



**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF
CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH,
AND VICTIM SERVICES**

**At-Risk Youth Prevention and Diversion
Programs Annual Report FY 2020**

*§ 8-605 of the Human Services Article; Chapter 6 of 2019
(Senate Bill 112)*

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Background

Chapter 445 of 2006 (Senate Bill 882), *At-Risk Youth Prevention and Diversion Programs*, established an Advisory Council to the Children’s Cabinet to make recommendations on efforts to improve the well-being of children, youth, and families.¹ In addition, and in accordance with § 2-503(b) of Article 41 - Governor - Executive and Administrative Department, it required Local Management Boards to coordinate, monitor, and support at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs. Furthermore, and pursuant to § 2-503(b) of Article 41 - Governor - Executive and Administrative Department, it required a Local Management Board to apply to the Governor’s Office for Children (now its successor agency the Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services, hereinafter referred to as “Office”) for funding for the at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs.²

Chapter 445, § 2 of the Acts of 2006 added that the Governor shall include \$10 million in the FY 2008 State budget to be distributed by the Office for at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs and, in the State budget for each fiscal year thereafter, shall include sufficient funds to maintain support for the programs implemented under this Act.³ It also allowed for federal funds, general funds, and private resources to be used to meet the funding specified in this section.⁴ Furthermore, Chapter 445, § 3 of the Acts of 2006 required the Office to report to the General Assembly by December 31 of each year as it relates to the implementation and effectiveness of at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs.⁵

Chapter 3 of 2007 (Senate Bill 6), *Human Services*, revised, restated, and recodified the laws of the State that relate to human resources.⁶ Specifically, Chapter 3 of 2007 repealed §§ 2-501 through 2-503, inclusive, and Subtitle 5. At-Risk Youth Prevention and Diversion Programs,

¹ Maryland General Assembly. (2006). [Senate Bill 882 \(2006\), At-Risk Youth Prevention and Diversion Programs](#). It required the Advisory Council to make recommendations to the Children’s Cabinet on: methods for meeting the policy and program goals of the state for integrated children and family programs; coordinating state programs with programs operated by local governments, local management boards, and private groups; building capacity to serve youths in their communities and at home; reducing reliance on institutions as the primary mode of intervention for at-risk youth offenders; promoting positive outcomes for youths; funding practices that prevent juvenile crimes and delinquency; and reducing disproportionate minority confinement.

² Ibid. Before submitting an application to the Office, the Local Management Board shall demonstrate that it “has convened a local planning group consisting of parents, youth, and representatives of public and private agencies that have knowledge of and experience working with at-risk youth and families.”

³ Ibid. Maryland General Assembly. (2006). [Senate Bill 882 \(2006\), At-Risk Youth Prevention and Diversion Programs \(Fiscal and Policy Note\)](#).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Maryland General Assembly. (2006). [Senate Bill 882 \(2006\), At-Risk Youth Prevention and Diversion Programs](#). An at-risk youth prevention and diversion program refers to “services provided to school-aged youth and their families to prevent or divert youth from entering the juvenile justice system and to help make them ready for adulthood by age 21.”

⁶ Maryland General Assembly. (2007). [Chapter 3 of 2007 \(Senate Bill 6\), Human Services](#).

from Article - 41 Governor - Executive and Administrative Department, and codified its requirements under Title 8. Children, Youth, and Families of the Human Services Article.

Chapter 6 of 2019 (Senate Bill 112), *Mandated Reports and Statutory Commissions, Councils, and Committees - Revisions*, repealed Chapter 445, § 3 of the Acts of 2006 and codified its requirements under § 8-605 of the Human Services Article for transparency.⁷ Pursuant to § 8-605 of the Human Services Article, the Office must report to the General Assembly by December 31 each year as it relates to the implementation and effectiveness of at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs.

Introduction

Pursuant to § 8-603 of the Human Services Article, at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs must be coordinated, monitored, and supported by Local Management Boards (Boards). Given this charge, and its role to coordinate with State and local partners to improve the well-being of Maryland’s children, youth, and families, the Boards serve as a critical component to the delivery of services and resources for at-risk youth.⁸ Established in 1990, the Boards strive to promote improved, coordinated local decision-making that focuses on results and accountability. In doing this, health, education, economic, and social outcomes are likely to improve because program and strategy decisions are made by local jurisdictions with the necessary funds, support, guidelines, and accountability managed by the State.

