

**Youth Outcomes in Juvenile Justice: Comparing Detention and Diversion and Evaluating
Oregon's Alignment with National Evidence**

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Abstract

Research on juvenile justice interventions has increasingly examined how system responses influence youth outcomes, particularly in relation to recidivism and long-term development. While juvenile detention remains a widely used response to delinquency in the United States, a growing body of literature suggests that community-based interventions may produce more favorable outcomes across multiple domains, including educational engagement, behavioral health, and prosocial development. However, variation in program design, outcome measurement, and jurisdictional practices continues to limit clarity regarding what works, for whom, and under what conditions. The purpose of this project was to (1) evaluate the comparative effectiveness of juvenile detention and community-based interventions, (2) identify intervention components most consistently associated with improved outcomes for justice-involved youth, and (3) examine how Oregon's juvenile justice practices align with national evidence. This project aimed to provide a structured synthesis of existing research to support evidence-informed decision-making within juvenile justice systems. A qualitative synthesis of secondary data, including peer-reviewed literature, national policy analyses, and publicly available administrative reports. Findings indicate that community-based interventions, particularly those incorporating family engagement, mentoring, therapeutic services, and structured supervision, are more consistently associated with reduced reoffending and improved developmental outcomes. In contrast, detention was frequently associated with disruption to key protective factors, including education and family stability. Analysis of Oregon's juvenile justice system revealed structural alignment with evidence-informed practices through diversion and community-based programming, but also identified limitations in program-level outcome tracking that constrain evaluation of effectiveness. These findings demonstrate that effective

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juvenile justice responses depend on the alignment of intervention context, program design, and data systems. This study contributes to the field by clarifying how different intervention approaches shape youth outcomes and by identifying system-level gaps that influence the ability to translate evidence into practice.

Keywords: Juvenile justice, juvenile detention, diversion, community-based diversion, detention alternatives, recidivism, youth outcomes, Oregon youth outcomes, juvenile justice interventions, evidence-informed practice

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of juvenile justice interventions in the United States remains a significant concern for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers because many system-involved youth continue to experience negative outcomes long after initial system contact. (Gilman et al., 2022). Although rates of youth confinement and violent juvenile arrests have declined substantially over the past two decades, patterns of reoffending and uneven youth development outcomes persist, raising fundamental questions about whether current intervention strategies achieve the goals of public safety and positive youth trajectories (Sentencing Project, 2025; CSG Justice Center, 2022). For example, national reentry literature indicates that rearrest within one year following release from residential placement averages approximately 55%, underscoring the persistence of reoffending among justice-involved youth (OJJDP, 2017). In many states, 80% of confined youth are later rearrested or re-referred to the justice system within three years of release, indicating that confinement alone does not sufficiently alter offending trajectories (Seigle et al., 2014).

In Oregon, statewide juvenile justice data collected through the Juvenile Justice Information System show ongoing rates of youth with new criminal referrals within a 12-month period following an initial contact with the justice system, indicating continued challenges in achieving sustained positive outcomes for justice-involved youth (OYA JJIS, 2023). However, simple comparisons of recidivism rates between youth who experience detention and those who participate in community-based programs can be difficult to interpret because of systematic differences in who receives each intervention, including offense severity and assessed risk levels. As a result, multiple outcome domains beyond recidivism, such as educational engagement, mental health, and prosocial functioning, must be considered to meaningfully evaluate

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intervention effectiveness (Holman and Ziedenberg, 2006). These factors are not peripheral to youth outcomes, but function as critical protective and risk indicators that shape long-term behavioral trajectories. Educational stability, positive mental health functioning, and strong prosocial relationships are consistently associated with reduced likelihood of reoffending, while disruptions in these areas are linked to increased system involvement (National Research Council, 2013; Bonnie & Backes, 2019). Focusing exclusively on recidivism may therefore obscure important differences in how interventions influence the underlying conditions that contribute to delinquent behavior. This broader outcome perspective aligns with the present study's approach to examining intervention effectiveness across multiple domains rather than relying solely on reoffending measures.

Prior research supports the importance of these broader outcome domains by demonstrating how different intervention approaches influence key protective and risk factors. Holman and Ziedenberg (2006) observed that confinement may disrupt schooling, family connections, and pro-social community ties, factors that are strongly associated with positive youth development and reduced likelihood of reoffending (Holman et al., 2006). In contrast, Lipsey's (2009) meta-analysis demonstrated that programs emphasizing mentoring, skill development, and family involvement were associated with greater reductions in reoffending than punitive or surveillance-based models (Lipsey, 2009). National reform efforts, such as the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the U.S. Department of Justice, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (2021), further reflect this shift by promoting community-based responses designed to hold youth accountable while strengthening prosocial competencies (Juvenile Detention Alternatives (JDAI), 2021).

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However, despite these national insights, Oregon's localized data comparing diversion programs and detention outcomes remain limited. This project examines juvenile detention and community-based intervention programs in the United States, comparing outcomes associated with each approach across several key dimensions, including recidivism, education, and behavioral health. Through a synthesis of national research evidence and an evaluation of Oregon's existing juvenile justice programs and publicly available data, this project aims to clarify which intervention components are associated with more favorable outcomes and to assess how well Oregon's practices align with evidence-informed models of effective juvenile justice responses.

Statement of Research Objective

The objectives of this project are to (1) evaluate the comparative effectiveness of juvenile detention and community-based interventions in the United States, (2) identify intervention components most consistently associated with improved outcomes for justice-involved youth, and (3) evaluate how Oregon's current juvenile justice programming aligns with those national findings and best-practice standards. The purpose of this project is to synthesize open-access research and publicly available agency reporting to clarify how detention and community-based interventions are associated with key outcomes and to support evidence-informed juvenile justice decision-making in Oregon. The units of analysis include (a) juvenile justice intervention models (detention and community-based alternatives), (b) youth outcome domains reported in the research literature and public reporting systems, and (c) the program components and implementation characteristics associated with more favorable outcomes for justice-involved youth.

Theoretical Framework

Several criminological perspectives offer different explanations for how juvenile justice interventions may influence youth behavior and long-term outcomes. Some theoretical frameworks support diversion and community-based interventions, whereas others suggest that detention and more punitive responses may deter future offending. Recognizing these competing perspectives is important because the central research question of this project examines how outcomes may differ across intervention contexts.

This project primarily draws on Labeling Theory and Social Control Theory to frame how different juvenile justice interventions may relate to youth outcomes across detention and community-based contexts. Labeling Theory suggests that formal justice system involvement and stigmatizing labels can shape identity development and potentially reinforce continued system contact (Becker, 1963; Schumann & C, 1978). Similarly, Social Control Theory emphasizes that strong bonds to family, school, and community function as protective factors against delinquency (Hirschi, 1969; Wiatrowski et al., 1981). From these perspectives, interventions that maintain youth connections to prosocial supports, such as mentoring, education, and family engagement, may reduce the likelihood of continued offending.

At the same time, other theoretical perspectives suggest that detention may discourage future offending. Specific deterrence theory argues that the experience of punishment, including the “pains of imprisonment”, may discourage individuals from engaging in future criminal behavior (Nagin, 2013). Likewise, Rational Choice Theory suggests that individuals weigh the potential costs and benefits of their actions and may alter their behavior to avoid the negative consequences associated with detention or other sanctions (Cornish & Clarke, 1986).

Acknowledging these differing perspectives provides a theoretical foundation for examining

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whether outcomes associated with detention and community-based interventions align more closely with one set of expectations than another.

Research Design

This project employs a qualitative, comparative, literature-based research design to examine how juvenile detention and community-based interventions are associated with outcomes for justice-involved youth and to evaluate how Oregon’s juvenile justice programming aligns with evidence-informed practices identified in the national literature. Guided by the question, *“Based on existing research and publicly available data, how do juvenile detention and community-based interventions compare in terms of youth outcomes, and how do Oregon’s current juvenile justice programs align with those findings?”* the project synthesizes prior scholarship and agency reporting to identify patterns across intervention types and outcome domains.

Data for this project will be drawn from open-access, peer-reviewed literature and publicly available federal and state agency reports, including national juvenile justice resources and Oregon-specific outcome reporting. Rather than estimating causal effects, the analysis focuses on identifying recurring themes, similarities, and differences across studies, particularly in relation to recidivism, educational engagement, and behavioral health outcomes. A detailed description of data collection procedures, source selection, and analysis methods is provided in the Methodology section.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of National Trends in Juvenile Delinquency, Arrest, and Recidivism

National patterns in juvenile delinquency and justice-system involvement have shifted substantially over the past two decades, with broad declines in arrests, court caseloads, and residential placement, alongside continued concerns about reoffending among the smaller group of youth who remain formally processed or confined. Scholars describe overall delinquency patterns in one way by examining juvenile court delinquency caseloads. Recent federal summaries indicate that juvenile courts handled 437,000 delinquency cases involving youth charged with criminal law violations in 2021, and that from 2005 through 2021, the number of delinquency cases declined by 73% (Beigel & Hockenberry, 2021). The same national summary reports that person offenses represented the largest share of delinquency cases in 2021 (37%), followed by property (30%), public order (22%), and drug offense cases (11%), illustrating both the continued volume of court-involved youth and the shifting composition of offense categories over time (Beigel & Hockenberry, 2021). These case-flow trends provide a broad indicator that fewer youth are formally processed for delinquency than in prior decades, even as juvenile courts continue to handle a substantial number of cases each year.

A parallel pattern is evident in law enforcement arrest trends. National arrest-rate data show a steep long-term decline in youth arrests, for example, OJJDP's Statistical Briefing Book reports that the overall juvenile arrest rate (arrests of youth ages 10-17 per 100,000 youth ages 10-17) fell from 6,493.6 in 2000 to 1,269.8 in 2020 (OJJDP, n.d.). The Sentencing Project similarly reports that youth arrests peaked in the mid-1990s and have declined by more than 75% since that period, with most youth arrests involving nonviolent offenses; their summary indicates that in 2024, 8.5% of youth arrests were for offenses categorized by the FBI as Part 1 violent

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crimes (Rovner, 2025). At the same time, recent data summaries also note short-term fluctuations after the early pandemic period. Youth arrests increased from 2021 to 2023 before declining again in 2024, even while remaining well below pre-pandemic levels (Rovner, 2025). Taken together, these indicators show that the juvenile justice system now operates in a context of markedly lower arrest and court-processing volume than in prior decades, while still confronting serious and persistent outcome concerns for youth who do not enter the system.

Declining system involvement is also reflected in youth confinement trends. The Sentencing Project reports that the one-day count of youth held in juvenile justice facilities fell from 108,800 in 2000 to 29,300 in 2023, a 73% decline (Rovner, 2025). OJJDP's Juvenile Residential Facility Census snapshot similarly notes that the number of youths in placement reported in 2022 was 75% below the number reported in 2000, while also documenting a modest increase in placement between 2020 and 2022 (OJJDP, 2024). These patterns indicate a long-term shift away from confinement as the dominant response for youth, though confinement remains a significant intervention for a subset of justice-involved youth, and recent increases emphasize that long-term declines do not eliminate year-to-year variation.

Even within this broader context of declining arrests and confinement, recidivism remains a central descriptive benchmark in juvenile justice research and policy discussions. Federal summaries emphasize that there is no single national juvenile recidivism rate because states define and measure recidivism differently; however, state-level studies consistently report substantial rearrest rates after release from residential placement. OJJDP's Model Programs Guide literature review on juvenile reentry reports that state studies show rearrest rates within one year of release from an institution average 55%, with reincarceration/reconfinement rates averaging 24% over the same timeframe (OJJDP, 2017). These figures are frequently cited in

juvenile justice scholarship as a high-level indicator of the persistence of reoffending among youth who experience residential placement, while also highlighting the methodological reality that recidivism estimates depend heavily on definitions (rearrest versus reconviction), follow-up windows, and the characteristics of youth included in the sample.

Overall, the current empirical landscape is defined by two coexisting trends: (1) long-term declines in youth arrests, delinquency caseloads, and confinement rates, and (2) sustained levels of reoffending among youth who experience deeper justice-system penetration, particularly residential placement. This context provides an empirical foundation for reviewing how detention and community-based interventions are studied and compared in the literature, and it helps explain why researchers increasingly examine intervention components, implementation practices, and jurisdiction-level variation when interpreting youth outcomes across program models. While contemporary data highlight substantial declines in youth arrests, court involvement, and residential placement alongside persistent concerns about recidivism, these patterns are rooted in decades of shifting legal philosophies, policy reforms, and institutional responses to youth offending. Understanding how current intervention approaches emerged, therefore, requires examining the historical development of juvenile justice in the United States and Oregon.

Historical Development of Juvenile Justice in the United States and Oregon

The juvenile justice system in the United States has undergone significant transformation since the establishment of the first juvenile court in Cook County, Illinois, in 1899 (National Research Council, 2013). In three broad waves, these transformations can be anchored to distinct periods: 1899-1960s, 1980s-1990s, and 2000s-present. Early approaches reflected a *parens patriae* philosophy, emphasizing rehabilitation and individualized treatment rather than

punishment (Lipsey, 2009). Throughout the twentieth century, however, shifting political climates, rising public concern about youth crime, and the “tough on crime” movement of the 1980s and 1990s led to an increased reliance on detention and more punitive responses to adolescent offending (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; MacKenzie & Ryan, 1999). During this period, policymakers expanded the use of secure confinement, transferred youth into adult courts at higher rates, and invested in institutional facilities under the assumption that incapacitation would reduce youth crime (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006).

Subsequent research began to challenge these assumptions. A growing body of studies documented adolescents’ developmental vulnerability, the potential criminogenic effects of detention, and the long-term consequences of system involvement (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; Ryan et al., 2014). By the early 2000s, national juvenile justice trends increasingly reflected a shift toward rehabilitation approaches, driven by emerging developmental science, Supreme Court decisions recognizing the reduced culpability of youth (National Research Council, 2013; National Academies of Science, 2019), and accumulating evidence suggesting that many youths respond more positively to community-based interventions than institutional placement (Lipsey, 2009; OJJDP, 2021; Early, Ryon, Hand, et al., 2014).

Shift Toward Rehabilitation and Evidence-Based Practices

As research increasingly revealed that detention frequently disrupted education, strained family relationships, and disconnected youth from prosocial supports, states began exploring alternatives that prioritized accountability alongside youth development. Holman and Ziedenberg (2006) found early evidence that detention increased recidivism for many adolescents, particularly low-risk youth who were unnecessarily exposed to higher-risk peers. Lipsey’s (2009) influential meta-analysis further reinforced the movement toward evidence-based practice,

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demonstrating that structured, skill-building, and relationship-focused community programs consistently outperformed punitive models in reducing reoffending.

These findings encouraged the widespread adoption of evidence-based frameworks such as cognitive-behavioral interventions, multisystemic therapy, and family-centered programming (National Institute of Justice; Lipsey, 2010). At the same time, research documenting racial and ethnic disparities in detention admissions prompted renewed attention to equity and disproportionality in juvenile justice decision-making (OJJDP, 2021). The resulting policy landscape began to shift toward rehabilitative strategies aligned with adolescent development and community partnership models. Evidence-based program selection has increasingly been guided by cost-effectiveness modeling and long-term impact projections, particularly through state-level evaluations demonstrating higher returns on investment for rehabilitation-based approaches compared to confinement (Aos et al., 2004; WSIPP, 2018).

Development of Oregon's Juvenile Justice System

Oregon's juvenile justice history reflects many of these national trends but also includes region-specific reforms that emphasize prevention, community partnership, and accountability. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) advanced initiatives to integrate evidence-based treatment, standardized risk/needs assessment, and cross-system collaboration into youth rehabilitation practices. Over time, the state shifted resources toward community-based services, alternative programs, and prevention-focused investments, especially following the Justice Reinvestment initiatives (Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, 2021), which redirected funding from incarceration to community organizations and local public safety strategies. Oregon's reinvestment strategy emphasizes reducing growth in correctional spending

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while expanding evidence-based community services intended to lower recidivism and improve public safety efficiency (Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, 2021).

Oregon's statewide recidivism monitoring system provides valuable insights into youth outcomes, although reporting limitations and methodological revisions complicate long-term comparisons (OYA JJIS, 2023). Recent data highlight consistent recidivism patterns across years and reveal disparities among youth of color, an issue OYA acknowledges and has prioritized through diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. Despite these initiatives, Oregon lacks extensive comparative research evaluating the relative outcomes of community-based diversion programs versus detention, leaving a critical gap in state-specific evidence.

Federal and State Policy Influences

Federal policy has also shaped the evolution of Oregon's juvenile justice system. The Federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) encouraged states to reduce reliance on detention, address racial disparities, and strengthen community-based programming (OJJDP, 2021). National standards promoted by organizations such as the Annie E. Casey Foundation further pushed states toward data-driven, developmentally appropriate responses to youth behavior (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021).

Oregon's judges, policymakers, and county governments have incorporated these standards through investments in risk assessment tools, community supervision models, and programmatic partnerships with local organizations. Nevertheless, detention remains a significant component of the state's response to specific youth populations, particularly those assessed as high-risk or whose behavior requires structured oversight. The scale of Oregon's community-based program evaluations, however, varies widely by county, making statewide

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comparisons difficult and highlighting the need for rigorous synthesis of available research (Lane County, OR; Clark County, WA). One critical question that remains unanswered is: How do the outcomes of community-based diversion programs compare to those of juvenile detention in Oregon when examining both short-term and long-term recidivism rates? Addressing this question could invite practitioners into partnerships for data sharing, facilitating a comprehensive evaluation of these intervention strategies across different regions of the state.

Regional Influences: Lessons from Washington State and the JDAI Model

As a neighboring state, Washington offers an important comparative context, particularly through its implementation of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). Washington's 2020-2021 JDAI report documented substantial reductions in detention admissions across multiple counties, improvements in the use of objective screening tools, and increased collaboration with community-based programs (Washington State Center for Court Research, 2022). These findings align with national JDAI results, which show that structured diversion, community partnerships, and data-driven decision-making can reduce detention without compromising public safety (WSIPP, 2019).

Washington's experience is highly relevant for Oregon because both states share similar regional demographics, policy environments, and justice reform priorities. Washington's robust data collection, program monitoring, and cross-county collaboration provide a model for how Oregon might strengthen its evaluation of diversion programs and better understand the long-term effects of different intervention types. While Oregon has made progress in expanding community-based alternatives, the absence of statewide comparative analyses highlights an opportunity to learn from neighboring states that have systematically assessed outcomes across intervention strategies.

