

Community Reintegration Call

4/17/20, 1pm

Meeting Notes

Attending:

Jay Pennell (JJAG) Bonnie Porta, Erica King (USM), Samantha Fenderson (DOL), Mike Freysinger (Maine Youth Court), Andrew Kirkman (YAP acting program director), Hailey Virusso (Opportunity Alliance), Missy Cormier (Day One), Colin O'Neill (DOC), Jon Ruterbories (YAP), Autumn Magee (YAP), Galan Williamson (DOC), Anne Sedlack (MCJPAL), Christine Thibeault (JJAG), Asia Bowman (Vera), Sarah Mattox (RJP), Anwar Whiting (DOC), Abulkadir Ali (USM), Jill Ward (MCJPAL), Lindsay Rosenthal (Vera), Margot Fine (MIO), Atlee Reilly (DRM), Osgood (Portland Outright), Sarah Mattox (RJP), Mary Bonauto (GLAD), Julia Sleeper (Tree Street), Jesse Pettengill (ACAP), Kelsey Park (RJIM), Margaret Micolich (RJP), Rachel Talbot-Ross (Legislature), Mara Sanchez (USM), Ned Chester (JJAG)

Discussion:

Jill set context Place Matters, Task Force, JJAG, JDAI, Children's Cabinet bringing all the pieces together to move forward to build community-based continuum

Erica framed result for the community reintegration subgroup and walked through agenda

- All system involved youth thrive into adulthood in their communities
- Put their wellbeing at center at this table
- Develop shared definitions for successful community integration to inform the collective work of the group

Introductions & Check In – everyone answered the check in question: One thing that successful community reintegration looks like to you?

Jay – would be most successful if it's not necessary and includes family

Andrew – Supporting young people in the community

Jon – Having an individualized approach so youth lead the direction and it's about what they want rather than what others want for them

Colin – it's a shared result that all young people enter adulthood connected to the workforce and/or education

Missy - success is rooted in safety

Galan – it is a planful process, youth and family driven mitigates risk must be as safe as possible, connects youth to their communities, multisystemic, sustainable, flexible enough to adjust and pivot when it's needed.

Lindsay – interested in seeing ways people come together so creatively and find creative solutions

Osgood – About choice, autonomy, and self-determination. Need to return to communities that are resourced. Reintegration is a moment of transformation about returning power to communities.

Atlee – People sharing in meaningful rituals with a plan of what's next

Kelsey – People have the opportunity to build and rebuild connections. Opportunities for advocacy for change around harm.

Julia – You don't have to reintegrate anyone ever again

Jesse – Removing of dehumanizing attitudes and functions so a youth can feel fully human

Margot – creating spaces where young people can experience belonging and develop skills to thrive. Important to know that young people can have access to processes that address harm outside of punitive model.

Mary – Spiritual, emotional, physical health so they can live their best life

Rachel – Shifting power to those who have had lived experience and have historically been on the margins. This pandemic shows us that the ways to be healthy and safe need to be informed by a bigger group of people. Reintegration can only happen because you were there in the first place and we need to shift to prevention.

Anne – A community where kids can find joy and be children

Christine – Want families to be healthy. Healthy kids make safe communities.

Margaret – Supportive community is one of the biggest things we often lack, accessing resources, and ensuring a strong connection. Put it on paper but don't always follow up to make sure they happen. Have all the resources on this call but how do you put it together?

Ali – Every child wants to have a good family, a good career, and some youth just don't have those opportunities. From my perspective as formerly incarcerated, black, immigrant, Muslim, I have realized that the story that youth tell, it's really not their fault and it's about the tools we give them.

Samantha – Something that offers stability and safety for the family.

Hailey – Youth being engaged and connected, being able to experience fulfilment.

Asia – Must consider multi-generations, need to help the family as well as the youth

Jill – fulfill their potential and their dreams

Anwar – Kids need a strong support system and a strong community behind them. We all have a role as adults to surround kids and give them guidance.

Sarah – Being flexible and responsive so that everyone that's involved feels like they are a part of the community

Bonnie – Important that there are culturally appropriate supports and have mental health needs met

Check in word cloud summary



- Erica summarized check in responses: some elements of success are at the individual level, some are about family, some are about community, some are about structure and systems. Those are all things that we've been interested in putting data to in Place Matters. These are all the interests that are shared and can inform shared strategies to strengthen this part of the continuum of care, building on Section G of the JJ System's Assessment.
- Colin – Over the past couple weeks we've been thinking about and developing structure for regional review teams. Colin had a call with Erica a few days ago. What we are hoping to put together is technical assistance through a cooperative agreement with Muskie to develop and implement regional care teams in each of the three regions to review cross-system involved youth. To develop a healthy process and resolve issues on an individual case level and inform on the system level where there are gaps in programming and need for the continuum of care. The goal is to develop this process, I see these teams meeting monthly. This is not a totally new practice, we have done this before, and it was effective then with good outcomes. Colin has already reached out to my counterparts in DOE, OCFS, DOL to ask for a commitment from them that someone from a local and regional level will commit to this process. Hoping to move forward quickly. I think it's best to do it regionally based on Place Matters and CCLP reports. There may need to be more than one team in Regions 2 and 3, due to geography and size. Hoping that we can start this, keep an open mind, and learn as we go together.

- Erica – This is an extension of the work of Place Matters that many of you have been involved with. DOC is joining this effort and making an investment in strengthening community reintegration and transition to adulthood component.
<https://justicepolicyprogr.wixsite.com/imagineanewfuture/place-matters>
- Jill – There were short term/midterm/long term recommendations that came out of the task force process. MCJPALs work is around developing a continuum of care. This is about meeting youth needs and identifying the barriers to doing that. Sometimes those are administrative, sometimes they are legal, and some where lifted up in the assessment. We may find places where we need MOUs, more braided funding, rule changes. The hope is to not only have a more community engaged process but use that process to make systems change.
- Galan – Always love accepting resources and collaboration from and for the community. We have done this before. There is a lot of potential here. We are looking forward to getting this up and going with you all. (Colin, Galan and Rachel excused themselves call for another meeting)
- Erica invited community group to report back on their discussions and ideas to date
- Julia shared that the community group met a few times and the big piece we landed on is the way that decisions are being made and money is being allocated is problematic and without the input of the broader group.
- Erica asked if there was a proposal for how that could move forward and what the action steps were.
- Autumn suggested sharing the document that was compiled by the community group. Erica pointed out that Margot shared it in the chat. Document was shared on the screen.
- Margot pointed out that there were some values over which there wasn't consensus.
- Decision to not go through every subgroup value and leave that to a future meeting.
- Autumn discussed giving youth options is important to give them choice and a sense of responsibility.
- Jill proposed to hold off on discussing the small group conversations until all the small group conversations have been held and can dovetail with the regional teams being set up.
- Julia stated that most likely everyone in the room agrees with the values espoused by the community group, but none of that matters if there's not discussion of how the decisions are being made. If we don't pause ourselves to highlight the process, we are going to recreate what has already been done. We have created community-based groups to solve issues before, and I challenge people to acknowledge that it is messy.
- Erica invited the group to remember the shared result and interest in improving process and outcomes for youth. Acknowledging this will involve difficult conversations, proposed need to develop norms about resolving conflict. Hope to support the group to move towards alignment where people agree and explore interests and perspectives when people disagree.

Check out and next steps

- Jill proposed that the group share worries and anxiety to get it out on the table. What does the next meeting need to look like for all of you? What would decision-making look like? Warned that it will most likely be done wrong at first, so asked for people to be patient.
- Next meeting at 1pm
- Autumn wants to know what people want to talk about. When Galan and Colin left the conversation that shifted how things are going. My questions are who are the resources and how do I access them?
- Bonnie suggests bringing what Julia articulated up with DOC so they know where a lot of people are in the big group
- Kelsey asked in chat whether DOC could be asked to stay on the entire call next time and expressed disappointment in that
- Erica committed to being accountable to providing that feedback and reminded the group that result has been her focus for years
- Mara raised the hopefulness of this moment and how much opportunity there is right now to create new innovation.
- Julia stated that it is a critical point that the people who raise these points being the people who raise them.
- Jill recommended that baby steps be taken to create a space where DOC could hear what the community work group is saying.
- Christine summarized JJAG meeting, there are federal resources that JJAG wants to distribute intentionally and thoughtfully to both people working on the ground and to sustain this process with support to DOC to continue to work with USM and MCJPAL, as well as to support addressing CCLP recommendations long term. JJAG will be putting out RFPs in the future rather than responding to individual proposals.
- Sarah states in chat: "One of the key things that I've heard Erica identify is whether the goal is a DOC run reintegration process alongside a community-based reintegration process or if this group unites around wanting a singular process. This might be a good thing to talk about next-time."
- Atlee recommended that people think about what makes sense in terms of a structure outside the DOC to hold resources that can be accessed for direct community support.
- Jill stated that no one, including Colin, wants the DOC to hold or distribute these resources.
- Erica stated that it is a win to shift the resources to the community and thanked the JJAG for making that commitment. Suggested it would be great to hear more from the community group of how those resources need to be shaped, shifted, and allocated.
- Jill will pull together models for how community held resources and circulate to group

