

## **Beyond Juvenile Justice: A Case for Reinvestment in Youth and Community**

The calls to defund law enforcement agencies have arisen amidst growing evidence from empirical research and youth and family experiences that consistently highlight failed juvenile justice policies that disproportionately impact communities and people of color. The pervasive nature of failed policies and systemic racism must be addressed immediately. While these voices for change have mostly grown out of community-based organizations and grassroots advocacy movements, they are also echoed throughout decades of empirical research on juvenile justice.

As the State Advisory Group for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in California, per the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP), our role is to advise Governor Newsom on juvenile justice practice and policy in the State. Our Committee membership is diverse and rich with expertise on a range of practice and policy issues related to juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, as is mandated by the JJDP. Membership includes formerly incarcerated individuals, probation administrators, advocates, psychologists, judicial officers, and more.<sup>1</sup>

This brief includes a small set of recommendations that the State Advisory Group for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention have identified as critical areas of need to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the State of California. In 2018, Congress passed H.R. 6964, the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 which amended the JJDP in a variety of ways. One important change was the focus on reducing racial and ethnic disparities. The reauthorized JJDP now requires, among other items, that states develop and implement a work plan with measurable objectives for policy, practice, or other system changes based on the needs identified through data collection and analyses of racial and ethnic disparities. We recommend the following items as part of the work plan so that California can take specific and actionable steps to address systemic racism, reduce racial and ethnic disparities in juvenile justice, and take a conscious approach to reinvest in youth and communities.

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