



# ST. PAUL YOUTH SERVICES

Rewriting the Rules of Youth Engagement  
COPP Presentation to Saint Paul City Council — February 14, 2018



1. About St. Paul Youth Services
2. Community Organization Partnership Program (COPP)  
Funded Pre-Charge Diversion  
at St. Paul Youth Services:
  - What Is Diversion?
  - How SPYS' Pre-Charge Diversion Meets COPP Goals
  - Why Diversion?
  - How It Works
  - Our Results
  - Funding – SPYS Leverages Additional Dollars that Benefit Saint Paul
  - What Makes Us Unique
3. Comments & Questions

# 1. About St. Paul Youth Services



# Our Mission & History

**St. Paul Youth Services**

**We improve the community's collective ability to engage and support all youth through proven and pioneering practices.**

**St. Paul Youth Services (SPYS) was jointly founded by the City of Saint Paul and the Saint Paul Police Department in the 1970s in response to increased interaction between youth and law enforcement. SPYS continues to partner closely with public safety, juvenile justice, and law enforcement agencies while adding programs and services for early behavior intervention.**

# Our Values

St. Paul Youth Services

These values guide all of our programs and actions.



# Our Approach: Smart, Fair & Loving

St. Paul Youth Services

Pushing limits is a healthy part of youth development. How we respond as adults can transform their entire lives for the better or the much, much worse.



## 2. Pre-Charge Diversion funded by the Community Organization Partnership Program (COPP)



# What Is Diversion?

St. Paul Youth Services

**Pre-Charge Diversion is a restorative justice alternative to the juvenile justice system.**

**SPYS is funded through COPP to deliver Pre-Charge Diversion to select first-time offenders and reduce “subsequent incidents of arrests and criminal involvement as indicated by less than 5% of recidivism.”**

**SPYS delivers an effective restorative justice alternative to a criminal record and juvenile detention for first-time offenses, such as shoplifting, theft, or property damage. We offer youth a second chance by holding them accountable for their actions while partnering with them and their families to gain skills to thrive.**

# How SPYS' Diversion Meets the City's COPP Goals

St. Paul Youth Services

SPYS' Pre-Charge Diversion Program meets the following goals of the City of Saint Paul's Community Organization Partnership Program:

## Community Restorative Justice Programs

**RJ-1. Promote programs which use restorative justice approaches as a value-based approach to criminal justice with a balanced focus on the offender, victim, and the community.**

## Services for Children, Youth, and Families

**CYF-1. Support organizations which have the capacity to advocate for and coordinate services to children, youth, and families in a non-duplicative way which work to make the City services more responsive to the needs of children, youth, and families and to collaborate with other public and nonprofit entities to support children youth and families in Saint Paul.** 9

# Why Diversion?

St. Paul Youth Services

Diversion disrupts the cradle-to-prison pipeline and increases racial equity.

It's best for our kids and best for our community.

It's a nationally-recognized juvenile detention alternative embraced by public safety and community groups.

**According to Ramsey County's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative or JDAI (of which SPYS is a member):**

*"The JDAI has been proven to keep communities safe, help youth succeed, and save tax dollars. Secure detention is very expensive with little opportunity for rehabilitation while the youth is waiting to appear for court. Community-based alternatives [e.g., Pre-Charge Diversion] are typically a third of the cost and as effective as secure detention. Providing different community options for low risk non-violent offending youth:*

- *Ensures space is available for high risk youth;*
- *Eliminates low risk youth experiencing detention culture which studies show encourages more delinquency; and*
- *Reduces violent crime.*

*JDAI sites show that youth violent crime arrests decline significantly over time as appropriate, more effective responses, to youth behavior are deployed."*

# SPYS Pre-Charge Diversion: How It Works

St. Paul Youth Services

## 1. ARREST, ELIGIBILITY & REFERRAL

Youth arrested.  
City or County determines if youth is eligible for Diversion.

Ramsey County Attorney's Office sends 1-2 referral letters to youth/ family.  
SPYS is cc'd on referral letters.



## 2. ENGAGEMENT & INTAKE

Youth/family responds to SPYS based on letter.  
If no response after 2 letters, SPYS uses Pursuit Engagement.

Youth-family intake session using SPYS' Risk Assessment Tool.  
SPYS develops a customized youth contract based on youth and family strengths & needs.



## 3. PARTICIPATION & CONTRACT COMPLETION

Youth complete contracts, typically lasting from 45 days to 6 months.

