

An Ounce of Prevention: Return on Investment (ROI) Cost Savings Evaluation of Florida Network of Youth and Family Services

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Evaluation and Program Profiles of Florida
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Title: An Ounce of Prevention: Return on Investment (ROI) Cost Savings Evaluation and Program Profiles of Florida Network of Youth and Family Services

The Florida Network of Youth and Family Services is driven by their mission of valuing young people and therefore creates safe pathways to their future by building strong families and communities. This mission guides Florida's youth and families toward the Florida Network vision that Florida will be a safe place where all young people reach their full potential. The mission and vision of the Florida Network is fostered through their stated core values:

- **Family:** We are committed to keeping youth and families together and to strengthening family systems.
- **Quality:** We are dedicated to ensuring the highest standards of practice within our programs and our organization.
- **Youth Development:** We value young people as vital resources and partners in finding solutions. We cultivate a young person's strengths and assets in all of our programs and services.
- **Safety and Support:** We believe prevention and early intervention services are powerful, not only in keeping young people from committing crimes and families being safe, but as catalysts for youth to realize their full potential and make a successful transition to adulthood.

The Florida Network of Youth and Family Services is a non-profit statewide association of member agencies with over 45 years of experience serving Florida's most vulnerable youth, providing prevention and early intervention programs to families across Florida. The Florida Legislature appropriates the funding for the services provided by the Florida Network, with the FL Department of Juvenile Justice being responsible for overseeing the allocation of these funds. Notably, the Florida Network contract with the Department of Juvenile Justice represented only 6.5% of the Department's overall 2020-21 operating budget of \$503,214,197. The youth and families served are defined in Florida Statute as Children and Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS; Florida Statutes, §984.03(9)(25), 2023). The Florida Network has 27 member organizations providing 40 programs across Florida. The Florida Network offers families a continuum of services designed to prevent crises from becoming catastrophes. Beginning with a 24-hour accessible screening process, families can engage in Community-Based Counseling, access to 24-hour Crisis Shelter, Domestic Violence Respite, Probation Respite, Civil Citation Respite, Family Youth Respite Aftercare (FYRAC), Intensive Case Management, and the family skills development program, Stop, Now and Plan (SNAP®), ensuring families can get the right service at the right time to meet their needs. As such, the Florida Network provides non-residential, residential shelter, and respite services to at-risk youth and their families.

The current evaluation pursued the following primary aim:

- Return on Investment (ROI) Evaluation: Estimation of cost avoidance/savings projections based on the expenditure differences between the expected (FL Department of Juvenile Justice) and *actual* (FL Network) placements.

Importantly, this goal (Return on Investment Evaluation) is a product of leveraging comprehensive risk/need and strength assessments conducted by the Florida Network and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (hereafter FL DJJ). This allows for Florida Network served youth to be compared to the known delinquency population in Florida (those with an official delinquency referral to FL DJJ). Florida Network youth were matched to similar FL DJJ youth and then classified into one of four groups as 1) diversion, 2) probation, 3) community commitment (post-release supervision following residential placement), and 4) residential placement/commitment. These classifications were considered “expected” placements which were then compared to any actual subsequent placements of Florida Network youth (official referral and placement in FL DJJ services within 6 months).

Notably, just over 87% of Florida Network youth were able to be matched with FL DJJ youth. Of those matched, 27.2% of Florida Network youth matched to FL DJJ residential youth, 13.6% to community commitment (post-release supervision following residential placement), 35.9% to probation youth, and 10.7% to diversion youth. Matching indicates the large proportion of overlap in dynamic risk factors and childhood adversity between Florida Network and FL DJJ youth.

Results indicate that Florida Network youth substantially outperformed expectations given their established risk profiles. The difference between the expected outcomes and the actual outcomes of Florida Network youth allowed for estimation of the overall cost avoidance garnered from Florida Network services. Cost avoidance considered both the actual costs of Florida Network services and the costs of any subsequent FL DJJ placement of those Florida Network youth. The total costs of the youth served by the Florida Network (initial Florida Network services plus costs of subsequent FL DJJ placements of those youth) were then compared to the expected costs of the Florida Network youth based on the matching of those youth with diversion, probation, community commitment, and residential placement youth. Those expected costs were derived from actual cost expenditures from the costs published in the FL DJJ 2021 annual Comprehensive Accountability Report (CAR;

<https://www.djj.state.fl.us/research/reports-and-data/research-reports/comprehensive-accountability-report>), allowing for a “cost per youth” for each of the four

classifications (diversion, probation, community commitment, residential/commitment) to be derived from actual FL DJJ placements.