Theoretical Foundations for Understanding Youth Intervention Outcomes

Understanding how intervention type influences recidivism among justice-involved youth requires grounding the discussion in criminological theory. Theoretical frameworks provide a lens for interpreting why some interventions strengthen prosocial development while others may inadvertently increase the likelihood of reoffending. The literature consistently points to the importance of identity formation, attachment to prosocial institutions, and the role of the social environment in shaping youth behavior (National Research Council, 2013; National Academies of Sciences, 2019). This section synthesizes two core theories, Labeling Theory and Social Control Theory, while integrating broader insights from social learning and developmental research to explain why community-based diversion may yield different outcomes than juvenile detention.

Labeling Theory provides a foundational explanation of how involvement in the justice system can influence youth behavior. Becker's (1963) Labeling Theory argues that deviance is not inherent in an act but arises from the social reaction to that act. When young people are officially labeled as "offenders," they may internalize this identity, experience stigma, and face restricted opportunities in education, employment, and social relationships. These effects may reinforce pathways into continued offending.

In the context of juvenile justice, detention can intensify the labeling process by isolating youth from prosocial influences, placing them alongside higher-risk peers, and signaling that they are part of a deviant category. Research supports these concerns. Holman and Ziedenberg (2006) found that detention can weaken ties to school and family, relationships that help counteract the formation of a deviant identity. Ryan et al. (2014) similarly observed that more extended periods of confinement are associated with higher recidivism, suggesting that increased

exposure to institutional environments strengthens deviant labeling and interrupts normative development. From a theoretical perspective, community-based diversion programs that minimize formal justice contact and maintain youth in their natural environments may reduce the risk of harmful labeling and support more adaptive self-concepts. Formal system processing has also been empirically associated with increased future offending, particularly for low-risk youth, lending additional support to labeling theory's central claims (Petrosino et al., 2010).

Social Control Theory, proposed by Hirschi (1969), emphasizes that strong attachments to family, school, and community institutions discourage delinquency. Youth who maintain positive bonds and commitments to pro-social goals are less likely to engage in criminal behavior. Detention can disrupt these protective factors by interrupting school involvement, straining family relationships, and weakening community ties. Studies reinforce these mechanisms: family support has repeatedly been shown to reduce recidivism, with Farrington and Malvaso (2025) highlighting the critical role of stable family bonds in youth desistance. Evidence from the National Research Council (2013) further confirms that sustained family engagement is among the strongest protective factors against persistent delinquency.

Conversely, community-based interventions often intentionally strengthen these attachments. Diversion programs that emphasize mentorship, family engagement, and school stability directly align with Hirschi's framework. Lipsey (2009) found that interventions grounded in skill-building and relationship development were particularly effective in reducing recidivism, demonstrating how strengthened social bonds act as protective factors. Social Control Theory helps explain why diversion programs may mitigate recidivism: they reinforce social connections rather than severing them (Hirschi, 1969).

Although Labeling Theory and Social Control theory form the primary conceptual foundation for this project, insights from Social Learning Theory and developmental frameworks provide important supplementary context. Akers (1998) argues that behavior is shaped through reinforcement, modeling, and peer influence. Detention facilities, where youth are grouped with peers who may exhibit antisocial attitudes or behaviors, can increase opportunities for negative reinforcement and deviant learning. This aligns with findings by Ryan et al. (2014), who note that peer dynamics within detention environments can heighten the risk of reoffending.

Developmental research in the juvenile justice field highlights adolescence as a period characterized by neurobiological sensitivity to peer environments, challenges in emotional regulation, and ongoing identity formation (Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor, 2016). Interventions that support prosocial development, build cognitive and emotional skills, and maintain youth within supportive environments align more closely with youth developmental needs than confinement-based approaches (Lipsey, 2009). Although these frameworks are not the primary focus of the project, they reinforce the relevance of considering how intervention environments shape learning and behavior.

Integrating Theory with Oregon's Juvenile Justice Context

Applying these theories to Oregon's juvenile justice landscape illustrates why understanding intervention type is essential. Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) emphasizes developmental approaches, positive youth development, and equity-focused reforms, yet detention remains a publicly funded and frequently utilized component of the system (OYA JJIS, 2023). Theoretical frameworks suggest that the context of intervention, community versus confinement, may influence youth outcomes through mechanisms of identity, social attachment, and learning environments (Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor, 2016). For example, diversion programs in

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Oregon that rely on mentorship, family services, and school engagement align with both Labeling and Social Control perspectives. In contrast, detention may introduce conditions that contradict these theoretical principles.

Washington's JDAI experience also supports these theoretical implications. Reductions in detention admissions and increased reliance on community-based alternatives have coincided with improvements in youth outcomes and system efficiency (Washington State Center for Court Research, 2022; Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021). These findings echo the theories synthesized here, suggesting that diversion strategies may help preserve prosocial bonds and avoid the criminogenic effects associated with labeling and detention environments.

Effects of Juvenile Detention on Youth Outcomes

A substantial body of research has examined the impacts of juvenile detention on youth development, behavior, and long-term recidivism (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; National Research Council, 2013; National Academies of Sciences, 2019). Across studies, several consistent themes emerge: confinement can disrupt core developmental processes, expose youth to criminogenic peer influences, weaken connections to family and school, and contribute to higher reoffending rates (Becker, 1963; Akers, 1998; Ryan et al., 2014; Petrosino et al., 2010). Although detention is sometimes viewed as a necessary response for accountability and public safety, the literature indicates that its effects often extend far beyond the period of confinement (Ryan et al., 2014; The Sentencing Project, 2016). This section synthesizes findings on developmental, behavioral, and systemic impacts of detention, with an emphasis on research relevant to Oregon and neighboring regions.

Developmental Impacts. Adolescence represents a period of significant neurological, social, and emotional development. Detention environments, characterized by restricted autonomy, limited peer selection, and limited exposure to prosocial adults, often conflict with these developmental needs (National Research Council, 2013; National Academies of Sciences, 2019). Holman and Ziedenberg (2006) argue that confinement can impede psychosocial maturity by disrupting normative developmental experiences, potentially increasing susceptibility to antisocial behavior. Their findings align with broader developmental theory, which emphasizes the importance of autonomy, structured skill-building, and consistent adult support during adolescence (National Research Council, 2013; National Academies of Sciences, 2019).

Oregon's own system recognizes these developmental concerns. OYA's Annual Performance Progress Report (2023) states that the agency's evidence-based curriculum is built on positive youth development principles designed to strengthen psychosocial maturity, an area closely linked to long-term desistance. However, OYA also acknowledges that youth of color experience poorer outcomes than white youth, suggesting inequities in how developmental supports are delivered or accessed within custodial environments. These disparities underscore the need for interventions that reinforce development rather than limit it (Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor, 2016).

Recidivism Outcomes. One of the most consistent findings across the literature is the relationship between detention and increased recidivism. An evaluation of detention practices found that more extended periods of confinement were associated with higher odds of reoffending, even after controlling for offense severity and demographic factors (Ryan, Abrams, Huang, et al., 2014). The authors argue that detention exposure itself may introduce criminogenic effects by strengthening deviant peer networks or undermining protective factors. Formal

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processing has also been shown to increase subsequent delinquency for low-risk youth, confirming that detention can unintentionally amplify criminal pathways rather than disrupt them (Petrosino et al., 2010).

Holman and Ziedenberg (2006) similarly report that detention increases the likelihood of recidivism by disrupting education, family connections, and access to community supports. This aligns with Becker's (1963) Labeling Theory, suggesting that detention intensifies stigmatization and reinforces a deviant identity, contributing to long-term offending patterns. These outcomes also carry significant economic implications, as juvenile confinement is among the most expensive justice interventions while producing comparatively weak public safety returns (The Sentencing Project, 2024).

In Oregon, the OYA (2023) report shows that parole recidivism was measured at 13.4%, below the agency's 30% target. However, OYA notes that changes in recidivism matching algorithms may have artificially lowered observed rates and cautions that outcomes vary significantly by demographic group. The report underscores that youth of color experience worse outcomes, which is an important limitation in interpreting recidivism data, and a reminder that detention outcomes are not uniform across populations.

Institutional Effects and Peer Influence. Institutional environments play a significant role in shaping youth behavior during and after confinement. Akers' (1998) Social Learning Theory suggests that behavior is shaped through modeling, reinforcement, and peer influence. Detention centers often group youth with peers exhibiting antisocial attitudes or criminal trajectories, creating conditions for negative peer reinforcement. Ryan et al. (2014) emphasize that peer contagion is one of the most widely documented mechanisms by which detention increases recidivism. For instance, minor property offenders housed with violent peers might

adopt more severe antisocial behaviors over time, illustrating how such environments can intensify delinquent behavior patterns.

Walden and Allen (2019) studied staff engagement in short-term detention facilities and found that staff commitment to rehabilitation varied widely. When staff did not consistently model prosocial behavior or reinforce rehabilitative goals, situational culture could shift toward control rather than support, limiting the effectiveness of programming (Walden & Allen, 2019). Their findings highlight that even well-designed rehabilitation curricula may be undermined by inconsistent institutional practices. National evaluations caution that institutional environments lacking consistent therapeutic modeling undermine program effectiveness regardless of curriculum quality (National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021).

These peer and institutional effects contrast sharply with those of community-based interventions, where youth typically interact with prosocial adults, mentors, and community members, a difference that theoretical frameworks predict is meaningful. Evaluations of credible messenger mentoring, multisystemic therapy, and community supervision models show improved outcomes when youth remain embedded in natural support systems (Urban Institute, 2017; MDRC, 2018; National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021; Hawkins, et al., 2009).

Disruptions to Education, Family Ties, and Community Connection. Detention frequently interrupts essential social systems that support positive youth development. According to Holman and Ziedenberg (2006), confinement can sever relationships with teachers, counselors, coaches, and peers, connections that Social Control Theory identifies as protective against delinquency. Youth who fall behind academically, lose school placement, or become disconnected from supportive adults often face increased obstacles upon returning to their communities (Early, Ryon, Hand, et al., 2014; Bonnie & Backes, 2019). County-level

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evaluations in Lane County and Multnomah County confirm that school disengagement is among the most reliable predictors of youth return to system involvement (Lane County, OR; Multnomah County, OR).

Family disruption is another primary concern. Farrington and Malvaso (2025) demonstrate that family support is among the most important predictors of reduced recidivism. Detention can weaken these bonds by limiting visitation, straining family resources, or disrupting caregiving structures. This has particular implications for youth experiencing instability or involvement with child welfare agencies, who may rely on detention as a placement rather than as a restorative tool.

In Oregon, OYA emphasizes the importance of cognitive-behavioral interventions, family engagement, and DEI-focused strategies; however, the agency also notes that service inequities persist (OYA JJIS, 2023). These inequities may be exacerbated when detention disrupts the relationships essential for youth success.

Mental Health Impacts. Although mental health is not the central focus of this project, it remains a critical component of detention outcomes. The Oregon Youth Authority (2023) reports high rates of behavioral health needs among youth in close custody, alongside uneven access to trauma-informed services across facilities. Parallel concerns appear in Washington, where system evaluations note variability in service delivery across counties despite statewide reform efforts (Washington State Center for Court Research, 2022). These findings align with national research demonstrating that detained youth experience elevated rates of trauma, anxiety, and depression, conditions that can be exacerbated by institutional environments (National Academies of Sciences, 2019; Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor, 2016).

Regional Evidence: Oregon and Washington

Regional evidence further reinforces the national literature. Washington's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) reports substantial reductions in detention admissions and improvements in youth outcomes, including declines in recidivism and reductions in racial disparities (Washington State Center for Court Research, 2022; Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021). Researchers attribute these improvements to consistent use of community alternatives, validated risk tools, and strengthened partnerships with community organizations.

This contrasts with Oregon, where community-based interventions exist but lack a comprehensive statewide evaluation. OYA's recidivism reports provide valuable data, but Oregon has not yet conducted systematic comparative studies between diversion programs and detention.

Evaluating detention outcomes is challenging. Recidivism definitions vary widely across studies, ranging from rearrest to reconviction to technical violations (OJJDP, 2021). Sample populations differ in risk level, age, offense type, and length of confinement, complicating cross-study comparisons. Similar methodological concerns have been raised by national research organizations examining inconsistencies in recidivism measurement across jurisdictions (National Research Council, 2013). Some studies rely on administrative data without considering context, such as program quality or staff practices. OYA (2023) notes that methodological changes in recidivism matching may distort long-term trends, further complicating interpretation.

Despite these limitations, the literature consistently indicates that detention is frequently associated with developmental disruption, weakened social supports, and higher recidivism risk, particularly when applied to youth who could be safely served in less restrictive community settings.

Effectiveness of Community-Based Diversion Interventions

A parallel body of research examines the outcomes of community-based diversion programs as alternatives to juvenile detention. Across meta-analyses, program evaluations, and regional studies, community-based interventions consistently demonstrate more substantial impacts on recidivism, prosocial development, family functioning, and long-term youth outcomes (Lipsey, 2009; OJJDP, 2021). This section synthesizes national and regional findings on diversion approaches, with emphasis on mentoring, family-based treatment models, restorative and community-support interventions, and statewide reform efforts such as Washington's JDAI (Washington State Center for Court Research, 2022). Collectively, the literature suggests that well-implemented diversion, particularly when grounded in evidence-based practices, can reduce reoffending more effectively than custodial sanctions.

One of the most influential studies on the effectiveness of juvenile interventions is Lipsey's (2009) meta-analysis, which examined more than 700 program evaluations. Lipsey found that community-based programs produced substantially larger reductions in recidivism than custodial or sanction-oriented interventions. Programs emphasizing cognitive-behavioral strategies, mentoring, skill development, and family involvement demonstrated the most potent effects. Additional longitudinal research, including the *Communities That Care* prevention system, found that coordinated community interventions reduced delinquency and heavy alcohol use among participating youth, further validating the effectiveness of community-based prevention models (Hawkins et al., 2009). Importantly, Lipsey concluded that program modality is less important than quality and proper implementation, a finding that underscores the role of fidelity, staff training, and structured delivery (Lipsey, 2009).

This national pattern is reinforced by Lipsey, Howell, Kelly, and Chapman (2010), who argue that juvenile justice systems often misallocate intensive interventions to low-risk youth while failing to match higher-risk youth with evidence-based services. Their review highlights a consistent finding: community-based programs aligned with risk-needs-responsivity (RNR) principles yield greater reductions in reoffending than detention or punishment-driven responses. Consistent with these findings, WSIPP's benefit-cost analyses show that evidence-based community programs, such as MST, FFT, and mentoring models, produce significantly higher returns on investment than custodial sanctions (WSIPP, 2019).

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2021) reached a similar conclusion in its national overview of recidivism. Across jurisdictions, OJJDP found that community programs incorporating therapeutic, family-centered, or cognitive-behavioral components are associated with lower recidivism than secure confinement. These findings strengthen the case for diversion models rooted in structured, research-supported interventions.

Family-Based Approaches: MST, FFT, and Family Support Models

Family plays a central role in shaping youth outcomes, and a large subset of diversion programming focuses on strengthening family functioning. Farrington and Malvaso (2025) emphasize that family support is “one of the most robust predictors of reduced juvenile recidivism”, with stable parent-child relationships and consistent supervision acting as significant protective factors. This aligns closely with Hirschi's (1969) Social Control Theory, which argues that strong familial bonds reduce delinquent behavior by reinforcing attachment and commitment. Developmental research emphasizes similar conclusions, finding that stable caregiving relationships and consistent family engagement promote neurological regulation and reduce long-term offending (National Academies of Sciences, 2019).

Henggeler and Schaeffer (2016) further support this perspective by evaluating multisystemic therapy (MST) and functional family therapy (FFT), two gold-standard community-based interventions. Their findings show that MST and FFT produce substantial reductions in recidivism, out-of-home placements, and behavioral problems by simultaneously addressing family dynamics, peer influences, school functioning, and community supports. Evaluations summarized by the National Institute of Justice (2015-2021) similarly classify MST and FFT as “effective” or “promising”, citing strong empirical support across multiple jurisdictions. These programs also align with Akers’ (1998) Social Learning Theory: they modify reinforcement patterns, increase prosocial modeling, and shift youth away from criminogenic peer networks.

Collectively, the research indicates that family-centered community programs outperform detention by strengthening the relational and environmental systems that influence youth behavior.

Mentorship, Skill-Building, and Community Support Programs

Beyond family-based models, diversion programs often emphasize mentoring, prosocial skill-building, and structured community support. Lipsey (2009) identifies these program types as having strong effects on recidivism, particularly when delivered by trained staff in a structured curriculum. Community mentorship programs, for example, provide consistent adult relationships that strengthen social bonds, key protective factors in Social Control Theory.

Henggeler and Schaeffer (2016) note that community interventions are most effective when they address multiple domains simultaneously (school, peer groups, family relationships, and skill development). This aligns with Positive Youth Development (PYD) frameworks, which

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emphasize that youth thrive when given opportunities to build competencies, autonomy, and social connection (Bonnie & Backes, 2019).

Although Oregon-specific research on mentorship and skill-building programs is limited, local evaluations show that community-based organizations (CBOs) often provide structured after-school programming, employment training, and culturally-specific services, factors shown nationally to reduce both delinquency and system contact (Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, 2021). National evaluations of structured youth mentorship programs, including credible messenger mentoring and intensive wraparound support, demonstrate improvements in school engagement, employment stability, and reductions in justice involvement (Urban Institute, 2017; MDRC, 2018).

Restorative practices form another major category of diversion. While not always explicitly labeled “diversion”, restorative justice approaches seek to repair harm, strengthen relationships, and hold youth accountable in community settings rather than custodial environments (Farrington & Malvaso, 2025). Lipsey’s (2009) findings suggest that restorative-oriented programs, particularly those involving mediation, conferencing, or victim-offender dialogue, show moderate but meaningful reductions in reoffending.

Restorative approaches are also consistent with the broader theoretical frameworks guiding this project. From a Labeling Theory perspective, restorative approaches reduce exposure to stigmatizing labels by emphasizing reintegration rather than punishment (Becker, 1963). Social Control Theory supports the notion that restorative interventions reinforce bonds between youth, families, and communities, relationships that are central to preventing recurrent delinquency (Hirschi, 1969). Social Learning Theory further suggests that restorative processes offer youth opportunities to observe and engage in prosocial norms through structured dialogue,

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community involvement, and guided reflection (Akers, 1998). These theoretical connections underscore why restorative justice often complements broader diversion goals by creating supportive, accountability-focused environments.

