

Santa Cruz County Probation Department

Juvenile
Probation
Division
Annual
Report

2019

Our **VISION** is a safe and thriving community with justice for all.

Our **MISSION** is to promote public safety, reduce recidivism, and support victims and all those impacted by crime. In partnership with our community, we provide balanced supervision, accountability, and opportunities for positive change through results driven practices.

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Introduction: The Juvenile Services Division is responsible for investigation, diversion, pre and post adjudication services, community supervision, out-of-home placement, and prevention of out of home placement for juveniles referred to the Probation Department. The Division also supports the Juvenile Hall by assisting with the intake unit and alternatives to detention. The Juvenile Division incorporates a system of care model that consists of six essential values when working with juveniles and their families. The six values are family preservation, interagency collaboration, utilizing the least restrictive setting, youth and family engagement, natural setting and culturally responsive services.

Goals: The Juvenile Division is committed to ensuring public safety through the reduction of recidivism by increasing the life skills and competencies of the youth and families we serve. The Division accomplishes this by adhering to the Principles of Risk, Need and Responsivity which focuses on key supervision strategies including evidence-based supervision, family engagement, decreasing criminogenic risk factors, increasing protective factors, utilizing alternatives to detention, and providing services/interventions and programs that increase critical thinking skills. Probation has strategically and successfully partnered with community stakeholders to support the Juvenile Divisions efforts to provide comprehensive and culturally responsive supervision and services that the court, court partners, and community rely on to enhance community safety.

The Juvenile Division has adopted the following evidence based or best practices for community supervision to meet our objectives of reducing recidivism, reducing victimization, increasing life skills and family engagement.

Key Supervision Strategies	Methods	How we are implementing strategies
1. Use empirically based assessment to guide decisions.	Use of Risk Based Supervision: matching dosage with risk/needs.	Utilization of risk/needs assessments and reassessment: <u>Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS)</u> . ¹
2. Family Engagement.	Child and Family Team Meetings and Family meetings. Identification of Natural Supports beginning at intake.	Youth/Family participate in planning meetings to contribute to program determination/case planning and commitment from identified team members.
3. Focus on skill enhancement and reduction of criminogenic risk factors.	Effective use of supervision practices and tools.	Utilization of <u>Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS)</u> ; <u>Aggression Replacement Training (ART)</u> .
4. Increasing protective factors.	Increasing youth/family understanding of needs, and mental health diagnosis; engaging support, services and prosocial activities.	Specialized caseload assignments: FUERTE/Wraparound -application of <u>Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)</u> and <u>Family Engagement</u> . Provide education to access community services, treatment and pro-social activities. Aztecas soccer program.
5. Utilizing alternatives to detention.	Offering appropriate programs to youth in lieu of detention such as Home Supervision, Electronic Monitoring, GPS and Evening Center.	Utilizing the Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI) at the Intake level to assess the risk to reoffend and/or appear for court hearings pending adjudication.
6. Redirect antisocial thinking and behaviors.	Application of graduated responses.	Use of Rewards/Incentives; utilization of Violation Response Grid.

¹ The JAIS identifies the underlying reason for criminal behavior and classifies offenders into supervision strategy groups, giving officers the techniques that are most likely to be successful in managing each offender.

