

In 2010, the Summit County Juvenile Court was selected by the Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) as one of five counties in Ohio to participate in the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative is a comprehensive strategy developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to address the overuse of secure detention. Two decades of implementation of JDAI have demonstrated that detention admissions can be reduced without compromising public safety. The objectives of JDAI are to:

- Eliminate the inappropriate and unnecessary use of secure detention;
- Minimize re-arrest and failure to appear rates pending adjudication;
- Ensure appropriate conditions of confinement in secure facilities; and
- Redirect public finances to sustain successful reforms.

JDAI sites pursue eight interrelated core strategies to accomplish these objectives:

1. Collaboration between the major juvenile justice agencies, other governmental entities, and community organizations.

2. Use of accurate data, both to diagnose the system's problems and proclivities and to assess the impact of various reforms, is critical.

3. Objective admissions criteria and instruments must be developed to replace subjective

decision making at all points where choices to place children in secure custody are made.

4. New or enhanced non-secure alternatives to detention must be implemented in order to increase the options available for arrested youth.

5. Case processing reforms must be introduced to expedite the flow of cases through the system.

6. Special detention cases — youth in custody as a result of probation violations, writs and warrants, as well as those awaiting placement—must be re-examined and new practices implemented to minimize their presence in the secure facility.

7. Reducing racial disparities requires specific strategies (in addition to those listed above) aimed at eliminating bias and ensuring a level playing field for youth of color.

8. Improving conditions of confinement is most likely to occur when facilities are routinely inspected by knowledgeable individuals applying rigorous protocols and ambitious standards.

Please contact [Lisa DiSabato-Moore](#) , JDAI Coordinator, for further information.

[JDAI Brochure](#)