Contracts include: Restorative Practices; Therapeutic Services; Restitution; and/or Community Service.

Contract conditions include no truancy, good grades, remaining law abiding, respecting families, etc.

Youth and families have 1-on-1 engagement with a Diversion Counselor + group sessions as appropriate.

Youth complete our Teen Intervene Curriculum. Families complete our Everyday Parenting Curriculum.



## 4. FOLLOW UP

Evaluation 6 months after completion.

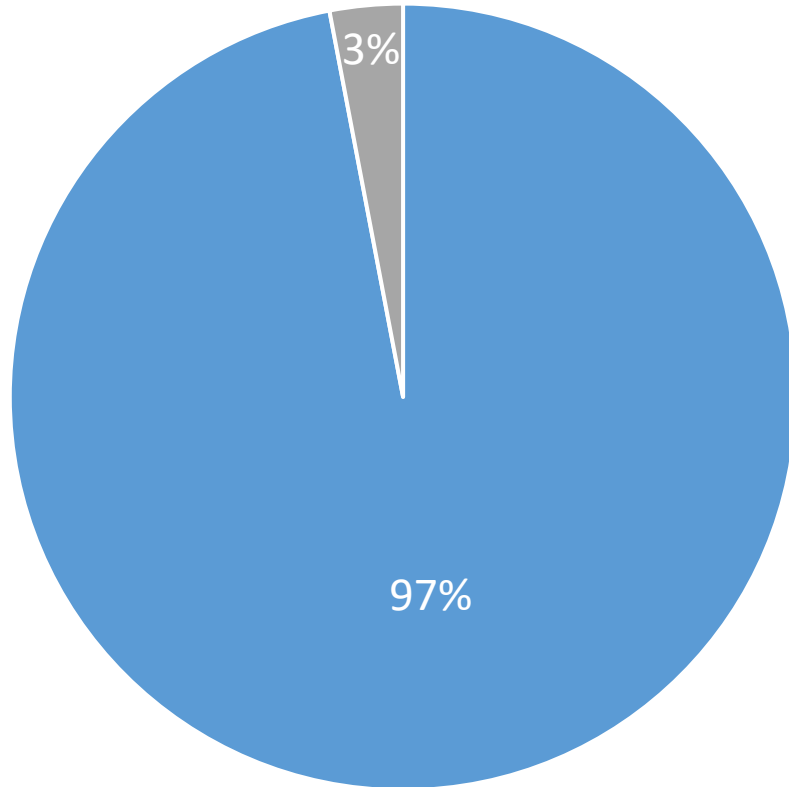
SPYS maintains relationships with approx. 1 in 4 youth via our Behavior Intervention Program at schools, our Children's Crisis Response program, and our YouthPower leadership institute.