At Risk Youth Prevention and Diversion Programs

In accordance with § 8-605 of the Human Services Article, the Office must report to the General Assembly by December 31 each year on the implementation and effectiveness of at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs.

The General Assembly has defined an “at-risk youth prevention and diversion program” as “services provided to school-aged youth and their families to prevent or divert youth from entering the juvenile justice system and to help make them ready for adulthood by age 21” (Maryland Annotated Code, Human Services Article, § 8-601). The General Assembly has set forth a framework for the development of such programs through Boards that coordinate, monitor, and support prevention and diversion programs through specific requirements detailed

⁷ Maryland General Assembly. (2019). [*Chapter 6 of 2019 \(Senate Bill 112\), Mandated Reports and Statutory Commissions, Councils, and Committees - Revisions*](#).

⁸ Governor’s Office for Children. (2019). [*FY 2020 Community Partnership Agreement Notice of Funding Availability \(Revised\)*](#). Community Partnerships. (2014). [*Maryland’s Local Management Boards: Making A Difference for Children and Families 1990-2010*](#).

in the Human Services Article § 8-603. The Statute further requires that Boards provide fiscal and program reports to the Office about these programs and that the Boards apply to the Office for funding for such programs.

The jurisdictions, through their Boards, bring the knowledge of local needs, resources, and strengths. The Boards bring together public and private agencies, local government, faith-based and civic organizations, families, youth, and community members to develop, implement, and review a community plan. The plan includes strategies to improve outcomes for one or more of the State's Child Well-Being Results - measures of quality of life for children and families:

1. Babies Born Healthy
2. Healthy Children
3. Children Enter School Ready to Learn
4. Children are Successful in School
5. Youth will Complete School
6. Youth have Opportunities for Employment or Career Readiness
7. Communities are Safe for Children, Youth and Families
8. Families are Safe and Economically Stable

To provide the necessary funds to support this effort, Boards may apply for funding from the Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund, which is administered by the Office on behalf of the Children's Cabinet.⁹ The primary purpose of the funding is to provide resources at the local level to strengthen community-based services to children, youth, and families.¹⁰ To apply for funding, the Boards must submit an application that is specific to the local needs, resources, and strengths of their jurisdiction. To this end, the Boards coordinate with public and private agencies, local government, faith-based and civic organizations, families, youth, and community members to develop and implement a community plan.

Implementation

For FY 2020, the Children's Cabinet, through the Office, awarded \$18,086,251 to Boards to address local needs and gaps for the period of July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020. Each Board was required to submit a semi-annual and annual program report that included data on the agreed upon performance measures for each program. A portion of the awarded funds (\$9,918,274) was allocated for at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs.

⁹ Governor's Office for Children. (2019). [FY 2020 Community Partnership Agreement Notice of Funding Availability \(Revised\)](#). It is important to note that the Community Partnership Agreement is the contract that is executed with the Boards, once the application has been approved.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Results-Based Accountability™ and Scorecard

For more than 20 years, the Office and other child-serving agencies have utilized the Results-Based Accountability™ framework to focus planning, decision-making, and budgeting on desired results and outcomes.¹¹ To compliment the use of the framework, the Office also uses a Scorecard, a web-based application developed by Clear Impact, LLC, to track and consolidate data from Boards and other agencies and jurisdictions to ensure greater transparency and allow for improved evaluation of programs.¹² The Scorecard modernizes the data reporting process and makes it more useful for the Boards and Maryland’s citizens.

The Scorecard is also populated with performance measures for all programs funded by the Boards through the Children’s Cabinet Interagency Fund, and is accessible on the Office’s website at: <https://goc.maryland.gov/wellbeingscorecard/>. Through this web-based tool, users may track data for each reporting period for every program funded by the Children’s Cabinet Interagency Fund.