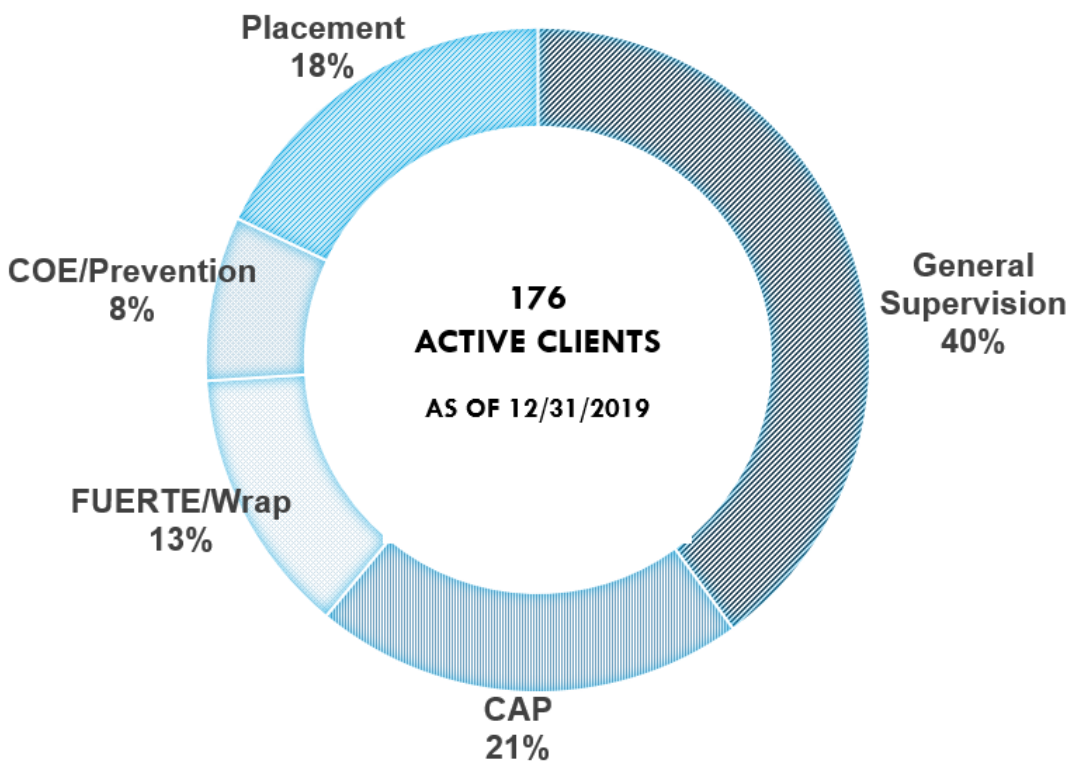
² The EPICS model targets higher risk offenders and their criminogenic needs using cognitive-behavioral interventions and core correctional practices and provides the structure for officers to identify high-risk thinking and anti-social attitudes that lead to criminal behavior.

Executive Summary

In 2019, the focus of our staff continued to be increasing family engagement efforts to offer the youth and families a better opportunity to be successful under supervision. These efforts were greatly enhanced by taking a trauma informed approach beginning at intake and continuing with case plan development and risk-based supervision. By assigning caseloads based on risk levels and regularly reassessing risk levels, the Division can focus higher levels of supervision to youth assessed with moderate and high-level risk factors. Additionally, through treatment/intervention matching, staff ensure dosage is appropriate for the assigned caseloads and does not “net widen” by increasing engagement with youth assessed with lower risk factors.

In keeping with research-based and effective supervision practices, the Juvenile Services Division continues to implement and sustain key caseload types with 13 Deputy Probation Officers who are supervised by four Supervising Probation Officers (Deputy Probation Officer III’s).

The following chart outlines caseload types and percentages in the Juvenile Division:



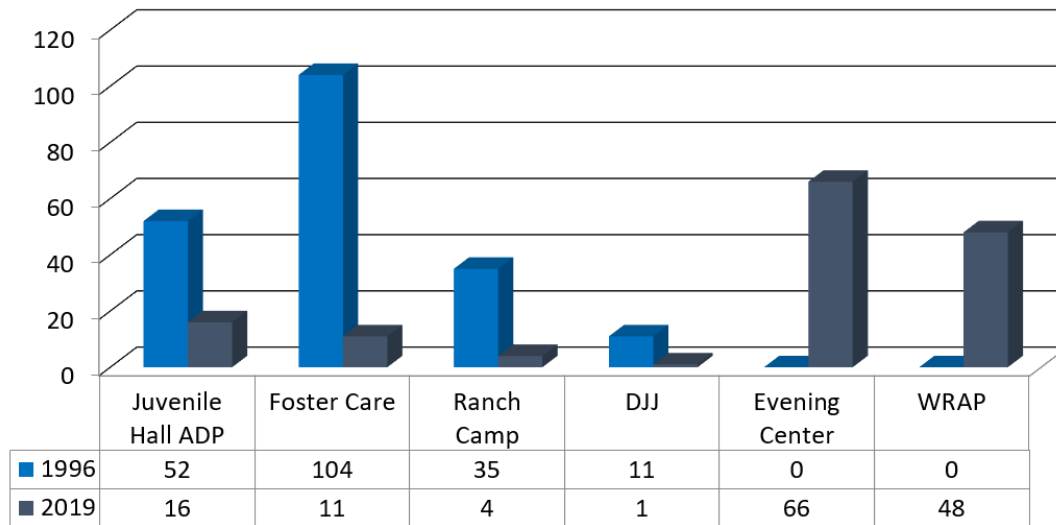
General Supervision which consists of 40% of our current youth under supervision are those youth that score low to moderate on our JAIS risk assessment tool. These youth do not require high level of supervision to prevent recidivism. CAP is our Community Accountability Program caseload and provides risk-based supervision strategies for youth on formal probation living in program areas of San Lorenzo Valley, Live Oak and Watsonville. The goal of CAP is to increase local responses to juvenile justice and create interventions that increase competencies among at-risk youth. The FUERTE/Wrap caseloads are smaller caseloads that focus on family engagement strategies and mental health treatment. This supervision model includes a team approach consisting of a transitional specialist, a mental health clinician and a probation officer. The

