

MARCH 2017

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

KING COUNTY JUVENILE
DIVERSION RESEARCH

KEEPING KIDS OUT OF THE SYSTEM: AN EXAMINATION AND ANALYSIS

CREATED BY

LAW,
SOCIETIES, &
JUSTICE GROUP
HONORS
COHORT

AUTHORS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Authors:

Audrey Airut Murphy; Elizabeth Berry; Sarah Brenden; Xavier Frank; Clara Manahan; Cait Nold; Marisa Russell; Komalpreet Kaur Sahota; Eleana Stevens; Capriel Stevenson; and Lindsey Townsend.

Acknowledgements:

We would like to give special thanks to the following individuals for their continued support and guidance:

Professor Steve Herbert

Catherine Pickard, Elizabeth Haumann, and the King County Juvenile Court

Heather Evans, Ph.D Sociology

We would also like to thank the following individuals for their valuable contributions to this report and their willingness to share with us the intricacies of juvenile justice in King County:

180 Program Staff and Volunteers, CAB Board Volunteers, Ben Carr, Justan Cook, Jonah Crollard, Elinor Cromwell, Leila Curtis, Paul Daniels, Dominique Davis, Terrell Dorsey, Professor Sarah Elwood, Sean Goode, Jimmy Hung, Judge Laura Inveen, Christine Kahikina, La Mer Kyle-Griffith, Arielle Lane, Sarah Lewontin, Katelyn Lowthorp, Michelle Mihail, Shirley Noble, Judge J. Wesley Saint Clair, Youssef Shalaby, Hannah Schwendeman, Stephan Thomas, Claire Thornton, Kory VanDyke, Youth and Families (names omitted)

I. Introduction PAGE 4

A. Research Questions

B. Summary of Key Findings

II. Background PAGE 5

A. Community Accountability Boards

B. 180 Saturday Seminars

C. Juvenile Probation Counselor Diversion

III. Methods and Limitations PAGE 7

A. Analysis of 2014 Juvenile Diversion Referral Data

B. Analysis of Interviews and Observations

IV. An Overview of Juveniles Referred to Diversion in 2014 PAGE 9

V. Key Findings and Discussion PAGE 11

VI. Recommendations PAGE 21

VII. Appendices and Sources PAGE 23

I. INTRODUCTION

Juvenile diversion, which is an alternative to formal court processing for youth accused of misdemeanor crimes, is a significant component of the King County Juvenile Justice System. The three juvenile diversion processes in King County include Community Accountability Boards (CABs), the 180 Program (sometimes referred to as a Saturday Seminar), and Juvenile Probation Counselor (JPC) Supervised Diversion. We were asked to gather and analyze data about the diversion process. Our specific research questions included:

- *Are there any patterns -- in terms of race, gender, geography, or offense type -- in the practice of referrals of juveniles accused of misdemeanor offenses to any diversion program offered through the King County juvenile justice process?*
- *Are any of these factors associated with the rates of completion of individuals in any of these diversion programs?*
- *To the extent that any patterns or associations noted above occur, what plausible explanations might exist for them?*

We compiled 2014 King County juvenile diversion data and analyzed patterns we observed regarding rates of completion, referral processes, and offense types. We also conducted qualitative research by attending diversion programs, interviewing court and diversion actors, and studying relevant literature.

Key Findings:

Youth who attend diversion programs almost always complete them;
Many youth who are eligible for diversion do not attend a program, about three-fourths of whom were not successfully engaged;
The main obstacle preventing youth from attending diversion programs is likely a barrier with communication;
Minority youth complete diversion at lower rates than white youth. Minority youth are also overrepresented within those who fail to engage with diversion;
Filing patterns differ by age and race;
The length of time between a youth's initial referral and the completion of diversion varies considerably;
A small number of zip codes in South King County have disproportionately high concentrations of referrals;
Zip codes with higher numbers of referred juveniles generally have higher proportions of minority youth referred;
Of youth referred to diversion, black youth are concentrated in younger age groups while white youth are concentrated in older age groups.

II. BACKGROUND

As mandated by the Washington Juvenile Justice Act of 1977, if there is probable cause that a juvenile has committed an offense classified as a misdemeanor, a gross misdemeanor, or a civil infraction, the case must be referred to diversion by the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (KCPAO). CABs should be the first diversion. Upon completion of a CAB diversion agreement, any reference to this offense in the criminal history will be hidden from the public. If a youth fails to complete a CAB or commits another crime after completing a CAB, a youth is usually sent to the 180 Program. Completion of the 180 Program leaves the youth with no record for that particular offense on their criminal history or record. If a youth commits another crime after the CAB and 180 Program, they are usually referred to the KCPAO and the youth is eligible for referral to a JPC diversion.

The three forms of diversion are structured differently. They can be described as follows:

Community Accountability Boards are conducted by community volunteers and court advisors who interview the referred youth and their guardian(s), and provide an accountability plan and/or recommendations for resources. The boards are usually comprised of two to seven members, who should represent the diversity of the local community. The sessions occur at 23 different locations across King County, as frequently as once a week, typically during evenings. During the interview, the CAB facilitators will ask questions of the youth and guardian(s), review the offense, and discuss the implications of the offense for the community and/or victim(s). The boards have discretion in determining the terms of the diversion agreement with which the youth must comply in order to "complete" the CAB, provided the board abides by the the Juvenile Justice Act of 1977. According to the legislation, these agreements can consist of: completion of community service of up to 150 hours; monetary restitution to the victim; up to 10 hours of counseling or 20 hours of educational sessions or health services; and/or requirements to stay at home, school, or work during certain hours. The diversion agreement may not exceed six months, nor can it extend beyond the youth's 18th birthday. Provided a youth has only one diversion, the criminal history of this offense will be automatically dropped two years after successful completion of the CAB and once they turn 18. The cost to complete a CAB is \$100, which can be waived upon proof of financial hardship.

The 180 Program is conducted by community leaders, a panel of youth, and staff who present a part-lecture, part-discussion workshop to youth who are expected to actively participate in large and small group activities. The program occurs for four hours one Saturday a month at Seattle University Law School in Central Seattle. Youth “complete” the 180 Program by remaining physically and mentally present during the full duration of the program, and by complying with the activities led by staff. Youth who complete these Saturday Seminars are not mandated to complete additional diversion requirements following the workshop. The program intends to teach coping skills and encourage youth to make better decisions when facing challenges which may otherwise lead to crime; this notion is referred to as making a 180. The general format of the sessions includes: speakers presenting their experiences with the criminal justice system and personal hardships, and how they decided to make better decisions; a panel of youth who speak about their current path toward making a 180; and small group discussions led by volunteer facilitators in which youth discuss their own challenges and future goals. 180 Programs are free of charge for the diversion participant.

Juvenile Probation Counselor Supervised

Diversion is a process conducted by a Juvenile Probation Counselor (JPC) who works with the youth to determine appropriate diversion requirements. These requirements are constrained by the same restrictions which pertain to CABs. Each JPC endeavors to serve as a resource, disciplinarian, and advisor for the diversion recipient.

III. METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

Analysis of 2014 Juvenile Diversion Referral Data

We obtained and compiled extensive data files from the King County Juvenile Court. The first file contained all juvenile diversion referrals in 2014, including information on: referral dates; the most serious offense for which the juvenile was referred and its offense level (misdemeanor, felony, other violation); the juvenile's primary (residential) zip code; and disposition information. A second file contained demographic information (date of birth, race, gender). We matched demographic information with 2014 diversion referral information using a unique ID number assigned to each juvenile. Using these data, we assessed patterns or trends among offense types and disposition outcomes by age, race, or gender. After removing two cases associated with juveniles charged with felonies, the data consisted of 1190 juveniles referred to diversion programs in 2014.

These data also do not include any JPC diversions. Additionally, the data we received did not include any domestic violence referrals because of a policy change classifying such cases under the Family Intervention and Restorative Services (FIRS) program.

We created several new variables to analyze this population of 1190 youth. We created time variables to analyze the delay between different stages of the diversion process. We created an age variable by subtracting the date of birth from the date of first diversion referral from the police to the prosecutor. We also re-categorized offense type, disposition, race, age categories, reasons for diversion rejection and zip codes. For the specific variable coding protocols, and more information about the new variables and their limitations, please see appendix.

An overall limit to our analysis is that these data are from 2014, and the qualitative data is from 2016-2017. In this time period, the programming for diversion and their oversight changed.

Therefore, it is possible that patterns found in the 2014 data are no longer prevalent. We cannot evaluate Saturday Seminars in the same way as CABs because there are no event reasons to describe why the diversion did not occur disclosed in these data. Juvenile confidentiality concerns precluded us from knowing details of specific cases, which limited the contextual information in the data.

Although the demographic data we received included self-reported ethnicity, these data were missing for a majority of youth in the file and thus were not a component of our analysis. Additionally, although we include race data, these data come from a police referral and it is unclear how consistently they are updated after that point, or whether or not the youth is involved in reporting it. We were provided the zip code of the youth's primary residence but did not have access to the zip code of where the youth committed the offense nor geographical information on referral agencies. As a result, we were unable to make any informed analyses of the processes of initial referral. These are all areas where we suggest future research.

Analysis of Interviews and Observations

Between October 2016 and March 2017, we conducted 33 interviews of the following court and diversion actors: prosecuting attorneys, public defenders, judges, juvenile probation counselors, supervisors and volunteers of the three diversion programs, and youth who participated in diversion and their guardians. During these interviews, we framed our discussions with the guidance of our research questions. We audio-recorded these meetings, and took extensive notes. In addition, we observed seven CABs in Burien, Kent, and Federal Way. Lastly, we observed four Saturday Seminars; two of our group members also trained and participated as facilitators in one of those.

In observing programs and interviewing individuals, we faced several challenges. Two substantial limits were timing constraints and the scope of youth we were able to contact due to confidentiality considerations. We were limited to collecting data over the span of six months, which constricted our ability to explore certain aspects of King County diversion in more depth. In order to respect the privacy of diversion participants, we were limited in the amount of youth and families we could interview who had completed diversion. Despite this, we were able to interview 10 youth who had completed 180 diversion, a few of whom had completed CABs previously, and five parents. In addition, three of the CABs we were invited to attend were cancelled, which limited our exposure to CABs and the ability to talk to more CAB facilitators. We would have hoped to interview more actors and youth but time constraints prevented us from doing so.

IV. AN OVERVIEW OF JUVENILES REFERRED TO DIVERSION IN 2014

Analysis of 2014 Juvenile Diversion Referral Data

As noted above, our population for analysis includes 1190 juveniles referred to diversion programs in King County in 2014. Of the 1190 juveniles, 44.3% are female and 55.7% are male. Of the youth in our sample, 45.3% are white, while 53% are non-white. The majority of the non-white category are black youth, who make up 29.4% of the overall population. For 1.7% of our population, race is unknown, Table 1 summarizes these data.

Race	Count	Percent of Referrals
White	539	45.3
Black	350	29.4
Other	281	23.6
Unknown	20	1.7
Total	1190	100

Table 1. Racial Distribution of Overall Referral Population

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N = 1190.

Note: "Other" race includes: American Indian, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Hispanic youth. For a detailed distribution of race categories, see Appendix I.

Theft, drug and alcohol offenses, and misdemeanors relating to assault, harassment, or weapons are the three most common offense categories for which juveniles were referred to diversion in 2014. Table 2 shows that theft is the most common offense referral overall (49.8%), and that most females are referred to diversion for theft (65.3%). Theft is the most common reason for referral for all demographic groups except for white males. White males are referred for theft and drug/alcohol crimes at a nearly equal rate.

Offense Type	Percent of Females	Percent of Males	Percent of all Referrals
AHW	13.9%	17.0%	15.6%
Drug	11.2%	19.6%	15.9%
Property	2.7%	11.8%	7.7%
Public Disturbance	1.5%	2.9%	2.3%
Theft	65.3%	37.6%	49.8%
Other	2.8%	8.0%	5.7%
Other Violation	2.7%	3.2%	2.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 2. Juveniles Referred to Diversion in 2014, Broken Down by Gender and Offense

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N = 1190.

*Note: AHW stands for Assault, Harassment, and Weapons. For a detailed distribution of offense categories, see Appendix II.

V. KEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Youth who attend diversion programs almost always complete them.

Of the youth who attended a CAB diversion program, nearly all of them completed it. In our 2014 dataset, 830 youth signed a CAB diversion agreement, and attended a CAB program; of these, 765 completed a CAB successfully. This means only 65 youth, or 7.8%, began a CAB and did not comply with the requirements. Our qualitative observations and interviews complement our finding that those who attend CABs are likely to complete the diversion agreements. We observed seven CAB sessions, and among these, the CAB boards generally assigned community service or creative projects. In the CABs we observed, the completion requirements assigned were less than the maximum amount allowed under legislation.

In our observations, these CAB processes tailored the diversion agreement to the youth and to the offense, taking into account the punishments the family had already given the youth, the social history of the youth, and their resources. These agreements appeared reasonable and feasible. The high completion rates of CABs imply that the requirements of the diversion program are not a barrier to completion.

Unlike CABs, we do not have data on the attendance rates of the 180 Program. That means we cannot compare completion rates across the two programs. However, completion rates for 180 appear to be high. Attending and participating in the entire workshop are the main requirements for completion. The 180 staff and facilitators require that the youth participate in the activities, and in our experience the majority of youth do so, leading them to successfully complete the program.

2. Many youth who are eligible for diversion do not attend a diversion program, about three-fourths of whom were not successfully engaged.

Despite the high rates of completion for youth who attend diversion programs, these rates do not include youth who are referred to CABs or 180 but do not attend. Out of the youth referred to a CAB, a quarter (25.9%) did not attend. Of those who did not attend, three-fourths (74.8%) were not successfully engaged (see next section). Some of these youth were subsequently referred to Saturday Seminars. Though we do not have precise attendance rates for Saturday Seminars, our understanding is that if a youth referred to a Saturday Seminar is recorded as not completing it, it means that youth did not attend. Based on this understanding, our analysis suggests that 43.5% of youth referred to Saturday Seminars did not attend.

Nearly all youth in our dataset who were referred to 180 were referred to CABs first. As a result, youth referred to 180 are a subset of youth who already experienced barriers to engaging with diversion. Thus, the completion rates for CABs and 180 cannot be directly compared.

In the event that youth do not respond to their notice of referral, or if they do not attend the diversion, their case will be sent back to the KCPAO. At this stage, prosecutors have discretion to refer the youth to another diversion, such as the 180 Program or JPC diversion. Alternatively, they may choose to file the charges and begin court proceedings, or they may dismiss the charges. Most eligible youth referred to a CAB who do not complete it never physically attend due to issues with the contacting process. Our analysis revealed no discernible pattern regarding which youth will receive a subsequent "second chance" at diversion with a Saturday Seminar referral, and which will not.

3. Our evidence suggests that the main obstacle preventing youth from attending diversion programs are barriers with communication.

Two-hundred ninety youth in our dataset did not attend a CAB although they were eligible. As noted above, of these, 217 (74.8%) did not attend because of issues with either notifying or locating the youth. More than half of those youth--131--never responded to contact attempts by CAB actors, meaning no one was able to definitively communicate with the youth. Put differently, almost half of the time (45.1%) that a youth does not attend a CAB, it is because they did not respond to contact attempts. In these cases, we cannot be certain if the youth was aware of the diversion.

Of youth who did not go to a CAB, and were given a second chance to complete diversion at a 180 Program, 56.4% were able to complete the Saturday Seminar. Thus, Saturday Seminars are engaging many youth that CABs are not. The CAB contacting process begins with sending a letter to the potential diversion recipient. These diversion letters are available in Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and English. If there is no response within two weeks, the CAB coordinator will call the youth. If there is no answer, another letter will be sent as a final notice. If there is no response to any of these communication attempts, the youth will be recorded as a "failure to respond," and their case will be sent back to the KCPAO. In comparison, the Saturday Seminar begins contact with a letter, which is explicitly marked with red lettering on the envelope in an attempt to illicit a response. If there is no reply, a member of the 180 team will call the youth/guardian, following up multiple times to ensure that every effort to communicate is made.

Many of the youth we interviewed explained that they found out about the 180 Program through a phone call, rather than the letter. Some mentioned that they did not even know that their case had been acted upon until receiving the phone call. Such practices suggest that phone calls may be more effective than letters at contacting youth. The 180 Program has recently begun using home visits as another method to increase the likelihood of reaching youth. Future research should investigate the success of that practice.

4. Minority youth complete diversion at lower rates than white youth. Minority youth are also overrepresented within those who fail to engage with diversion.

To complete a diversion, a youth must successfully receive a referral, attend the diversion, and fulfill any requirements. All minority groups in our data set complete diversion at lower rates than white youth. While 83.9% of white youth complete a diversion, only 66.3% of black youth complete a diversion. American Indians make up a small proportion of the overall population referred and complete at the lowest rate for all minority groups (46.4%).

Our data suggest the issues in the contacting process discussed above affect minority youth in a disproportionate way. A failure to engage with CABs encompasses all youth who failed to respond, failed to show, were categorized as “on the run”, or whom diversion actors were unable to locate. American Indians fail to engage at a relative rate of 42.9%, black youth at 27.7%, and hispanic youth at 21.1%. Asian and Pacific Islander youth fail to engage at the lowest rate for minorities at 15.3% in comparison to 10.2% of white youth. Despite making up 53% of our population, minority youth represent 71.9% of the 217 youth who fail to engage with diversion.

As discussed, almost all youth referred to 180 are a subset of youth who failed to engage with a CAB. Thus, the reason why a youth does not complete 180 likely mimics the reason why they did not complete a CAB.

5. Filing patterns differ by age and race.

There are potential implications from a failure to complete a diversion, including the likelihood of charges being filed on the youth. Our analysis suggests that there are racial differences in youth who have charges filed on them, at least with respect to black and white youths. All races except black youth and white youth are filed on at rates consistent with their referral rates. Yet, as shown in Figure 1, while black juveniles comprise 29.4% of all of the referrals, they make up 49.2% of cases that ended up being filed on. Conversely, whites comprise 45.3% of the juveniles referred, and are only 26.2% of those filed on. Put differently, black youth are filed on at a rate about 1.7 times greater than the rate at which they are referred to diversion, while white youth are filed on at a rate about 1.7 times less than the rate at which they are referred to diversion.

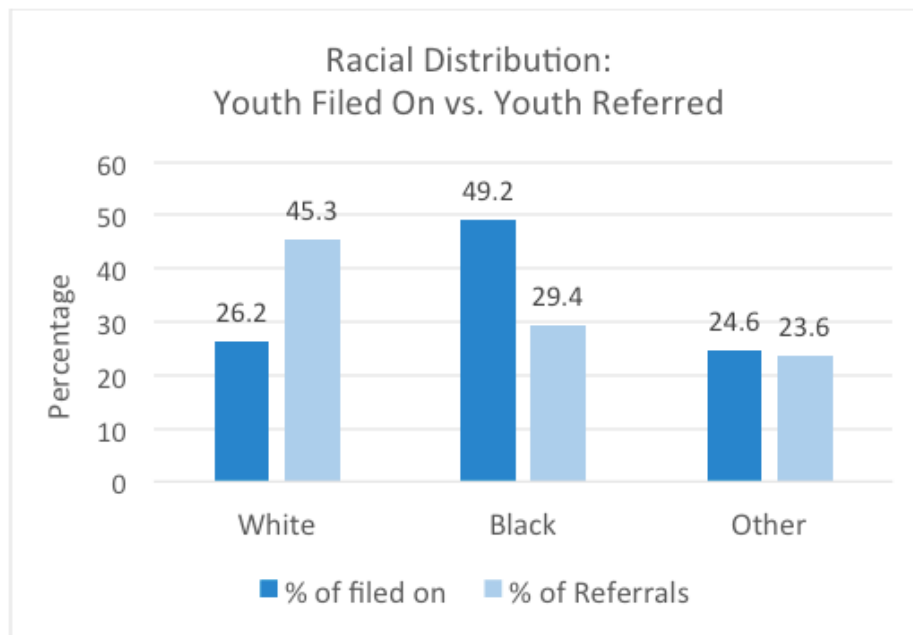


Figure 1.

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. Other race includes: American Indian, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Hispanic youth (see Appendix I). N=1190.

Like race, age influences the likelihood of a youth being filed upon. Youth aged 13-15 are overrepresented in the population of those who are ultimately filed on. Youth aged 12-15 make up 70.5% of those who are filed on, but only 50.5% of those who are referred. Figure 2 illustrates these patterns.

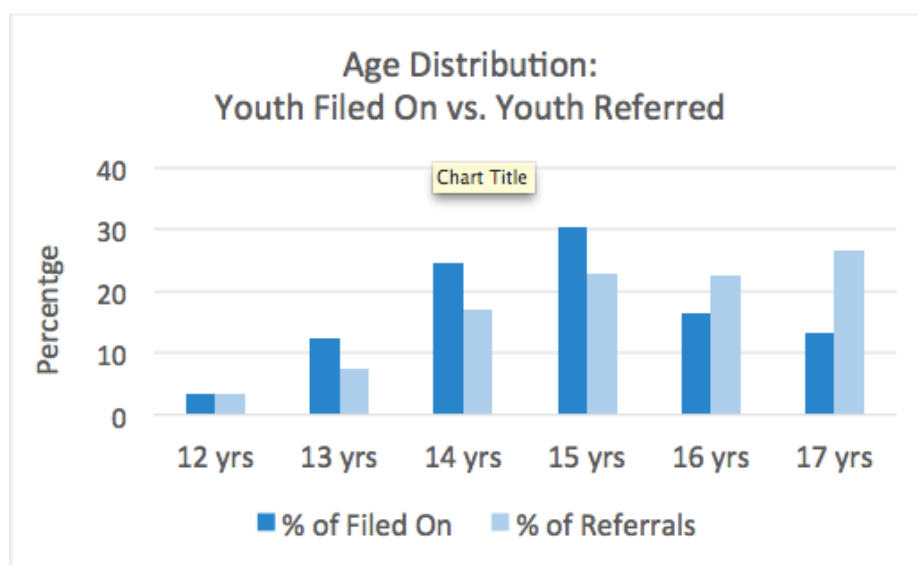


Figure 2.

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N=1190.

6. The length of time between a youth's initial referral and the completion of the diversion process varies considerably.

The amount of time between the date of referral to diversion and the diversion start date varies immensely among youth. There is also considerable variation in the time span between a referral to diversion and its completion. We noticed a general consensus across interviews with youth and guardians who voiced concerns that diversion processes generally take too long, and this time lapse may impact the effectiveness of their diversion experience. Our interviews with diversion and court actors also indicate that the temporal variability and length across diversion processes are likely problematic. These actors believe the impact of a diversion program is increased the closer it occurs to the offense.

7. A small number of zip codes in South King County have disproportionately high concentrations of referrals.

The 2014 diversion referral population includes youth reporting primary residences from a total of 134 different zip codes, including several zip codes that are outside of King County, and 26 from outside of Washington State. Importantly, these zip codes are not necessarily the zip code where the offense occurred, but rather the zip code of the juvenile's residence. A majority (71.1%) of the juveniles come from five cities: Seattle, Kent, Auburn, Federal Way, and Renton. Nearly 33% of all youth come from Seattle alone; however, these youth are concentrated primarily in South Seattle (see Figure 3). Youth from Kent are referred at the second most frequent rate, about half the rate of Seattle. Overall, the majority of youth referred to diversion live in South King County (the dark blue sections in the below map).

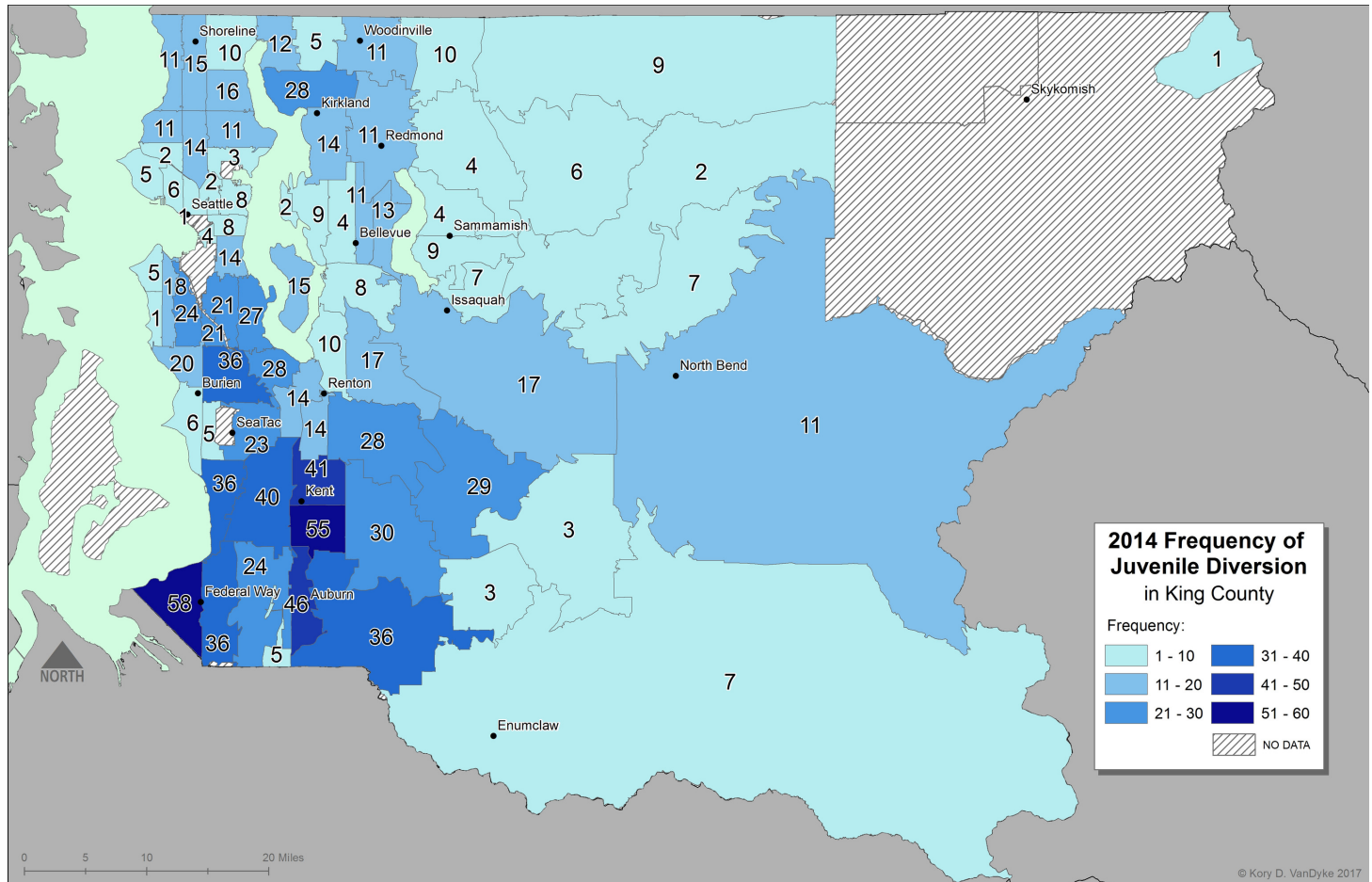


Figure 3. Frequency of Juvenile Diversion Referrals by Residential Zip Codes in King County

Source: King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals data. Two juveniles were missing zip code information or listed a nonexistent zip code and therefore are not included here, nor are youth referred from zip codes outside of King County or Washington State. N = 1126. Darker colors represent zip codes with a larger number of referrals. Map created in ArcMap by Kory VanDyke.

8. Zip codes with higher numbers of referred juveniles generally have higher proportions of minority youth referred.

In general, as the number of referrals in a zip code increases, so does the relative percentage of youth of color, especially black youth. Table 3 shows the racial breakdown of the five residential zip codes with the highest number of referrals. In four of the five zip codes with the highest concentration of referred youth, black youth make up 35% or more of the referrals, despite making up only 29.4% of the overall referral population.

Rank	Number of Juveniles (%)	Zip Code	City	Black (%)	White (%)
1	58 (4.9%)	98023	Federal Way	36.2%	27.6%
2	55 (4.6%)	98030	Kent	38.2%	40.0%
3	46 (3.9%)	98002	Auburn	21.7%	45.7%
4	41 (3.5%)	98031	Kent	46.3%	26.8%
5	40 (3.4%)	98032	Kent	40.0%	17.5%

Table 3: Top 5 Residential Zip Codes for Juvenile Referrals

Source: Authors’ analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N=1188. Two juveniles were missing zip code information or listed a nonexistent zip code and therefore are not included here (See Appendix III).

9. Of youth referred to diversion, black youth are concentrated in younger age groups while white youth are concentrated in older age groups.

The population of referred youth ranges from ages 10 to 18 years old, with a mean age of 15.3 years old. The evidence suggests that race influences the age of referral. White youth are concentrated in the older age groups, and minority youth are concentrated in the younger age groups. Between the ages of 10-14, black juveniles are the largest group referred. As age increases, the relative percent of white referrals increases. The largest gap exists in the 17 year old category, which is composed of 55.9% white youth and 21.6% black youth. In short, black youth are more likely to be referred to diversion at younger ages, and white youth more likely at older ones. Put differently, white youth are less likely to be referred to diversion at younger ages, and black youth are less likely at older ones. These patterns are shown in Figure 4.

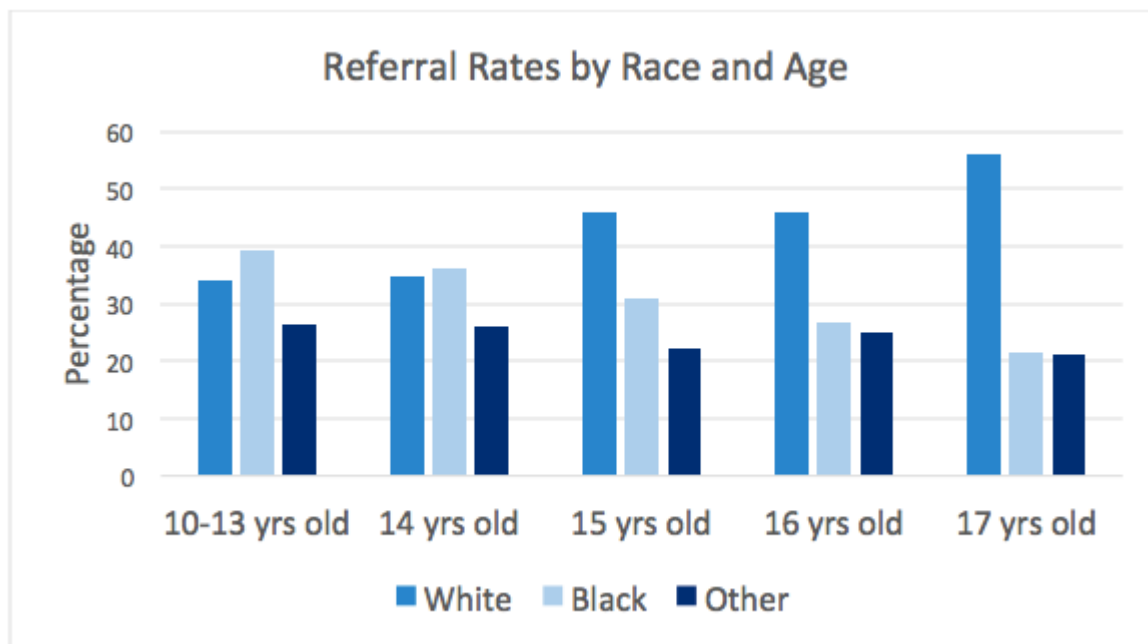


Figure 4.

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N=1190. Note: Four youth aged 18+ are not pictured in the chart above (see Appendix IV).

Whether or not a youth completes a diversion is not strongly associated with their age. The only exception to this are youth aged 14 to 15, who have slightly lower completion rates. This group also experienced high relative referral rates for the lowest level violations.

Within the various offense types there is a subset of juveniles that were referred to diversion in 2014 who did not commit a misdemeanor crime, but were instead cited as having committed an "other violation". These "other violations" appear to include the lowest level violations, such as tobacco or "in the park after dark" violations. Within these cases we see a disproportionate majority of black juveniles. Black youth make up 29.4% of the overall referral population, but 51.4% of those with an "other violation."

VI . RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our qualitative and quantitative findings, we recommend the following as areas for future research and development in King County Juvenile Diversion Referral Process:

Communication

The high frequency of youth who are eligible for CABs but do not complete them due to a failure to engage may be driven to some extent by the fact that many youth lack a stable mailing address and/or do not have English as their first language. We hypothesize that diversion recipients in King County may be more likely to engage in diversion if the languages used for initial contact included the immigrant communities that have become more numerous in recent years (Rodriguez, 2010). We were unable to gain any relevant data concerning the experience of foreign language speakers in the contacting process. With only our limited information on this subject, we suggest that this be a place of future research which may help address the high rates of inability to contact youth for diversion.

The 180 Program recently began using house visits as a method for contacting youth who are not able to be reached by letter or phone call. While this method is resource intensive, we suggest that the court collect data and analyze whether this method of contact will improve engagement and completion rates for youth.

Follow Up Resources

Nearly every youth and guardian interviewed, along with many diversion actors, expressed the desire for more follow up resources for youth who have completed diversion programs. In recent months, the 180 Program has undergone structural changes and budget constraints which resulted in the elimination of Beyond 180, a program providing voluntary follow-up resources through a community ambassador. Also emphasized by parents we interviewed was a desire for these resources to exist in South King County so that they are accessible for youth whose parents lack transportation or have time constraints (Felt, 2013). In cities across the US, expanding access to mental health, educational, and recreational resources has proven highly effective in reducing the amount of youth in detention (Cabaniss et. al., 2006). Increasing the access youth and their parents have to resources, specifically in high referral areas, will help youth go beyond just diversion completion to reach sustainable success (Models for Change Juvenile Diversion Workgroup, 2011).

Data Collection and Future Research

The final recommendation concerns improvement to overall data collection. One impediment to our research was the lack of consistency in the data received from the Juvenile Court. In order to remedy this for future research, we suggest reforming the data collection system so that all data are recorded consistently and in one place. The data we received from the court included reasons why juveniles did not attend CABs. However, the court did not include any of these same reasons for youth who were referred to a Saturday Seminar and did not complete it. We suggest that diversion programs record this information, and that the court collects data in both of these areas to improve overall understanding of why juveniles are not completing Saturday Seminars. We recommend having consistent and well defined disposition categories. Additionally, we suggest the system of data collection from police be improved so that future research can take into account not only the residential zip code of the youth, but also the arrest location. Future researchers could more substantially address referral rates if there were data available about the sources from which youth are referred, such as schools or certain police precincts.

We further recommend that the King County Juvenile Court consider expanding categories of identification to include the various nationalities, ethnicities, and languages of youth. Such expansion can provide more insight into the difference of diversion completion rates among youth of color (Cabaniss et. al., 2006; Rodriguez, 2010; Balahadia, 2016). In King County, an inclusive method of data collection would allow a more complete understanding of the specific communities represented, in order to implement programs which can aid in reducing the disproportionate completion rates of diversion.

One of our key findings--the concentration of referrals from South King County zip codes--deserves greater investigation (Goff et. al., 2014). One potential focus for further research would be differing school policies within King County and how they might affect the referral rates of youth in particular zip codes (Rodriguez, 2010).

VII . APPENDICES AND SOURCES

Appendix I: General Population Information

Table A (below) shows an overview of both gender and the refined race distributions of our 2014 referral population. For all race data, the 1.7% that is missing comes from 20 youth for whom race is unknown. These 20 youth are excluded from our analysis of trends in diversion programs, since most of these trends appear to be driven at least in part by race.

	% of Referrals	Count (N)	% Missing
Male	55.7	663	0
Female	44.3	527	0
American Indian	2.4	28	1.7
Asian and Pacific Islander	9.3	111	1.7
Black	29.4	350	1.7
Hispanic	11.9	142	1.7
White	45.3	539	1.7

Table A. Race and Gender Overview of Referrals

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals.

Appendix II: Offenses

We were provided an offense variable that listed the most serious offense for which a juvenile was referred to diversion. We did not receive information about any additional offenses that may have accompanied that offense and been included in the diversion referral.

To facilitate our analysis of patterns related to offense, we consolidated the list of discrete offenses into broad offense categories based upon similarities between certain types of offenses. See Table B below for the complete list of original offenses and their corresponding groupings.

AHW	Drug	Other	Property	Public Disturbance	Theft
ASSAULT 4 – SM	ALCOHOL - FURNISH TO MINOR	HIT & RUN (OCCUPIED)	COMPUTER TRESPASS 2	DISRUPT SCHOOL ACTIV	POSS STOLEN PROP 3
RECKLESS ENDANGER	ALCOHOL OFFENSE	OBSTRUCT PUBLIC SERVANT	CRIMINAL TRESPASS 1	FIREWORKS-DISCHARGE	THEFT 3
CYBERSTALKING-MISD	VUCSA/LEGEND DRUG POSS	OTHER "D"	MAL MISCHIEF 3D	RECKLESS BURNING 2	IDENTITY THEFT 2
HARASSMENT	VUCSA/MJ POSS LT 40G	OTHER "E"	CRIMINAL TRESPASS 2	DISORDERLY CONDUCT	
INT. SCHOOL OFFICIAL	VUCSA/POSS DRUG PAR	INDEC EXP (UNDER 14)	PARK-IN AFTER DARK	SOUNDING FALSE ALARM	
VIOLATE ANTI-HARASS ORDER		PROSTITUTION	VEHICLE PROWL 2	BUS MISCONDUCT – E	
WEAPON - POSS - D+		NVOL		TRANSIT MISCONDUCT	
WEAPON AT SCHOOL		RECKLESS DRIVING			
WEAPON-DISPLAY		FALSE STATEMENT			
WEAPON-SMC/D		BURGLARY TOOLS – POSS			
ASSAULT 4		COMN W/MNR IMORL PUR			

Table B. All Offenses Encompassed in 2014 Referrals and their Associated Groupings

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N = 1190.

*Note: The acronym AHW stands for Assault, Harassment and Weapons-related offenses.

Appendix III: Zip Codes

Every time we refer to geographical data or findings, they are based on a list of zip codes that correspond to the primary residential addresses of youth referred. This means that youth mapped as living within a particular zip code were not necessarily referred from that zip code. Put differently, we do not have any data on location of offense or on referral agency, and thus our current data include no potential to explain why youth residing in particular areas make up such a high concentration of referrals to diversion.

Using supplemental resources, we categorized these zip code data into groups by state, city and county. City data relating to zip codes both in and out of Washington State was obtained through the United States Postal Service website

<<https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookupAction!input.action?mode=2&refresh=true>>. When multiple cities were listed, we selected the city listed as the “default” or “primary” city for the given zip code. For zip codes in the state of Washington, we also used the Washington State Courts’ website to identify and verify the county in which each zip code is located <https://www.courts.wa.gov/court_dir/?fa=court_dir.countycityref>.

As shown in Table C below, of the 134 distinct zip codes represented in our referral population, 2 are invalid (excluded from analysis), 26 are from locations outside the State of Washington, and the remaining 1162 are from Counties inside Washington State. The bulk of youth referred from Washington State list their primary residence in King County (96.9%).

County (WA)	Residing Youth (#)	Percent of Referrals
Kittitas	1	0.1
Okanogan	1	0.1
Skagit	1	0.1
Spokane	1	0.1
Snohomish	10	0.8
Pierce	22	1.8
Out of State	26	2.2
King	1126	94.6
Total	1188	100

Table C. City and County Data for 2014 Referrals

Source: Authors’ analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N = 1188.

*Note: The acronym AHW stands for Assault, Harassment and Weapons-related offenses.

Appendix IV: Age

We created a new age variable representing the youth's age at the date of referral to the KCPAO. We did this by subtracting the youth's first diversion referral date from their date of birth listed in these data. We do not account for the extent to which any youth may have aged over the course of diversion, which may be particularly notable for youth for whom diversion programs take a long time, or who are closest to turning 18 and becoming ineligible for these programs.

The exact age distribution of referrals is listed in Table D (below). The mean age of youth referred to diversion is 15.3 years old, but this average differs across different races (see Table E) .

Age	Frequency	% of Referrals
10	2	.2
11	2	.2
12	41	3.4
13	87	7.3
14	201	16.9
15	272	22.9
16	266	22.4
17	315	26.5
18	4	.3
Total	1190	100.0

Table D. Age Distribution of 2014 Referrals

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N = 1190.

	Age at Time of Referral (From Police to PAO)		
	Minimum	Maximum	Median
American Indian	13	17	15
Asian and Pacific Islander	12	17	16
Black	10	18	15
Hispanic	11	18	15
Unknown	14	17	16
White	10	18	16

Table E. Age Ranges by Race Categories

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N = 1190.

Appendix V: Disposition

Disposition Coding Limitations:

The codes used by the King County Juvenile Court to summarize a youth's diversion outcome overlap. For example, youth who are rejected from diversion because they are over 18 are split between two different codes, either the "Out of Jurisdiction" category or (rarely) a separate "Over Eighteen" category. Additionally, the disposition outcome categories provided by the court only speak to a youth's ultimate diversion outcome and not to the different opportunities a youth was potentially offered for diversion along the way. We were interested in the pathways youth take through diversion programs (including the possibility for multiple chances at a given diversion) and especially interested in how those pathways may relate to a youth's overall diversion outcome. To address this, we dismantled the existing categories, and re-formed them based on a variety of other disposition-related variables we compiled from the court data we were provided.

We made new coding decisions for dispositions based exclusively on compiled information already included in files provided to us by the King County Juvenile Court. While we are confident that any patterns included in this report persist regardless of the minor differences caused by our coding decisions (elaborated below), it is possible that some of our coding decisions may mis-understand the particular circumstances surrounding an individual youth's case. Therefore, a small number of youth may be mis-categorized within our disposition codes due to some blank or incomplete information and the resulting assumptions we made about the data.

- We assumed all of the 765 youth with a "diversion completed" disposition completed a CAB. o About 20 of those youth also had a diversion rejected event prior to their completion that we could not explain. o Due to the rarity of this occurrence, we did not analyze this subset of diversion-rejected event reasons.
 - We assumed the event "diversion agreement signed" indicated that a youth had attended a CAB, since 180 programs do not involve such an event and our data did not include JPC diversions. o We did not distinguish between cases listed as signing a "diversion agreement" (a majority of CAB attendees) and a "Re-diversion Agreement" (about 3-5 cases).
 - We assumed that when data was missing for at least one variable, any data that was included for that youth was still accurate. o Since our coding protocol synthesized many different variables into one disposition code, when data was missing, we came up with a ranking system to determine which information we would or would not include in the new disposition code. These decisions are explained below.
-

-
- We assumed that nearly every youth in our data set was referred to a CAB before having their case dismissed, filed on, referred to 180, or resolved (following their completed CAB). o We assumed this because all youth in our dataset, excluding about five cases we could not explain, had a “Diversion - Rejected” event or a “Diversion-completed” event, our metrics for a CAB referral.
 - We assumed that youth coded “Out of Jurisdiction”/“Out of State” for their event rejection reason did not complete a diversion because they were not truly eligible (N = 70), and thus we did not include such youth in our calculations of diversion attendance, completion or engagement rates.

Notably, our coding decisions led to instances where we received different results for identical categories depending on how we calculated it. For example: while only 65 of our youth were listed as failing to comply with diversion, two additional youth were listed as signing a diversion agreement and then having their diversion subsequently rejected. Signing an agreement was our metric to verify that a youth listed as “failure to comply” had actually failed to comply, and therefore we listed these two youth who had diversion rejected for unknown reasons as part of the overall failure to comply category. This changed the number of youth who failed to comply from 65 to 67. This shows an example of how our coding choices may slightly impact the count of youth in particular categories, but are unlikely to influence the overall pattern within those populations.

Disposition Methods and Coding Protocol:

We re-categorized data on juveniles' disposition outcomes for diversion, largely disassembling the initial coding categories. Our ranking system for re-coding the new outcomes was as follows:

1. All youth with the disposition "Diversion Completed" and all youth with the disposition "Saturday Seminar Completed" were listed as completing diversion in general.
2. All youth who had neither a CAB nor a 180 completion and also were not referred to 180 were assumed to have had their charges dropped or filed on. If these youth had previously failed to comply with or engage with a CAB, we noted this information (see Table F).
3. All youth with a "Saturday Seminar Referral" event but no completion listed for a Saturday Seminar or for a CAB were assumed to not have attended the 180 diversion program, and were listed as not completing diversion.
4. All youth for whom we did not have any specific information (due to missing data or vague codes like "other") were considered ineligible for our diversion analysis, and excluded from it (N = 70).

Collapsed Code (Reason CAB was Rejected)	Categories Included in Collapsed Code	Event Reason (% of overall)	Count of Kids with Given Event Reason
Failure to Comply (65 or 15.3%)	FAILURE TO COMPLY	15.3%	65
	FAILED TO COMPLY		
Failure to Engage (217 or 51.0%)	UNABLE TO LOCATE	7.3%	31
	YOUTH ON RUN	5.6%	24
	FAILURE TO RESPOND	30.8%	131
	REJECT NEGATIVE ATTITUDE	0.2%	1
	FAILED TO SHOW	7.1%	30
Other (122 or 28.8%)	OUT OF JURISDICTION	5.4%	23
	OUT OF STATE	6.4%	27
	OVER EIGHTEEN	2.4%	10
	OTHER	9.9%	42
	RESTITUTION EXCEEDS LIMIT	0.2%	1
	UNKNOWN (BLANK)	4.5%	19
Referral Rejected (21 or 4.9%)	YOUTH WANTS COURT	1.6%	7
	TYPE OR SERIOUSNESS OF OFFENSE	2.1%	9
	MANY PRIOR CONTACTS	1.2%	5

Table F. Classification and Distribution of Reasons Youth do not Complete CABs

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N = 425.

Appendix VII: Time

We created a time variable from the number of days that lapsed between the initial police referral to the prosecuting attorney’s office and the first diversion event date associated with that case (delay to start of diversion). We also created a time variable of the number of days lapsed between that first diversion event date and the date a youth was discharged from diversion (time to completion). We used these two variables to analyze the variability of time that different stages in the diversion process take as well as how long it takes the average youth to complete different types of diversion programs. These data were limited, however, because of potential data entry errors, such that some of the time variables from our population were negative. Our analysis in Tables G through I exclude these negative values. For the length of time to start diversion, we excluded one value of -21 days. For the time to completion of diversion, we excluded two negative values (-75, -3).

		Number of days between police referral and first diversion event date (positive)	Number of days between first diversion event date and diversion discharge date
N	Valid	1187	1187
	Missing	3	3
Mean		19.7	126.8
Median		15.0	110.0
Minimum		0 (previously -21)	0 (-75)
Maximum		281	938

Table G. Range of Days between Diversion Start and Completion

Source: Authors’ analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N = 1187.

	Time to Completion of Diversion (Days)		
Final Disposition	Minimum	Maximum	Median
CAB Complete	0	938	95
Incomplete CAB (PFC) and no subsequent 180 referral	56	493	207
Incomplete CAB (PR) with no subsequent 180 referral	1	448	68
Other/Unknown	6	483	49
Out of Jurisdiction	8	108	42
Incomplete 180 Referral following PFC with a CAB	181	587	259
Incomplete 180 Referral following PR with a CAB	23	453	198
Complete 180 following PFC with a CAB	128	500	234
Complete 180 following PR with a CAB	8	330	137
Total	0	938	110

Table H. Number of Days between Initial Referral to Diversion and Discharge Date

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N = 1187.

Notes: PFC stands for "Prior Failure to Comply" and PR stands for "Prior Rejection" (any event reason which is not a failure to comply).

	Time to Completion of Diversion		
Outcome	Minimum	Maximum	Median
Completed	0	938	108
Did not Complete	1	587	177
Other	6	483	42
Total	0	938	110

Table I. Number of Days between Initial Referral to Diversion and Discharge Date

Source: Authors' analysis of King County Juvenile Court, 2014 Diversion Referrals. N = 1187.

Appendix VII: Standardized Questions for Youth and Guardians

The following are questions that each youth and guardian were asked in their interviews:

Questions for Youth:

1. What is your: age, ethnicity, first language, nationality, gender, zip-code/residential area?
2. Which diversion program did you participate in?
3. At what time did you participate?
4. Did you complete this program?
5. Can you describe your experience with the program and your general impressions? Did you feel comfortable?
6. To what extent do you think the diversion program you participated in took into account culturally relevant factors? I.e. language barriers etc.
7. Did the process move quickly enough?
8. How did you learn about the diversion? How much time was there between your interaction with the police and being notified about the diversion program?
9. Did you experience any difficulties fulfilling the requirements of your diversion? If so, why?
10. Overall do you feel that the program was able to fulfill it's purpose?
11. In what other ways do you feel the diversion process impacted your life?
12. In what ways could you see diversion programs being more effective for the community overall?

Questions for Guardians:

1. What was your involvement in the diversion process like?
 2. Which program did your dependent participate?
 3. At what time did they participate?
 4. Did they complete this program?
 5. Can you describe your experience with the program and your general impressions? Did you and your child feel comfortable?
 6. What impacts do you feel this program had on your dependent, your family, or you personally?
 7. In what ways could you see diversion programs being more effective for the community overall?
 8. To what extent do you think the diversion program you participated in took into account culturally relevant factors? I.e. language barriers etc.
 9. Can you describe the contact process for diversion? Did you have any difficulties receiving information about the program?
 10. Did you experience any difficulties fulfilling the requirements of your diversion? If so, why?
 11. Did you feel the programs were cost effective?
 12. Overall did you feel that the program was able to fulfill its' purpose?
-

Sources

Balahadia, Aileen. *Voices of Seattle's East African Communities: An Overview of Community Issues and Opportunities*. Rep. City of Seattle: Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, 2016. Web. 5 Mar. 2017.

Cabaniss, Emily R., James M. Frabutt, Mary H. Kendrick, and Margaret B. Arbuckle. "Reducing disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system: Promising practices." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 12.4 (2006): 393-401.

Felt, Chandler. "King County's Changing Demographics A View of Our Increasing Diversity." King County City Council. King County Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, 5 June 2013. 26 Feb. 2017.

Goff, Phillip A., and Matthew C. Jackson. "Black Boys Viewed as Older, Less Innocent Than Whites, Research Finds." Apa. American Psychology Association, 6 Mar. 2014. Web. 04 Mar. 2017.

Models for Change Juvenile Diversion Workgroup, Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, (2011), pp. 1-168

Rodriguez, Nancy. "The Cumulative Effect of Race and Ethnicity in Juvenile Court Outcomes and Why Preadjudication Detention Matters." *The Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 47.3 (2010): 391. Web.

Washington. Legislature. *Juvenile Justice Act of 1977*, Chapter 13.40 RCW.
