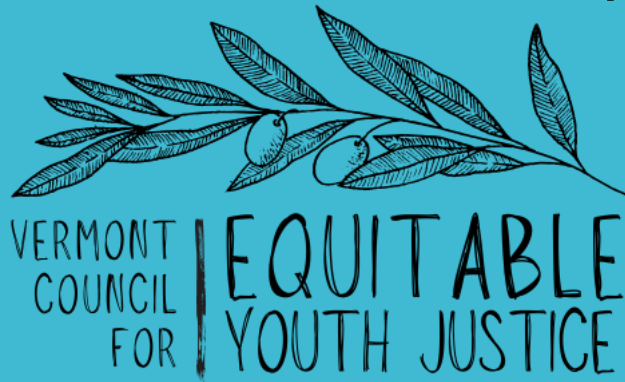


# Testimony to House Judiciary & Human Services Committees January 15, 2024

**Vermont Council for Equitable Youth Justice**

**Presenters: Karen Vastine, Chair**

**Amy Davenport, Member**

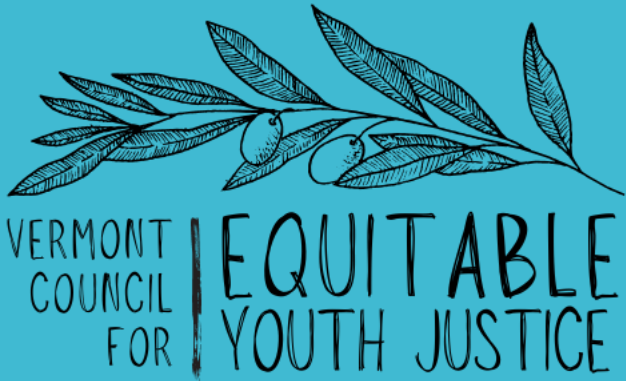


## Who We Are



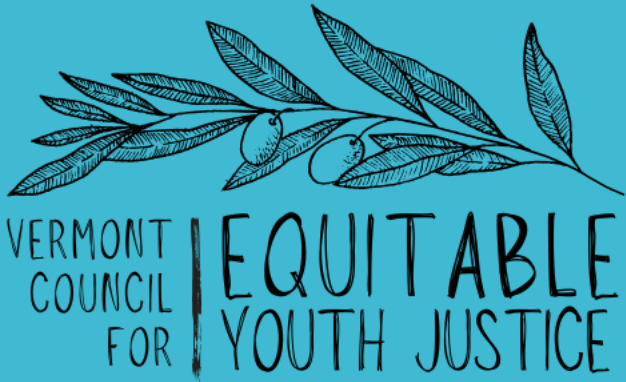
- Vermont's Advisory Group for juvenile justice and delinquency prevention as required by the federal Juvenile Justice And Delinquency Prevention Act and the Juvenile Justice Reform Act
- 21 members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate
- Federally required specific representatives including youth, victim advocates, law enforcement, non-profits and more
- Attached to DCF for planning and administrative functions

## What we do



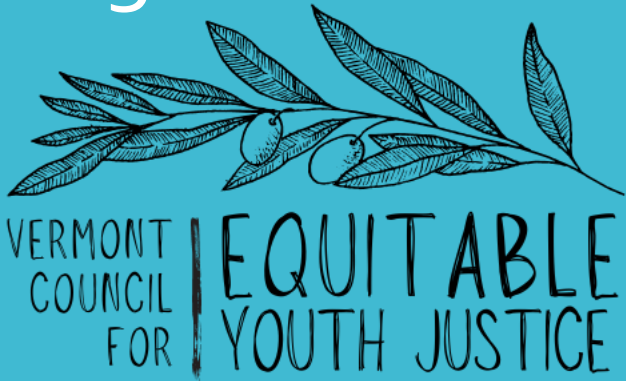
- Support DCF's compliance monitoring with respect to the core requirements of the JJRA
- Provide grants from Vermont's annual allocation of OJJDP funds for projects related to juvenile justice and the prevention of juvenile delinquency
- Support implementation of Act 201 and Juvenile Justice reform in Vermont
- Identify and reduce racial and ethnic disparities among youth who have contact with the JJ system