National reviews conducted by OJJDP (2021) indicate that restorative justice is especially effective for youth assessed as low to moderate risk, who are most likely to benefit from interventions that strengthen protective factors without disrupting their community ties. When paired with skill-building components such as communication training or emotional regulation strategies, restorative diversion programs can magnify their positive effects. The CDC's youth violence prevention framework similarly identifies restorative processes and community accountability practices as key components of effective prevention strategies (Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor, 2016). Together, the evidence demonstrates that restorative practices serve as a developmentally appropriate and theoretically grounded alternative to detention, offering pathways that simultaneously promote accountability, community safety, and reduce recidivism.

Economic Benefits of Community-Based Interventions

Diversion is not only more effective but also considerably more cost-efficient (Early, Ryon, Hand, et al., 2014). The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2021) further reports that jurisdictions implementing JDAI have saved high detention-related costs while expanding community alternatives. The Sentencing Project (2024) estimates that juvenile incarceration generates substantial long-term economic losses through decreased lifetime earnings, increased adult criminal system involvement, and the high cost of confinement itself. In contrast, community-based programs operate at a fraction of the cost while producing better public safety outcomes.

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This cost-benefit analysis is highly relevant to Oregon, where justice reinvestment initiatives aim to redirect state funds toward community-based prevention and treatment rather than expensive custodial placements. Oregon’s Criminal Justice Commission similarly reports that reinvesting in community programs reduces system involvement while improving public safety outcomes (Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, 2021). Research by Lipsey et al. (2010) reinforces the finding that investment in moderate-to-high-quality community programs yields significant returns in the form of reduced recidivism and lower long-term societal costs.

Evidence from Washington State and the JDAI Model

Washington State provides one of the strongest regional examples of successful diversion implementation through the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). The Washington State Center for Court Research (2022) reported that: detention admissions declined significantly; racial disparities in detention decreased; youth participating in community alternatives demonstrated positive outcomes; and public safety was maintained or improved. These findings are consistent with national JDAI evaluations documenting substantial reductions in detention use and improvements in youth outcomes across participating sites (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021). Washington’s success is attributed to structured risk assessment tools, community partnerships, strong data reporting practices, and a statewide commitment to reducing unnecessary detention. WSIPP evaluations further reinforce that Washington’s commitment to evidence-based practices has generated measurable reductions in recidivism statewide (WSIPP, 2018).

Because Oregon and Washington shared geographic, demographic, and policy similarities, the JDAI model offers a relevant comparison for Oregon’s reform efforts.

Washington's results strongly suggest that community-based diversion, when systematically implemented, can reduce reliance on detention while improving youth outcomes statewide.

Although the evidence supporting community-based programs is strong, several limitations must be acknowledged. OJJDP (2021) and Lipsey et al. (2010) note that program success depends heavily on implementation quality, staff training, and fidelity monitoring. Community programs may vary widely in structure, intensity, and resource availability. WSIPP (2019) also notes that intervention outcomes differ substantially depending on fidelity, dosage, and population risk level, reinforcing the need for rigorous evaluation. Additionally, Oregon lacks comprehensive evaluation data comparing statewide diversion programs to detention, limiting the ability to draw Oregon-specific conclusions.

Collectively, these findings demonstrate that community-based diversion programs, especially those emphasizing family engagement, mentoring, and skill development, are consistently associated with reducing reoffending and improving youth outcomes when implemented with fidelity.

Comparing Diversion and Detention: Converging Themes in the Literature

A central aim of the existing scholarship is to determine whether juvenile detention or community-based diversion produces more favorable outcomes for youth, particularly in relation to recidivism. Across studies, several converging themes emerge: detention is consistently linked to poor developmental and behavioral outcomes, while community-based interventions show more substantial reductions in recidivism when implemented with adequate structure, family involvement, and therapeutic components. This section synthesizes these cross-cutting findings,

drawing together theoretical and empirical evidence to assess how and why intervention type influences long-term youth outcomes.

Divergent Recidivism Outcomes Across Interventions

The research is remarkably consistent in showing that detention increases the likelihood of reoffending, particularly when compared to matched youth who receive community-based services. National evidence from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2021) shows that youth processed formally or held in secure confinement are more likely to recidivate within 12-36 months than youth diverted to community programs. Ryan, Abrams, and Huang (2014) similarly found that more extended periods of detention correlate with higher recidivism, regardless of offense type.

In contrast, diversion programs, especially those that incorporate counseling, mentoring, or family-based interventions, demonstrate measurable reductions in reoffending. Lipsey (2009) identified average recidivism reductions of 10-40% in high-quality community interventions, a finding reinforced by Lipsey, Howell, Kelly, and Chapman (2010) in their analysis of evidence-based juvenile programs. Regional evidence from Washington State's JDAI initiative (Washington State Center for Court Research, 2022) further demonstrates that replacing detention with structured community supervision maintains public safety while reducing returns to custody.

Taken together, the literature suggests that intervention type, custodial versus community-based, is a strong predictor of recidivism outcomes, with diversion outperforming detention across multiple states and program formats.

Developmental and Psychosocial Differences in Outcomes

Beyond recidivism, the two intervention types differ substantially in their impact on youth development. Holman and Ziedenberg (2006) argue that detention disrupts education, destabilizes family relationships, and exposes youth to antisocial peer influences, factors that collectively weaken pro-social development. Ryan et al. (2014) provide empirical support for these mechanisms, finding that institutional environments intensify antisocial behavior through peer contagion and limit access to pro-social supports.

By contrast, community-based interventions typically work to preserve and strengthen developmental supports. Family-centered programs like those reviewed by Farrington and Malvaso (2025) and Henggeler and Shaffer (2016) intentionally build parent-youth relationships, improve supervision, and increase emotional support, factors consistently associated with decreased delinquency. Community mentorship, skills training, and opportunities for prosocial engagement also reinforce positive identity development.

The literature, therefore, supports a broader conclusion: detention disrupts the social and developmental systems that protect against delinquency, while diversion strengthens them.

Differential Impacts by Risk Level and Needs

A more nuanced theme in the literature involves the interaction between youth risk level and intervention effectiveness. Lipsey et al. (2010) argue that the strongest outcomes occur when interventions are matched to youth risk and needs according to risk-needs-responsivity (RNR) principles. High-risk youth benefit from structured, evidence-based therapeutic programs, while low-risk youth tend to fare better with minimal system involvement.

Detention, however, is often used indiscriminately across risk levels. Research from OJJDP (2021) shows that low-risk youth placed in detention have worse outcomes than similar youth diverted to community supports, primarily due to exposure to higher-risk peers and unnecessary system contact. Conversely, well-matched community programs can reduce recidivism robustly among moderate- and high-risk youth by addressing criminogenic needs.

This cross-study pattern reinforces the conclusion that detention is not only less effective overall but particularly harmful for low-risk youth who could succeed with minimal interventions.

Program Quality, Fidelity, and Implementation Differences

One of the strongest converging themes is that program quality, not simply program type, determines outcomes. Lipsey (2009) found that high-quality diversion programs produce significant reductions in reoffending, while poorly implemented programs show little effect. Lipsey et al. (2010) further identify program fidelity, staff training, and structured curricula as essential components of effectiveness. Even Washington's JDAI success (WSCCR, 2022) is attributed not merely to community supervision but to consistent statewide procedures, standardized risk assessments, community partnerships, and continuous data monitoring.

By contrast, detention facilities vary widely in structure and resources, and even the best-operated facilities struggle to offset the developmental harms associated with confinement (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; Ryan et al., 2014). Walden and Allen (2019) note that even staff commitment to rehabilitation cannot fully overcome structural constraints.

The research, therefore, suggests that community-based programs outperform detention not just because they are community-based, but also because they can be implemented in ways that directly target criminogenic needs and developmental supports.

How Theory Explains Divergent Outcomes

The divergent outcomes between diversion and detention become clearer when viewed through the theoretical lenses that underlie much of the juvenile justice research. Labeling Theory (Becker, 1963) helps explain why youth who experience formal processing or confinement often demonstrate higher rates of reoffending. According to Becker, system involvement can solidify stigmatized identities such as “delinquent” or “offender”, shaping how youth view themselves and how their communities view them. Detention, in this framework, intensifies the likelihood that a young person internalizes a deviant identity, whereas diversion minimizes exposure to harmful labeling and preserves opportunities for prosocial self-definitions. Social Control Theory (Hirschi, 1969) further clarifies these outcomes by emphasizing that bonds to family, school, and community serve as primary protective factors against delinquency. Detention interrupts these bonds by isolating youth from their natural support networks and disrupting schooling and family relationships, while community-based programs intentionally work to strengthen these attachments.

Additional theoretical perspectives reinforce these distinctions. Social Learning Theory (Akers, 1998) suggests that antisocial behavior increases when youth are exposed to delinquent peers who model and reinforce such behavior. Detention settings can inadvertently concentrate higher-risk youth, contributing to peer contagion effects documented in studies such as Ryan et al. (2014). By contrast, diversion programs create opportunities for youth to engage with prosocial peers and adults, aligning behavior with more conventional norms. Contemporary

frameworks such as the Risk-Needs-Responsivity model (Lipsey et al., 2010) and family-centered approaches (Farrington & Malvaso, 2025) add further nuance. These models emphasize that interventions are most effective when they target criminogenic needs, strengthen family functioning, and match services to the youth's developmental and risk profile, conditions far more readily achieved in community settings than in custodial environments. Collectively, these theories illustrate not only why detention often exacerbates risk, but also why diversion aligns more closely with mechanisms known to reduce delinquency.

Across the collective body of research, an apparent convergence emerges regarding the comparative effectiveness of detention and diversion. Studies consistently demonstrate that community-based interventions reduce recidivism more than confinement, a pattern evident in Lipsey's (2009) meta-analysis, OJJDP's national reports (2021), and state-level evaluations such as the Washington JDAI report (Washington State Center for Court Research, 2022). These findings are reinforced by developmental research indicating that detention disrupts the very systems, education, family relationships, and community engagement that protect against delinquency (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006). Empirical analyses show that the harms of detention are not limited to developmental ruptures; institutional placements can also expose youth to delinquent peer groups, increase trauma symptoms, and create barriers to successful reintegration (Ryan et al., 2014). Even when detention facilities adopt rehabilitative approaches, structural constraints and the nature of confinement limit the consistency and depth of intervention delivery, as illustrated in Walden and Allen's (2019) study of short-term facilities.

In contrast, the literature on community-based diversion emphasizes the potential for these programs to strengthen protective factors and address criminogenic needs through family-based services, mentorship, skill-building programs, and therapeutic interventions (Farrington &

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Malvaso, 2025; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016). When implemented with fidelity, diversion programs consistently demonstrate reductions in reoffending, improvements in behavior, and increased prosocial functioning. These empirical patterns also align closely with theoretical expectations: diversion limits harmful labeling, preserves social bonds, fosters prosocial learning, and adheres more closely to contemporary models of evidence-based practice. While no intervention type is universally effective and program outcomes vary by fidelity and youth characteristics, the weight of evidence strongly supports the conclusion that diversion offers more developmentally appropriate and cost-effective pathways for justice-involved youth. When examined together, the literature converges on a consistent conclusion: diversion-based interventions generally outperform detention in reducing recidivism and supporting youth development, particularly for low- and moderate-risk youth.

Oregon and Washington as Case Studies

Oregon's juvenile justice system has undergone significant transformation over the past two decades, shaped by a commitment to balancing accountability, public safety, and youth development. Through Justice Reinvestment initiatives, the state has redirected resources away from costly confinement toward community-based programming that emphasizes family engagement, mentoring, and skill-building (Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, 2021; The Sentencing Project, 2024). These strategies reflect the broader national shift toward evidence-based practices and align with developmental research indicating that youth benefit most from interventions delivered in community settings (Lipsey, 2009; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016). Oregon's approach demonstrates an ongoing effort to reduce reliance on detention while improving long-term outcomes for justice-involved youth.

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Despite these efforts, Oregon's ability to evaluate the comparative effectiveness of diversion and detention remains constrained by data limitations. The Oregon Youth Authority's (2023) Annual Performance Progress Report provides statewide recidivism measures for youth released from close custody, but the state lacks a parallel reporting system for diversion programs. Similar limitations in diversion outcome tracking have been noted in county-level reporting structures (Lane County, OR; Multnomah County, OR). As the OYA notes, recidivism definitions vary, and methodological changes, such as removing Social Security numbers from matching algorithms, introduce uncertainty into trend interpretation. These limitations underscore a key issue: Oregon has made substantial investments in community programming, yet the state lacks consistent, comparative outcome data that would allow policymakers to definitively assess the impact of diversion relative to detention across youth populations. Even so, state-level reforms suggest growing recognition that community-based approaches better align with Oregon's rehabilitative goals and the developmental frameworks that guide contemporary juvenile justice practice.

The OYA's 2023 report documents a recidivism rate of 13.4% for youth paroled from close-custody facilities, a figure that appears substantially lower than rates reported in earlier periods. However, the agency urges caution in interpretation, noting that methodological adjustments likely reduced the number of matches to adult justice records and may underrepresent actual reoffending patterns. This complicates efforts to compare recidivism outcomes between detention and community programs. While the data demonstrate that the state is meeting its internal performance target, these metrics do not allow for direct comparison with community-based diversion outcomes, as Oregon lacks a standardized statewide system for tracking results across different intervention types.

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Nevertheless, the OYA's analysis highlights several factors associated with reduced reoffending among youth in custody settings, including structured cognitive-behavioral interventions, risk/needs assessments, and programming that aligns with principles of Positive Human Development (Lipsey et al., 2010; WSIPP, 2018). These findings are consistent with national research demonstrating the importance of targeted, evidence-informed interventions (Lipsey et al., 2010). The OYA further notes significant disparities in outcomes across racial groups, reflecting broader systemic inequities observed nationwide. This reinforces the need for Oregon-specific research that not only compares intervention types but also examines the role of equity in shaping youth outcomes. The current landscape illustrates both progress and the persistent challenges of producing reliable, comparable data to inform policy decisions.

Oregon's community-based landscape includes a range of nonprofit organizations, county programs, tribal initiatives, and school-based partnerships that collectively support diversion and prevention. Many of these programs provide mentorship, restorative practices, family engagement, and culturally grounded services intended to strengthen youth identity and promote prosocial development. National evaluations of community-based youth development and violence prevention initiatives similarly emphasize these components as protective factors (Hawkins et al., 2009; Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor, 2016). Studies reviewed by Farrington and Malvaso (2025) and Henggeler and Schaeffer (2016) emphasize that interventions rooted in family and community involvement are among the most effective in reducing recidivism. These findings align with Oregon's long-standing reliance on local programming to support at-risk youth.

However, unlike Washington's JDAI network, Oregon lacks a statewide mechanism to systematically evaluate community programs or track long-term outcomes across counties. Much

of the available information comes from individual program evaluations, county-level assessments, or grant-funded reports, which vary widely in scope and methodology. This variation is evident across counties such as Lane and Multnomah, where reporting practices, program models, and outcome measures differ significantly. As a result, Oregon's community programming system is robust but fragmented. Without a unified evaluation framework, the state cannot fully document the comparative advantages that community programs may offer over detention. This gap presents an opportunity for future research to synthesize local efforts into a statewide evidence database and inform more consistent policy direction.

Washington State's JDAI Model and Its Relevance to Oregon

Washington State offers a useful comparative model through its participation in the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). The 2020-2021 Washington JDAI report (Washington State Center for Court Research, 2022) demonstrates that jurisdictions implementing detention alternatives, such as evening reporting centers, family-centered interventions, and restorative practices, significantly reduced detention admissions while maintaining public safety. Independent cost-effectiveness analyses also support Washington's reliance on evidence-based diversion over detention (WSIPP, 2019). Washington's data infrastructure allowed researchers to track detention use, youth demographics, risk levels, and short-term recidivism indicators across counties. This level of transparency and consistency produces a clearer picture of how diversion and structured alternatives perform relative to traditional detention.

For Oregon, Washington's experience illustrates the potential value of establishing a statewide framework to guide diversion interventions and track recidivism outcomes across communities. The similarities between the two states, including shared geographic, demographic,

and policy contexts, make Washington's success particularly relevant. Washington's JDAI results also reinforce the theoretical expectations highlighted in this review: reducing youth exposure to detention, particularly for low- and moderate-risk youth, supports better developmental outcomes and lowers recidivism risk. By comparison, Oregon's current system of decentralized community programming lacks the unified data structure needed to evaluate outcomes at scale. Thus, Washington's model provides both a roadmap and a motivation for developing more systematic evaluation strategies in Oregon.

Gaps in Oregon-Specific Comparative Evidence

Although Oregon has invested heavily in community-based programs and implemented statewide reforms to reduce reliance on detention, the existing research base provides limited direct comparison between diversion and detention outcomes. Most national studies exclude Oregon-specific samples, and the state's own data infrastructure does not yet produce consistent cross-program evaluations. Unlike Washington's JDAI system, Oregon does not track diversion outcomes in a standardized way that would allow researchers to identify differences in recidivism outcomes by intervention type, risk level, or demographic subgroup. This gap remains one of the most significant barriers to concluding how Oregon's interventions impact long-term youth outcomes.

The absence of Oregon-specific comparative data also reinforces the need for research that integrates program evaluations, state reports, and national findings to contextualize how intervention strategies may influence youth development. Existing evidence overwhelmingly supports the benefits of community-based interventions (Lipsey, 2009; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016; Farrington & Malvaso, 2025), and Oregon's own Justice Reinvestment strategies align with these research trends. Yet without systematically collected state-level data, Oregon cannot

fully document the outcomes of its investments or identify disparities that may persist within the system. While Oregon's reform strategies parallel evidence-supported approaches used in Washington, the lack of standardized diversion outcome data limits Oregon's ability to draw definitive comparisons between intervention types.

Gaps, Limitations, and Contradictions in the Literature

Definitions and measures of recidivism. One of the most persistent limitations across juvenile justice literature is the lack of a uniform definition of recidivism. Studies included in this review operationalized recidivism in different ways, including rearrest, reconviction, reincarceration, and probation revocation (OJJDP, 2021). Some reports emphasized reconviction, while others relied on arrest data, resulting in outcomes that are not directly comparable across studies. The Oregon Youth Authority (2023) similarly notes that changes in reporting methods and data matching procedures complicate the interpretation of state-level findings. Without standardized definitions, it becomes difficult to accurately assess whether one intervention type demonstrates superior outcomes or whether discrepancies are artifacts of inconsistent measurement.

Further complicating comparison is the fact that recidivism often fails to capture developmental progress or desistance trajectories among justice-involved youth. Measures of success frequently exclude indicators such as educational attainment, employment, mental health status, or family reintegration, which are central to rehabilitation goals (Lipsey et al., 2010). As a result, studies that use only recidivism rates may understate the impact of community-based programs that produce non-criminal justice improvements. This gap underscores the need for multi-dimensional outcome measures that reflect youth development, not merely legal system involvement.