Placement caseloads consist of youth who have been removed from their homes and placed in Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP) by the Juvenile Justice Court. The decision for removal is typically based on behavioral and therapeutic needs which are not able to be met in a home-based family setting, even with the provision of supportive wraparound services. COE/Prevention caseloads, as part of the School Success Project (SSP) are part of our early intervention and prevention efforts in partnership with the County Office of Education. The SSP probation officers are assigned to designated schools creating additional opportunities to interact with youth and families as well as work more closely in a restorative justice approach with school staff.

It should be noted that on December 31, 2018 there were 143 active clients on probation and as can be seen by the graph above there were 33 more youth being supervised on probation one year later which represents a 19% increase. Interestingly, at the end of 2017, there were 171 active clients under supervision which is nearly identical to the end of 2019. The increases in 2019 were primarily in Placement which went from 14% of the overall total to 18% and the COE/Prevention caseload which increased from 6% to 8%. However, at the end of 2019, 40% of the youth under supervision were supervised in general supervision which is an example of matching youth risk and needs to specific type of supervision caseloads which are more responsive and better suited to help youth be more successful under supervision. Our goal is to remain at 40% or higher as we work to reduce youth in out of home placement and increase youth who are diverted from the juvenile justice system.

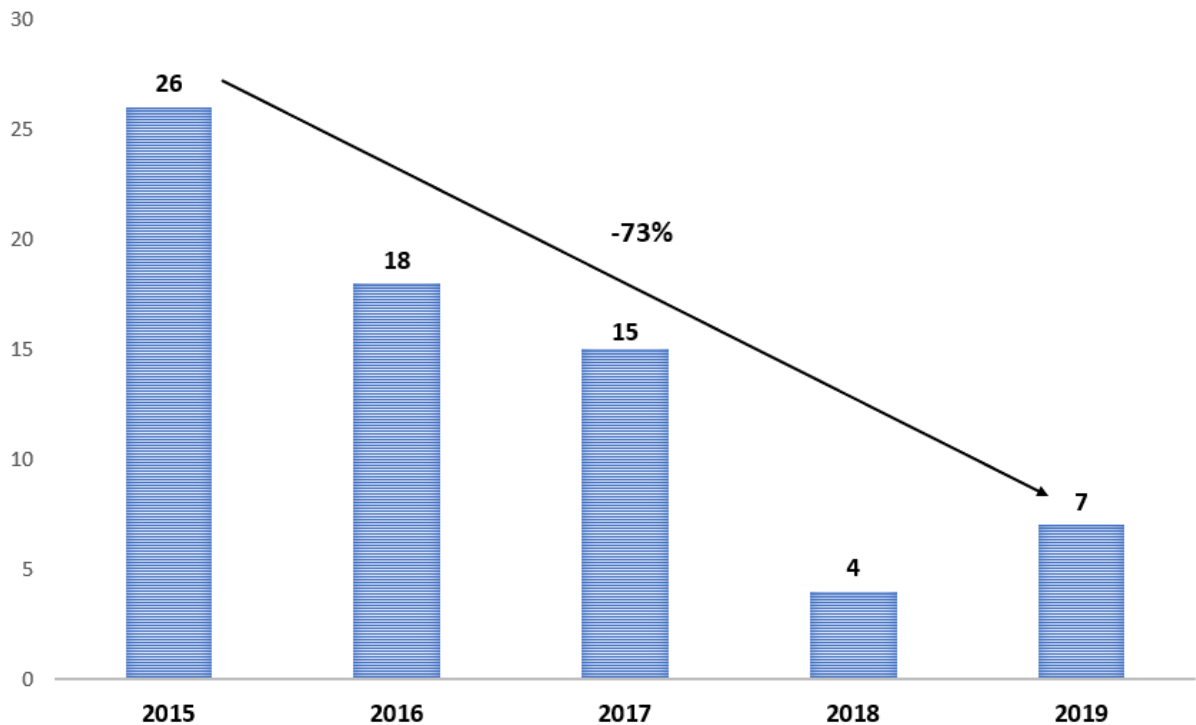
The next chart illustrates how the local use of alternatives and community based intensive programs such as FUERTE/Wrap and the Luna Evening Center have helped keep probation youth placed in their homes rather than in costly out-of-home placements and commitment facilities. The use of intensive local programs that utilize evidenced based practices (EBP) have proven to be effective in rehabilitating youth and families and results in considerable savings to the community.

