

Beach Cities Juvenile Diversion Project

Juvenile diversion is a restorative process that redirects a young person to a purposeful path, rather than entering the juvenile justice system. This diversion can be crucial to achieving lifelong success. In the absence of diversion, there can be compounding consequences for young people including increased risk of high school dropout, barriers to accessing college, trauma, substance abuse and other negative outcomes.¹ Juvenile diversion requires that offenders learn about the harm they have caused, make amends for their behavior, accept (and actively participate) in their punishment and develop a stronger moral compass going forward.

When a diversion program is implemented effectively, it can prevent long-term involvement in the justice system and the associated damage to health and well-being, while also improving public safety and reducing system costs.

HISTORY OF JUVENILE DIVERSION IN THE BEACH CITIES

The city of Manhattan Beach first launched its juvenile diversion program in 2012, under the leadership of Joan Stein Jenkins, Esq. Since then, the program has provided an opportunity for more than 400 young people to redirect their futures towards a purposeful path rather than entering the juvenile justice system. The long-term impact of the Manhattan Beach program is significant, with only a handful of cases of recidivism recorded.

In 2019, Beach Cities Health District partnered with the City of Manhattan Beach to continue the program and explore an expansion to the neighboring beach cities of Hermosa Beach and Redondo Beach. Since then, an additional 50 young people have entered the program.

In 2020, a consortium was established to create the Beach Cities Juvenile Diversion Project – a collaboration between local law enforcement in the cities of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach; school districts including Hermosa Beach City School District, Manhattan Beach Unified School District and Redondo Beach Unified School District; and Beach Cities Health District.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Beach Cities Juvenile Diversion Project sees the inherent value in each individual and affirms that every youth deserves a future. The Juvenile Diversion Project believes that youth who violate the law or make mistakes which bring them in contact with the law are best served by learning and growing from their errors, by taking responsibility for their behavior and by making amends. Incorporating best practices in youth restorative justice and data-informed research on juvenile diversion programming, the Juvenile Diversion Project provides every referred youth with the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes.

¹ Schooley, T. 2017. *Youth Diversion in Los Angeles County: Advancing Evidence--Informed Policy to Improve Youth Outcomes.*

² Human Impact Partners. 2017. *Reducing Youth Arrests Keeps Kids Healthy and Successful: A Health Analysis of Youth Arrest.*

Recent analysis of pre-arrest diversion programs found that youth were **2.5 times less likely** to re-offend than similarly situated youth who were not diverted.²

A MODEL FOR SUCCESSFUL YOUTH DIVERSION

Adapted from "Youth Diversion in Los Angeles County: Advancing Evidence-Informed Policy to Improve Youth Outcomes, T. Schooley

PREVENTION

Youth receives necessary and appropriate services and care in their home, school or community setting with no justice system involvement.

EVENT:

After a violation of a city ordinance or school rule, youth comes into contact with law enforcement, school resource officer or school administrator.

DIVERSION PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT

Juvenile Diversion Project staff conducts intake assessment, develops individual diversion and development plan and links youth to services which may include:

- Drug and alcohol treatment
- Mental health counseling
- Enrichment activities
- Trauma-responsive preventive services
- Credible mentorship
- Family engagement and support
- Empathy-based community service

OPPORTUNITY FOR PRE-ARREST DIVERSION:

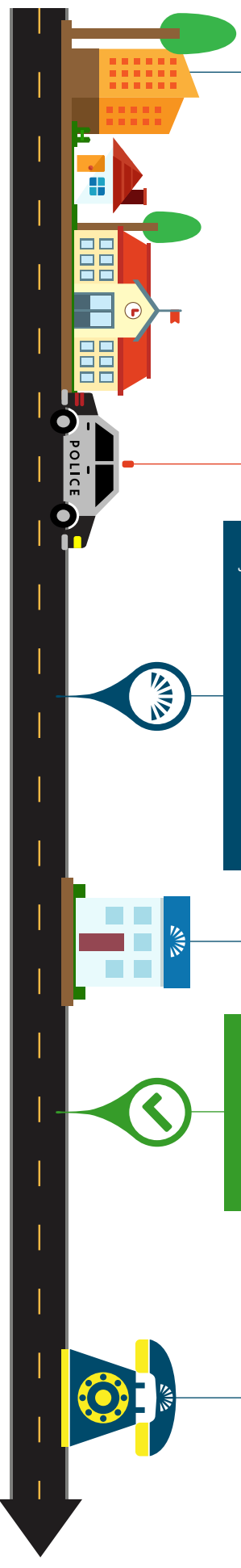
To prevent further justice system involvement, law enforcement refers eligible youth to Juvenile Diversion Project in lieu of arrest or citation.

COMPLETION

Upon completion of diversion, no permanent arrest or criminal record exists.

COLLABORATION AND EVALUATION

To encourage a successful program model, Juvenile Diversion Project partners communicate regularly to collect data necessary for program improvement and success.



Learn more about the Beach Cities Juvenile Diversion Project at bchd.org.

"How do we hold people accountable for wrongdoing and yet at the same time remain in touch with their humanity enough to believe in their capacity to be transformed?"

-Professor Bell Hooks, Ph.D.