Underrepresentation of Oregon-specific comparative research. While national studies provide substantial insight into juvenile justice trends, Oregon-specific research remains sparse. Much of the literature reviewed originates from national datasets, multi-state analyses, or regional evaluations outside Oregon (Lipsey, 2009; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016; OJJDP, 2021). Although Oregon publishes annual recidivism reports for youth in close custody, the state does not maintain a comparable reporting framework for community-based diversion programs (OYA JJIS, 2023). This imbalance limits the ability to conduct direct, within-state comparisons and weakens the generalizability of national findings to Oregon’s specific policy environment.

The absence of centralized evaluation systems also means that many community programs operate without consistent outcome measurement. This mirrors concerns raised by practitioners nationwide regarding the lack of reliable data infrastructure for diversion programs, which limits the visibility and scalability of community interventions (Lipsey et al., 2010). Without standardized reporting, Oregon’s investment in community-based services remains difficult to evaluate systematically, creating an evidence gap that persists despite increasing reliance on diversion strategies across the state.

Methodological weaknesses in program evaluation studies. Another critical limitation involves the variable methodological quality of program evaluations. Studies differ considerably in their research designs, sample sizes, and analytical rigor. Some rely on self-reported outcomes or short-term follow-up periods that limit conclusions about long-term effectiveness (Lipsey, 2009). Others use quasi-experimental designs that lack random assignment, introducing selection bias and limiting causal interpretation. For example, youth placed into diversion programs often differ systematically from those placed in detention, frequently exhibiting lower risk levels at

intake (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016). Without robust statistical controls, differences in recidivism may reflect preexisting characteristics rather than program impact.

Additionally, publication bias may influence conclusions in the literature. Programs with favorable outcomes are more likely to be publicly disseminated, while null or negative results may remain unpublished (Lipsey et al., 2010). This creates an imbalance in available evidence, overstating the effectiveness of some interventions and obscuring the limitations of others. These methodological challenges highlight the need for cautious interpretation and underscore the importance of triangulating results across multiple sources rather than drawing conclusions from a single study.

Contradictory findings regarding detention outcomes. The literature presents mixed findings on the effects of juvenile detention, fueling an ongoing debate. Some studies suggest that short-term, structured placements may provide stability or access to services otherwise unavailable in community settings (Walden & Allen, 2019). This perspective emphasizes the potential moderating roles of institutional programming and staff engagement in detention outcomes. However, other research consistently reports that detention is associated with negative educational, psychological, and social consequences, which may increase long-term delinquency (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; Ryan et al., 2014).

These contradictions may reflect variability in facility conditions, staff training, and the availability of rehabilitative services. Detention settings are not uniform, and outcomes likely depend on contextual factors that are unevenly measured. This inconsistency supports the conclusion that detention itself is not inherently deterministic but that its effects are shaped by institutional quality. However, given the costs and risks associated with confinement, the

literature increasingly questions detention as a default intervention for youth when less restrictive alternatives are available.

Equity concerns represent another significant gap in the literature. Studies consistently indicate that youth of color experience disproportionately high rates of system involvement and poorer outcomes across intervention types (OYA JJIS, 2023; OJJDP, 2021). While some evaluations examine aggregate effects, fewer disaggregate results by race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic status. This gap obscures how structural inequality operates within juvenile justice and limits the development of culturally responsive interventions.

Oregon's recidivism data similarly reflect disparities in outcomes across racial groups, suggesting that intervention effectiveness may vary by demographic characteristics (OYA JJIS, 2023). The absence of race-conscious program evaluations means reforms may unintentionally reproduce inequities even when overall outcomes improve. Future research must integrate equity-focused analysis to ensure that interventions not only reduce recidivism but also promote fairness and accessibility across populations.

Gaps in community-based program evaluation. Although community-based programs demonstrate promising outcomes, formal evaluations remain inconsistent. Many nonprofit organizations lack funding or infrastructure to conduct longitudinal analyses or publish findings in peer-reviewed outlets. As a result, successful community interventions may remain undocumented in academic literature, limiting their influence on policy decisions (Lipsey et al., 2010). This under-reporting contributes to an evidence base that favors system-run programs over grassroots initiatives, despite demonstrated benefits of community-led interventions.

The Washington JDAI model illustrates how centralized reporting systems can resolve some of these issues by aggregating county data and promoting transparency (Washington State Center for Court Research, 2022). Oregon's lack of a comparable framework makes it difficult to assess which diversion strategies perform best across demographic and geographic contexts. These limitations highlight the need for more consistent, equity-focused, and jurisdiction-specific evaluations, particularly in Oregon, to better assess how intervention type shapes long-term youth outcomes.

Conclusion

This literature review examined the comparative impacts of community-based diversion programs and juvenile detention on recidivism and youth outcomes, with a particular focus on implications for Oregon's juvenile justice system. Across national studies, state-level data, and program evaluations, a consistent pattern emerged: interventions delivered in community settings are generally associated with more favorable developmental and behavioral outcomes for justice-involved youth than those centered on confinement. Although exceptions exist depending on program quality and youth risk level, the cumulative evidence supports a growing consensus that detention should not function as the primary response to juvenile offending when effective alternatives are available.

Theoretical frameworks further strengthened this conclusion. Labeling Theory suggests that formal system involvement can reinforce deviant identity formation, especially when youth are exposed to stigmatizing environments that limit opportunities for reintegration (Becker, 1963). Social Control Theory highlights the importance of strong bonds to family, schools, and communities in reducing delinquency (Hirschi, 1969), reinforcing the developmental advantages of interventions that preserve social attachment rather than disrupt it. Social Learning Theory

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additionally emphasizes that peer environments and reinforcement patterns shape behavior (Akers, 1998), illuminating why institutional peer dynamics may amplify delinquency while community settings may foster prosocial norms. Together, these theoretical perspectives offer a coherent framework for understanding why community-centered interventions tend to outperform custodial models across multiple youth outcome measures.

Despite these insights, this review also revealed substantial limitations within the existing research base. The absence of standardized definitions of recidivism, inconsistent evaluation methodologies, and limited Oregon-specific data constrain efforts to draw definite conclusions at the state level. Oregon's reliance on detention data, without equivalent tracking of diversion outcomes, limits the state's capacity to evaluate whether community-based investments deliver proportional results. The Washington JDAI model demonstrates that coordinated data systems can facilitate meaningful evaluation, suggesting a potential pathway for strengthening Oregon's analytic infrastructure through centralized oversight and consistent performance metrics.

The findings presented here underscore the need for continued research that integrates state-level proprietary data, community program evaluations, and equity-focused analysis. As Justice Reinvestment efforts expand across Oregon, empirical evidence must guide decision-making to ensure that interventions reduce recidivism while promoting fairness, accountability, and youth development. By synthesizing existing scholarship, this review situates the present study within national and regional contexts and highlights critical knowledge gaps that warrant further investigation. Ultimately, understanding how intervention type shapes long-term outcomes for justice-involved youth is not only a research priority but also a policy imperative with profound implications for public safety and youth trajectories.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Although juvenile arrests and youth confinement have declined significantly over the past two decades, persistent patterns of reoffending and uneven developmental outcomes continue to raise questions about how juvenile justice interventions shape long-term trajectories for system-involved youth. The preceding literature review highlights a growing body of research comparing detention and community-based responses, as well as ongoing debates about which intervention approaches most effectively support rehabilitation and positive youth development. Building on this foundation, the present project synthesizes existing research and publicly available agency reporting to examine how differences in intervention context and program design are associated with youth outcomes and to evaluate how Oregon's current juvenile justice practices align with evidence-informed findings identified in national research.

Guided by this purpose, the objectives of this project are to (1) evaluate the comparative effectiveness of juvenile detention and community-based interventions in the United States, (2) identify intervention components most consistently associated with improved outcomes for justice-involved youth, and (3) evaluate how Oregon's current juvenile justice programming aligns with those national findings and best-practice standards. To address these objectives, the project employs a qualitative, comparative research design grounded in the systemic synthesis of secondary sources, including peer-reviewed studies and publicly available agency reports. The following sections describe the research design, data sources, and analytic procedures used to conduct this project.

Research Design and Rationale

This project employs a qualitative, comparative, secondary research design grounded in the systematic review and synthesis of existing empirical literature and publicly available

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administrative reports. This design was selected because the research objectives focus on comparing juvenile detention and community-based interventions, identifying intervention components associated with youth outcomes, and evaluating how Oregon's juvenile justice programming aligns with evidence-informed practices. Given the ethical and practical constraints associated with experimentally assigning justice-involved youth to interventions, a literature-based approach using secondary sources represents the most appropriate and feasible method for addressing the research question.

This approach is consistent with prior juvenile justice research that relies on integrative reviews, systematic reviews, and policy evaluations to assess intervention effectiveness and inform practice (Lipsey, 2009; Petrosino et al., 2010; Elliott et al., 2020). Rather than estimating causal effects, the project synthesizes patterns and associations reported across multiple sources, allowing for a structured and transparent comparison of intervention outcomes across studies and administrative reports (OJJDP, 2017; National Research Council, 2013).

Data Sources and Search Strategy

Data for this project consist exclusively of secondary sources, including peer-reviewed scholarly literature and publicly available federal and state agency reports. Primary digital access to scholarly sources was obtained through Western Oregon University's Wayne and Lynn Hamersly Library online databases, including Criminal Justice Database, ProQuest, JSTOR, and other discipline-relevant collections. Google Scholar was also used to identify open-access articles and reports not restricted by database access.

Public agency sources were obtained directly from federal and state repositories, including the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Oregon Youth

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Authority's juvenile justice outcomes, as well as Oregon-specific outcome reporting used in the state-level evaluation component of this project.

Search terms were used iteratively and included combinations of juvenile detention, community-based interventions, diversion programs, juvenile recidivism, youth outcomes, educational outcomes, mental health outcomes, and Oregon juvenile justice. Citation chaining was used to identify additional relevant sources referenced in highly applicable studies.

A total of approximately 46 sources were reviewed for this project, including peer-reviewed journal articles, government and agency reports, and other scholarly publications (Appendix A). Of the approximately 46 sources reviewed, the majority examine juvenile justice interventions at a national level, while a smaller number focus on Oregon-specific data and program evaluation. 22 of these sources were subsequently used for outcome-focused synthesis (Appendix B), and 18 sources were used as intervention component analysis (Appendix C), based on their empirical focus and relevance to the project's research objective.

Each source was initially screened based on title and abstract to determine relevance to the project's objectives. Sources that appeared relevant were then reviewed in full to assess methodological clarity, outcome measures, and applicability to juvenile detention or community-based interventions.

Zotero, a reference management software, was used to manage and screen sources throughout the research process. Articles and reports identified through database searches and web-based sources were saved directly to Zotero using the browser extension. Zotero collections and notes were used to organize sources by intervention type, outcome domain, and relevance to

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the national comparison or Oregon-specific evaluation. This process supported systematic source selection while reducing duplication and maintaining a transparent record of reviewed materials.

Sources were included in the project if they met the following criteria:

- (a) Focused on justice-involved youth in the United States;
- (b) Examined juvenile detention or community-based interventions, including diversion programs;
- (c) Reported outcomes related to recidivism, educational engagement, mental health, or closely related indicators of youth well-being;
- (d) Were published between 1990 and 2025 to balance foundational and contemporary relevance;
- (e) And were available in English and accessible as full-text sources.

Sources were excluded if they focused exclusively on adult populations, lacked clearly defined outcomes, or did not provide sufficient methodological detail to support interpretation. Opinion-based or advocacy materials without empirical grounding were not used as evidence for findings.

To ensure transparency and consistency in data extraction, this project employs a series of appendix tables that document and structure the evidence reviewed. Appendix A contains a comprehensive table of all sources included in the literature review. For each source, the table records the author(s), publication year, title, relevant research objective addressed, research methods, key findings, and relevance to the present project. This table includes both background and empirical sources and serves as the primary documentation tool for the literature review and overall evidence base.

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From this broader set of reviewed sources, a subset of studies was selected for further analytic categorization based on their relevance to specific research objectives. Appendix B includes only those sources that empirically examine youth outcomes associated with juvenile detention and/or community-based interventions. These sources are organized by outcome domain, including recidivism, educational engagement, and mental or behavioral health indicators. Appendix B supports cross-study comparison of outcome patterns without duplicating background or historical literature that does not report empirical findings.

Appendix C includes a further subset of sources that explicitly identify, evaluate, or describe intervention components and program characteristics associated with favorable youth outcomes. Drawing from findings reported in Appendix A, Appendix C organized sources based on recurring components of community-based interventions, such as service type, level of supervision, family involvement, treatment integration, and program structure or intensity. Not all sources reviewed in Appendix A are represented in Appendix C, as inclusion is limited to studies that directly address program design or implementation features.

Together, these appendix tables function as complementary tools for data extraction and synthesis. Appendix A documents the full scope of the literature reviewed, while Appendices B and C support targeted analytic synthesis aligned with the project's comparative and evaluative objectives. This tiered approach allows for systematic organization of evidence without expanding the scope of analysis beyond what is feasible or supported by the available data.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

Data analysis was conducted through qualitative synthesis rather than statistical aggregation. Findings from the literature review were reviewed and compared using the

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appendix tables to identify recurring themes, patterns, and distinctions across intervention types. Sources were examined for how outcomes were defined and measured, particularly with respect to recidivism timeframes, educational engagement indicators, and mental health-related outcomes.

The analysis focused on three interconnected components: (a) comparing reported outcomes associated with juvenile detention and community-based interventions, (b) identifying intervention components and program characteristics frequently linked to more favorable outcomes, and (c) assessing how Oregon's publicly documented programs and outcome reporting align with evidence-informed practices identified in the national literature. This process mirrors the spreadsheet-based thematic organization approach used in comparable literature-based studies and supports a structured synthesis without overstating empirical claims.

The use of secondary data allows this project to synthesize a broad body of evidence across jurisdictions and program models while avoiding ethical and logistical barriers associated with primary data collection involving justice-involved youth. However, this approach also inherits limitations present in the existing literature, including variation in outcome definitions, differences in program implementation, and potential selection bias due to non-random assignment to interventions. These limitations are acknowledged throughout the analysis, and findings are interpreted as associations rather than causal estimates.

This project relies exclusively on publicly available documents and does not involve interaction with human subjects or access to identifiable private data. As such, formal informed consent procedures and institutional review board approval are not required. Ethical considerations are limited to accurate representation of sources and responsible interpretation of findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This chapter presents the results derived from a qualitative, comparative synthesis examining the association between juvenile detention and community-based interventions and outcomes for justice-involved youth, the intervention components most frequently linked to these outcomes, and how Oregon's current juvenile justice practices align with patterns identified in the national literature. Consistent with the research design and methodology described previously, the results are organized around three primary objectives: (1) evaluating the comparative effectiveness of juvenile detention and community-based interventions in the United States, (2) identifying intervention components most consistently associated with improved outcomes for justice-involved youth, and (3) evaluating how Oregon's current juvenile justice programming aligns with those national findings and best-practice standards.

The findings presented in this chapter are drawn from peer-reviewed empirical studies, federal agency publications, and publicly available state-level administrative reports identified through the systematic search strategy described previously. Appendix A provides a comprehensive table of sources reviewed for this project, while Appendices B and C organize outcome domains and intervention components used to structure the results synthesis. This section focuses specifically on reporting observable patterns, outcome trends, and descriptive comparisons that directly address the research objectives. Interpretation of the findings and discussion of implications are reserved for the Discussion chapter.

Objective 1: Comparative Outcomes of Juvenile Detention and Community-Based Interventions

Across the national studies and administrative reports reviewed in this project, community-based interventions were more frequently associated with reduced or stabilized

recidivism outcomes compared to detention-focused responses. Meta-analyses and program evaluations consistently reported measurable reductions in reoffending among youth participating in structured therapeutic or family-oriented community programs (Lipsey, 2009; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016; Elliott et al., 2020). In contrast, detention-focused research frequently documented continued system contact among youth following release, with outcomes varying according to risk level, offense severity, and placement characteristics (Ryan et al., 2014; Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; OJJDP, 2017). National research also reported that community-based interventions were more likely than detention-focused approaches to document improvements in educational engagement, family functioning, and psychosocial outcomes among justice-involved youth (Bonnie & Backes, 2019; Urban Institute, 2017).

This section reports patterns observed across the evidence base regarding youth outcomes associated with juvenile detention and community-based intervention approaches. Outcomes were examined across multiple domains identified in the methodology, including recidivism, educational engagement, psychosocial functioning, and family or social relationship indicators. Rather than presenting findings by individual author or study, results are organized by outcome type to reflect recurring patterns identified across the sources included in Appendix A and categorized in Appendix B.

Recidivism Outcomes Reported in Detention-Focused Studies

Recidivism was the most consistently reported outcome measure among detention-focused studies included in this project. Across national evaluations and policy analyses, recidivism was typically operationalized using rearrest, re-referral, or reconviction indicators, although definitions varied by jurisdiction and study design (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; Petrosino et al., 2010; Ryan et al., 2014). Follow-up periods most commonly ranged from one

year to three years after release, with some administrative reports tracking youth for longer periods depending on data availability (OJJDP, 2017; OYA JJIS, 2023).

Detention-focused analyses frequently distinguished recidivism outcomes by assessed risk level, offense type, and placement characteristics. Studies examining custodial placement reported that youth classified as higher risk or with more extensive prior system involvement were more likely to experience continued system contact following release (Ryan et al., 2014; Walden & Allen, 2014). In addition to recidivism measures, several detention-focused studies documented educational disruption, reduced school continuity, and challenges maintaining family or community engagement during confinement periods, outcomes reported alongside patterns of subsequent rearrest or re-referral in follow-up tracking (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006).

Administrative reporting further reflected variability in recidivism measurement across systems. State-level reports differed in how outcomes were defined, including distinctions between technical violations, new law violations, and formal adjudications, as well as differences in follow-up windows used to calculate recidivism rates (OYA JJIS, 2023). These differences in measurement approaches contributed to variation in reported outcomes across detention-focused sources included in this project.

Recidivism Outcomes Reported in Community-Based Intervention Studies

Empirical evaluations of community-based interventions included in this project reported measurable reductions in recidivism across multiple program models. Meta-analytic findings indicated that therapeutic and skill-based interventions were associated with modest but consistent decreases in reoffending relative to control or minimal-service conditions (Lipsey,

2009). Comparative analyses of diversion and formal processing further found that youth formally processed through the juvenile justice system did not show lower delinquency outcomes than youth diverted from formal processing, with several studies reporting equal or higher recidivism among formally processed youth (Petrosino et al., 2010).