# SPYS' Pre-Charge Diversion: Our Results

St. Paul Youth Services

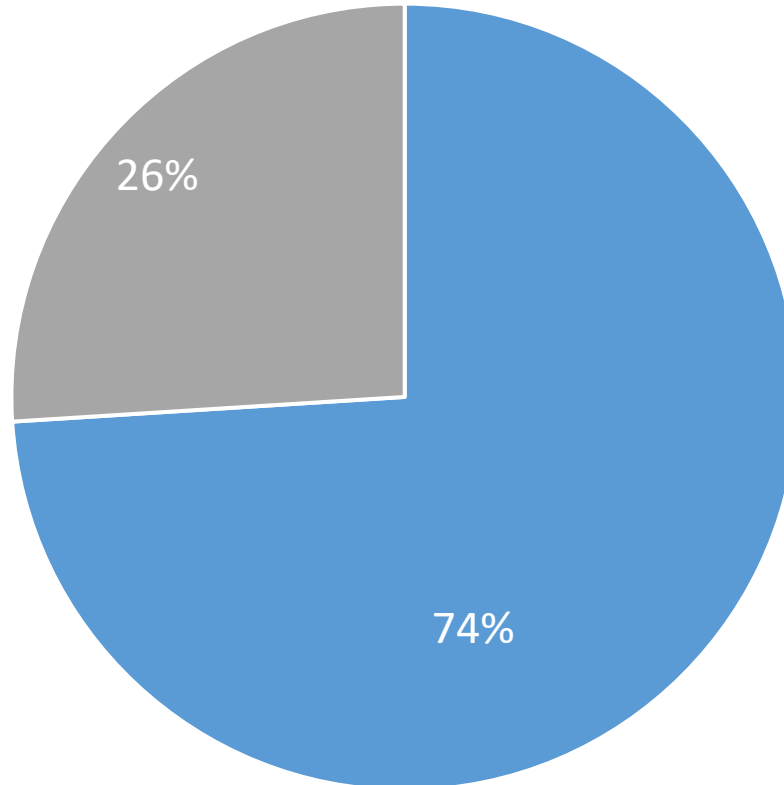
## 1. YOUTH PARTICIPATION

97% of Referred Youth Participate



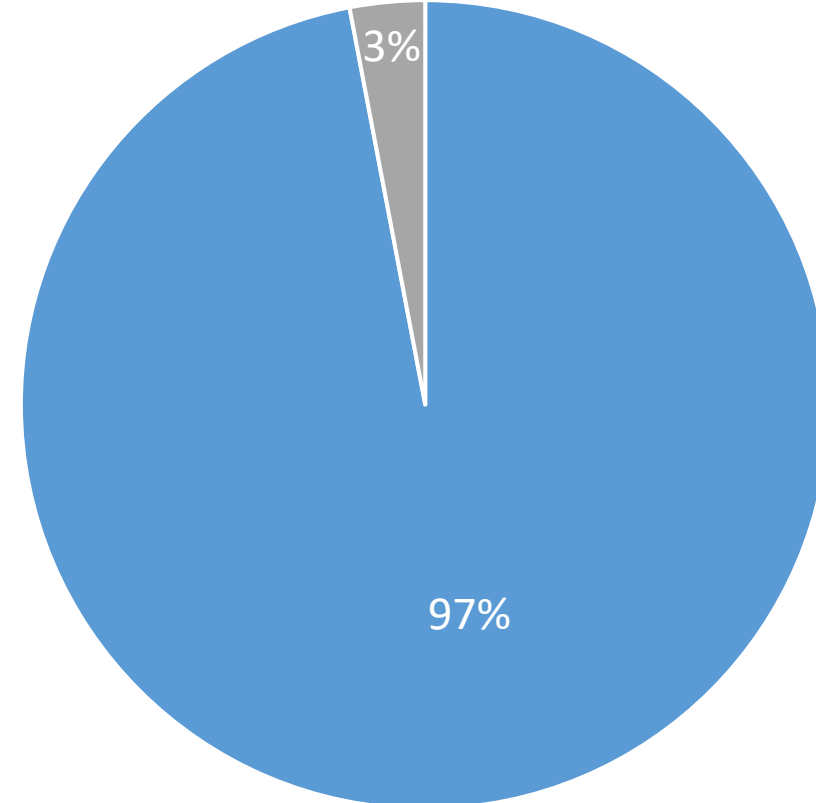
## 2. PROGRAM COMPLETION

74% Complete the Program



## 3. YOUTH ARE HEALTHY & FREE

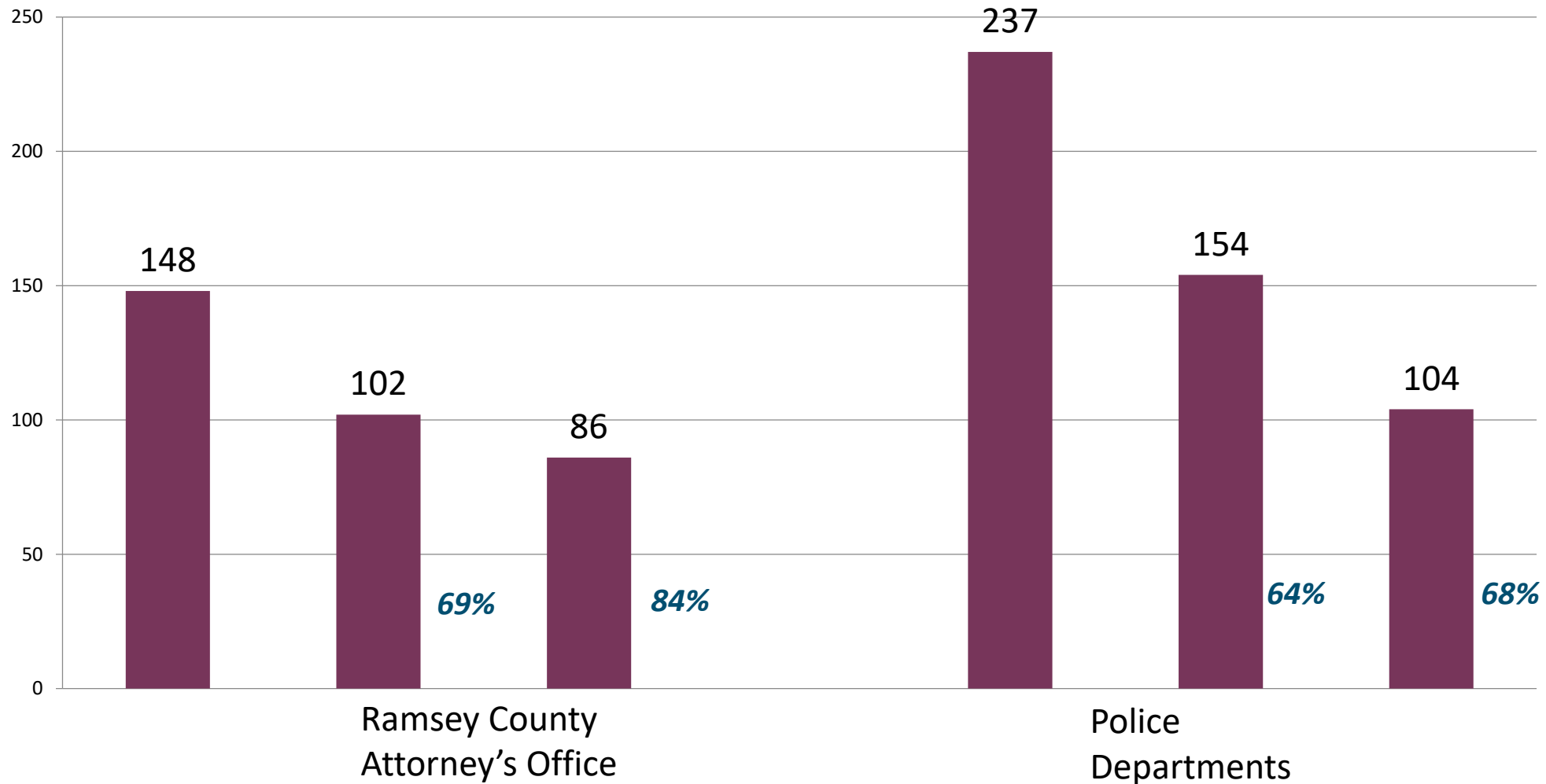
<3% Recidivism Rate





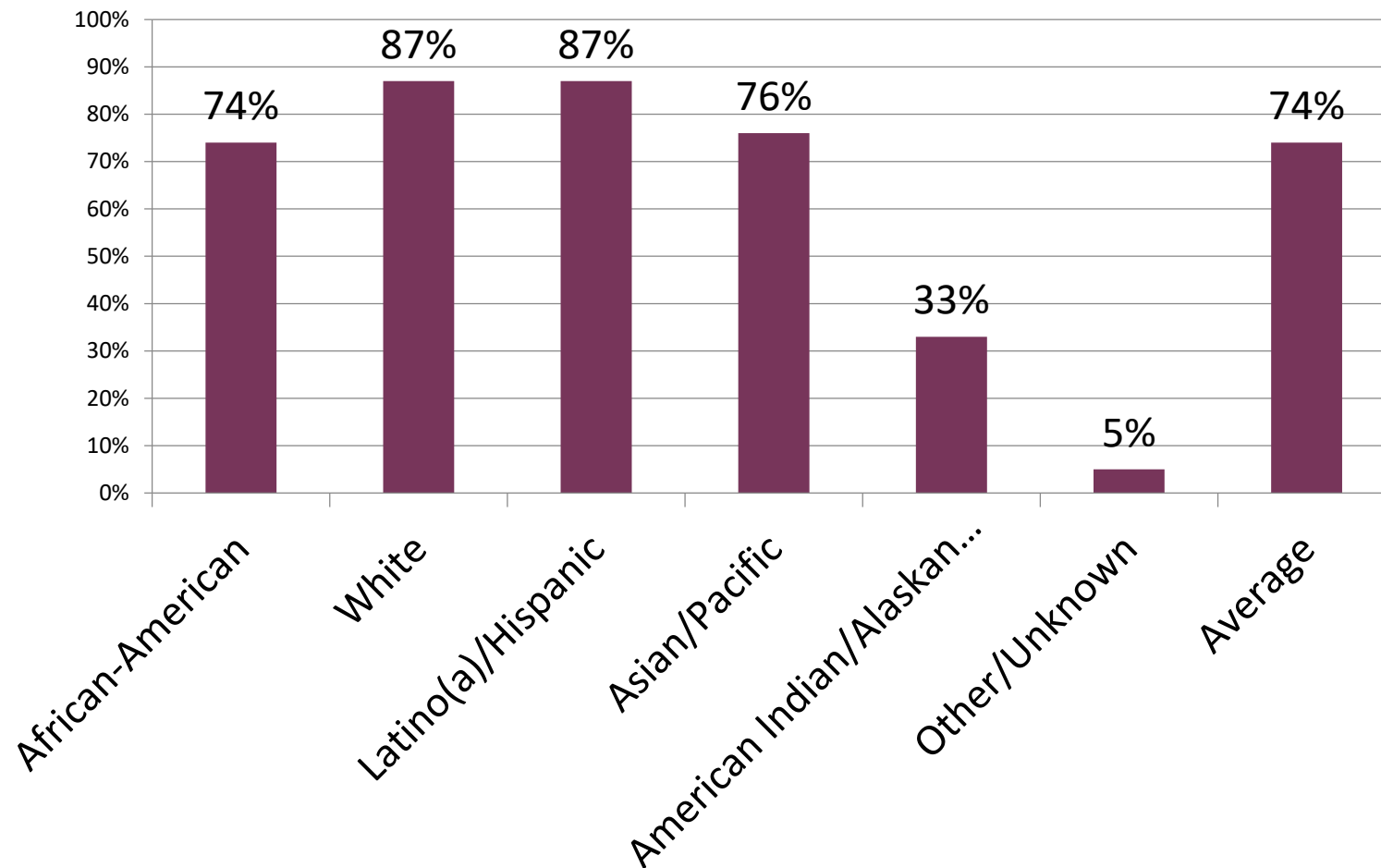
# Cases Referred | Opened | Completed by Referral Source

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# Completion of Open Cases by Race/Ethnicity

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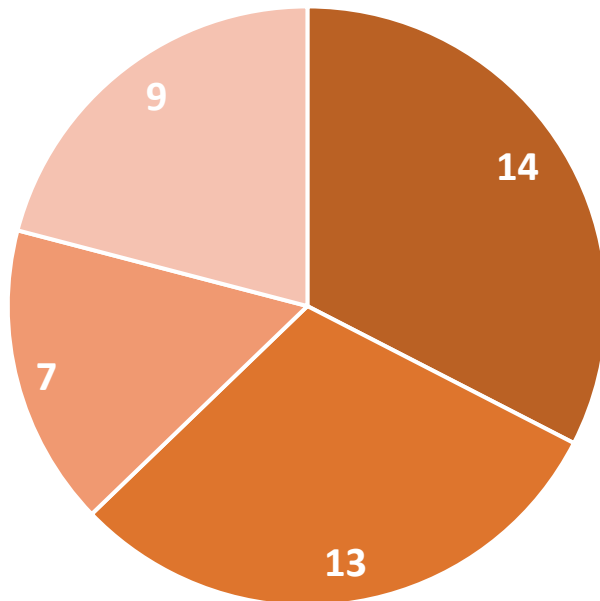