*Findings demonstrate a **\$9.19** return on investment for every dollar invested in Florida Network services, with nearly **\$410 million** dollars avoided as a result of Florida Network non-residential and residential/shelter services.*

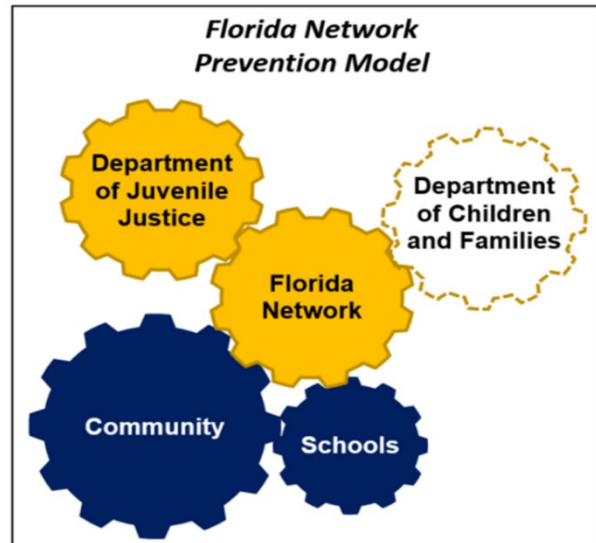
Summary of Return on Investment (ROI) Evaluation Results: results indicated that investing in Florida Network services provides a cost savings return of **\$9.19** for every dollar invested in prevention services for Florida’s most vulnerable youth and families. For the 17,729 Florida Network youth examined from January 1, 2022, through June 14, 2023, an expected **\$409,817,840** total dollars of cost savings were realized as a result of Florida Network services.

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
Summary of Return on Investment (ROI) Evaluation Results:	4
INTRODUCTION	5
Florida Network Programs	7
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	8
Developing risk profiles of Florida Network youth	8
Evaluation Samples	11
Program Costs	13
Analytic Strategy	14
RISK PROFILES of SAMPLE YOUTH	16
SOCIAL HISTORY RISK SCORE DEVELOPMENT	19
MATCHING FLORIDA NETWORK YOUTH TO FL DJJ YOUTH	24
RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) EVALUATION RESULTS	27
Return on Investment (ROI)	29
CONCLUSION	29
AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES	30
REFERENCES	31

INTRODUCTION

The State of Florida established Chapter 984 to Florida Statute in 1997, establishing provisions for Children and Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS). This statute continues to provide access to emergency shelter services for youth ages 10-17, out-patient community-counseling services for youth ages 6-17 and their families, the Stop Now and Plan program (SNAP®), a cognitive behavioral, evidence-based model designed to provide children and their parents a common language and framework for addressing and changing disruptive behavior in the home, school, and community, as well as respite services.



In this time, Florida Network of Youth and Family Services (hereafter Florida Network), in cooperation with its 27 partner agencies, has a history over 45 years of serving Florida’s families with the goal of preventing crises from becoming catastrophes, and assisting parents and guardians in negotiating, and avoiding, system involvement through comprehensive case planning that addresses both the therapeutic and practical needs of the family. The Florida Network offers families a continuum of services beginning with a 24-hour accessible screening process, families can engage in Community-Based Counseling, access to 24-hour Crisis Shelter, Domestic Violence Respite, Probation Respite, Civil Citation Respite, Family Youth Respite Aftercare (FYRAC), Intensive Case Management, and the family skills development program, Stop, Now and Plan (SNAP®), ensuring families can get the right service at the right time to meet their needs. As such, The Florida Network services include non-residential, residential, and respite program service types. The Florida Network partners with 27 distinct organizations, which comprise over 40 locations offering services to youth and families throughout the state of Florida. These community-based service sites work with local stakeholders to identify and serve the target demographic of youth and families at-risk of exposure to and/or deeper involvement with the juvenile justice and child welfare systems.

The Florida Network espouses family-focused values:

- We believe prevention and early intervention services are powerful, not only in keeping young people from entering the juvenile justice system and families from being unsafe, but as catalysts for youth to actualize their full potential and make a successful transition to adulthood;
- We value the collective wisdom, energy and expertise that working together as member agencies affords us in striving towards our vision of Florida being a safe place where all