Experimental evaluations of community-based programming similarly reported lower rearrest outcomes among participants receiving structured intervention services. Early et al. (2014) documented reductions in recidivism alongside improved cost-effectiveness outcomes compared to traditional system responses. Evaluations of multisystemic therapy and related family-based interventions reported decreases in rearrest and out-of-home placement rates among program participants relative to comparison groups receiving usual services (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016). Benefit-cost analyses conducted by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy also identified evidence-based community programs as producing measurable recidivism reductions while demonstrating positive economic returns (Aos et al., 2004; WSIPP, 2018-2019).

Across community-based intervention studies included in this project, recidivism outcomes varied according to youth risk level, program intensity, and implementation context; however, structured therapeutic and family-oriented approaches were most consistently associated with lower reoffending outcomes within reported follow-up periods.

Comparison of Recidivism Outcomes Across Intervention Types

Comparative national research included in this project reported differences in recidivism outcomes associated with intervention context, although findings varied according to youth risk level and program structure. Met-analytic evidence indicated that structured therapeutic and skill-based interventions were associated with measurable reductions in reoffending compared to

control or minimal-service conditions, whereas custodial placement alone did not consistently demonstrate reductions in recidivism across reported follow-up periods (Lipsey, 2009; OJJDP, 2017). Systematic review findings further reported that formal system processing did not produce lower delinquency outcomes than diversion approaches in several evaluated studies, with some analyses identifying comparable or higher reoffending rates among formally processed youth (Petrosino et al., 2010).

Experimental and program-level evaluations similarly reported lower rearrest outcomes among youth participating in structured community-based interventions compared to traditional justice processing responses (Early, Ryon, Hand, et al., 2014). Evaluations of multisystemic therapy and related family-based interventions documented decreases in rearrest and out-of-home placement outcomes relative to comparison groups receiving usual services (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016), while benefit-cost analyses identified several evidence-based community programs as producing measurable recidivism reductions alongside positive economic outcomes (Aos et al., 2004; WSIPP, 2018-2019).

Detention-focused analyses included in this project documented continued system contact for some youth following release, particularly among higher-risk populations or youth with extensive prior system involvement (Ryan et al., 2014). Variation in recidivism definitions, follow-up windows, and reporting practices across national studies contributed to differences in reported outcomes across intervention types.

Across the comparative literature reviewed for this project, several consistent patterns emerged regarding intervention outcomes, including reported reductions in recidivism among youth participating in structured, therapeutic community-based programs relative to traditional custodial responses (Lipsey, 2009; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016; Early, Ryon, Hand, et al.,

2014). At the same time, findings were not uniform across all studies. Some analyses reported mixed or inconclusive results depending on youth risk level, program implementation quality, or differences in outcome measurement approaches, particularly where follow-up periods varied, or recidivism definitions differed across jurisdictions (Petrosino et al., 2010; OJJDP, 2017). A structured categorization of recidivism outcome domains and intervention types referenced throughout this subsection is provided in Appendix B.

Non-recidivism Outcomes Reported in the Literature

Beyond recidivism, a substantial portion of the national research reviewed for this project reported outcomes related to educational engagement, behavioral health, and social functioning among justice-involved youth. Educational outcomes were most frequently discussed in studies examining diversion and community-based programming. Developmental research and national policy analyses consistently documented that placement in secure detention was associated with disruptions in school continuity and lower rates of academic engagement compared to youth supervised in community settings (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; National Research Council, 2013; Bonnie & Backes, 2019). In contrast, evaluations of structured diversion and school-based restorative programs reported improvements in school attendance, disciplinary outcomes, or continued educational participation, particularly when interventions emphasized mentoring, family engagement, or collaboration with educational institutions (Augustine et al., 2024; The Sentencing Project, 2024).

Mental and behavioral health outcomes were also reported across several national program evaluations. Community-based therapeutic models, including Multisystemic Therapy and related family-focused approaches, documented reductions in behavioral symptoms and improvements in emotional regulation and family functioning relative to traditional supervision

or custodial responses (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016; National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021). Prevention and youth development initiatives described by Mercy and Vivolo-Kantor (2016) and Hawkins et al. (2009) similarly reported improvements in prosocial behavior and reductions in risk factors associated with delinquency when youth remained connected to community supports. Conversely, detention-focused literature more often emphasized the potential for exposure to trauma, stress, or social isolation during confinement, although these outcomes were typically discussed descriptively rather than measured through standardized mental health instruments (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; National Research Council, 2013).

Studies examining family and social relationship outcomes reported that interventions incorporating family therapy, credible messenger mentoring, or structured pro-social adult support were associated with improved communication patterns and stronger youth-caregiver relationships (Urban Institute, 2017; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016). These outcomes were frequently presented alongside reductions in behavioral incidents or improvements in youth self-regulation, though measurement strategies varied considerably across studies. Federal literature reviews further noted that reentry and diversion programs emphasizing gradual community reintegration and structured supervision reported improved stability in housing, education, or employment compared to youth released directly from secure placement without comparable support services (OJJDP, 2017).

Across intervention types, non-recidivism outcomes were reported using diverse measurement approaches, including school records, program completion indicators, behavioral assessments, and qualitative program evaluations. This variation limited direct comparison across studies but demonstrated that community-based models were more likely than detention-focused programs to include multidimensional outcome measures extending beyond rearrest or

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reconviction (Elliott et al., 2020; Lipsey, 2009). A structured categorization of educational, psychosocial, and family-related outcomes identified across sources included in this project is summarized in Appendix B.

Across the sources included in this project, recidivism was the most consistently reported outcome domain used to compare juvenile detention and community-based interventions. Detention-focused research documented continued system contact among a substantial proportion of confined youth across follow-up periods, with studies noting variability in outcomes based on offense severity, assessed risk level, and placement characteristics (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; Ryan et al., 2014; OYA JJIS, 2023). National administrative and literature review data similarly reflected high rates of rearrest or continued justice involvement following release from custodial settings, although definitions and measurement periods differed across jurisdictions (OJJDP, 2017; Rovner, 2025).

In contrast, studies examining community-based diversion and treatment-oriented interventions frequently reported lower or comparable recidivism outcomes relative to custodial placement when programs incorporated structured supervision, family engagement, and therapeutic supports (Lipsey, 2009; Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016; Elliott et al., 2020). Meta-analytic and program evaluation research indicated that outcomes varied across intervention models, with the strongest reported effects occurring in programs aligned with risk-needs-responsivity principles or multisystemic approaches (Aos et al., 2004; WSIPP, 2018; National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021). Comparative studies did not uniformly report causal differences between intervention types; however, multiple sources described consistent patterns in which community-based programs were associated with reduced or stabilized reoffending trajectories

for certain youth populations when compared to traditional detention pathways (Petrosino et al., 2010; Early, Ryon, Hand, et al., 2014).

Beyond recidivism, the literature reported additional outcome domains related to education, behavioral health, and family functioning. Custodial placement studies documented disruptions to schooling and social supports among detained youth, while diversion-focused research highlighted improvements in school engagement, prosocial relationships, or behavioral outcomes within structured community programming (Bonnie & Backes, 2019; Urban Institute, 2017; MDRC, 2018). Taken together, the findings presented across Objective 1 indicate that existing national research documents measurable differences in reported youth outcomes across intervention contexts, while also demonstrating variability based on program design, implementation characteristics, and youth risk profiles (Lipsey, 2009; Elliott et al., 2020; OJJDP, 2017).

Objective 2: Intervention Components Associated with Youth Outcomes

Across the national studies and program evaluations reviewed in this project, several intervention components were repeatedly associated with improved outcomes for justice-involved youth. The literature most consistently identified family-based services, mentoring and pro-social adult supports, therapeutic and skill-building programming, structured supervision combined with services, and risk-needs assessment practices as components present in programs reporting reductions in recidivism and improvements in youth behavioral outcomes (Lipsey, 2009; Elliott et al., 2020; National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021). These components were most frequently implemented within community-based intervention models rather than custodial settings and were commonly delivered together within integrated program structures. The

sections that follow present detailed findings on how each of these intervention components was associated with reported youth outcomes across the sources included in this project.

Family Involvement and Family-Based Services

Evaluations of multisystemic and family-centered programming reported reductions in rearrest and delinquent behavior when interventions incorporated caregiver engagement, home-based services, and coordinated family treatment strategies (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016). Meta-analytic research examining juvenile justice interventions similarly identified family involvement as a defining feature of programs reporting lower recidivism rates compared to surveillance-oriented or custodial approaches, with effects observed across multiple program models and youth risk levels (Lipsey, 2009).

Program evaluations included in this project also documented outcome patterns beyond recidivism. Prevention trials implementing structured family communication strategies and coordinated school-family interventions documented reductions in substance use and delinquent behavior, alongside improvements in school engagement outcomes among participating youth (Hawkins et al., 2009; Aos et al., 2004). National diversion program reviews documented lower rates of continued system contact during follow-up periods when family participation and caregiver engagement were incorporated into community-based supervision models (The Sentencing Project, 2004; Elliott et al., 2020).

Across program evaluations and meta-analytic studies reviewed for this project, family-based components were repeatedly present in interventions reporting reductions in recidivism as well as improvements in educational engagement and behavioral health indicators, particularly within community-based treatment models (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016; Lipsey, 2009; Elliot et

al., 2020). Outcome domains and intervention characteristics associated with these findings are organized in Appendix C.

Mentoring and Pro-Social Adult Supports

Program evaluations included in this project reported that mentoring and pro-social adult support were commonly implemented within community-based diversion and youth development initiatives and were associated with measurable changes in youth outcomes. Evaluations of credible messenger mentoring programs documented reductions in subsequent system contact and improvements in youth engagement during follow-up periods when mentoring was delivered through structured, relationship-based supervision models (Urban Institute, 2017). Diversion program guidance and national practice reviews similarly identified mentoring as a recurring component in interventions reporting lower rearrest rates compared to traditional supervision approaches that relied primarily on monitoring without structured relational support (The Sentencing Project, 2024; Elliott et al., 2020).

National youth violence prevention initiatives further reported behavioral and psychosocial improvements among youth participating in programs that paired mentoring with broader service delivery models. Reviews of prevention strategies documented increases in school engagement and reductions in risk factors linked to delinquency when sustained pro-social adult relationships were incorporated alongside therapeutic or family-focused programming (Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor, 2016; Elliott et al., 2020). Across sources reviewed for this project, mentoring components were most frequently implemented in community-based settings rather than custodial environments, and outcomes reporting emphasized reduced rearrest, improved behavioral regulation, and strengthened prosocial engagement among participating youth (Urban Institute, 2017; The Sentencing Project, 2024).

Although outcome measurement approaches differed across studies, mentoring and pro-social adult support were repeatedly documented within interventions reporting improvements in recidivism and psychosocial outcomes, particularly when mentoring was delivered with consistent contact and structured goal-setting expectations. Outcome domains and intervention characteristics associated with mentoring components are summarized in Appendix C.

Therapeutic and Skill-Building Programming

Therapeutic and skill-building programming were consistently reported across national evaluations as components present in interventions that demonstrated reductions in delinquent behavior and system contact among justice-involved youth. Meta-analytic findings examining juvenile justice interventions documented that programs incorporating cognitive-behavioral skill development, problem-solving training, and structured therapeutic services reported stronger reductions in recidivism compared to programs emphasizing surveillance or custodial control alone (Lipsey, 2009; Elliott et al., 2020). Clinical overviews of multisystemic therapy similarly reported improvements in behavioral outcomes and lower rates of rearrest among youth receiving intensive therapeutic services delivered across family, school, and community contexts (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016).

National program reviews and federal evidence summaries further documented that therapeutic skill-building approaches were frequently implemented within diversion and community-based supervision models, which were associated with improved educational engagement and behavioral health indicators. Evaluations summarized through federal program ratings identified cognitive-behavioral programming, functional family therapy, and therapeutic foster care as interventions with reported reductions in reoffending across multiple study designs and youth risk levels (National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021; Office of Juvenile Justice and

Delinquency Prevention, 2017). Prevention research also documented improvements in social competencies and reductions in substance use when therapeutic skill development was integrated into broader youth development initiatives (Hawkins et al., 2009).

Across sources reviewed for this project, therapeutic and skill-building programming were most frequently implemented in community-based settings and were reported alongside improvements in recidivism, educational participation, and behavioral health outcomes. Although follow-up periods and outcome measures varied across studies, therapeutic intervention models emphasizing structured skill development were repeatedly documented within programs reporting positive youth outcome trajectories (Lipsey, 2009; Elliott et al., 2020; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). Outcome domains and intervention characteristics associated with therapeutic and skill-building components are summarized in Appendix C.

Supervision Level and Service Intensity

Meta-analytic and program evaluation research reviewed for this project reported mixed outcome patterns associated with supervision intensity when examined independently from therapeutic services. Findings summarized by Lipsey (2009) indicated that increased surveillance or control-oriented supervision alone was not consistently associated with meaningful reductions in reoffending across juvenile justice interventions. Instead, programs combining structured supervision with therapeutic or skill-building services were more frequently represented among interventions demonstrating measurable reductions in recidivism. Federal evidence reviews similarly documented that community-based supervision models incorporating graduated responses, individualized service planning, and coordinated treatment components were present

in programs reporting modest but consistent reductions in rearrest during follow-up periods (OJJDP, 2017; Elliott et al., 2020).

Empirical studies examining probation and placement contexts further reported variability in outcomes depending on how supervision was implemented. Research on first-time violent juvenile offenders documented that placement decisions and levels of supervision were associated with differing recidivism outcomes, with more restrictive placements not consistently producing lower rates of reoffending compared to community-based supervision when controlling for youth characteristics (Ryan et al., 2014). National program reviews also noted that higher service intensity appeared most effective when aligned with assessed youth risk level, whereas mismatched supervision approaches produced inconsistent findings across jurisdictions (National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021; Elliott et al., 2020).

Across sources reviewed for this project, supervision level and service intensity were most frequently reported as moderating factors rather than standalone intervention strategies. Outcome reporting emphasized that structured service delivery paired with appropriately scaled supervision was present in interventions documenting reductions in recidivism and improvements in behavioral outcomes, although reported effects varied depending on program design and youth risk characteristics (Lipsey, 2009; Ryan et al., 2014). Outcome domains and intervention characteristics associated with supervision level and service intensity are summarized in Appendix C.

Risk/Needs Assessment and Responsivity Matching

National guidance and program evaluations reviewed for this project reported that structured risk and needs assessment processes were frequently incorporated into interventions,

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demonstrating more consistent outcome patterns across youth risk levels. Federal implementation guides documented that programs using validated risk assessment tools to match supervision intensity and services to assessed needs were associated with more stable reductions in reoffending compared to interventions applying uniform supervision strategies regardless of youth risk profile (Vincent et al., n.d.; OJJDP, 2017). Evidence-based program reviews similarly reported that interventions aligning service dosage with risk classification were more frequently represented among programs demonstrating measurable decreases in rearrest during follow-up periods (National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021; Elliott et al., 2020).

Meta-analytic findings further indicated that mismatches between intervention intensity and youth risk level were associated with weaker or inconsistent outcome patterns across studies. Analyses summarized by Lipsey (2009) reported that higher-intensity services tended to produce stronger effects among moderate- and high-risk youth, while applying intensive interventions to lower-risk youth did not consistently produce additional reductions in reoffending. National policy reviews also documented that jurisdictions implementing structured assessment-driven placement decisions reported clearer distinctions in outcomes between custodial and community-based interventions, reflecting the role of responsivity matching in shaping program effectiveness (Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2022).

Across sources reviewed for this project, risk/needs assessment and responsivity matching were most frequently described as organizational practices that guide program delivery, rather than standalone interventions. Outcome reporting emphasized that assessment-driven decision-making was present in programs documenting reductions in recidivism and improved behavioral outcomes, particularly when assessment results informed individualized service planning and supervision levels (Vincent et al., n.d.; National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021).

Outcome domains and intervention characteristics associated with assessment and responsiveness matching are summarized in Appendix C.

Variability and Gaps in Component-Level Findings

Across sources reviewed for this project, outcome reporting associated with intervention components varied in both measurement approach and level of detail. Meta-analytic and federal program reviews documented differences in how recidivism was defined, with studies using measures such as rearrest, re-referral, or reconvictions across follow-up periods ranging from several months to multiple years (Lipsey, 2009; OJJDP, 2017). These differences in measurement limited direct comparison of reported effect sizes across intervention models and contributed to variability in how component-level outcomes were presented within the literature.

National evaluations also reported uneven documentation of educational and behavioral health outcomes compared to recidivism measures. While several studies have described improvements in school engagement, behavioral regulation, or psychosocial functioning, outcome reporting in these domains has been less standardized and often relies on program-specific indicators rather than uniform national metrics (Elliott et al., 2020; Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor, 2016). As a result, findings related to educational and mental health outcomes were reported less consistently across sources than recidivism outcomes.

Program reviews further documented that intervention components were frequently implemented in combination rather than isolation, making it difficult to attribute reported outcome changes to any single program element. Federal evidence summaries noted that family involvement, mentoring, therapeutic programming, and assessment practices were often

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integrated within the same intervention models, resulting in overlapping outcome reporting across component categories (National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021; Elliott et al., 2020).

Findings reported across sources reviewed for this project indicated that several intervention components were repeatedly present in programs documenting reductions in recidivism and improvements in youth behavioral outcomes. Meta-analytic research and federal program evaluations most consistently reported family-based services, mentoring and pro-social adult supports, therapeutic and skill-building programming, and structured risk/needs assessment practices within interventions demonstrating measurable outcome changes (Lipsey, 2009; Elliott et al., 2020; National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021). Outcome reporting across these components emphasized rearrest and continued system contact as the most frequently measured indicators, while educational engagement and behavioral health outcomes were reported less consistently and often varied in measurement approach across studies (OJJDP, 2017; Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor, 2016).

Across the literature analyzed through this project's qualitative synthesis process, intervention components were rarely implemented independently and were more commonly delivered as integrated program models combining multiple services. Findings documented variability in reported outcomes depending on supervision intensity, youth risk level, and program design, reflecting differences in implementation and measurement across jurisdictions (Ryan et al., 2014; Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2022). Outcome domains and component categorizations associated with these findings are summarized in Appendix C.