Reductions at all levels of Institutional care, while increasing capacity of community-based interventions....



In 2019, efforts by the Juvenile Division staff and the court partners to keep youth in the community continued to be met with successful results. Although the number of new court ordered out of home placements rose from historically low numbers in 2018, it remained relatively low with only 11 placement orders (seven of which were new placement orders) in 2019. This increase impacted the average length of stay for youth in Juvenile Hall and made finding suitable placements more challenging since there were more youth requiring placement and fewer beds available statewide. Probation staff continue to work tirelessly to find appropriate placements and in a timely manner but are focused more than ever at reducing out of home placements by early identification of natural supports for youth and families and increasing the number of Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings. In 2018, Probation staff completed 82 CFT meetings and in 2019, Probation staff completed 96 CFT meetings. The CFT meetings allow the youth and families to have a stronger voice in the outcomes of their cases and more influence on supervision strategies administered by probation. The utilization of the CFT meetings allows for a very thorough review of factors impacting our youth and their families. It provides a team of professionals from various county agencies and community-based organizations to come together to meet with the family and strategize on how to meet the needs of the youth and family but at the same time make an appropriate recommendation to the Juvenile Court regarding disposition. It has also created an opportunity for probation staff to look at options other than out of home placement for youth and as is illustrated in the following graph:

NEW PLACEMENT ORDERS



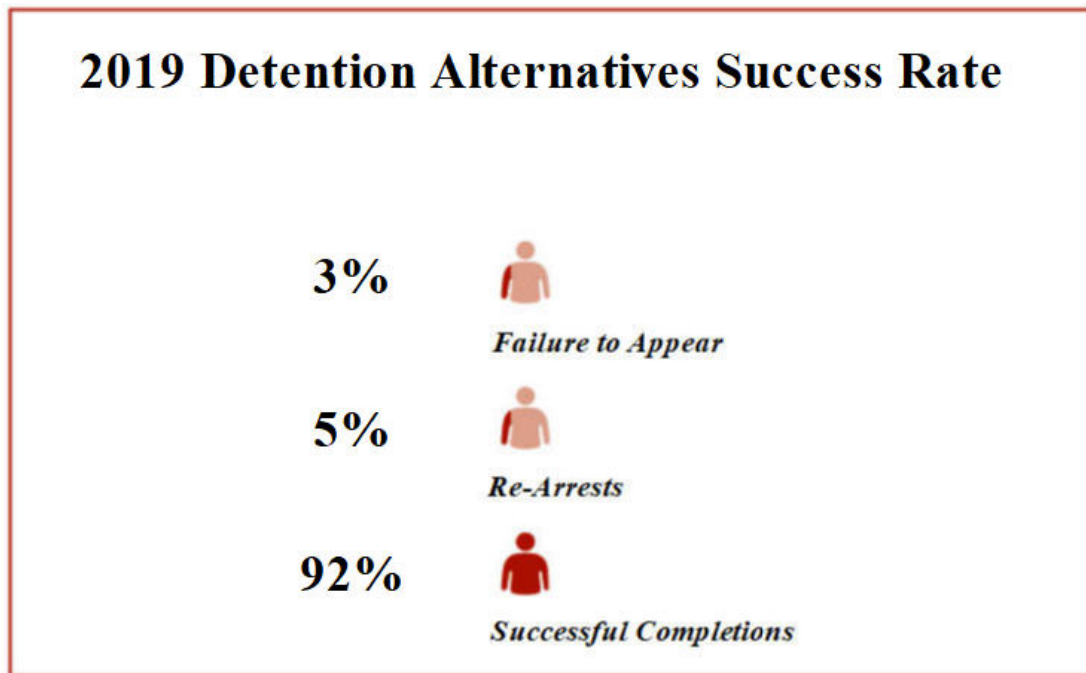
In 2019, the Juvenile Division continued to administer the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS) by initiating use of the JAIS Case Plan. In addition to identifying a youth's level of risk to reoffend, the JAIS has three goals:

- To help probation officers quickly establish appropriate supervision strategies based on youth strengths and needs, anticipated behaviors and attitudes, and the reasons for behaviors and attitudes.
- To provide probation officers with effective strategies for dealing with problem behaviors before they escalate into law violations.
- To reduce recidivism, which is defined as any youth receiving a subsequent adjudication while on active probation (which was 11% in 2019).

Supervisors and Division Managers are monitoring administration of the instrument for inter-rater reliability, a result of which is 86% of all cases with an initial assessment of moderate and high risk having received a full JAIS assessment. Additionally, the JAIS assessment is being reflected in court reports and in case staffing.

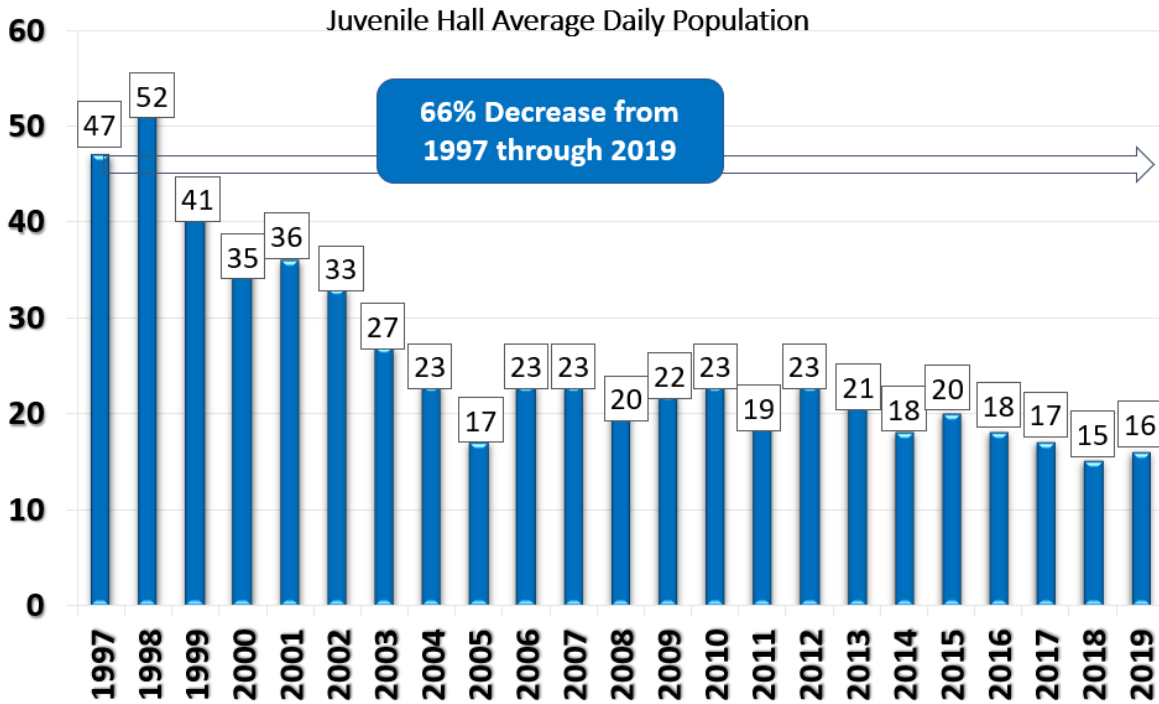
Detention Alternatives Outcome Data

The Juvenile Division continues to be a leader in juvenile justice system reform by utilizing alternatives to detention when appropriate. The following chart illustrates the use of alternatives to detention upon contact with the juvenile system. In 2019, 92% of all youth that were placed in an alternative to detention program made their next court appearance and did not recidivate pending court.



Our focus on reducing the unnecessary use juvenile detention has been a commitment of the Juvenile Division since 1999, when the Juvenile Division became a model site for the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). The initiative seeks to eliminate unnecessary use of secure detention; utilize data-driven decision making; improve court processing; develop risk-based detention criteria; increase the use of community-based detention alternatives; improve conditions of confinement; address racial and ethnic disparities of those who are confined, and address inequities and needs of special populations. In 2019, the Division hosted two site visits consisting of delegations from Mexico (which reflected our first ever site visit conducted solely in Spanish) and St. Louis, Missouri. The Division also participated in a reverse site visit to St. Louis sending a team that included representatives from the Santa Cruz County Office of Education (COE), Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance (PVPSA), the presiding Juvenile Court Judge, the County Health Services Director (HSA) and the Chief and Assistant Chief Probation Officers to support system reform efforts. The Division also sent a cross system delegation represented by Probation staff, our Juvenile Court Judge, Director of HSA, and three representatives from COE to the JDAI National Inter-site Conference in October of 2019. While at the conference, which was held in Seattle, Washington, the team members provided technical assistance and facilitated workshop presentations. Our Assistant Chief Probation Officer, Valerie Thompson, was also awarded the JDAI Distinguished System Leadership Award for Juvenile Justice Reform efforts. The Probation Department will continue to sustain JDAI’s eight core strategies reflected in our reform efforts to date.

Our intentional work to safely reduce the use of unnecessary detention and increase community capacity continues to have a positive impact on the average daily population (ADP) of the Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall. As is illustrated in the following chart, the ADP in 1997 was 47 youth in detention, exceeding our rated capacity of 42. In 2019, the ADP was 16, or down 66% from 1997.



As can be seen in the next table, the use of alternatives to detention programming has remained an integral function of probation. Although many of the categories remained stable and virtually unchanged from the previous year there was one notable exception which showed a 31% increase in the number of youth placed on the home supervision program. This increase results in fewer youth being placed into Juvenile Hall and is in alignment with the Division’s approach to pursuing alternatives to detention when possible. The number of diversion and informal contracts did decrease by 13% (20 total) from the previous year however with the addition of two new grant funded projects focusing on diversion it is anticipated the number of youth diverted from formal probation proceedings will increase significantly over the next several years.

Referrals	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	% Change
Diversion and Informal Contracts	409	362	180	242	151	131	- 13%
Home Supervision	81	92	61	50	58	76	31%
Electronic Monitoring	166	205	140	114	115	114	-.01%
Average Monthly Supervision Total	391	386	347	187	161	156	-3%
Court Reports Completed	62	60	53	54	69	67	-3%

Juvenile Division Grant Projects and Programs

Outlined below is a summary of the current grant projects the Juvenile Division is involved with and working with community partners to enhance services to youth:

Youth Reinvestment Grant – Claiming Reclaiming Youth Justice (CRY-J)

The Youth Reinvestment Grant Project, Community Reclaiming Youth Justice (CRY-J), through the BSCC for a total of \$1,000,000 over three years to reduce race and ethnic disparity by diverting Latino/a youth from contact or further penetration into the juvenile justice system. This collaborative effort will partner Probation as the lead agency, Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance as the primary community partner and the Santa Cruz District Attorney's Office in roles that seek to expand prevention efforts to the community of Watsonville.