# What we Monitor



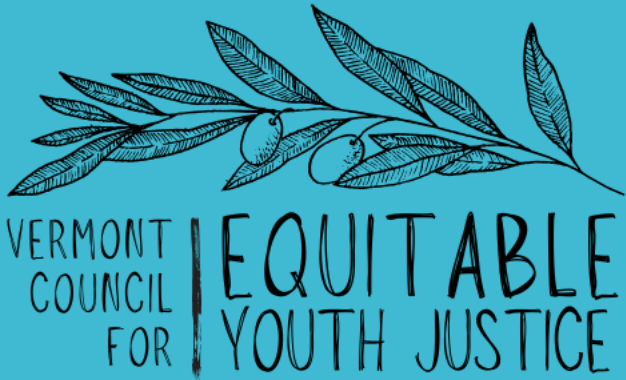
- The 4 Core Requirements of the JJRA
  - Deinstitutionalization of status offenders
  - Separation of juveniles from adult inmates
  - Removal of juveniles from adult jails and lockups
  - Address Racial and Ethnic Disparities

# Juvenile Justice Oversight: Looking at the Big Picture



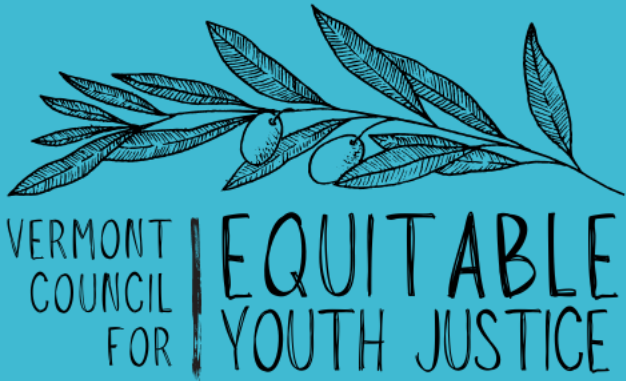
1. Data Collection and Accessibility
2. Programming for Youth in the JJ System
3. Recidivism Studies

# Data: What We Know



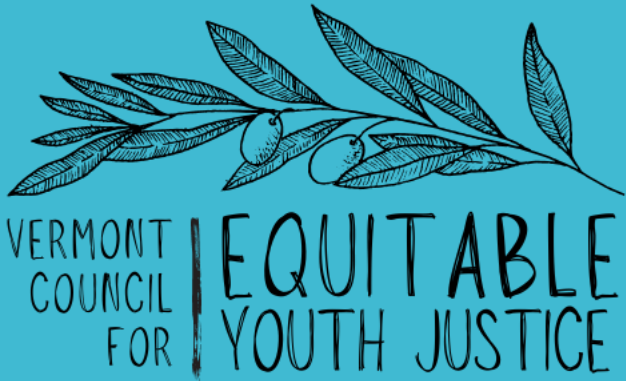
FY 7/1 – 6/30	Delinquency	YO
FY 18	879	302
FY 19	703	504
FY 20	634	383
18 year olds added to Family Division Jurisdiction July 1, 2020		
FY 21	681	308
FY 22	573	319
FY 23	700	314
FY 24	679	256

# We Have A Lot of JJ Data



- Court Data: Annual
  - # of filings, dispositions for delinquency, YO and youth in criminal division
  - Level of Offense: Misdemeanor or Felony
  - Category or Type of Offense: Public Order, Motor Vehicle, Domestic Violence, theft, robbery, assault, sex offense, arson, homicide
  - Type of Disposition: adjudicated, dismissed, diversion
- DCF and DOC Data: Point in Time
  - # of youth in custody
  - # of YOs under supervision
  - # of delinquent youth under supervision
- AG Data on Diversion

