



Jackson County Family Court

Grant Program Information

Ordinance Number: 6118

Program Name: Juvenile Court Diversion (JCD) Grant

Funding Agency: Missouri Division of Youth Services (DYS)

Funding Arrangements and Use of Funds: \$185,600.00 to continue programming in Jackson County to divert youth from commitment to the Division of Youth Services for treatment.

Funding Period for Grant: The grant period is July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027

New or Existing Program/Continued Funding Opportunity: Existing program

Program Description : The DYS JCD grant funds treatment programming for Family Court Services. The following program and service activities are funded by this grant:

Expressive Arts & Self Care– trauma-informed programming for youth in out of home placement for support of mind, body and spirit including creative arts, cultural exploration, yoga, meditation, and large-muscle recreation.

Day Reporting Program– supplies and services for youth attending the Drop In Center to prevent subsequent offending when youth are not in school.

CORP Restitution– restitution funds for victims to be earned by youth completing community service, includes supplies.

Education Consulting – provision of services from certified teachers in the Kintsugi Institute in Detention and Day Reporting.

Violence Interruption – Pilot projects designed to address gun violence and interpersonal conflict in the community involving youth under supervision.

Theoretical or Practical Basis: For youth at-risk for system involvement and currently justice-involved, the arts provide a means for addressing emotional and/or problem behaviors through opportunities to learn new skills, develop new talents, and express thoughts and ideas in creative and therapeutic ways. Similarly, for youths dealing with trauma or victimization (including exposure to violence), the arts can help them to cope with painful experiences by fostering resiliency. Creating art can strengthen a youth's problem-solving skills, autonomy, sense of purpose, and social competence. Moreover, art encourages positive emotions and strength, allowing youth and families to view themselves as survivors and not as victims.

Under-resourced youth are at increased risk for academic deficits of both cognitive and social development. Urban youth are at high risk owing to exposure to violence in their communities. Providing system-involved youth with quality education is essential to keeping them engaged in their education, including a successful return to school and community upon release. The Jackson County Family Court has continued to experience an increase in youth who lack the basic educational skills and competencies necessary to thrive into adulthood. Youth under Court supervision typically have fewer hours of educational instruction than non-Court involved youth. This makes their matriculation problematic, as most of the youth have been underperforming educationally many years prior to their involvement with the Court. Parents and guardians also are in need of assistance helping the youth receive the educational support and assistance they need while court involved as well as in step-down, aftercare and independent living situations.

Many delinquent offenses occur when youth out in the community, not attending school. Day Reporting keep youth occupied during these key hours while providing opportunities for them to engage in the community, build skills, and establish relationships with trustworthy adults. Youth on probation are at risk for further offending and system penetration, and these programs provide opportunities for intervention and treatment while keeping youth occupied, limiting opportunities for new offending.



Jackson County Family Court Grant Program Information

In the 16th Circuit, we developed an innovative strategy heavily reliant on diversion to keep 17-year-old youth out of the juvenile-justice system and connect them with the resources they need to successfully transition into adulthood.

Family Court is increasingly serving youth who have either perpetrated or been victims of violent incidents. Many of these youth have experienced significant trauma, are on the Save KC list (a designation used by the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department for individuals frequently involved in or exposed to violence), and are at a heightened risk for harm, arrest, retaliation, or deeper justice system involvement. According to internal data, in 2024, 28% of all delinquent and status offense petitions involved a weapon, and 26% involved a gun. Traditional probationary and therapeutic interventions may not be adequate to disrupt the cycles of violence these youth face in their homes, peer groups, and communities. The court is adding multiple resources and services through this project to enhance efforts towards violence interruption.

Expected Impact: All programs and services within Family Court Services are subject to ongoing evaluation. Each program is guided by a logic model that clearly links risk factors, inputs, outputs, and intended outcomes. Programs are strategically designed to address one or more intermediate goals, such as enhancing competencies, providing mental health treatment, supporting educational achievement, and promoting engagement in prosocial activities. The overarching objectives of all programs are to reduce future delinquent behavior, increase educational involvement, and strengthen relationships within the family and among peers.

Evaluation Plan and/or Demonstrated Efficacy: We will measure successful program completion rates, rates of probation violations and recidivism at 12 months following release from jurisdiction.

For more information, contact the Office of the Jackson County Deputy Court Administrator at 435-4850

Program Directors: Pamela Behle, Adrienne Guillen, and Tyra Sanders