, including, but not limited to (§43-3504):	
Notes:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Programs for assessment and evaluation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The prevention of delinquent behavior
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Diversion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Detention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shelter care
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Intensive juvenile probation services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Restitution
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family support services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community centers for the care and treatment of juveniles in need of services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other:
Page number(s) in the plan: 19,20	
4. Identification of Services in close proximity of the county or counties that may be utilized if community-based programs are not available within the county or counties (§43-3504):	
Notes:	
Page number(s) in the plan: 20	

5. Identification of juvenile detention or alternatives to detention the county primarily uses (§43-3504):	
Notes:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Juvenile Detention programs, services, facilities, and providers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Alternative to detention programs, services, facilities, providers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Costs associated with use of such programs, services, facilities, and providers
Page number(s) in the plan:21	
6. Identify needed community-based programs not available within, or in close proximity to, the county or counties.	
Notes:	
Page number(s) in the plan:	

Coordination Plan and Priorities

The coordination plan must include an enhancement, development, and expansion plan of community services within the county, counties, or region to help prevent delinquency by providing intervention services when behavior that leads to delinquency is first exhibited.

1. Coordination Plan: Enhancement, development, and expansion plan of community services, including, but not limited to (§43-3504):	
Notes:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Alternative schools
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School truancy programs
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Volunteer programs
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family preservation and counseling
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Drug and alcohol counseling
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Diversion programs
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Parents Anonymous
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delinquency prevention efforts and system improvement efforts designed to reduce the disproportionate number of youth members of minority groups who come into contact with the youth justice system.
Page number(s) in the plan:24-26	
2. Priorities: Identify community priorities that includes defining a problem, or set of problems, that affects juveniles at risk or those already involved in the criminal justice system (Title 75, Chapter 1, 005.02);	
Notes:	
Page number(s) in the plan:28-30	
3. Strategies: Identify Implementation Strategies (§43-2404.01)	
Notes:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Identify policies and practices that are research-based or standardized and reliable and are implemented with fidelity and which have been researched and demonstrate positive outcomes.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Identify clear implementation strategies that are S.M.A.R.T.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Identify how the impact of the program or service will be measured.
Page number(s) in the plan:28-30	

The plan shall be submitted to the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. Following or in conjunction with the development of a comprehensive youth services plan, each county may develop regional service plans and establish regional juvenile services boards when appropriate. The regional service plan shall be submitted to the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice.

Memorandum of Understanding


For purposes of obtaining Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program Funds for July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025, the following counties agree to the conditions enumerated in this Memorandum of Understanding, (hereinafter referred to as "agreement"): York County and Polk County (hereinafter referred to as "the counties").

1. That the Interlocal Cooperation Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. §§13-801 et seq. (Reissue 2012), permits units of local governments in the State of Nebraska to cooperate with other localities on a basis of mutual advantage and thereby provide services in a manner that will best serve local communities.
2. That Neb. Rev. Stat. §13-801 provides that any one or more public agencies may contract with any one or more public agencies to perform any governmental service, activity, or other undertaking which each public agency entering into the contract is authorized by law to perform.
3. That there is a reasonable basis for the counties to enter into this agreement to apply for Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program Funds as a group.
4. That the pooling of resources by these counties will provide for the continuation of current juvenile services for the counties involved.
5. That the counties will participate with the Community Team to coordinate the use of these funds as outlined in that team's planning process.
6. That York County will be the lead county for purposes of applying for the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program Funds on behalf of the two-county group. If awarded, York County will be responsible in the distribution of grant funds, quarterly program reporting, and financial reporting.
7. That York County, in consultation with the other counties, will ultimately employ individual(s) to implement the planned services throughout the multi-county area per the Comprehensive Juvenile Services Community Plan developed by the Community Team.
8. That each of the counties signing this agreement has already implemented or has agreed to implement and maintain a Drug-Free Workplace Policy.
9. That the counties agree that the match funds will be provided when required by the grant.
10. In the event that either county is not awarded grant funding pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding, the County not receiving the funds shall then be responsible for paying their share of allocated funds under said Grant program to York County for the continuation of the programs funded by the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program.
 - a. For Fiscal Year 2024-2025, if Polk County is required to contribute funds under this paragraph, they shall contribute \$28,818 by the conclusion of the same fiscal year after denial of funding through said program.

- b. For Fiscal Year 2024-2025, if York County is required to contribute funds under this paragraph, they shall contribute \$35,261 by the conclusion of the same fiscal year after denial of funding through said program.
 - c. Such amounts shall increase or decrease for subsequent fiscal years based on such allocated funds under the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program for said fiscal year.
11. This contract will begin July 1, 2024 and remain in effect through June 30, 2025, unless the parties hereto agree in writing to modify, extend, or terminate this agreement prior to that time. After June 30, 2025, this agreement will automatically renew for successive one-year terms unless either party notifies the other party in writing of their intent to terminate the agreement. In such event of written notice to terminate by either county given between the dates of July 1 and December 31, such agreement will terminate on the date of June 30 of the following calendar year. In such event of written notice to terminate by either county given between the dates of January 1 and June 30, such agreement shall terminate on the date of June 30 of the following calendar year.
12. That signing of this agreement does not bind the counties to contribute any further funds absent further agreement between the counties.

Date Signed: 12-19-2023

Chairperson Randy Obermter



York County Board of Commissioners

Date Signed: 12/26/23

Chairperson



Polk County Board of Commissioners

Census Data ¹	N	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian/Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander	Black	Hispanic	Multiple Races/Other	Unspecified/Missing	White
2020 Census Number of Youth by Race/Ethnicity	3,713	35	23	73	332	104	0	3,146
Percent of Youth by Race/Ethnicity	-	0.9%	0.6%	2.0%	8.9%	2.9%	0%	84.7%

Census Data	N		Male	Female
2020 Census Number of Youth by Gender		3,713	1,943	1,770
Percent of Youth by Gender		-	52.3%	47.7%

Measurement	
Poverty/Socioeconomic Status²	
Percent of Children < 18 Years Old in Poverty	10.8%
Percent of Children 5-17 Years Old Below Poverty Line	8.7%
Percent of Children 5-17 Years Old Above Poverty Line	91.3%
Percent Age 25+ with a Bachelor's Degree	25.3%
County Rank	31 (tied)
Percent Age 25+ with a High School Degree	28.8%
County Rank	65

Absenteeism ³	N	American Indian/Alaskan Native	Asian/Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander	Black	Hispanic	Multiple Races/Other	Unspecified/Missing	White
Enrolled	2,533	9, 0.4%	17, 0.7%	34, 1.3%	278, 10.9%	73, 2.9%	0, 0%	2,122, 83.8%
Chronically Absent	225	2, 0.9%	0, 0%	6, 2.7%	82, 36.4%	8, 3.6%	0, 0%	127, 56.4%

¹ Census data (2022) came from the Center for Public Affairs Research Nebraska State Data Center, <https://www.unomaha.edu/college-of-public-affairs-and-community-service/center-for-public-affairs-research/programs/nebraska-state-data-center.php>.

² Socioeconomic and Educational Attainment data (2021) came from the United States Census Bureau's American Community Survey, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACST5Y2021.S1701?q=Poverty&g=040XX00US31>.

³ Absenteeism data (2022-2023) came from the Nebraska Department of Education 2022/23 Student Absence Counts by District, <https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/data-reports/>

Racial and Ethnic Distribution of System Points

System Point	N	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian/ Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander	Black	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Multiple Races/ Other	Unspecified/ Missing	White
2020 Census Number of Youth by Race/Ethnicity	3,713	35	23	73	332	-	104	0	3,146
Percent of Youth by Race/Ethnicity	-	1.0%	0.6%	2.0%	8.9%	-	2.9%	0%	84.7%
Law Enforcement Contact/ Cited	156	0, 0%	1, 0.6%	5, 3.2%	13, 8.3%	-	0, 0%	1, 0.6%	136, 87.3%
Youth Referred to Diversion (CY 2022)	11	0, 0%	0, 0%	0, 0%	1, 9.1%	-	1, 9.1%	0, 0%	9, 81.8%
Filed in Juvenile Court	25	0, 0%	0, 0%	1, 4.0%	2, 8.0%	-	0, 0%	12, 48.0%	11, 44.0%
Filed in Adult Court	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Adult Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Youth Placed on Probation ⁴	22	0, 0%	0, 0%	1, 4.5%	-	-	1, 4.5%	0, 0%	20, 91.0%
Hispanic/non-Hispanic					4, 18.2%	18, 81.8%			
Satisfactory Release	16	0, 0%	0, 0%	1, 6.2%	-	-	3, 18.8%	0, 0%	12, 75.0%
Hispanic/non-Hispanic					3, 18.8%	13, 81.2%			
Motions to Revoke	3	0, 0%	0, 0%	0, 0%	-	-	0, 0%	0, 0%	3, 100%
Hispanic/non-Hispanic					1, 33.3%	2, 66.7%			
Probation Revoked	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	0
Hispanic/non-Hispanic					0	0			
Youth Booked into Detention	2	0, 0%	0, 0%	0, 0%	0, 0%	-	0, 0%	0, 0%	2, 100%

