

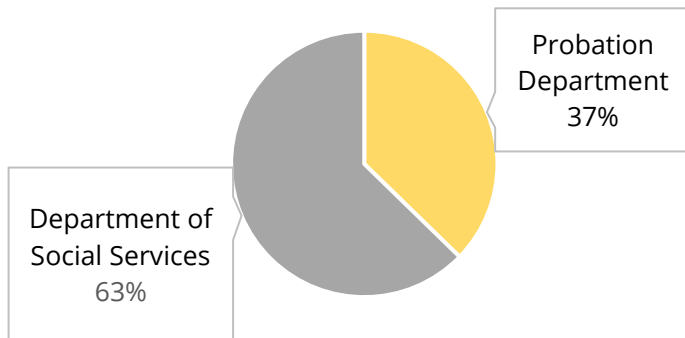
Building Connections: Probation & Schools

Research Brief

Prepared at the Request of New York County Leaders
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BACKGROUND

Lead Agency for PINS across NYS Counties



Across the state, different departments serve as the **Persons in Need of Services (PINS)** lead agency for their county.¹ In the 37% of counties where probation departments are the PINS lead, it is particularly important for there to be strong relationships between these departments and the local school districts to best support youth.

PROMISING APPROACHES

We reached out to counties across New York to ask leaders of probation departments for their tips and advice for building strong relationships with schools in the area.

We asked, “What tips do you have for probation departments wanting to build strong connections with school districts?”

1 Host Regular Meetings with Key Leaders

- Counties’ number one suggestion was regularly occurring meetings with key leadership from the county and from schools that are hosted by the Probation Department.
- Meetings that bring together DSS, Probation, and district-level leadership are helpful in building connections.
- After meetings, consider sending meeting minutes and broad discussion points out on a listserv anyone who is interested – teachers, principals, caseworkers, other county officials – can join.

“The committee consists of probation, mental health, DSS, representatives from the schools, youth bureau and any nonprofits that offer services to youth and families... This [twice-monthly meeting] has proven to be a valuable committee for all. It is a one stop shop for information.”

– Probation Officer

¹ PINS Data and Resources. <https://www.ocfs.ny.gov/programs/youth/pins/resources.php>

2

Join Regular Meetings Hosted by Others

- One county presents annually at their area's superintendent training. Their presentation covers changes to any juvenile justice policies and updates for superintendents on what services they can offer.
- Another county has a representative that sits in on regular meetings with school social workers to hear updates and provide their own updates when needed, as well as discuss wraparound services with schools.

3

Visit Schools

- In two counties, leaders described efforts to be in schools at least twice a month, even after they were no longer the lead PINS agency. Leaders emphasized this was important for maintaining a relationship with the schools.
- Leaders also emphasized connections with guidance departments, main office staff, and school social workers.

4

Offer Schoolwide Informational Sessions

- One county noted the importance of offering training on the PINS petitions. During these presentations, leaders also emphasized the importance of still filing petitions, even if school personnel only thought they worked a fraction of the time.

5

Step Away When Necessary

- County leaders also emphasized the importance of knowing when to ease back their efforts with schools. Sometimes school leadership stood as gatekeepers that kept out students services, so it was a matter of waiting for new leadership to make changes happen.
- At other times, schools stepped away from the relationship because they no longer wanted to fund officers in the schools. When funding became available, they reached back out.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Breaking Down Silos in Elgin, Illinois

Presented by: PowerDMS

<https://www.powerdms.com/policy-learning-center/breaking-down-silos-in-public-safety>

Education and Interagency Collaboration: A Lifeline for Justice-Involved Youth

Presented by: Center for Juvenile Justice Reform

https://drive.google.com/file/d/18ecV_1NgOhPLaO4vxce7RfGz_lgZhX37/view

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METHODS

Findings presented in this brief come from email and phone communication with five counties across New York, as well as a literature review of academic peer-reviewed studies and research and findings from non-partisan think tanks, foundations, and organizations. Given the rapid nature of this search, we recognize other relevant studies and perspectives from other counties may exist.