Sources of Funding for SPYS Pre-Charge Diversion	Community Organization Partnership Program (COPP)	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	Ramsey County Attorney General (RCAO)	Foundation Support
2018 Funding Amount	\$57,132	\$36,141	\$130,000	\$40,000+
Referral Sources	Saint Paul Police Department (SPPD) Ramsey County Attorney’s Office (RCAO)	SPPD, RCAO	RCAO	SPYS raises supplement funding from 2-4 foundations per year.
Eligible Offenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shoplifting</li> <li>theft</li> <li>auto theft</li> <li>burglary</li> <li>arson</li> <li>receiving or possessing stolen property or criminal damage to property</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>alcohol or drug possession/use</li> <li>curfew violation</li> <li>disorderly conduct</li> <li>simple assault</li> <li>weapons</li> </ul>		Funds are used to cover base program costs. When available they’re used for program enhancements to improve outcomes ( <i>e.g.</i> , additional staffing and training, research on best practices, evaluation of SPYS’ service delivery, diagnostic tools, curriculum, cultural responsiveness, translation, sharing of best practices, and integration and alignment among SPYS’ programs to maximize impact for community and youth).
Income Verification Requirements & Median Income	None – City General Fund	<p>Income Verification of 20-25% who complete income affidavit forms – Federal Funds.</p> <p>Clients are @ ≤80% of Median Income</p>		
Reporting	Quarterly	Quarterly		