Sources: Court and probation data (2022) came from the Nebraska Judicial Branch, Juvenile Justice Annual Statistical Report, https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/108/PDF/Agencies/Supreme_Court/567_20230718-094145.pdf; Law enforcement citations, diversion, and detention booking data (2022) came from the Nebraska Crime Commission Juvenile Court Reports, <https://ncc.nebraska.gov/data-and-reports>.⁵

⁴ Race and ethnicity (Hispanic or non-Hispanic) for probation placement, satisfactory release, and revocations were reported separately. Comparisons to the census percentages cannot be made.

⁵ All data received from the crime commission may include youth processed through the system more than once; may not be individual youth.

Risk and Protective Factors

County: York (2018)

Number of Youth with Surveys: 434

Risk Factors

Schools		Prevalence Rates		
		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(1) Grades were A's and B's	Average Difference: ⁶ +9.2%	8th	93.1%	81.5%
		10th	91.2%	78.4%
		12th	87.1%	83.8%

Peer-Individual		Prevalence Rates		
		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(3) % Current use				
(a) Smoke cigarettes	Average Difference: +4.4%	8th	2.1%	1.2%
		10th	3.4%	1.8%
		12th	14.5%	3.8%
(b) Drink alcohol	Average Difference: -2.9%	8th	5.6%	9.2%
		10th	19.2%	18.2%
		12th	25.7%	31.9%
(c) Smoke marijuana	Average Difference: -2.4%	8th	1.4%	2.2%
		10th	4.1%	7.6%
		12th	9.6%	12.5%
(4) % Perceive as Wrong				
(a) Smoking cigarettes	Average Difference: +0.3%	8th	99.3%	94.4%
		10th	90.5%	88.9%
		12th	74.8%	80.5%
(b) Using smokeless tobacco	Average Difference: +0.6%	8th	97.1%	94.2%
		10th	91.9%	87.2%
		12th	71.5%	77.3%

⁶ We examined the statewide average and compared it to the county average. The average difference value reflects whether the county is higher (+) or lower (-) than the state average.

Peer-Individual		Prevalence Rates		
(4) % Perceive as Wrong		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(c) Drinking alcohol at least once or twice a month	Average Difference: +9.4%	8th	94.3%	85.8%
		10th	79.1%	69.3%
		12th	63.3%	53.5%
(d) Smoking marijuana	Average Difference: +6.6%	8th	97.2%	93.1%
		10th	83.7%	77.6%
		12th	73.9%	64.3%
(e) Misusing prescription drugs	Average Difference: +3.2%	8th	96.5%	94.4%
		10th	97.3%	92.1%
		12th	94.2%	91.9%
(f) Using other illegal drugs	Average Difference: +1.3%	8th	100%	98.6%
		10th	98.0%	96.4%
		12th	96.4%	95.4%
(5-6) % Perceive as Great Risk		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(a) Smoking 1 or more packs of cigarettes daily	Average Difference: +8.1%	8th	75.2%	58.2%
		10th	66.9%	59.9%
		12th	59.7%	59.4%
(b) Taking 1 or 2 drinks of alcohol nearly every day (Taken from Peer Views)	Average Difference: -34.7%	8th	48.6%	85.4%
		10th	33.6%	68.6%
		12th	23.9%	56.2%
(c) Having 5+ drinks of alcohol 1 or 2 times a week	Average Difference: +19.1%	8th	70.7%	37.3%
		10th	46.9%	33.7%
		12th	40.3%	29.6%
(d) Smoking marijuana 1 or 2 times a week	Average Difference: +10.7%	8th	63.8%	46.8%
		10th	42.2%	33.4%
		12th	29.5%	23.1%
(e) Misusing prescription drugs	Average Difference: +9.1%	8th	73.6%	56.3%
		10th	67.6%	60.1%
		12th	64.0%	61.6%