Supporting Male Survivors of Violence – Project Thrive

Santa Cruz County Project Thrive is a grant funded project by the Department of Justice (DOJ). The initial award was for a period of three years from October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2018. Since this time, Project Thrive has received another award extending the project from October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2020. Project Thrive is focused on addressing gaps in how we identify, support and serve boys and young men of color surviving exposure to direct or indirect involvement with violence. The effort is a highly collaborative effort involving numerous community-based agencies in Santa Cruz County.

School Success Project – (SSP)

In 2018 the Probation Department in partnership with the Santa Cruz County Office of Education (COE), came together to work on a pilot to enhance prevention and opportunities for education success for students in south county. The pilot is a two-part project to implement Social/Emotional responses to students' behavior in order to support school retention, ensure situational assessment of needs and provide services/interventions accordingly.

In 2019 the work performed in conjunction with the School Success Project allowed students to earn more credits and stay in their schools using engagement activities and natural supports. The project started with a small test of change working with students at Sequoia and Freedom and we are now taking this project to scale with Pajaro Valley Unified School District (PVUSD), the largest school district in the county. Our efforts at expansion consisted of adding three new school sites: Renaissance, New School and Parajo Valley High School. In response to adding the three new sites, the Probation Department made changes to staff assignments by having six probation officers assigned to the three new schools while continuing to provide support at Sequoia and Freedom. While the Probation Officers do not spend their entire workday at the schools, they do spend parts of the school day on-site working with both probation youth and non-probation youth. They also work closely with school administration/staff by suggesting ways to look at root causes of behavior issues. The Probation Officers utilize motivational interviewing and EPICS to improve educational outcomes. The work described above continues to scale our diversion and intervention efforts.

At the end of 2019, in partnership with the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office and the COE we received grant funding through the Justice Assistance Grant to enhance services to expand the SSP in North County as well.

Aztecas Youth Soccer Academy - (AYSA):

Developed in 2008, this program has grown and remains enormously popular with probation and diversion involved youth. The AYSA program has come to be recognized as an innovative intervention to reduce violence in the streets while teaching young men essential life skills in areas of leadership skills, health, civic engagement, educational achievement and how to mutually respect one another, regardless of gang affiliation. Latino youth comprise 72% of youth on probation and the Aztecas soccer program, focusing on Latino youth is helping youth engage in a healthy activity that keeps them off the streets, provides mentors as coaches and mentors as players that play side by side with them on the field and who model appropriate behaviors that teach at-risk youth healthy anger management skills, which helps reduce violence and other harmful behaviors.

The Aztecas have held their yearly summer soccer camp for youth ages 6-14 since 2015, with the first camp being one week-long and serving 70 local youth. Due to an overwhelming demand, the camp is now two weeks in length and in 2019, the two-week camp hosted 171 youth (95 were boys and 76 were girls). The program seeks to serve youth and families that are system involved or at risk of system involvement. The 2019 summer camp served 14 youth that had someone in their family on probation, 11 foster care youth, and 93 who were below the Federal poverty level. They were also provided paid positions for four college students and eight high school youth (four were on probation). We had an additional sixteen high school volunteers, which helped them meet their court or school requirements. The soccer camp added to the focus of the Aztecas Soccer Academy by including delinquency prevention. This was a win-win for the community.

AYSA has increased tutoring and academic support to the youth and 79% of our youth have increased their grade point average (GPA). Nine youth tried out for high school soccer and all nine made their teams and had the grades to play. AYSA has successfully collaborated with the local competitive soccer league and successfully helped bridge youth into competitive teams increasing their time participating in a pro-social activity. AYSA also supported four youth who tried out for the California North Olympic Development Program and three were chosen to represent Cal North.

Finally, in 2015, AYSA started an annual fundraiser, the Golden Goals. In the first four years it was held AYSA has raised over \$10,000 each year and in 2019 the annual fundraiser raised nearly \$9,000. The Aztecas have received support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Freedom Lions Club, The United Way, the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County, the Borina Foundation, the Ed Kelley Foundation. Local community businesses such as: Cal Giant, Falcon Trading, Righter Farms, and Dr. Donald Foster.