



# King County's Uniting for Youth Initiative: Improving Outcomes for Multi-System Involved Youth



We want to keep youth in their communities, out of the Juvenile Justice system, or if already involved, keep them from going "down the pike" to further involvement.

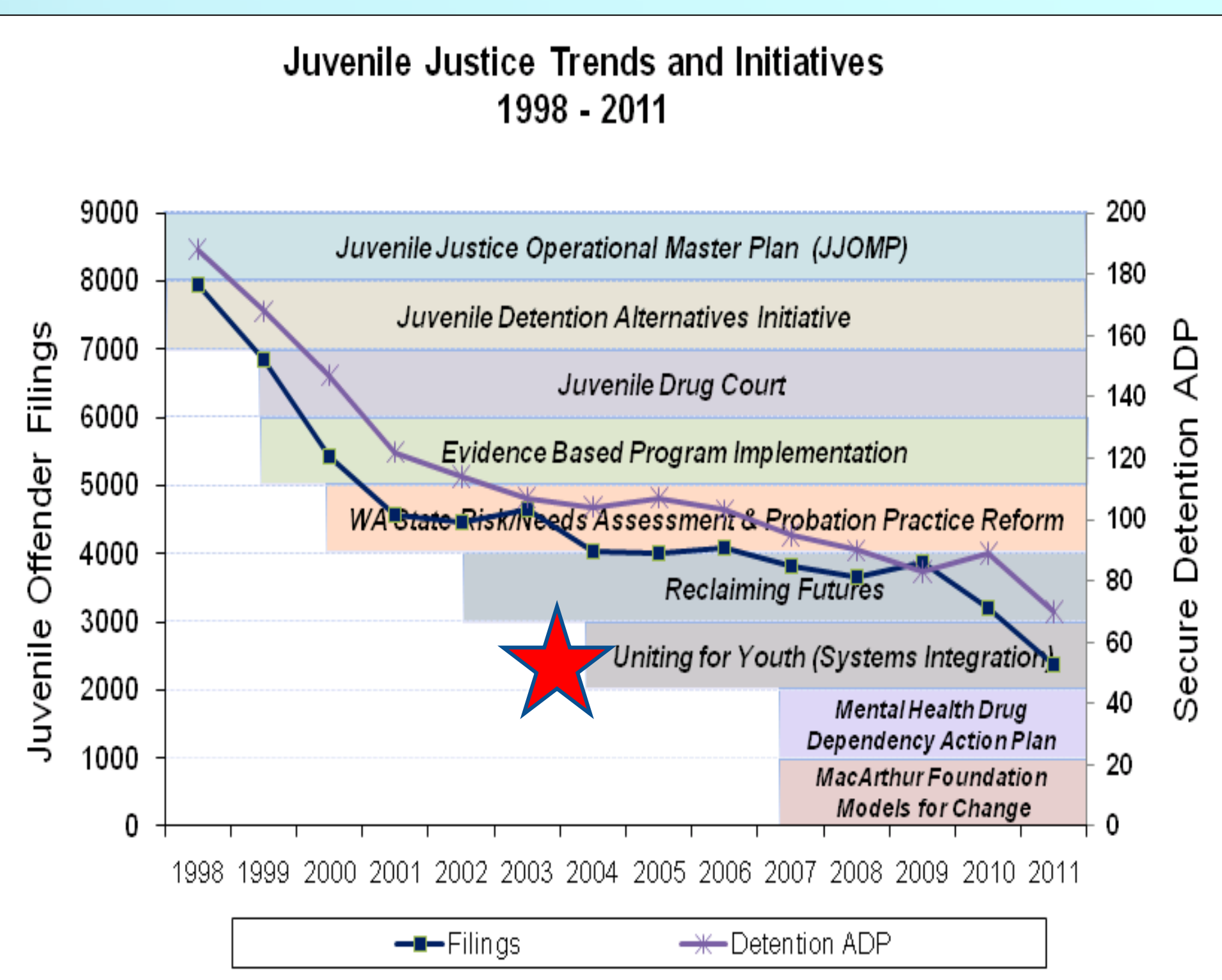
This requires a community safety net that works smoothly together to help youth grow, and empowers youth and families.



## Background and Related Initiatives

The Mission of Uniting for Youth is to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and coordination of services, policies and practices in youth-serving agencies in King County.

Uniting for Youth originated as a Models for Change Initiative funded by the MacArthur Foundation in 2004, and developed beyond the funding period. It grows from and connects to other reform initiatives, such as the Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan (JJOMP, began in 1998). Technical assistance or funding has been provided by partners including the Annie E Casey Foundation, Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The MacArthur Foundation, Gates Foundation, and the Center for Children and Youth Justice. Uniting for Youth has been held up by the MacArthur Foundation and other partners as a national model for other jurisdictions to emulate.

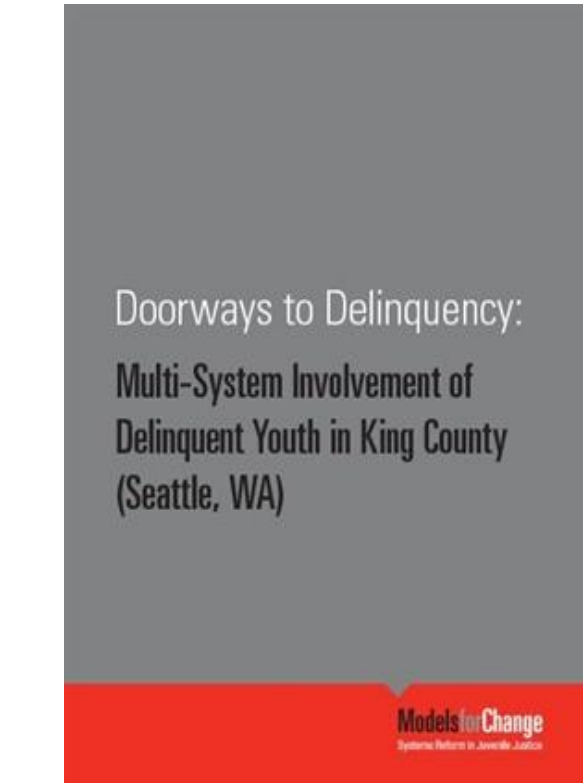


## Problem:

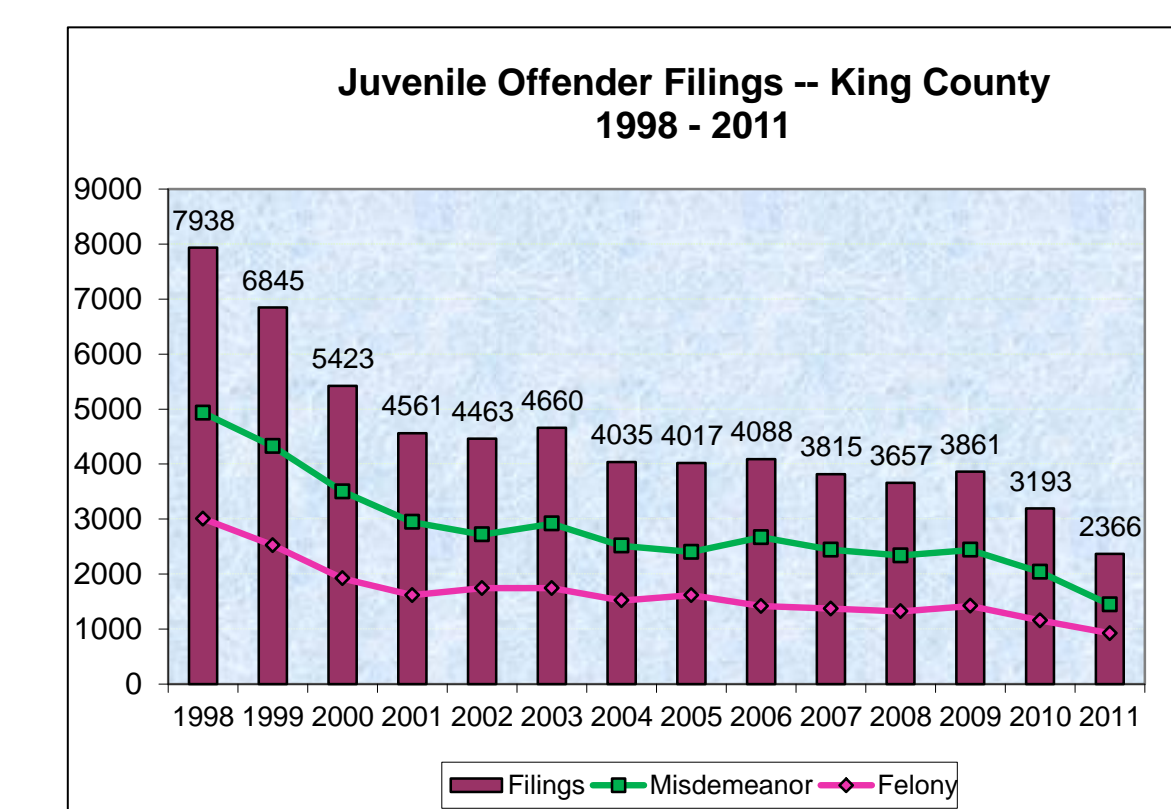
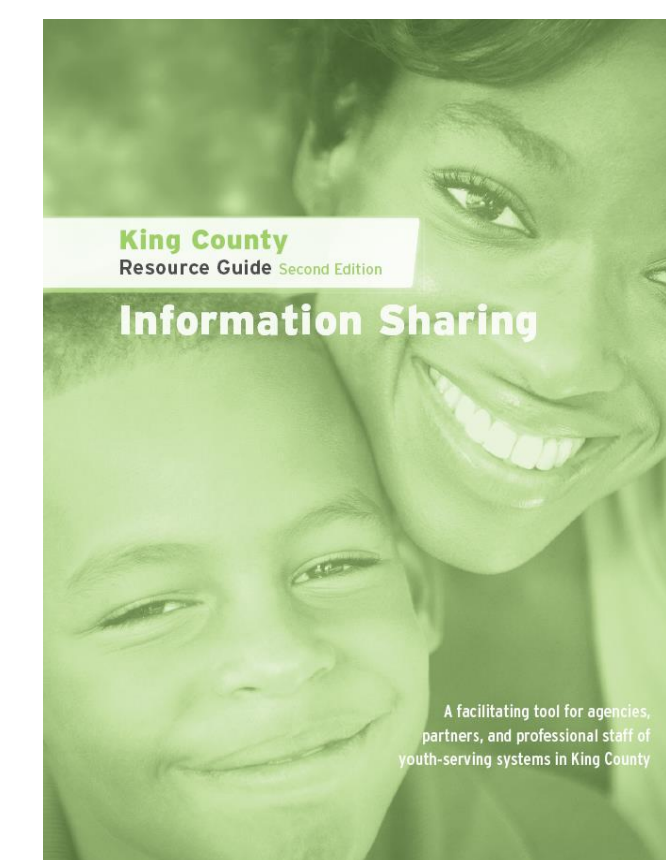
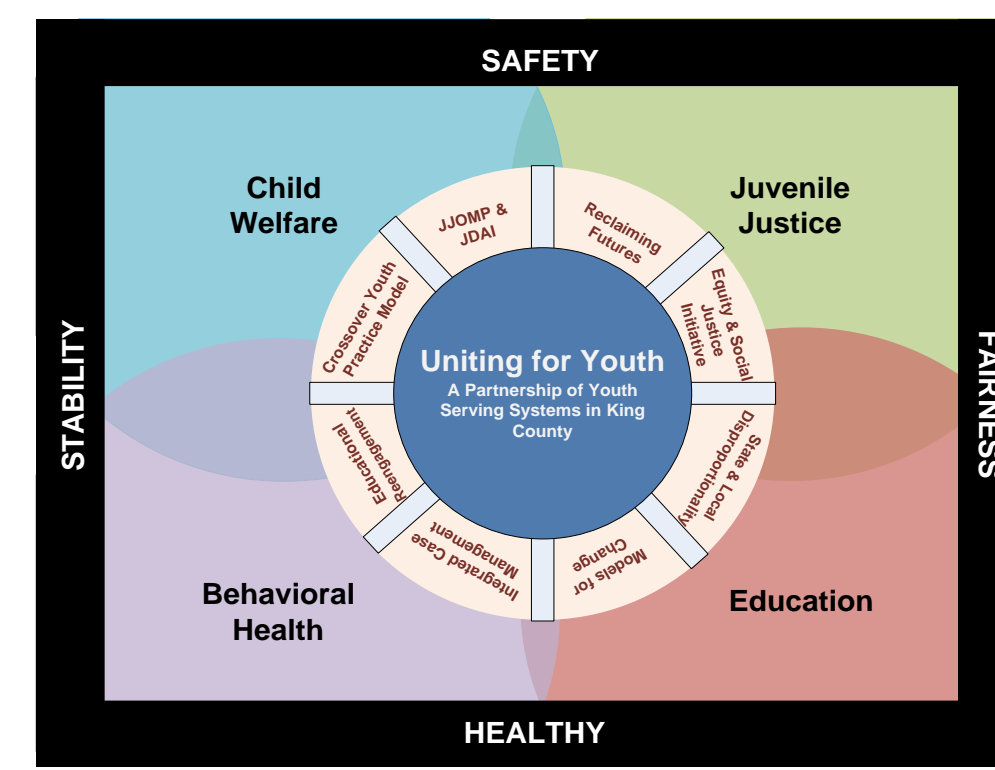
Youth that enter into the King County Juvenile Justice System are often involved in multiple youth-serving systems such as Child Welfare, Behavioral Health, etc. However, often these systems aren't taught how to collaborate.

## Research: *Doorways to Delinquency* (2011), found that for Court-Involved Youth in King County:

- About 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of youth in juvenile criminal court in 2006 had involvement in the child welfare system. Greater involvement relates to more jail time and higher recidivism.
- 73% have mental health and/or substance abuse disorders with most having multiple disorders, and high rates of trauma.



## Solutions: Policy Reforms, Collaboration between Systems, Cross-System Training, Reducing Incarceration and Increasing Supports



## Successes: Uniting for Youth

**Implemented a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** between multiple County and State agencies, declaring and formalizing their collaborative partnership for youth served by multiple systems.

**Provided Support** to youth-serving systems in the effort to reduce juvenile incarceration and increase youth diversion, including the provision of multi-dimensional assessments, and services to youth in their communities.

**Produced** informational materials in partnership with the Seattle Police to assist law enforcement in diverting youth from detention and helping youth access services. Also developed informational flyers for families on how to work with multiple service systems.

**Created an Information-Sharing Guide** for staff working across youth-serving systems, approved by all agency's Attorney Generals, showing staff how to share information within existing laws.

**Created and Implemented Cross-System Protocols-** Working agreements that detail joint policies and procedures for Juvenile Court, Probation and Children's Administration staff, to facilitate collaboration for youth and their families.

**Provides Cross System Training** – Quarterly joint system training for staff from youth serving systems to encourage shared responsibility and linked services. Completed over 17 trainings for over 2500 participants.

**Examined data via *Doorways to Delinquency*:** Illustrated the prevalence of multi-system involvement among youth referred to the King County Juvenile Court.

**Holds Monthly Partnership Meetings-** Bringing together Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice, Behavioral Health, Education and related systems in King County to identify successful collaborations and work together on areas needing improvement.

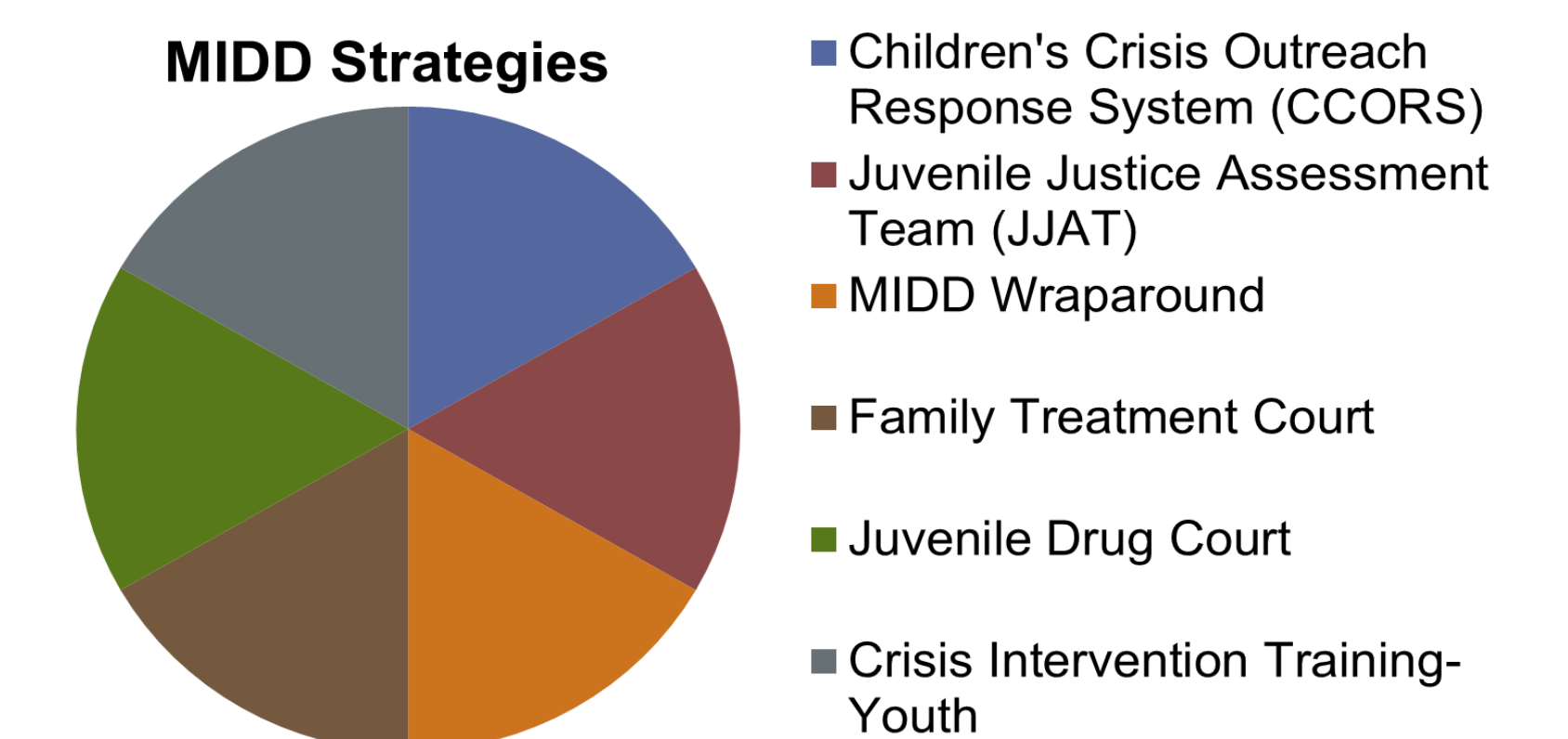
**Promotes Educational Integration** – Developed a model (Pathnet) and strategic plan for addressing the needs of youth in the Juvenile Justice system who have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out. Created alternative school options for youth to complete high school and move on to college or a career. Successfully implemented this plan in multiple school districts.

**Promotes Education** of Youth and Families about the Juvenile Justice System via support for the Juvenile Justice 101 Initiative.

**Regularly Evaluates** the work of the Initiative, systems interactions, and the state of multi-system youth in King County.

## Connections to MIDD

Uniting for Youth supports MIDD (Mental Illness Drug Dependency) funded strategies that serve high-needs youth and reduce incarceration. Uniting for Youth and these programs' goals are aligned, and they regularly collaborate.



## Participating Partners

- Juvenile Court (Superior Court)
- Children's Administration, Region 2
- King County Department of Community & Human Services
- Puget Sound Educational Service District
- Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention
- Casey Family Programs
- Juvenile Justice & Rehabilitation Admin.
- Attorney General's Office
- King County Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget
- King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- Developmental Disabilities
- Law Enforcement
- Community Advisory Board (youth and adult)
- Community Agencies

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**Children's Mental Health Planner**  
**King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division (MHCADSD)**

Information Sharing Guide link  
[http://www.nijn.org/uploads/digital-library/King\\_County\\_Resource\\_Guide\\_for\\_Information\\_Sharing\\_2nd\\_Edition.pdf](http://www.nijn.org/uploads/digital-library/King_County_Resource_Guide_for_Information_Sharing_2nd_Edition.pdf) Models for Change Initiative Report <http://nicic.gov/Library/025382> or for information contact Marcus Stubblefield at: [marcus.stubblefield@kingcounty.gov](mailto:marcus.stubblefield@kingcounty.gov) Sources: Presentations on Uniting for Youth 5/22/12, 9/12/13, and related Uniting for Youth documents by M. Stubblefield, B.Knutson, et al.