Peer-Individual		Prevalence Rates		
		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(7) % Involved in a Gang	Average Difference: -0.8%	8th	1.4%	2.6%
		10th	2.7%	3.5%
		12th	2.9%	3.4%

Bullying		Prevalence Rates		
(8) % Bullied within Past 12 Months		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(a) Physically	Average Difference: +1.6%	8th	29.3%	27.5%
		10th	17.7%	15.3%
		12th	10.8%	10.3%
(b) Verbally	Average Difference: +5.2%	8th	50.7%	51.3%
		10th	53.1%	42.3%
		12th	42.8%	37.4%
(c) Socially	Average Difference: +7.9%	8th	43.9%	43.4%
		10th	55.5%	39.1%
		12th	44.6%	37.8%
(d) Electronically	Average Difference: -3.3%	8th	12.2%	22.5%
		10th	21.1%	21.4%
		12th	19.6%	18.9%

Family		Prevalence Rates		
		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(9) % Parents would think wrong				
(a) Smoking cigarettes	Average Difference: -0.6%	8th	100%	98.1%
		10th	100%	97.1%
		12th	89.5%	96.2%
(b) Using smokeless tobacco	Average Difference: -0.8%	8th	98.6%	98.0%
		10th	98.6%	96.7%
		12th	90.1%	95.1%

Family		Prevalence Rates		
		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(9) % Parents would think wrong				
(c) Having 1 or 2 drinks of alcohol nearly every day	Average Difference: +2.3%	8th	97.2%	94.1%
		10th	93.1%	90.2%
		12th	85.0%	84.1%
(d) Smoking marijuana	Average Difference: +0.8%	8th	97.9%	96.9%
		10th	93.1%	91.9%
		12th	88.5%	88.3%
(e) Misusing prescription drugs	Average Difference: +0.4%	8th	99.3%	97.8%
		10th	98.6%	97.6%
		12th	96.2%	97.5%
(10) % Agree or Strongly Agree		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(a) Clear substance use rules	Average Difference: N/A	8th	-	66.8%
		10th	-	68.7%
		12th	-	71.3%
(11) % Sort of Easy or Easy to Obtain		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(a) Beer, wine, hard liquor	Average Difference: -1.7%	8th	20.9%	31.6%
		10th	48.6%	47.8%
		12th	62.8%	58.1%
(b) Marijuana	Average Difference: +6.8%	8th	3.6%	9.5%
		10th	36.8%	25.9%
		12th	52.3%	37.0%
(c) Prescription drugs for non-medical use	Average Difference: +6.3%	8th	12.2%	16.9%
		10th	30.1%	19.7%
		12th	33.8%	20.7%

Protective Factors

School		Prevalence Rates		
		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(12) % Agree or Strongly Agree	(a) Feel safe	8th	95.1%	88.6%
		10th	92.6%	86.7%
		12th	93.5%	89.4%
(b) Adult in school who listens	Average Difference: +5.5%	8th	95.1%	85.8%
		10th	87.2%	83.7%
		12th	90.6%	88.7%

Family		Prevalence Rates		
		Grade	York 2018	Nebraska 2021
(13) % Agree or Strongly Agree	(a) Adult at home who listens	8th	90.1%	85.2%
		10th	79.9%	83.4%
		12th	84.2%	83.2%
(b) Help for personal problems	Average Difference: -0.2%	8th	93.0%	85.2%
		10th	77.8%	83.4%
		12th	80.3%	83.2%

Source: Risk and protective factor data came from the Bureau of Sociological Research, <https://bosr.unl.edu/projects/sharp/nrpfss/county-level-data/>, Nebraska Risk and Protective Factor Student Survey Results.

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2024 Four Corners Community Youth Mental Health Assessment

-Executive Summary-

Background: Under the direction of Four Corners Health Department (FCHD), the 2024 Community Youth Mental Health Assessment (YMHA) provides an updated overview of mental health issues among youth and young adults in the FCHD service area. This assessment follows the 2022 baseline study focused on youth suicide prevention, offering data and insights for FCHD, community partners, and stakeholders to make informed decisions. This assessment aims to identify goals, set priorities, and recognize successes in improving youth mental health. As part of FCHD's Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, the assessment targets youth aged 10-19, gathering feedback from a survey conducted in Polk, Butler, York, and Seward counties. The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (NUPPC) compiled the data in collaboration with FCHD, incorporating information from various health sources to educate and mobilize community resources for enhancing youth mental health.

