



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

**At-Risk Youth Prevention and Diversion  
Programs Annual Report FY 2015 - FY 2018**

*Chapter 445(3) of 2006 (Senate Bill 882)*

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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.<sup>1</sup> 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 of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (Office), previously known as the Governor’s Office for Children, for funding for the at-risk youth prevention and diversion program.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup> It also allowed for federal funds, general funds, and private resources to be used to meet the funding specified in this section.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup>

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 Specifically, Chapter 3 of 2007 repealed §§ 2-501 through 2-503, inclusive, and Subtitle 5.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

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland General Assembly. (2006). [Chapter 445 of 2006 \(Senate Bill 882\), 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.”

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

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

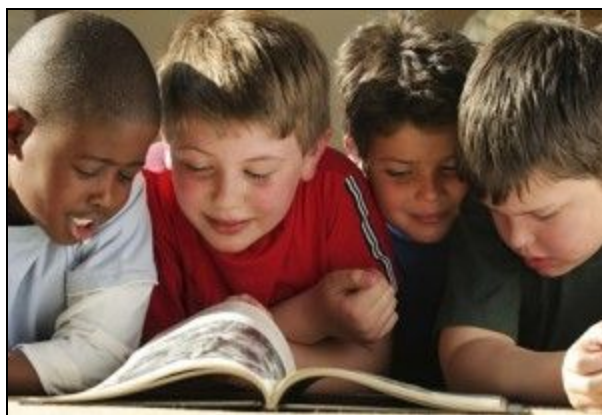
<sup>5</sup> Maryland General Assembly. (2006). [Chapter 445 of 2006 \(Senate Bill 882\), At-Risk Youth Prevention and Diversion Programs](#). An at-risk youth prevention and diversion program refers to “services provided to school-aged youth and their families to prevent or divert youth from entering the juvenile justice system and to help make them ready for adulthood by age 21.”

<sup>6</sup> 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.

## 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 their 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.<sup>7</sup> 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 Chapter 445, § 3 of the Acts of 2006, 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

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<sup>7</sup> 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](#).

forth a framework for the development of such programs through Boards that coordinate, monitor, and support prevention and diversion programs through specific requirements detailed 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.<sup>8</sup> The primary purpose of the funding is to provide resources at the local level to strengthen community-based services to children, youth, and families.<sup>9</sup> 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 2015 through FY 2018, the Children's Cabinet, through the Office, awarded \$66,236,764 to Boards to address local needs and gaps for the period of July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2018 (*as illustrated on the following page*). 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

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<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

portion of each year’s awarded funds was allocated for at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Awarded</b>	<b>Allocated to At-Risk Youth Prevention and Diversion Programs</b>
FY 2015	\$16,059,191	\$10,561,502
FY 2016	\$16,059,191	\$9,412,300
FY 2017	\$16,059,191	\$7,346,706
FY 2018	\$18,059,191	\$10,310,852
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$66,23,764</b>	<b>\$37,631,360</b>

For FY 2018, the increase in the awards represents an additional \$2,000,000 in funding available. For FY 2015 through FY 2018, an average of 56% of available Children’s Cabinet funding was allocated by Local Management Boards to at-risk youth prevention and diversion programs as determined by local needs and in accordance with Children’s Cabinet priorities.

### **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.<sup>10</sup> To complement 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.<sup>11</sup> 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 on the following page*). The Office routinely collects data as it is available on the Indicators that measure progress in

<sup>10</sup> Governor’s Office for Children. (2016). [Child Well-Being Scorecard](#).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

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/>.

<b>Results</b>	<b>Indicator(s)</b>
Babies Born Healthy	<a href="#">Infant Mortality</a> <a href="#">Low Birth Weight</a> <a href="#">Births to Adolescents</a>
Healthy Children	<a href="#">Immunizations</a> <a href="#">Hospitalizations</a> <a href="#">Deaths</a> <a href="#">Health Insurance Coverage</a> <a href="#">Obesity</a> Substance Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Alcohol</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Tobacco</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Marijuana</a></li> </ul>
Children Enter School Ready to Learn	<a href="#">Kindergarten Assessment</a>
Children are Successful in School	Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Math</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Reading</a></li> </ul> High School Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Algebra</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">English</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Biology</a></li> </ul> <a href="#">Truancy</a> Alternative Maryland School Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Math</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Reading</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Science</a></li> </ul> <a href="#">Bullying and Harassment</a>
Youth Will Complete School	<a href="#">Dropout</a> <a href="#">High School Program Completion</a> Program Completion of Students with Disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Diploma</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Certificate</a></li> </ul> <a href="#">Educational Attainment</a>

Youth Have Opportunities for Employment or Career Readiness	<a href="#">Youth Employment</a> <a href="#">Youth Unemployment</a> Youth 16-24 not in School and not Working <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Number</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Percent</a></li> </ul>
Communities are Safe for Children, Youth, and Families	<a href="#">Juvenile Felony Offenses</a> <a href="#">Recidivism</a> <a href="#">Child Maltreatment</a> <a href="#">Crime</a>
Families are Safe and Economically Stable	<a href="#">Hunger</a> <a href="#">Out-of-Home Placement</a> <a href="#">Homelessness</a> <a href="#">Child Poverty</a>