In addition to the data for performance measures, the Scorecard is a repository for data on Maryland’s eight Results and corresponding Indicators (*as illustrated below*). The Office routinely collects data as it is available on the Indicators that measure progress in achieving the Results, allowing State agencies to evaluate progress and inform decision-making. A list of Maryland’s Results for Child Well-Being with full datasets and accompanying narratives can be found at: <https://goc.maryland.gov/wellbeingscorecard/>.

Result	Indicator(s)
Babies Born Healthy	Infant Mortality Low Birth Weight Births to Adolescents
Healthy Children	Immunizations Hospitalizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitalizations – Nonfatal Injury for Assault Injuries to Children 0-21 • Hospitalizations – Nonfatal Injury for Self-Inflicted Injuries to Children 0-21 • Hospitalizations – Nonfatal Injury for Unintentional Injuries to Children 0-21 Deaths Health Insurance Coverage Obesity Substance Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol • Tobacco • Marijuana

¹¹ Governor’s Office for Children. (2016). [Child Well-Being Scorecard](#).

¹² Ibid.

Children Enter School Ready to Learn	Kindergarten Assessment
Children are Successful in School	Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math • Reading High School Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algebra • English • Biology Truancy Alternative Maryland School Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math • Reading • Science Bullying and Harassment
Youth Will Complete School	Dropout High School Program Completion Program Completion of Students with Disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma • Certificate Educational Attainment
Youth Have Opportunities for Employment or Career Readiness	Youth Employment Youth Unemployment Youth 16-24 Not in School and Not Working <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number • Percent
Communities are Safe for Children, Youth, and Families	Juvenile Felony Offenses Recidivism Child Maltreatment Crime
Families are Safe and Economically Stable	Hunger Out-of-Home Placement Homelessness Child Poverty

Effectiveness

Fiscally responsible approaches are those that are accountable to taxpayers and focus on spending existing funds in more effective ways. To that end, the Office works to ensure that the Children’s Cabinet funds are invested only in those programs or services that achieve measurable results. Data for the performance measures for each program shows whether the strategies and programs funded by the Children’s Cabinet, through the Boards, are making a difference in the lives of Maryland’s families. These interventions represent new pathways to opportunities, and a

push for systemic change that will further Governor Hogan’s vision of maximizing resources to provide stability and opportunity for all of Maryland's children, youth, and families.

Since 2016, data to measure progress has been collected electronically in the Scorecards and are available on the website. By funding programs and strategies that achieve measurable results, the Office and the Children’s Cabinet received recognition in 2016 and 2018 by the National Governors Association, as a leader in developing solutions that have a far-reaching impact for children and families.

To review the programs funded by each Board, and the data on the effectiveness of the programs, please visit the following webpage <https://goc.maryland.gov/reportcard/>, and select the jurisdiction name in the left column.¹³

Although statistically significant conclusions cannot be made for the programs, the improvement in the Results and Indicators measured annually and documented in Maryland’s Results for Child Well-Being can be attributed, at least in part, to the collaborative efforts implemented by the Boards in their communities.

Conclusion

Data reported by the Boards for at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs indicate that children who received preventive services show improvement in overall functioning as measured by various assessments and/or a decrease in negative behaviors and outcomes. The data also shows that children who are engaged in preventive programs are less likely to reoffend during service interventions.

Children and youth who are diverted from the juvenile justice system or who reject negative behaviors (e.g., drug use, pregnancy, gang involvement, dropping out of school, etc.) often represent a fiscal savings to the State. Participation in these types of intervention programs reinforces positive behaviors and protective factors for young people, so investing in these programs can be a cost-effective strategy.

In Maryland, the average cost of such a program is approximately \$1,800¹⁴ per participant annually, as compared to \$30,025¹⁵ for a Community-Based Residential Placement for a youth committed to the Department of Juvenile Services.

¹³ It is important to note that users may select a link to view the Scorecard page for the Boards, to include hyperlinked listings of the programs funded. Information is updated for each Board as it becomes available.

¹⁴ Maryland Out of School Time Network. (2013). (Unpublished data).

¹⁵ Department of Juvenile Services (2020).

Children and youth who have access to early intervention and prevention programming are likely to be more socially responsible, productive young adults who can contribute to the economy and are assets to the State.