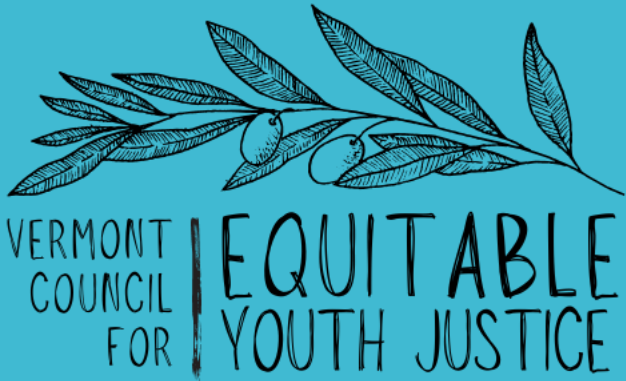
## What we need



- Consensus on what data points are the most important
- Data that is easily accessible
- Data that lets us see trends and gaps and successes as well as failures
- A rule against data cherry picking!

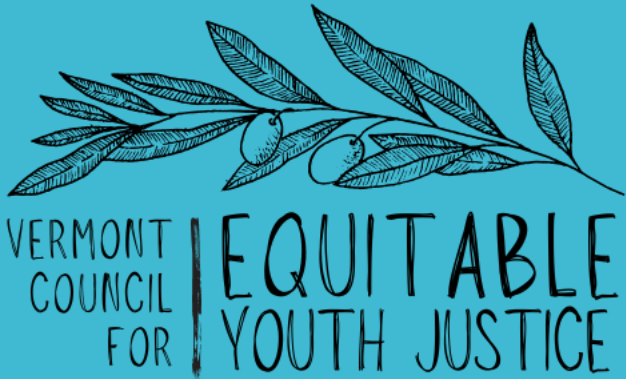


## Programming for Youth - Filling the Gaps



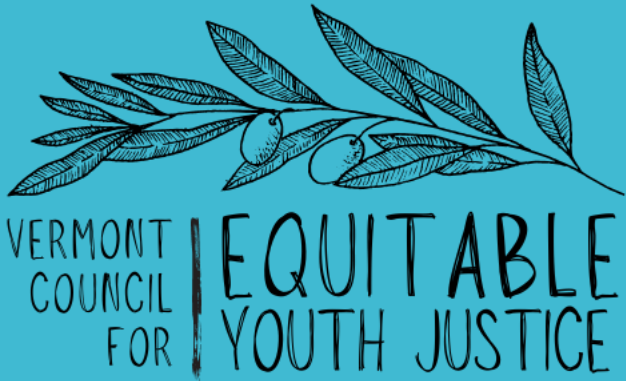
- Domestic violence Accountability project
  - Domestic violence charges against youth
  - Bennington College grant to design program
  - Implementation grant to the Hartford Community Justice Center
- Increasing pre-trial Diversion
  - Law Enforcement training on restorative justice

# Recidivism Studies



- Recidivism studies are rare because they are labor-intensive and expensive. They require a three-year window to determine whether there was a subsequent offense.
- In Vermont, they are usually conducted by the Crime Research Group.
- In 2022, CEYJ funded a recidivism study of youth ages 18-19 adjudicated in the criminal division of non Big 12 offenses between 2016 and 2019. The goal was to set a bench- mark that could be used to compare against outcomes for youth ages 19-19 adjudicated in the family division.
- The recidivism rate was 45.98%

# Closing



- Recidivism studies over time.
- Leverage CEYJ funds to continue to identify gaps, make recommendations and implement programming.
- Continue to address systemic inequities.
- Always keep in mind that we are talking about children and young people who have specific developmental needs.

Thank you  
Happy to answer any  
questions

For more information about the Council please visit: