Lessons Learned from COVID-19

San Mateo County Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission

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San Mateo County Juvenile Justice System

- Law Enforcement
- Juvenile Court
- Juvenile Probation
- Juvenile Hall Staff
- Education: Court & Community Schools
San Mateo County Law Enforcement Agencies

- South San Francisco Police
- Daly City Police
- Hillsborough Police
- Atherton Police
- Redwood City Police
- San Mateo Police
- San Mateo County Sheriff
Positive Impacts of COVID-19

- Sharp reduction in Juvenile detentions. Bookings at the Youth Service Center were limited to 707(b) offenses.
- “Cite and Release” Law Enforcement policies did NOT increase Juvenile recidivism rates in San Mateo County.
- Zoom: The use of the Zoom video platform has benefited all segments of San Mateo County’s Juvenile Justice System.
- Expanded Visiting Time. Zoom visiting has allowed incarcerated youth to stay more closely connected to their minor siblings and family members.
- Education: Accelerated training for Educators. Expedited Investment in technology, WIFI, and online educational programs for students.
- Probation: Successfully created and implemented new therapeutic programming at the Juvenile Hall.
Youth Interviews

• Change in YSC Food Service Providers: Youth expressed considerable distress over both the amount and quality of the food provided by the McGuire Correctional Facility. Youth report consistently bring hungry and expressed a need for culturally relevant meals and fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables.

• Youth expressed an overall lack of knowledge about the COVID-19 virus and general mistrust of COVID-19 vaccines.

• Appreciate the additions to their daily program schedule.

• Enjoy school and expressed enthusiasm about academic progress, studies, and future graduation.

• Felt they have a YSC staff member they can confide in and trust.
Recommendations

• **YSC Bookings:** Create a future-looking policy that, in general, bookings will be limited to 707(b) crimes, an outstanding arrest warrant, or if a youth is a danger to self or to the community, unless there are contraindications in the future.

• **Food Services:** Return to the prior system of preparing family-style meals at the YSC. Keep food items on the unit to address hunger. i.e., peanut butter & jelly sandwiches, granola bars, and fresh fruit.

• **COVID-19:** A robust educational campaign is needed to provide youth the information required to make a well-informed vaccination choice and increase vaccination rates at the YSC.

• **Continue Zoom Visiting:** Allowing youth to continue to visit with their family members via Zoom is strongly recommended. Zoom visits increase equity by removing the need for childcare and transportation. Most importantly, Zoom visits allow minor siblings to visit with one another, stay connected, and help keep the family unit intact during incarceration.

• **YSC Medical Screenings & Clearance:** Notify elected officials and explore opportunities to contract with Seaton Medical Center to provide YSC Booking Medical Screenings and Clearance for northern San Mateo County law enforcement agencies to limit current wait times at San Mateo County Medical Center.

• **JJDPC Meetings:** Continue to conduct JJDPJC Commission Meetings via Zoom to increase attendance, participation, and outreach.