# Spotlight on COPP Diversion Participants

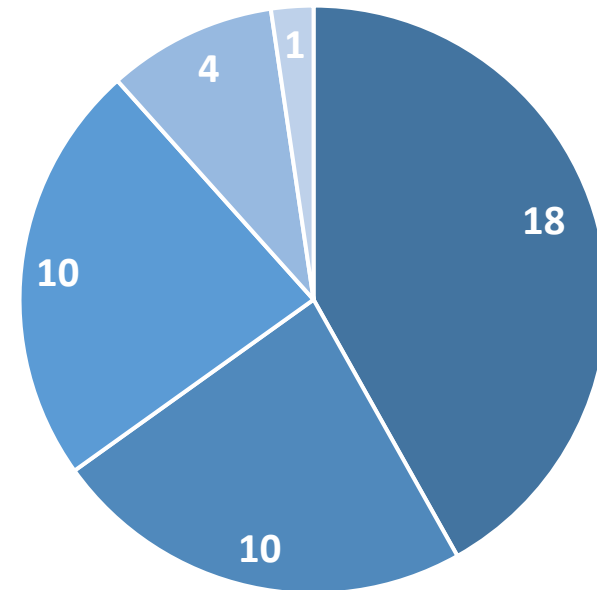
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Sample: Demographics of  
43 new cases opened in 2017 Q2

Income



Race/Ethnicity



■ 0-30% AMI ■ 31-50% AMI ■ 51-80% AMI ■ Unknown ■ Black ■ White ■ Asian ■ Latino ■ Unknown

# What Makes SPYS Unique Among Diversion Providers

## Curriculum

- Best Practices
- Validated by External Research (U of MN)
- Homegrown, not off the shelf – relevant to families in Saint Paul and Ramsey County
- Culturally Responsive
- Restores Youth and Families: Teen Intervene & Everyday Parenting
- Not cookie cutter: Risk Assessment Tool creates individualized youth support

## Rigorous Practices

- Training: Program Manager Certified by Georgetown University; upon hire, employees receive mandatory training, within 90 days they must become certified in Youth Intervention; within 1 year they must be certified by 10 additional training programs
- Evaluation: Civicore Database + Analysis and Adjustments in Practice to Improve Outcomes in Real-Time
- Engagement: Pursuit Engagement Model leads to above average participation rates

## Integrated Services

- Expertise and relationships with youth at school (Behavior Intervention Program), at home (Children's Crisis Response), with the courts (Diversion), and in the community (YouthPower) = skilled adults to hold youth accountable and support positive choices in all life areas
- YouthPower & Diversion work together in both directions: SPYS offers (non-COPP) Diversion to build skills & deter engagement w justice system; YouthPower offers additional restoration & sense of purpose

## Leadership in the Field

- Pioneer in YouthCentric, Culturally Responsive & Restorative Practices
- Co-hosted 1<sup>st</sup> ever statewide Diversion Conference to share best practices
- Host workshops and partner with other agencies to promote youthcentric practices and dismantle the cradle-to-prison pipeline
- Recognized as a Saint Paul Foundation Nonprofit to Know

## RESULT RESULTS RESULTS

- Above average participation rate of 97%
- Lower than average recidivism rate of <3% (which meets & exceeds the COPP goal)
- Youth Have a Voice: Kids Changing Systems vs. Systems Changing Kids

# Diversion Increases Racial Equity

St. Paul Youth Services

- Black youth represent 7.4% of Minnesota's juvenile population, but 65% of the arrests involving curfew, loitering, and runaway infractions. <sup>1</sup>
- In 2010, just 11% of all youth arrests in Ramsey County were for disorderly conduct, but 74% of those arrests involved Black youth. Black, Native, and Latino youth are more than 5, 3, and 2 times likelier to be arrested than white youth. <sup>2</sup>
- Once arrested, youth of color are likelier than white youth to face harsh consequences: Native and Asian youth are 4+ and 2+ times more likely to be detained vs. a white youth. And youth of color are less likely than white youth to receive probation. In addition, Black youth are over three times more likely to have their cases transferred to adult court <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MN Dept of Public Safety, Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee 2011 <sup>2</sup> Ramsey County Corrections <sup>3</sup> MN Dept of Public Safety, Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee 2011