Objective 3: Oregon Juvenile Justice Practices in Relation to National Evidence

Across the Oregon sources reviewed in this project, statewide reporting indicates that juvenile justice outcomes are primarily measured through referral-based recidivism tracking rather than program-specific outcome evaluation. Administrative data from Oregon's Juvenile Justice Information Systems (JJIS) reported a statewide 12-month recidivism rate of 27.8% among youth with criminal referrals in 2023 (OYA JJIS, 2023). Publicly available county and state documentation also indicates that Oregon maintains a diversion infrastructure, including youth courts, mediation programs, community supervision pathways, and detention alternatives authorized through statute (Oregon Legislature Authorized Diversion Programs, 2025; Marion County Juvenile Department Programs, n.d.). However, publicly posted statewide reporting provides limited standardized data linking specific community-based intervention components to measured outcomes, constraining direct evaluation of diversion program effectiveness using currently available administrative reports (OYA, n.d.).

Oregon Specific Evidence-Based and Evaluation Approach

Oregon-specific results in this section are based on publicly available state administrative reports and county-level juvenile department documentation. Statewide outcome reporting was drawn from Oregon's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) recidivism reports, which track youth with a criminal referral in a reporting year and measure subsequent referrals over a defined follow-up period (OYA JJIS, 2023). County-level program descriptions and service planning were drawn from county juvenile department materials and state-administered county funding documentation, where publicly available (Multnomah County JCP Basic and Diversion Plan Narrative, 2025).

Oregon Juvenile Justice Outcome Reporting

Statewide recidivism reporting in Oregon is available through JJIS referral-based recidivism reports. The 2023 12-month referral-based report identified 6,118 youth statewide with a criminal referral in 2023 and reported a statewide 12-month recidivism rate of 27.8%, with a chronic recidivism rate (three or more referrals) of 5.2% (OYA JJIS, 2023). JJIS documentation specifies that these reports rely on JJIS data and include criminal referrals from within Oregon (OYA JJIS, 2023).

However, JJIS documentation also indicates limitations in Oregon’s public reporting on service participation and service completion. The JJIS “Programs and Service Reports” page explains that publication of the 2023 report was suspended due to concerns about consistency and reliability of the reported data, while noting that the underlying source data remains available (OYA, n.d.). This suspension represents a constraint on evaluating, through publicly posted statewide reporting, how specific intervention components (e.g., family-based services, mentoring, therapeutic programming) are distributed across youth populations and how completion patterns may relate to outcomes.

Oregon Community-Based Programming and Diversion Practices Documented in Public

Sources

Oregon community-based programming and diversion practices are documented in public sources. Oregon statute authorizes diversion programs and identifies examples such as youth courts, mediation programs, and chemical substance abuse education programs, reflecting a formal legal basis for community-based diversion mechanisms (Oregon Legislature Authorized Diversion Programs, 2025). County juvenile departments publicly describe diversion and

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community-based service continuums that include several intervention elements consistent with evidence-informed component categories identified in Objective 2.

For example, Marion County’s juvenile department describes a continuum that includes diversion (including peer courts, mediation, and community service), informal probation, formal probation, and detention. Additionally, it outlines a “Guaranteed Attendance Program” as a detention alternative (Marion County Juvenile Department Programs, n.d.). This public description indicates that Oregon county-level practices include diversionary pathways and detention alternatives, aligning structurally with national recommendations that favor community-based responses for lower-risk youth, reserving secure confinement for narrower circumstances.

County-level planning documents also reflect state funding mechanisms intended to support early intervention and diversion. A Multnomah County Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP) Basic and Diversion plan describes two funding streams administered through Oregon Youth Authority support to county juvenile departments: (a) “JCP Basic” (described as supporting infrastructure and preventing further offenses among youth ages 10-17) and (b) “JCP Diversion” (described as diverting higher-risk youth from placement in close custody, with a target population described as youth ages 12-19) (Multnomah County JCP Plan, 2025). The same county plan explicitly notes limits on causal attribution between these funding streams and outcomes due to budget structure and the mixing of funding sources, indicating a constraint on outcome evaluation using public materials alone (Multnomah County JCP Plan, 2025).

Alignment Between Oregon Practices and Evidence-Informed Components Reported in National Literature

When Oregon’s publicly documented practices are compared to the evidence-informed components summarized in Objective 2, Oregon sources show partial but identifiable alignment in three areas: (1) diversion infrastructure and detention alternatives, (2) attention to service planning and youth needs, and (3) stated emphasis on family engagement and collaboration in delinquency-system improvement initiatives.

First, Oregon county juvenile department materials indicate routine use of diversion pathways, including peer courts, mediation, and structured community service requirements, consistent with national diversion practice categories that emphasize accountability outside confinement (Marion County Juvenile Department Programs, n.d.). Second, county planning documentation describes the use of data attachments to guide funding decisions, including youth needs and referrals, suggesting an administrative structure oriented toward needs-informed service planning, even where outcome attribution is constrained (Multnomah County JCP Plan, 2025). Third, statewide court-program documentation describes a Juvenile Delinquency Improvement Program launched in 2021, with stated goals of improving Oregon’s response to youth in the delinquency system and expanding resources and support for family engagement, indicating an institutional emphasis on engagement-oriented practice improvements (Oregon Judicial Department, n.d.).

At the same time, the Oregon public record reviewed for this project provides limited statewide, component-specific outcome reporting for community-based interventions. JJIS provides statewide reporting for referral-based measures, but the suspension of the published Programs and Services report for 2023 due to data consistency concerns limits the ability to

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evaluate, through statewide posted reporting, how frequently specific evidence-informed components (family-based services, mentoring, therapeutic programming, structured responsivity matching) are delivered, completed, and associated with subsequent outcomes (OYA, n.d.)

Publicly available Oregon juvenile justice documentation indicates that statewide outcome reporting is primarily centered on referral-based recidivism tracking rather than program-specific outcome evaluation. The Oregon Youth Authority's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) reports identified 6,118 youth with a criminal referral in 2023 and documented a statewide 12-month recidivism rate of 27.8%, with a 5.2% of youth categorized as chronic recidivators based on multiple subsequent referrals (OYA JJIS, 2023). Available reporting describes recidivism using referral-based measures and does not consistently link outcomes to specific diversion or service participation categories within publicly posted reports.

County-level program documentation and statewide legislative materials indicate that Oregon maintains a structured diversion infrastructure that includes youth courts, mediation programs, community service requirements, and detention alternatives authorized under state statute (Oregon Legislature, 2025; Oregon Judicial Department, n.d.). County juvenile department planning materials describe diversion pathways, informal probation options, and community-based supervision models that incorporate elements consistent with intervention components reported in national literature, including mentoring supports, family engagement efforts, and service planning based on youth needs (Multnomah County Department of Community Justice, n.d.; Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2022).

Despite the presence of diversion pathways and community-based programming structures, publicly available statewide reporting provides limited standardized data connecting specific intervention components to measurable outcomes. JJIS program and service reporting

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have identified challenges related to consistency and reliability of program-level data, limiting direct comparison between diversion participation and custody-based outcomes using existing administrative reports (OYA JJIS, 2023). As a result, findings from Oregon sources included in this project indicate partial alignment between documented practices and nationally identified intervention components, while also reflecting variation in how diversion and service outcomes are publicly tracked across jurisdictions.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

The purpose of this project was to examine how different juvenile justice intervention approaches relate to outcomes for justice-involved youth and to evaluate how Oregon's current juvenile justice practices align with evidence identified in national research. Three research objectives guided the project. The first objective evaluated the comparative effectiveness of juvenile detention and community-based interventions in the United States. The second objective identified intervention components most consistently associated with improved outcomes for justice-involved youth across the national literature. The third objective examined how Oregon's current juvenile justice practices align with those national findings and evidence-informed intervention components.

To address these objectives, the project employed a qualitative synthesis of existing empirical literature and publicly available administrative reports. Sources included peer-reviewed studies, national policy analyses, and state-level documentation describing juvenile justice outcomes and program structures. Findings were examined across outcome domains, including recidivism, educational engagement, behavioral health indicators, and family or social relationship outcomes. The results chapter presented these findings in relation to the three research objectives and documented patterns observed across detention-focused research, community-based intervention evaluations, and Oregon-specific administrative reporting.

Overall, the findings of this project indicate that the research objectives were achieved. The analysis identified consistent differences in outcomes between intervention contexts, clarified key program components associated with improved youth outcomes, and provided an

evidence-informed assessment of how Oregon’s current practices align with national research. The discussion that follows interprets these findings and examines their broader implications in relation to existing literature, theoretical perspectives, and juvenile justice system considerations.

Interpretation of Key Findings

The findings for the first research objective indicate that the national literature consistently reports differences in youth outcomes between custodial and community-based intervention contexts. Across the studies reviewed, recidivism was the most frequently reported outcome used to evaluate juvenile justice interventions. Detention-focused research documented continued system contact among a substantial proportion of confined youth following release, with outcomes varying according to youth risk level, prior system involvement, and offense characteristics (Holman and Ziedenberg, 2006; Ryan et al., 2014). Administrative reports and national literature reviews similarly identified variability in recidivism definitions and follow-up periods across jurisdictions, contributing to differences in reported reoffending rates (OJJDP, 2017; OYA JJIS, 2023).

In contrast, studies examining community-based interventions more consistently reported reductions or stabilization in recidivism outcomes when programs incorporated structured therapeutic services, family engagement, and coordinated supervision strategies. Meta-analytic research documented measurable reductions in reoffending associated with structured treatment programs and skill-based services compared to minimal intervention conditions (Lipsey, 2009). Program-level evaluations further reported reductions in rearrest among youth participating in therapeutic community interventions, including multisystemic therapy and related family-based models (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016; Early, Ryon, Hand, et al., 2014). Benefit-cost analyses similarly identified several evidence-based community programs as producing measurable

reductions in reoffending alongside positive economic outcomes (Aos et al., 2004; WSIPP, 2018).

Importantly, the literature demonstrated that intervention context influences outcomes beyond recidivism alone. Detention-focused research frequently documented disruptions to educational continuity, reduced opportunities to maintain family relationships, and increased social isolation during periods of confinement (Holman & Ziedenberg, 2006; National Research Council, 2013). In contrast, diversion and community-based programming more often reported improvements in educational engagement, behavioral regulation, and family functioning (Bonnie & Backes, 2019; Augustine et al., 2024).

These findings also suggest that current reliance on detention within juvenile justice systems may not fully align with evidence regarding youth development and behavior. While detention provides an immediate response to delinquency, the literature reviewed in this project indicates that it may address short-term control rather than the underlying factors associated with continued system involvement. In contrast, community-based interventions appear to operate through mechanisms that strengthen protective factors, including family relationships, educational engagement, and prosocial development. This distinction highlights a fundamental difference in how intervention approaches influence not only behavior, but the conditions that shape future outcomes for justice-involved youth.

Taken together, these findings suggest that intervention context is not a neutral factor but a central determinant of youth outcomes across multiple developmental domains. While detention remains a core component of the juvenile justice system, the evidence reviewed in this project indicates that community-based interventions incorporating structured services and

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developmental supports are more consistently associated with positive outcomes for justice-involved youth.

The second research objective focused on identifying intervention components most consistently associated with improved outcomes across the national juvenile justice literature. The findings indicate that several program characteristics were repeatedly present in interventions reporting reductions in recidivism and improvements in youth behavioral outcomes. These included family-based services, mentoring and pro-social adult supports, therapeutic and skill-building programming, structured supervision paired with service delivery, and the use of risk-needs assessment practices.

Family involvement emerged as one of the most consistently identified components associated with positive outcomes. Evaluations of family-based intervention models documented improvements in youth behavior and reductions in delinquent activity when treatment approaches incorporated coordinated family engagement strategies (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2016). Prevention research similarly reported improvements in school engagement and reductions in substance use when programs incorporated structured family communication and coordinated school-family supports (Hawkins et al., 2009; Aos et al., 2004). These findings underscore the central role of caregiver relationships and family stability in shaping youth developmental trajectories.

Mentoring and pro-social adult relationships also appeared as recurring components within effective interventions. Evaluations of mentoring programs documented reductions in continued system contact and improvements in youth engagement when structured mentoring relationships were integrated into supervision models (Urban Institute, 2017). National reviews of diversion programs similarly identified mentoring as a common element in interventions

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reporting lower rearrest rates compared to traditional supervision models relying primarily on surveillance-based supervision (The Sentencing Project, 2024; Elliott et al., 2020).

Therapeutic and skill-building programming represented another key component identified across the literature. Programs incorporating cognitive-behavioral strategies, behavioral skill development, and structured therapeutic services consistently reported reductions in delinquent behavior across multiple study designs (Lipsey, 2009; Elliott et al., 2020). Federal evidence reviews further documented that interventions including cognitive-behavioral programming, functional family therapy, and multisystemic therapy were associated with measurable reductions in reoffending (National Institute of Justice, 2015-2021; OJJDP, 2017).

Findings related to supervision intensity further indicated that surveillance alone was not consistently associated with improved outcomes. Instead, programs combining structured supervision with therapeutic services and individualized support were more frequently associated with positive outcomes (Lipsey, 2009; Ryan et al., 2014). Risk-needs assessment practices also emerged as a critical organizational feature, with programs aligning service intensity to youth risk level more consistently represented among effective interventions (Vincent et al., n.d.; Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2022).

These findings also have important implications for how juvenile justice systems conceptualize intervention effectiveness. Rather than viewing programs as interchangeable, the evidence suggests that outcomes are driven by specific components and how they are implemented. This highlights the importance of program design, service integration, and implementation fidelity in shaping outcomes. Systems that focus primarily on supervision or compliance without incorporating relational and therapeutic elements may be less effective in addressing the underlying needs associated with delinquent behavior.

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Overall, these findings suggest that effective juvenile justice interventions are multidimensional rather than singular in design. Programs that integrate relational, therapeutic, and structured support components appear more consistent with improved youth outcomes than approaches relying on monitoring or confinement alone.

The third research objective examined how Oregon’s juvenile justice practices align with intervention components and outcomes documented in the national literature. Findings indicate that Oregon maintains a structured diversion and community supervision framework supported by statutory authorization and county-level implementation. State statutes authorize diversion mechanisms, including youth courts, mediation programs, and community-based service requirements, establishing a formal legal foundation for non-custodial responses to juvenile offending (Oregon Legislature Authorized Diversion Programs, 2025).

County juvenile department materials further describe a range of diversion and supervision pathways, including peer courts, community service programs, and detention alternatives (Marion County Juvenile Department Programs, n.d.). These program structures reflect several intervention approaches identified in the national literature as consistent with improved youth outcomes. County planning documents also describe funding mechanisms supporting diversion and prevention initiatives, including Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP) Basic and Diversion funding streams administered through the Oregon Youth Authority (Multnomah County JCP Plan, 2025).

However, an important limitation identified in this analysis is the extent to which publicly available statewide data connects intervention participation to measurable outcomes. The Oregon Youth Authority’s Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) reported that 6,118 youth statewide had a criminal referral in 2023, with a 12-month recidivism rate of 27.8% and 5.2% classified as

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chronic recidivators (OYA JJIS, 2023). While these reports provide valuable information regarding statewide recidivism patterns, publicly available reporting does not consistently connect specific program participation to measured outcomes across jurisdictions.

An additional notable finding that emerged from this analysis is the disconnect between the presence of community-based intervention structures and the ability to evaluate their effectiveness through standardized outcome data. While Oregon demonstrates alignment with national evidence in terms of program availability and statutory support for diversion, the lack of consistent program-level outcome tracking limits the ability to assess which interventions are most effective (OYA, n.d.). This finding highlights an important distinction between system capacity and system evaluation, suggesting that the existence of programs alone is insufficient without the ability to measure their impact.

These findings suggest that while Oregon has established a structural foundation for community-based intervention, the current limitations in program-level outcome tracking constrain the system's ability to fully align practice with evidence. Without consistent data linking specific interventions to outcomes, it becomes difficult to determine which programs are most effective or how resources should be allocated. This gap reflects a broader challenge within juvenile justice systems, where the presence of programs does not necessarily equate to the ability to evaluate their impact. As a result, Oregon's system demonstrates partial alignment with national evidence in structure, but more limited alignment in its capacity for outcome-based evaluation.

Theoretical Interpretation of Findings

The findings of this project are broadly consistent with criminological theories emphasizing the importance of social environment, identity development, and social bonds in shaping youth behavior. Labeling theory provides one framework for interpreting the patterns observed in detention-focused research. Formal system involvement may contribute to the internalization of deviant labels and increased social stigma, which can influence future behavior and limit access to prosocial opportunities (Becker, 1963; Petrosino et al., 2010). The findings of this project, which document continued system contact and disruptions to educational and social supports among detained youth, align with these theoretical mechanisms.

Social control theory offers an additional explanation for the differences observed between detention and community-based interventions. The theory emphasizes the importance of strong social bonds, including attachments to family, school, and community institutions, in reducing delinquent behavior (Hirschi, 1969). Many of the intervention components identified in this project, such as family engagement, mentoring relationships, and community-based supervision, directly reinforce these bonds. The findings suggest that interventions maintaining youth within supportive environments may strengthen these attachments and contribute to reduced involvement in delinquent behavior.

Developmental perspectives further explain why intervention context may significantly influence youth outcomes. Adolescence is characterized by ongoing cognitive development and heightened sensitivity to social environments. Institutional settings that concentrate justice-involved youth may increase exposure to negative peer influences while limiting access to positive developmental supports (Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor, 2016; National Research Council,

2013). In contrast, community-based interventions emphasizing mentorship, family engagement, and skill development may better align with adolescent developmental needs.

Taken together, these theoretical perspectives provide a cohesive explanation for the patterns observed across the findings and highlight the importance of aligning intervention strategies with developmental and social processes. Interventions that emphasize supportive relationships, structured guidance, and responsiveness to youth needs are more consistent with mechanisms associated with positive behavioral outcomes. In contrast, custodial environments may introduce conditions that disrupt these processes and increase exposure to risk factors associated with continued system involvement. These insights reinforce the importance of considering not only whether interventions occur, but how they interact with the developmental and social contexts that shape youth behavior.

Conclusion

This project examined the comparative effectiveness of juvenile detention and community-based interventions, identified key components associated with improved youth outcomes, and evaluated how Oregon's juvenile justice practices align with national evidence regarding effective intervention approaches. Guided by three research objectives, the project synthesized empirical literature and publicly available administrative documentation to analyze patterns in youth outcomes across detention-focused research, community-based intervention evaluations, and Oregon-specific reporting.

The findings of this project indicate that national research consistently documents meaningful differences in youth outcomes across intervention contexts. Community-based programs incorporating structured therapeutic services, family engagement, mentoring

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relationships, and needs-based supervision were most frequently associated with reductions in recidivism and improvements in behavioral and educational outcomes among justice-involved youth. In contrast, detention-focused research frequently documented continued system contact following release, as well as disruptions to educational continuity and social supports during periods of confinement.

Evaluation of Oregon's juvenile justice system indicates that the state maintains a diversion infrastructure that incorporates several intervention elements identified in national literature. County-level program documentation reflects the presence of mentoring supports, family engagement strategies, and structured service delivery practices aligned with intervention models associated with improved youth outcomes. At the same time, publicly available administrative reporting primarily focuses on referral-based recidivism measures and provides limited standardized data connecting specific intervention participation to measured outcomes across jurisdictions.

Overall, the findings of this project demonstrate that intervention context and program design are central factors in shaping outcomes for justice-involved youth. The synthesis of national research and state-level reporting conducted in this project supports the conclusion that structured, community-based interventions represent a critical component of effective juvenile justice responses. These findings provide a comprehensive understanding of how intervention approaches are associated with youth outcomes and offer a clear, evidence-based foundation for interpreting juvenile justice practices within the context of this project.

CHAPTER SIX: RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS

Recommendations

The findings of this project carry significant implications for juvenile justice systems, policymakers, and community-based service providers. Across all three research objectives, a consistent pattern emerged: intervention context, program design, and the presence of specific evidence-informed components are central to shaping youth outcomes. Community-based interventions were more frequently associated with reductions in recidivism and improvements in developmental outcomes, while detention-based approaches were associated with disruption of protective factors and continued system involvement.

At the same time, the analysis of Oregon's system revealed that, although structural elements of diversion and community-based programming are present, these efforts are proportionately more limited and less consistently implemented compared to jurisdictions such as those implementing JDAI-aligned models, where diversion is proportionately prioritized and community-based interventions are most effective. In jurisdictions identified in the literature as demonstrating stronger outcomes, diversion is utilized as a primary response for a broader proportion of youth and is supported by more standardized program delivery and outcome tracking. In contrast, Oregon's current approach reflects a system in which community-based options exist but are not yet uniformly prioritized or implemented at the same scale.

Taken together, these findings indicate that current system practices are not fully aligned with the conditions under which interventions have been shown to be most effective, highlighting the need for structural, not incremental, change. Improving youth outcomes is not solely a matter of expanding programs but aligning system structure, service delivery, and data

practices with evidence-informed principles. The recommendations that follow are directly derived from these findings and are intended to provide concrete, actionable strategies that can be implemented across policy and practice contexts.

Prioritize Community-Based Intervention as the Default Response

The findings of this project indicate that intervention context plays a critical role in shaping youth outcomes. Across the national literature examined in Objective 1, community-based interventions were more consistently associated with reductions in recidivism, improved educational engagement, and stronger family and social outcomes compared to detention. Despite this, detention continues to be used as a routine response, including for youth who do not present a significant public safety risk.

This pattern reflects structural decision-making practices within juvenile justice systems rather than alignment with evidence. Detention is often used as a response to noncompliance or system pressure rather than as a targeted intervention for high-risk cases. However, the findings presented in this project suggest that for many youths, particularly those at low and moderate risk, detention may introduce additional criminogenic risks rather than reduce them. Disruptions to school continuity, separation from family, and exposure to higher-risk peers were consistently identified in the literature as factors associated with continued involvement in the system.

This pattern contrasts with systems identified in the literature where community-based interventions are more proportionately utilized, particularly for low- and moderate-risk youth, and where detention is reserved for a smaller subset of cases involving higher-risk individuals. In these systems, placement decisions are more consistently aligned with risk and need rather than with system convenience or default practice.

In contrast, community-based interventions operate through mechanisms that align more closely with developmental and behavioral research. These programs maintain youth within their natural environments while providing structured supports, including family engagement, mentoring, and therapeutic services. As identified in Objective 2, these components strengthen protective factors that are directly associated with reduced reoffending, including caregiver attachment, school involvement, and prosocial peer relationships.

Shifting toward community-based interventions as the default response for low- and moderate-risk youth must begin at key decision points within the system, particularly intake, detention screening, and early case processing. In practice, this requires revising eligibility criteria that rely heavily on offense type and instead incorporating validated risk assessment tools that distinguish between youth who require secure confinement and those who can be safely supervised in the community. Expanding diversion eligibility for low- and moderate-risk youth would reduce unnecessary system penetration while aligning placement decisions with evidence-informed principles.

In addition, this shift requires deliberate reallocation of resources. Rather than maintaining current levels of detention use, systems should reduce reliance on detention for lower-risk youth and reinvest those resources into expanding the availability and capacity of community-based programs. This includes increasing geographic access, reducing waitlists, and ensuring that programs are equipped to deliver structured, high-quality services. However, implementing this shift requires navigating structural and political constraints. Detention facilities represent established investments in infrastructure, staffing, and funding streams, and reducing their use may face resistance from stakeholders concerned with public safety, institutional stability, or budget reallocation. Expanding community-based programming also

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requires upfront investment, workforce development, and coordination across agencies, which may be challenging within existing funding and administrative structures. As a result, this transition is likely to occur incrementally, requiring phased implementation, strategic reinvestment of cost savings, and sustained policy support to realign system priorities over time.

For policymakers, this recommendation has implications at multiple levels. Policymakers must reevaluate funding structures and statutory frameworks that may unintentionally incentivize detention-based responses. Juvenile justice agencies must align operational practices with evidence-informed approaches to intervention. Community providers must be supported in developing and sustaining programs capable of delivering high-quality services at scale. Collectively, these changes represent a shift from a control-oriented model toward a developmentally informed system that prioritizes long-term outcomes over short-term containment.

Standardize Core Components of Evidence-Informed Programs

The findings associated with Objective 2 demonstrate that not all juvenile justice interventions produce equivalent outcomes. Rather, specific program components were consistently present in interventions associated with reductions in recidivism and improvement in youth development. These components include family-based services, mentoring, and pro-social adult relationships, therapeutic and skill-building programming, structured supervision combined with service delivery, and risk-needs-responsivity assessment practices.

This pattern highlights a critical issue within juvenile justice systems: variability in program design and implementation. While many jurisdictions offer diversion and community-based programs, not all incorporate these core components. Programs that rely primarily on

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monitoring or surveillance without structured service delivery were not consistently associated with improved outcomes.

Addressing this gap requires the development of clear, statewide standards defining what constitutes an evidence-informed juvenile justice intervention. These standards should specify required components, including the integration of family-based services, structured mentoring, and therapeutic programming. Establishing these criteria would ensure that program expansion efforts are aligned with effectiveness rather than simply increasing the number of available programs.

Implementation of this recommendation also requires attention to service delivery and program fidelity. Jurisdictions differ in available resources, infrastructure, and service capacity, and enforcing uniform standards without adequate support may create additional strain on under-resourced systems. Workforce development, training, and ongoing support will be essential to ensure that programs are implemented as intended while maintaining responsiveness to local community needs.

From a policy perspective, tying funding to adherence to these standards would incentivize alignment with evidence-informed practices. For service providers, this recommendation emphasizes the importance of program design and consistency. Ultimately, standardizing intervention components strengthens the connection between research and practice and reduces variability in outcomes across programs and jurisdictions.

Strengthen Statewide Data Systems and Outcome Tracking

One of the most significant findings of this project is the limitation of current data systems in evaluating program effectiveness, particularly within Oregon. While statewide

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recidivism data is available, it is primarily reported at an aggregate level and is not consistently linked to specific program participation. As a result, it is difficult to determine which interventions are most effective, for which youth, and under what conditions.

This gap limits the ability of agencies and policymakers to make evidence-informed decisions. In these contexts, agencies are able to identify effective interventions, allocate resources strategically, and refine service delivery based on measurable outcomes. Data systems function as a central component of system accountability rather than a secondary reporting tool.

Strengthening data systems requires the development of a standardized framework for linking program participation to measurable outcomes. In practice, this would involve assigning youth-level identifiers that track participation across services and connecting those records to outcome measures such as recidivism, educational engagement, and behavioral indicators. Counties should be required to report this information using consistent definitions and reporting structures to allow for meaningful comparison across jurisdictions.

However, implementing these improvements requires significant investment in data infrastructure, staff training, and inter-agency coordination. Challenges related to data integration, consistency in reporting practices, and concerns regarding privacy and information sharing may also affect implementation. Addressing these barriers will require sustained institutional commitment and collaboration across agencies.

This recommendation is foundational to all others. For policymakers, it provides the basis for allocating resources based on demonstrated impact. For agencies, it enables continuous program improvement. For communities, it increases transparency and accountability. Without improvements in data systems, efforts to align practice with evidence will remain limited.

Reduce Cross-County Variation and Promote Equitable Access to Services

Although Oregon has established a statewide diversion framework, findings from Objective 3 indicate that implementation varies across counties. Differences in resource availability, service delivery, program design, service capacity, and resource allocation result in unequal access to interventions, meaning that youth outcomes may be influenced by geographic location rather than individual need.

This variation presents a challenge for system consistency and equity. When access to effective interventions differs across jurisdictions, similarly situated youth may experience different outcomes based on factors unrelated to their risk level or needs. This undermines the goal of a fair and evidence-informed juvenile justice system.

Reducing this variation requires the establishment of statewide guidelines that define minimum standards for diversion and community-based programming. These guidelines should ensure that all youth have access to core intervention components identified in the literature, regardless of where they reside. At the same time, they should allow for local flexibility in how programs are implemented to address community-specific needs.

In practice, this may involve developing baseline service requirements, standardized eligibility criteria across counties, and providing targeted funding to jurisdictions with fewer resources. Counties vary in funding, staffing, and existing service networks, and implementing uniform standards without targeted support may widen disparities rather than reduce them. Providing additional funding, technical assistance, and capacity-building support to under-resourced jurisdictions will be essential to achieving equitable implementation.

For policymakers, this recommendation highlights the importance of balancing local autonomy with system-wide consistency. For agencies, it emphasizes the need to ensure that service availability aligns with youth needs across jurisdictions. Addressing geographic disparities is critical to ensuring that the benefits of evidence-informed interventions are realized equitably across the system.

Suggestions for Future Research

While this project provides a structured synthesis of national and Oregon-specific research, several areas remain where further investigation is needed to deepen understanding of juvenile justice interventions and outcomes.

Future research should build on the findings of this study by addressing identified gaps in the literature, strengthening methodological approaches, and expanding the scope of analysis across different contexts. The results of this project highlight several areas where additional research is necessary to deepen understanding of juvenile justice intervention effectiveness and to support more precise, evidence-informed decision-making.

Program-Level Outcome Evaluation and Mechanisms of Effectiveness

One of the primary findings of this project is that while community-based interventions are generally associated with improved outcomes, there is limited consistency in how specific programs are evaluated and reported across jurisdictions. Future research should move beyond broad comparisons of detention versus diversion and instead examine program-level effectiveness in greater detail. This includes identifying which specific interventions, or combinations of intervention components, produce the strongest outcomes for different youth populations.

In addition, future studies should focus on the mechanisms through which these programs produce change. While this project identified key components such as family engagement, mentoring, and therapeutic services, further research is needed to understand how these elements interact and which components are most influential under different conditions. This would allow for more precise program design and more targeted implementation strategies.

Long-Term and Multi-Dimensional Outcome Measurement

The literature reviewed in this project relied heavily on recidivism as the primary outcome measure, often within relatively short follow-up periods. While recidivism is an important indicator, it does not fully capture the range of outcomes relevant to youth development.

Future research should examine long-term outcomes, including educational attainment, employment stability, mental health, and sustained desistance from system involvement. Expanding outcome measures would provide a more comprehensive understanding of intervention effectiveness and better reflect the developmental goals of the juvenile justice system. Longitudinal research designs would be particularly valuable in assessing whether short-term improvements translate into sustained positive outcomes over time.

Comparative and Cross-Jurisdictional Research

This project focused on national research and Oregon-specific practices, which limits the ability to generalize findings across different policy environments. Further research should apply similar research designs to other states and jurisdictions to examine how variations in system structure, funding models, and policy frameworks influence outcomes.

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Comparative research would allow for the identification of best practices across different contexts and provide insight into how system-level factors shape the effectiveness of interventions. In addition, examining differences between jurisdictions with more developed data systems and those with limited reporting capacity could further clarify the role of data infrastructure in supporting evidence-informed practice.

Developmental and Environmental Influences on Intervention Outcomes

The findings of this project suggest that intervention context and environment play a significant role in shaping youth outcomes. However, additional research is needed to further examine how developmental factors and environmental conditions interact with intervention strategies.

Future studies should explore the role of peer dynamics, family context, and community environment in influencing the effectiveness of both detention and community-based interventions. In particular, research examining how exposure to peer groups in custodial settings compares to community-based environments would provide valuable insight into the mechanisms underlying observed differences in outcomes.

Data Systems, Measurement, and Policy Feedback Loops

A key limitation identified in this project relates to the availability and quality of program-level data, particularly within Oregon. Future research should examine how improvements in data collection, reporting systems, and outcome measurement influence policy decisions and program effectiveness.

This includes evaluating the impact of enhanced data systems, such as improved integration of program participation and outcome tracking, on the ability of agencies to allocate

resources, refine interventions, and improve outcomes over time. Research in this area would contribute to understanding how data infrastructure functions as a central component of effective juvenile justice systems.

Study Limitations

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of this project. These limitations relate to the use of secondary data, variation in measurement across studies, constraints in Oregon-specific data availability, and the overall scope of the analysis.

This study relied exclusively on secondary data sources, including peer-reviewed literature, national policy reports, and publicly available administrative data. While this approach enabled the integration of a wide range of existing research, it also limited control over data quality, consistency, and measurement approaches.

Differences in how studies defined recidivism, variation in follow-up periods, and inconsistencies in population characteristics across sources constrained direct comparison of findings. In addition, the absence of primary data collection limited the ability to examine program implementation, fidelity, and contextual factors at a detailed level. These limitations are inherent to qualitative synthesis methods and should be considered when interpreting the findings.

A significant limitation of this project relates to variation across the literature in how outcomes are defined and measured. Recidivism was operationalized differently across studies, including measures such as rearrest, reconviction, or re-referral, and follow-up periods varied from several months to multiple years. This variation limits the ability to directly compare effect sizes and introduces challenges in synthesizing findings across studies. While this study focused

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on identifying patterns rather than quantifying effects, differences in measurement approaches remain an important limitation.

The evaluation of Oregon's juvenile justice system was constrained by the availability of publicly accessible data. While statewide data was available through JJIS reports, program-level outcome data was limited, and certain reports were suspended due to concerns regarding data consistency and reliability. As a result, the analysis of Oregon's alignment with national evidence relied primarily on program descriptions and structural indicators rather than direct outcome evaluation. This limits the ability to draw definitive conclusions regarding the effectiveness of specific interventions within the state and highlights the need for improved data systems.

The findings of this study are dependent on the availability and scope of existing literature. While the project incorporated a range of peer-reviewed and policy sources, the body of research on certain aspects of juvenile justice intervention remains uneven. Some areas, such as program-level comparisons and long-term outcomes, are less extensively studied, which may limit the completeness of the analysis. In addition, reliance on existing literature means that findings are shaped by the focus and design of prior studies, which may not address all aspects of the research questions.

This study examined multiple intervention types, outcome domains, and system-level factors, including both national and Oregon-specific evidence. While this broad approach supports a comprehensive analysis, it limits the ability to conduct an in-depth evaluation of individual programs or specific populations.

The findings should therefore be understood as a synthesis of patterns across the literature rather than a detailed analysis of any single intervention model. Future research may

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build on this work by conducting more targeted analyses of specific program models or populations.

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Appendix A

Summary of Literature on Community-Based Diversion and Juvenile Detention

Interventions (U.S., 1963-2025)

This table summarizes 46 scholarly and government sources that examine juvenile justice interventions, with an emphasis on Oregon and Washington, as well as U.S. community-based programs addressing recidivism, diversion, and youth development. Columns include authors, publication information, research objectives, design and data features, findings, conclusions, and relevance. Sources include peer-reviewed journal articles, federal/state reports, and evaluations of community-based organizations.

Author(s)	Year	Title / Source	Research Focus / Objective	Methods (Design, Data, Variables, Analysis)	Findings	Conclusions	Notes / Relevance
Akers, R. L.	1998	Social Learning and Social Structure	Develop a general theory explaining how crime and deviance are learned through social interactions and reinforcement.	Theoretical synthesis drawing on prior empirical research; focuses on peer influence, reinforcement, and modeling.	Criminal behavior is learned through differential association, reinforcement, and exposure to deviant peers.	Environments that reinforce antisocial behavior increase offending, while prosocial modeling reduces it.	Theoretical foundation explaining why detention peer environments may increase delinquency and why community programs may reduce it.
Annie E. Casey Foundation	2021	Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)	Examine outcomes of detention reform and diversion strategies	Multi-jurisdiction administrative data review: detention admissions,	Significant reductions in detention use without increases in youth	Structured diversion and objective screening can safely reduce	Key national reform model referenced throughout

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			across participating jurisdictions.	length of stay, and racial disparities.	offending; improvements in racial equity in some sites.	reliance on detention.	Oregon and Washington policy discussions.
Aos, S., Lieb, R., Mayfield, J., Miller, M., & Pennucci, A.	2004	Benefits and Costs of Prevention and Early Intervention Programs for Youth	Assess the cost-effectiveness of youth-focused prevention and intervention programs.	Meta-analysis and benefit–cost modeling using administrative justice data.	Many community- and family-based programs produce significant net benefits; incarceration yields limited returns.	Investing in evidence-based prevention yields higher public safety and economic benefits.	Supports arguments for justice reinvestment and diversion funding.
Becker, H. S.	1963	Outsiders	Explain how labeling and social reactions contribute to deviance.	Qualitative sociological analysis and theoretical framework development.	Deviant labels can shape identity and increase continued deviance.	System involvement may reinforce delinquent identities rather than reduce behavior.	Core theoretical framework for diversion vs. detention comparison s.
Beigel, E., & Hockenberry, S.	2021	Delinquency Cases in Juvenile Court	Provides national statistical overview of juvenile delinquency cases processed by U.S. juvenile courts, including offense types and long-term trends in case volume.	Descriptive analysis of national juvenile court data compiled through federal reporting systems.	Reports that juvenile courts handled 437,300 delinquency cases in 2021 and documents long-term declines in delinquency caseloads since the mid-2000s	Mixed interpretations.	Supports Objective 1 background context and results chapter reporting on national patterns of delinquency and system involvement
Bonnie, R. J., & Backes, E. P.	2019	The Promise of Adolescence	Translate adolescent developmental science into policy recommendations.	Interdisciplinary consensus report synthesizing neuroscience and social	Adolescents are developmentally distinct and highly responsive to	Justice responses should prioritize rehabilitation over punishment.	Supports developmental arguments against detention.

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				science research.	rehabilitative interventions.		
Brady, C. M., & Peck, J. H.	2021	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (Encyclopedia entry)	Describe the role of OJJDP in juvenile justice research and policy.	Descriptive overview of federal research and grant programs.	OJJDP promotes evidence-based, developmentally appropriate practices.	Federal leadership has shaped diversion and detention reforms nationwide.	Contextual source supporting the use of OJJDP data.
Cornish, D. B., & Clarke, R. V.	1986	The Reasoning Criminal: Rational Choice Perspectives on Offending	Introduce rational choice theory to explain criminal decision-making.	Theoretical framework and criminological analysis.	Offending behavior can be explained through rational decision-making processes where individuals weigh potential risks and rewards.	Individuals may alter behavior when potential consequences outweigh perceived benefits.	Provides theoretical support for the argument that detention may deter future offending through rational decision-making.
Early, K. W., Ryon, S. B., Hand, G. A., & Blankenship, J. L.	2014	Experimental Community-Based Interventions for Delinquent Youth	Evaluate the impact of community-based interventions on recidivism and costs.	Quasi-experimental design; justice system administrative data comparing participants to controls.	Community-based interventions reduced recidivism and costs relative to secure placement.	Diversion programs can be cost-effective and reduce reoffending.	Empirical support for community-based alternatives.
Elliott, D. S., Buckley, P. R., Gottfredson, D. C., Hawkins, J. D., & Tolan, P. H.	2020	Evidence-Based Juvenile Justice Programs and Practices	Review the effectiveness of evidence-based juvenile justice interventions.	Systematic review of evaluation studies across multiple program types.	Programs adhering to evidence-based principles outperform punitive approaches.	Fidelity and program quality are critical to success.	Frames importance of implementation quality.
Farrington, D. P., & Malvaso, C. G.	2025	Child-Rearing and Risk Factors in Delinquency	Examine how family factors interact with delinquency risk.	Longitudinal and developmental research synthesis.	Strong family bonds reduce delinquency risk over time.	Family-focused interventions are key to prevention.	Supports family-centered diversion approaches.

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Gilman, A., Sanford, R., Catena, J., Haumann, E., Jewell, C., Pickard, C., Reynolds, D., Treece, R., & Young, J	2022	Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative in Washington State 2020-2021 Report	Examines implementation and outcomes associated with Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) practices in Washington State, including detention trends and diversion strategies.	Administrative data analysis and program reporting based on statewide juvenile justice system records.	Documents detention trends, diversion practices, and system-level outcomes associated with JDAI implementation; highlights shifts toward community-based responses and detention reduction strategies.	Supports shift toward community-based intervention.	Supports Objective 1 comparisons between detention and diversion approaches and provides regional context useful for Objective 3 when evaluating Oregon practices alongside nearby jurisdictions.
Hawkins, J. D., et al.	2009	Communities That Care Trial	Test community coalition prevention models.	Community-randomized trial across 24 towns; longitudinal youth surveys.	Reduced initiation of delinquency and violence in intervention communities.	Community-led prevention reduces youth crime.	Supports community-based system approaches.
Henggeler, S. W., & Schaeffer, C. M.	2016	Multisystemic Therapy Overview	Summarize outcomes of MST and related family-based therapies.	Review of randomized controlled trials and long-term follow-ups.	MST significantly reduces rearrest and out-of-home placement.	Family-centered interventions outperform institutional placement.	Key evidence-based diversion model.
Hirschi, T.	1969	Causes of Delinquency	Introduce Social Control Theory linking bonds to delinquency.	Theoretical framework supported by empirical survey data.	Strong attachments to family, school, and community reduce delinquency.	Strengthening bonds is central to crime prevention.	Explains why detention disrupts protective factors.
Holman, B., & Zidenberg, J.	2006	The Dangers of Detention	Synthesize research on detention impacts.	Policy report drawing from national datasets and prior studies.	Detention disrupts education, family ties, and	Overreliance on detention is counterproductive.	Primary source for detention harms.

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					increases recidivism.		
Lane County Youth Services	(n.d.)	Juvenile Justice Evaluation Reports	Track local outcomes for detention and diversion.	County administrative data analyses.	Increased reliance on community programs; attention to recidivism risk.	Local data support diversion strategies.	Oregon-specific policy relevance.
Lipsey, M. W.	2009	Effective Juvenile Interventions	Identify characteristics that reduce recidivism.	Meta-analysis of 500+ program evaluations.	Skill-based, family-focused programs outperform custody.	Program quality matters more than punishment.	Central empirical anchor for the review.
Lipsey, M. W.	2010	Improving Juvenile Justice Programs	Improve evidence-based practice implementation.	Policy analysis and synthesis.	Poorly matched interventions reduce effectiveness.	Align services with risk and needs.	Supports the RNR framework.
MacKenzie, D. L., & Ryan, J. P.	1999	Detention in Delinquency Cases	Examine trends in juvenile detention use.	National administrative data analysis.	Detention is widely used, but with limited benefits.	Calls for reconsideration of detention policy.	Historical detention context.
Marion County Juvenile Department	(n.d.)	Juvenile Services Program Descriptions	County diversion and detention alternatives	Public program documentation	Peer courts, mediation, and attendance programs are described	Diversion pathways exist at the county level	Community-based programming
MDRC	2018	Youth Villages Transitional Living Program	Assess the outcomes of community programs for justice-involved youth.	Randomized and quasi-experimental design; administrative data.	Improved housing and stability outcomes.	Community supports aid transition outcomes.	Supports non-custodial interventions.
Mercy, J. A., & Vivolo-Kantor, A. M.	2016	CDC Youth Violence Prevention Centers	Describe the national prevention framework.	Program evaluations and public health data synthesis.	Community prevention reduces violence.	Multi-level prevention is effective.	Connects health and justice approaches.
Multnomah County DCJ	(n.d.)	Juvenile Services Annual Data Book	Report county detention and diversion outcomes.	Local administrative data.	Growth in diversion and equity monitoring.	County approaches align with reform goals.	Oregon county-level context.

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Multnomah County Department of Community Justice	2025	Juvenile Crime Prevention Basic and Diversion Plan	County-level diversion programming	Administrative planning document	Diversion funding streams targeting higher-risk youth	County practices include diversion infrastructure	Program alignment Objective 3
Nagin, D. S.	2013	Deterrence in the Twenty-First Century	Evaluate deterrence theory and its role in criminal behavior.	Review and synthesis of empirical deterrence research.	Punishment and perceived consequences may influence future offending decisions under specific conditions.	Deterrence effects depend on certainty, severity, and immediacy of punishment.	Supports theoretical perspectives suggesting detention may discourage future offending through deterrence mechanisms.
National Institute of Justice	2015 – 2021	Crime Solutions Ratings	Rate program effectiveness.	Systematic evidence review.	MST/FFT rated effective.	Evidence-based programs outperform custody.	Source for program credibility.
National Research Council	2013	Reforming Juvenile Justice	Integrate developmental science into policy.	Consensus report.	Developmentally aligned practices improve outcomes.	Justice systems should avoid punitive models.	Foundational policy synthesis.
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)	2017	Juvenile Reentry Literature Review	Summarizes national research on outcomes and recidivism patterns for youth released from residential placement.	Literature review and synthesis of existing state-level reentry studies.	Reports that rearrest within one year following release from residential placement average approximately 55%, with variation across jurisdictions and definitions of recidivism.	Used in Objective 1 comparisons and background trends discussed in Results.	Provides national context for recidivism outcomes.

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Oregon Criminal Justice Commission	2021	Justice Reinvestment Program	Evaluate reinvestment impacts.	Statewide administrative analysis.	Reduced incarceration growth.	Community investments improve outcomes.	Oregon policy framework.
Oregon Judicial Department	(n.d.)	Juvenile Court Programs: State of Oregon.	Overview of juvenile court programming and diversion practices in Oregon	Administrative /program description (non-empirical)	Describes court-based diversion options, supervision pathways, and program structures used across Oregon juvenile courts	Oregon courts utilize multiple diversion and supervision models aligned with community-based practices	Oregon program structure and alignment with national intervention components
Oregon Legislature	2025	Authorized Diversion Programs (Oregon Statutory Framework)	Legal framework authorizing diversion and alternative juvenile court programs	Legislative/policy documentation	Identifies diversion options such as youth courts, mediation, and community-based alternatives authorized under Oregon law	Diversion is formally embedded within Oregon juvenile justice statutes	Structural alignment with national community-based intervention models
Oregon Youth Authority	(n.d.)	Program and Services JJIS Landing Page Reports	Public Reporting of Juvenile Justice Outcomes	Administrative reporting.	Outcomes tracked focus on referrals rather than program participation.	Limits direct diversion outcome evaluation.	Objective 3 data availability and limitations
Oregon Youth Authority JJIS Recidivism Report	2023	12-Month Recidivism Report (JJIS)	Reports statewide recidivism outcomes for youth involved in Oregon's juvenile justice system.	Administrative data analysis using statewide justice information system records.	Reports approximately 27.8% statewide 12-month recidivism rate; definitions and follow-up periods specified within the report.	Multiple interpretations.	Primary Oregon-specific outcome source used for Objective 3 evaluation and comparison to national evidence

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Petrosino et al.	2010	Formal System Processing Effects	Compare formal processing vs diversion.	Systematic review/meta-analysis.	Formal processing increases delinquency.	Diversion often produces better outcomes.	Directly supports the diversion argument.
Rovner, J. <i>The Sentencing Project</i>	2025	Youth Justice by the Numbers	Provides national statistical overview of juvenile arrests, confinement trends, and system involvement.	Policy brief summarizing federal datasets and national trend analyses.	Youth arrests and confinement have declined substantially over time; confinement population decreased significantly compared to early 2000s levels.	Contextualizes intervention outcomes for Objective 1 and 3	Supports national trend discussion
Ryan, J., Abrams, L., & Huang, H.	2014	First-Time Violent Juvenile Offenders	Examine placement and recidivism.	Multivariate regression using administrative data.	Confinement is associated with higher recidivism.	Placement decisions influence outcomes.	Supports risk-based placement logic.
Seigel, E., Walsh, N., Weber, J.	2014	Core Principles for Reducing Recidivism and Improving Other Outcomes for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System	Examine current practices to reduce recidivism, evaluate, and provide policy recommendations.	Empirical review of national literature and program interviews.	We must shift away from detention and confinement to improve recidivism. Better implementation, better policies, and more funding allocation.	Provides framework and knowledge on how to improve outcomes for youth in juvenile justice systems.	Provides national background and supports objectives.
Schumann, C.	1978	Institutional Care and Labeling	Test labeling theory in juvenile institutions.	Empirical analysis of youth bureau data.	Institutional labeling is linked to future offending.	Supports diversion to avoid stigma.	Reinforces labeling theory.
The Council of State Governments Justice Center	2022	Navigating Concerns on Youth Crime, Violence, and Behavioral Health	Provides an overview of national juvenile justice policy trends and evidence-informed practices	Policy synthesis drawing on national research and implementation frameworks	Highlights shift toward community-based approaches and evidence-informed	Provides framework for community intervention strategies to be more successful.	Helps frame objective 2 by identifying commonly cited intervention

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					intervention strategies		practices and policy directions.
The Sentencing Project	2024	Protect and Redirect	Identify best practices for diversion.	Policy analysis and case examples.	Diversion reduces justice involvement and costs.	Expansion of diversion is recommended.	Supports policy implications.
Urban Institute	2017	Credible Messenger Mentoring	Evaluate community mentoring models.	Mixed-methods evaluation.	Improved engagement and outcomes.	Community messengers are adequate support.	Relevant diversion model.
Walden, A. L., & Allen, N. E.	2019	Staff Engagement in Detention	Analyze staff role in detention outcomes.	Qualitative interviews and observations.	Rehabilitation varies by staff engagement.	Institutional constraints limit effectiveness.	Highlights detention variability.
Washington State Center for Court Research	2022	JDAI Annual Report	Track Washington detention reform outcomes.	Statewide administrative data.	Reduced detention with stable safety outcomes.	JDAI reforms are effective regionally.	Strong comparator for Oregon.
WSIPP	2018 – 2019	Benefit-Cost Results	Evaluate the ROI of juvenile programs.	Meta-analysis and economic modeling.	Community programs yield positive ROI.	Evidence supports community investment.	High-credibility economic evidence.
Wiatrowski, M. D., Griswold, D. B., & Roberts, M. K.	1981	Social Control Theory and Delinquency	Test Hirschi's theory empirically.	Multivariate statistical analysis.	Social bonds significantly reduce delinquency.	Empirical validation of social control theory.	Supports the theoretical framework.

Note. This table includes open-access or publicly available research conducted in the United

States between 1963 and 2025. Priority was given to studies from Oregon and Washington and to evidence-based evaluations of diversion or community-based youth programs. Sources include government publications, meta-analyses, academic research, and evaluations of nonprofit and local initiatives.

Appendix B

Outcome Domains by Intervention Type (Sources Included in Results Analysis)

Author & Year	Intervention Type	Outcome Domain Reported	Key Result Reported in Project
OJJDP (2017)	Detention/Reentry	Recidivism	Rearrest averages reported near 55% within 1 year for custody-involved youth
Lipsey (2009)	Community-Based	Recidivism	Programs emphasizing therapeutic and family elements associated with reduced reoffending
Henggeler & Schaeffer (2016)	Community-Based	Recidivism	Multisystemic therapy linked to lower rearrest outcomes compared to standard services
Early et al. (2014)	Community-Based	Recidivism	Experimental diversion programming demonstrated reduced reoffending patterns
WSIPP (2018,2019)	Community-Based	Recidivism	Benefit-cost analyses identified diversion and therapy programs linked to reductions in criminal justice involvement
Petrosino et al. (2010)	Detention/System Processing	Recidivism	Formal processing associated with increased delinquency outcomes in several studies
Ryan et al. (2014)	Detention/Placement	Recidivism	Placement decisions associated with differing recidivism trajectories
Holman and Ziedenberg (2006)	Detention	Education/System Outcomes	Confinement linked with schooling disruption and continued system contact patterns
National Research Council (2013)	Detention/Developmental	Psychosocial Outcomes	Custody associated with developmental risks affecting future system involvement
Urban Institute (2017)	Community-Based	Recidivism/Social Outcomes	Credible messenger mentoring associated with reduced justice involvement
Elliott et al. (2020)	Community-Based	Recidivism	Evidence-based programs linked to improved youth outcomes

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Oregon Youth Authority (2023)	State Administrative	Recidivism	27.8% statewide 12-month referral recidivism; 5.2% chronic recidivism
Walden & Allen (2014)	Detention Environment	Psychosocial Outcomes	Staff engagement and facility practices linked to youth rehabilitation context
Bonnie & Backes (2019)	Developmental/National	System Outcomes	Developmentally informed interventions associated with improved trajectories
Aos et al. (2004)	Prevention/Community-Based	Recidivism	Early intervention programs demonstrated long-term crime reduction potential
Hawkins et al. (2009)	Prevention Model	Behavioral Outcomes	Community prevention models linked to reductions in delinquency behaviors
Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor (2016)	Youth prevention centers associated with reductions in risk behaviors	Violence Prevention Outcomes	Youth prevention centers associated with reductions in risk behaviors
Augustine et al. (2024)	Diversion/Education	Behavioral Outcomes	Restorative and diversion models associated with improved engagement outcomes
MDRC (2018)	Transitional Community Program	Education/Employment Outcomes	Structured community programs linked to improved youth transitions
The Sentencing Project (2018)	Diversion/National	Recidivism	Diversion practices linked to reduced system involvement
Rovner (2025)	National Policy Data	System Trends	National youth justice trends contextualizing intervention outcomes
National Institute of Justice (2015-2021)	Evidence Ratings	Recidivism	Therapy-based models rated effective in reducing reoffending

Appendix C

Intervention Components and Associated Outcome Patterns

Author & Year	Intervention Component Identified	Outcome Type Reported	Notes for Results Chapter
Lipsey (2009)	Family Engagement, Skill-Building	Recidivism	Meta-analysis identified strongest effects in therapeutic models
Henggeler & Schaeffer (2016)	Family-Based Therapy (MST)	Recidivism	Reduced rearrest outcomes reported
National Institute of Justice (2015-2021)	Evidence-Rated Therapy Programs	Recidivism	MST and FFT identified as effective models
Urban Institute (2017)	Mentoring/Credible Messenger Supports	Recidivism/Social outcomes	Programs emphasize pro-social adult relationships
Elliott et al. (2020)	Evidence-Based Programming	Recidivism	Structured intervention models linked to improved outcomes
WSIPP (2018,2019)	Risk-Needs Responsivity Matching	Recidivism	Higher reductions when programs match youth risk-level
OJJDP (2017)	Cognitive-Behavioral and Family Supports	Recidivism	Reentry programs with therapy components reported better outcomes
Oregon Legislature (2025)	Statutorily Authorized Diversion	Program Structure	Youth courts, mediation, diversion pathways
Oregon Judicial Department (n.d.)	Court-Based Diversion Practices	Program Structure	Demonstrates Oregon implementation of diversion models
Hawkins et al. (2009)	Communities That Care Prevention Framework	Behavioral/Delinquency outcomes	Community prevention planning linked to reductions in delinquency behaviors
Aos et al. (2004)	Early Prevention and Intervention Strategies	Recidivism	Prevention programs demonstrated long-term crime reduction potential
Mercy & Vivolo-Kantor (2016)	Community Violence Prevention Initiatives	Behavioral outcomes	Prevention centers associated with reductions in risk behaviors
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2017)	Cognitive-Behavioral and Family-Focused Reentry Programming	Recidivism	Structured reentry models associated with improved outcomes
Ryan et al. (2014)	Placement Decision Practices and Supervision Structure	Recidivism	Differences in supervision context linked to outcome variation
Vincent et al. (n.d.)	Risk Assessment Implementation	Supervision/placement outcomes	Structured risk tools guide intervention matching

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Council of State Governments Justice Center (2022)	Behavioral Health and Service Coordination	System outcomes	Emphasis on coordinated intervention approaches
The Sentencing Project (2024)	Diversion Infrastructure and Restorative Practices	Recidivism	Diversion models emphasize accountability without confinement
Augustine et al. (2024)	Restorative Practices and Diversion Programming	Education/behavior outcomes	Restorative approaches linked to improved engagement outcomes