Key Findings from 105 survey participants:

- 49.0% of survey respondents had seen Four Corner's 'Nebraska Needs You' suicide prevention and mental health campaign, most commonly on social media (54.2%), billboards (35.4%), or websites (25.0%).
- 89.8% agreed that youth suicide is a community concern, up from 67.9% in 2022¹.
- 39.4% of respondents identified as parents or guardians of children aged 10-19. Among them, 64.8% were concerned about their child's and/or teenager's mental health, an improvement from 2022, where 82.4% express concern for their child and/or teenager.¹
- 68.1% of those who accessed or knew someone accessing mental health services in the past year found it difficult, up from 61.8% in 2022.¹
- 28.7% believe their community knows how to access mental health resources, slightly up from 22.6% in 2022.¹
- 33.0% believe community members know where to go or who to call in a mental health crisis, up from 21.2% in 2022.¹
- 41.4% believe resources and services are available for youth in a mental health crisis, slightly up from 36.0% in 2022.¹
- 39.4% believe there is a wide range of mental health resources for youth, up from 27.8% in 2022.¹
- 13.9% believe mental health services and resources are affordable, down from 20.5% in 2022.¹

¹ 2022 Four Corners Youth Mental Health Assessment - <https://fourcorners.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022-Four-Corners-Youth-Mental-Health-Assessment-FINAL.pdf>

Brief Summary of Community Perceptions and Concerns About Youth Mental Health

This survey highlighted the need to continue ongoing efforts to address both cultural and systemic challenges in supporting youth mental health in the Four Corners area. Survey respondents shared their thoughts on the availability, affordability, and accessibility of mental health resources in their community, especially for youth in crisis. Many were very worried about youth suicide but doubted the community had enough resources or knew how to access them. For example, while 52.0% strongly agreed that youth suicide is a concern, many disagreed that people in the community know how to find mental health services. Many also felt there are not enough resources for youth in crisis or that people do not know where to get help in an emergency.

When asked if they were parents or guardians of children under 19, 39.4% of respondents said they were. These parents were asked about their concerns for their child's mental health, their child's ability to manage stress, and their overall optimism. Among the 37 parents who answered, 24.3% were 'Very Concerned' and 40.5% were 'Somewhat Concerned' about their child's mental health. This is slightly better than in 2022 when 35.1% were 'Very Concerned' and 47.3% were 'Somewhat Concerned'. Most parents felt confident about their child's ability to manage stress and their general outlook on life. Additionally, parents were asked how often they think about their child's mental health. Most reported thinking about it 'Often' (62.2%) or 'Sometimes' (27.0%). This is similar to the 2022 survey, where 71.6% thought about it often and 25.7% sometimes.

When asked if they or someone they knew had used community mental health resources in the past year, 50.0% said they did, close to the 46.3% in 2022. When asked how easy it was to access mental health resources for youth, 18.9% said it was 'Extremely difficult' and 33.7% said it was 'Somewhat difficult'. Only 11.6% found it 'Somewhat easy' and 6.3% found it 'Extremely easy', while 21.1% said it was 'Neither easy nor difficult'. This is similar to 2022, when 15.7% found access 'Extremely Difficult' and 37.4% found it 'Somewhat Difficult'. Among those who did access mental health resources, 36.2% found it 'Extremely difficult' and 31.9% found it 'Somewhat difficult'. Fewer found it 'Somewhat easy' (8.5%) or 'Extremely easy' (4.3%), and 17.0% said it was 'Neither easy nor difficult'.

Respondents also shared ideas on improving mental health resources for youth through open ended survey questions. They talked about raising awareness, changing how people think about mental health, and adding more mental health professionals in schools. They emphasized the need for more counseling services in schools and making mental health professionals easier to access. To better support youth with mental health challenges, respondents suggested educating people, improving local mental health services, and making it easier for youth to get help without needing parental consent. They also called for more affordable services, a variety of mental health options, and shorter wait times for appointments.

Lastly, respondents pointed out major barriers for youth accessing mental health care. They mentioned stigma and limited access as big problems. Youth often avoid seeking help due to fear of being judged and high costs. Many noted the lack of mental health professionals and the high costs as key issues.