# Diversion Benefits Our Community

## St. Paul Youth Services

- While there's a need to balance public safety concerns with youth welfare in responding to juvenile offenses, a youth arrest produces lasting negative consequences for both the young person and the broader community.
- Youth in prison are more likely than their peers to drop out of school and have difficulty finding work.
- Only about 60% of incarcerated youth are released without a place to live; with about a third receiving help securing housing.<sup>1</sup>
- Incarceration and other punitive measures are a one-size fits all approach that separates youth from their families, disrupts their education, increases their chances of homelessness, and reduces their employment prospects – all without addressing either the juvenile behavior or underlying causes. 70% of young people in the juvenile justice system have substance use or abuse issues, 50% have mental health issues, and 75–90% have experienced significant trauma in their lives.<sup>2</sup>
- Depending on their age and the offense, youth court records may be open to the public. This impacts their prospects for employment, housing, military service, financial aid – even participation in sports. According to Saint Paul Police Department Senior Commander Gene Polyak, “Sometimes the impacts don’t occur for years after the event.”

<sup>1</sup>(Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness, Out of Sight, Out of Mind report 2013 <sup>2</sup>District 1 Community Council Update 1/30/14 Update on Boys Totem Town

# Diversion Is Best for Kids

St. Paul Youth Services

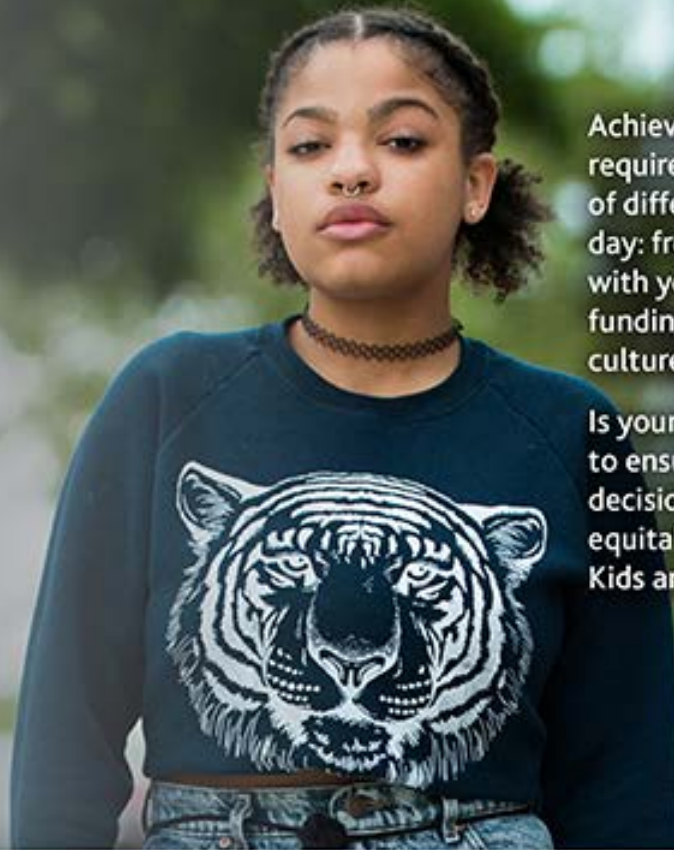
As awareness of racial disparities increases, many law enforcement officials are adjusting their approaches, but with unintended consequences. For example, some police increase their use of a 'warn and release' approach with youth of color. While their intentions are good, the outcomes are not: Youth who have this interaction with the criminal justice system are actually more likely to reoffend. Youth do best through alternatives to the juvenile justice system: when held accountable for their behaviors, given the chance to make amends, and offered targeted support for any challenging circumstances they're facing.

**WE SAY WE'LL DO  
WHATEVER IT TAKES  
TO END RACIAL DISPARITIES.**

**DOES THAT INCLUDE  
CHANGING OUR  
OWN PRACTICES?**

Achieving equity will require us to make 1,000's of different decisions every day: from how we interact with youth to policies, funding, staffing, data, culture, and more.

Is your organization ready to ensure all of your decisions measurably and equitably benefit youth? Kids are counting on it!





3. Comments / Questions?