## 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 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.

Since 2016, data to measure progress has been collected electronically in the Scorecards and are available on the Office’s 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 program, please visit the following webpage <https://goc.maryland.gov/reportcard/>, and select the jurisdiction name in the left column.<sup>12</sup>

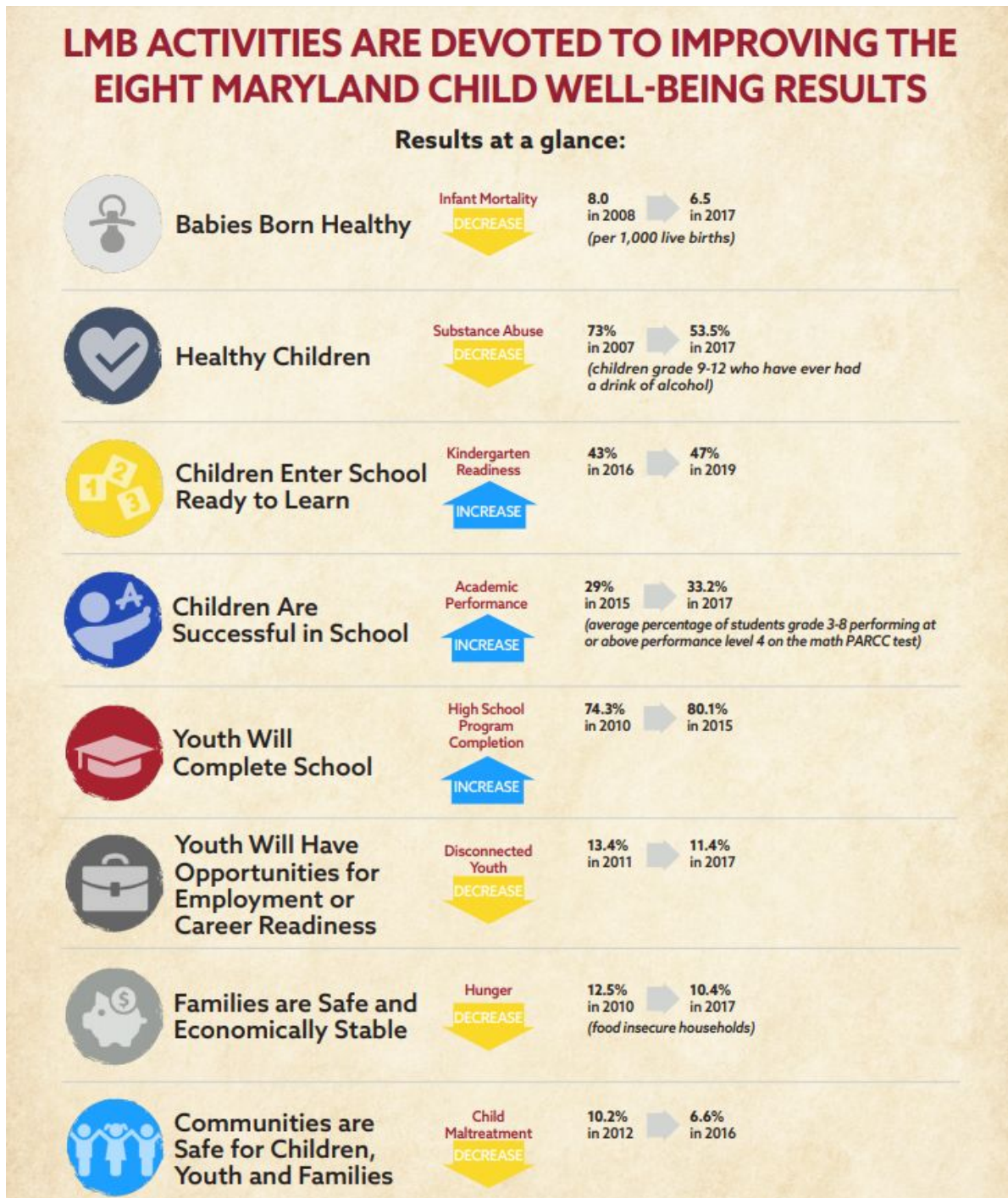
Although statistically significant conclusions cannot be made for the programs, the improvement in the Results and Indicators measured annually and documented in Maryland’s Results for Child Well-Being can be attributed, at least in part, to the collaborative efforts implemented by the

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<sup>12</sup> 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.



Boards in their communities. In addition, Board activities are devoted to improving the Results and Indicators (as illustrated below).<sup>13</sup>



<sup>13</sup> Maryland Association of Local Management Boards. (2019). [Maryland Association of Local Management Boards FY 2019 Annual Report](#). The referenced illustration is captured on page seven.

## 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 re-offend 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 \$1,800<sup>14</sup> per participant annually, as compared to \$91,250<sup>15</sup> for a Community-Based Residential Placement for a youth committed to the Department of Juvenile Services.

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.

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<sup>14</sup> Maryland Out of School Time Network. (2013). (Unpublished data).

<sup>15</sup> Governor's Office for Children. (2019). [\*FY 2018 State of Maryland Out-of-Home Placement and Family Preservation Resource Plan\*](#).