

THE HOW — CYFS YOUTH JUSTICE

CYFS approaches youth involved in the justice system by asking, “What happened to you?” instead of “What is wrong with you?”

Any young person can make a bad decision. We believe young people should not be judged by their worst day. CYFS recognizes kids generally don’t commit crimes and harm their environments without external forces acting on them. We start from a place based on research and experience and guide our youth to a place of improved, long-lasting outcomes.

CYFS aims to facilitate positive youth identity development by identifying their strengths, assisting them in exploring a positive future, and supporting them in achieving their goals.

Our goal is to enhance the following skills with our youth:

- critical thinking.
- self-regulation.
- problem-solving.
- mindfulness.
- goal setting.
- interpersonal relationships.
- enhancing caregiver confidence.

By focusing on mental wellness, healing-focused care, alternatives to out-of-home placements, data-driven programming, and integrative approaches that involve all the tools available to DHHS, youth are developing tools and strategies to help them succeed and return to supportive homes and stronger communities.

Kelly Pethke
Interim CYFS Administrator

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county.milwaukee.gov/CYFS



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
& HUMAN SERVICES
**CHILDREN, YOUTH
& FAMILY SERVICES**

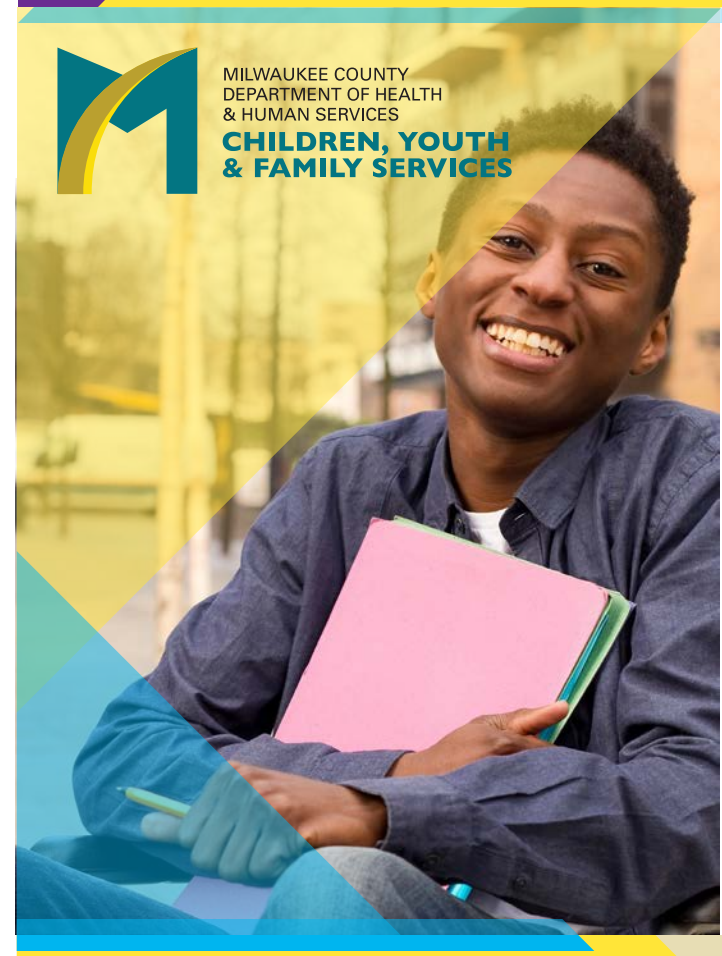
Here and Now

The Direction of Children,
Youth and Family Services
in Milwaukee County



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
& HUMAN SERVICES

**CHILDREN, YOUTH
& FAMILY SERVICES**



Our Mission, Values,
and Goals for Youth
in Our Community

WHAT IS CYFS YOUTH JUSTICE?

The Milwaukee County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Children, Youth & Family Services (CYFS) creates support systems for youth involved in the justice system. We help kids live meaningful lives and build safer neighborhoods while preparing them to do the same in the future.

ABOUT MILWAUKEE COUNTY'S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AND CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

Our Vision:

Empowering safe, health, meaning lives.

Our Mission:

Together creating healthy communities.

Our Values:

Partnership: We work collaboratively, fostering trusting relationships.

Respect: We value the dignity and worth of each individual.

Integrity: We adhere to the highest moral and ethical standards.

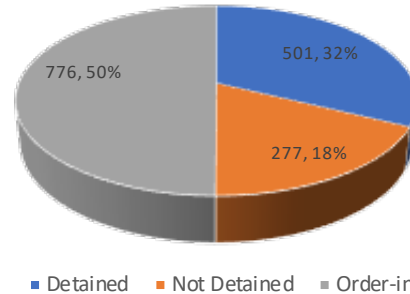
Diversity: We view differences of all people, values, and ideas as strengths.

Excellence: We challenge ourselves and others to innovate and achieve exceptional outcomes.

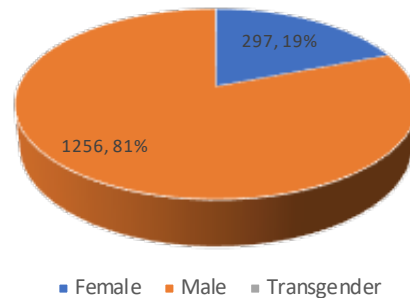
CYFS STATISTICS

In 2021, **1,554 referrals** were made to CYFS.

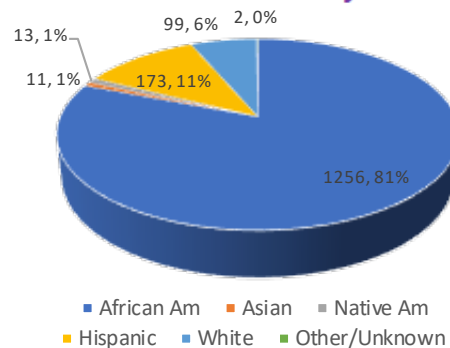
Custody Decision



Gender



Race/Ethnicity



PROJECT RISE

On any given day in the United States, nearly 53,000 youth are held in youth justice facilities. This reality is unacceptable to Milwaukee County. In 2011, we made a commitment to change our youth justice system.

We recognize the profound impact of racial disparities throughout our county, and have committed to advancing racial equity in our community.

We've changed our focus from a system of punishment to one of rehabilitation. Through education, addressing mental health and trauma for individuals and communities, and building job skills, our goal is to reduce the number of youth in the youth justice system, and ensure all kids, regardless of background, experience safe, healthy and meaningful lives.

To ensure that all children in Milwaukee County thrive in strong, positive communities, CYFS pledges to mitigate the trauma of confinement and separation from family causes.

Learn more at county.milwaukee.gov/ProjectRise.

WHO SUPPORTS CYFS?

Milwaukee County DHHS CYFS has made tremendous efforts with the support of national industry experts in the youth justice field, including the Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Georgetown Public Policy Institute and the Peabody Research Institute, Urban Institute, along with local providers with a long history of success who care deeply about the youth in our community.