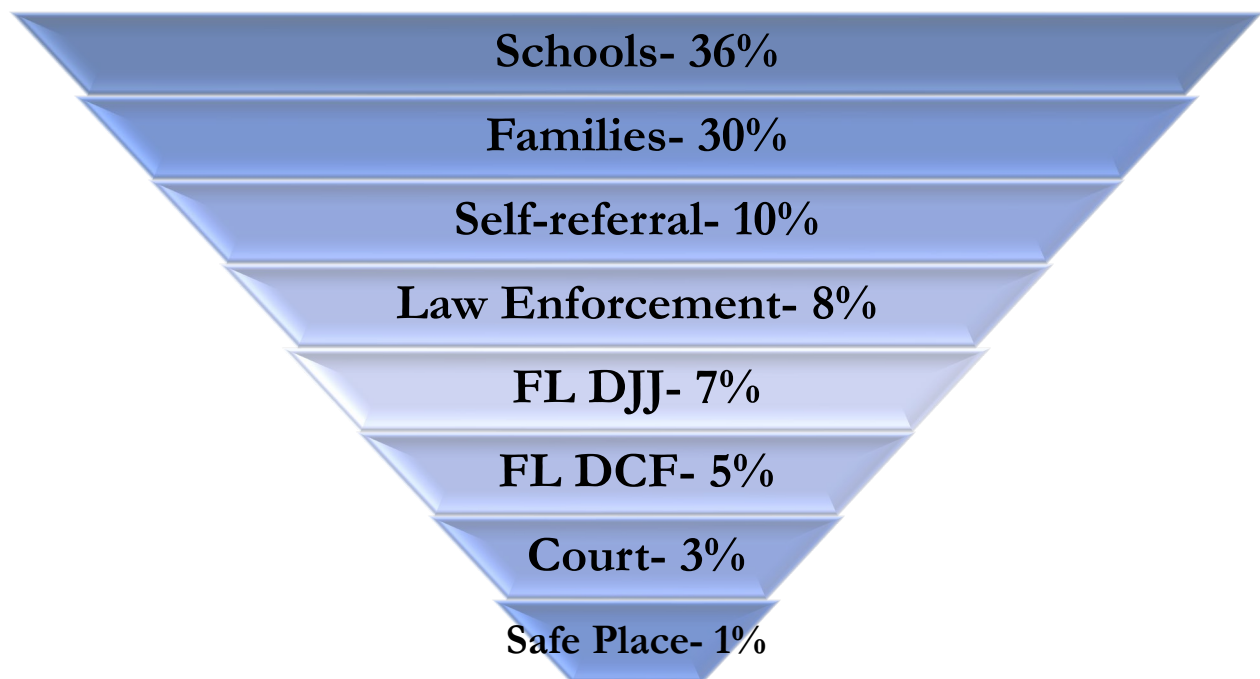
families and young people can reach their full potential, adhering to our mission and reaching our common goals;

- We believe the whole is always greater than the sum of the parts in making Florida a safer place for children and families. Our actions match our mission, as the Florida Network boasts over 45 years of experience in providing prevention and early intervention services across Florida.

While services canvass the entire state, additional focus is on serving youth and families residing in Florida’s 427 designated Opportunity Zones (a minimum of 20% of households fall below the poverty line; median family income is below 80% of the statewide median family income). As such, Florida Network outreach and services serve the entire state, including Florida’s most at-risk and disadvantaged areas.

The Florida Network accomplishes its mission by investing in proven, evidence-based practices that yield measurable outcomes. Working with their 27 member organizations providing prevention and intervention services across the entire state of Florida and offer a diverse continuum of services designed to meet the needs of the family in their moment of crisis and build upon existing strengths to develop a case plan that creates opportunity for positive, sustainable growth.

The Florida Network receives referrals from multiple sources which include the following (percentage of known referrals to the Florida Network provided)¹:



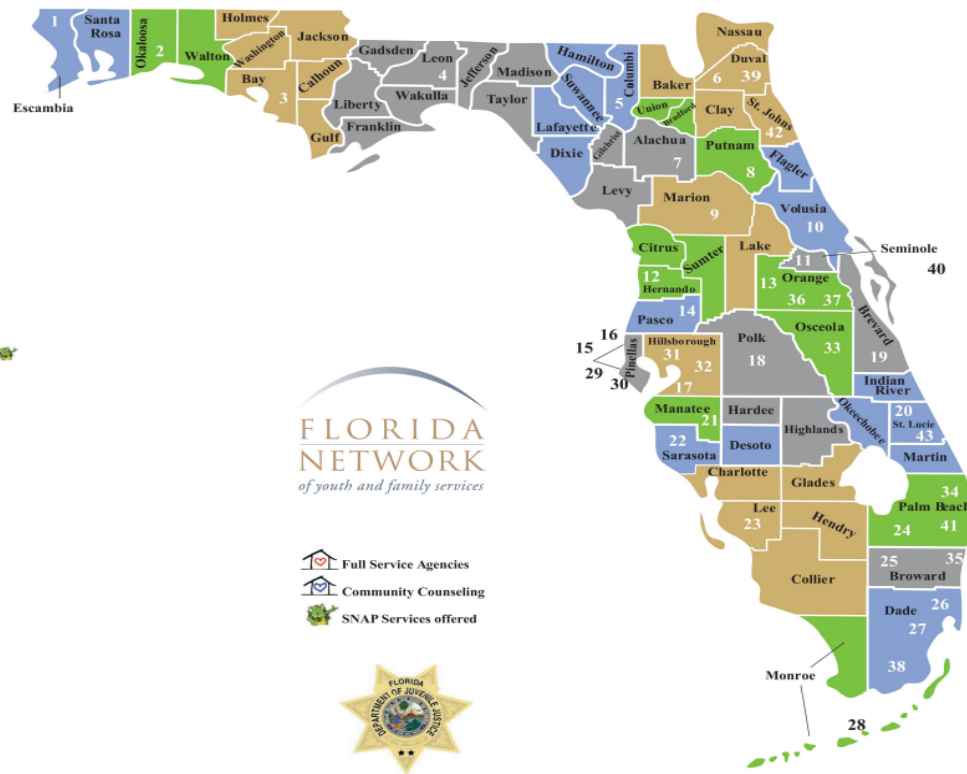
¹ From: Florida Network of Youth and Family Services: Connected through Community, 2022 Annual Report.

Florida Network Programs

The list below encompasses the more than 40 Florida Network programs, as well as the types of services provided at each location (“Full service”, Community Counseling, or SNAP®), and demonstrates the statewide reach of Florida Network services.

FLORIDA NETWORK PROGRAMS

1. Lutheran Services Florida, Currie House 🏠🌿
2. Lutheran Services Florida, Hope House 🏠🌿
3. Anchorage Children's Home, Hilde House 🏠🌿
4. CCYS, Somewhere Else 🏠🌿
5. CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services, Interface Northwest 🏠
6. Youth Crisis Center 🏠🌿
7. CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services, Interface Central 🏠
8. CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services, Interface East 🏠
9. Arnette House 🏠🌿
10. SMA Healthcare Inc., Beach House 🏠
11. Boys Town Central Florida 🏠
12. Youth & Family Alternatives, New Beginnings 🏠
13. Orange County Youth & Family Services 🏠🌿
14. Youth & Family Alternatives, RAP House 🏠🌿
15. Family Resources, SafePlace2B 🏠🌿
16. Family Resources, SafePlace2B 🏠
17. Hillsborough County Children's Services, Lake Magdalene 🏠
18. Youth & Family Alternatives, GW Harris Runaway and Youth Crisis Center 🏠🌿
19. Crosswinds Youth Services, Robert E. Lehton 🏠🌿
20. Children's Home Society, WaveCREST 🏠
21. Family Resources, SafePlace2B 🏠🌿
22. Safe Children Coalition, SCC Youth Shelter 🏠
23. Lutheran Services Florida, Oasis Youth Shelter 🏠🌿
24. Children's Home Society, Safe Harbor 🏠
25. Lutheran Services Florida, Lippman Youth Shelter 🏠
26. Lutheran Services Florida, Miami Bridge, Central Shelter 🏠
27. Lutheran Services Florida, Miami Bridge, Homestead Shelter 🏠
28. Florida Keys Children's Shelter 🏠
29. Bethel Community Foundation 🏠
30. Thaise Educational & Exposure Tours 🏠
31. Tampa Housing Authority 🏠
32. Youth Advocate Program, Inc. 🏠🌿
33. Children's Home Society, Osceola 🏠
34. Urban League of Palm Beach County 🏠
35. Prevention Central 🏠🌿
36. Nehemiah Educational & Economic Development 🏠
37. Thaise Educational & Exposure Tours 🏠
38. Center for Family & Child Enrichment 🏠🌿
39. Thaise Educational & Exposure Tours 🏠
40. Seminole County Sheriff's Office 🏠🌿
41. Center for Child Counseling 🏠🌿
42. Youth Crisis Center 🏠🌿
43. Urban League Palm Beach County 🏠🌿



EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The current evaluation provides an updated analysis from a prior assessment which examined the cost effectiveness/cost avoidance evidenced from Florida Network services.² The current evaluation builds on that prior work to provide an updated assessment of cost avoidance realized to the State from Florida Network services to Florida's most vulnerable youth and families.

The purpose of the current Return on Investment (ROI) cost-benefit analysis is to examine the cost savings actualized from providing prevention services to Florida's youth and families through the Florida Network. To establish reliable cost effectiveness, one must demonstrate that:

- The youth served by the Florida Network (or a portion thereof) are similar to youth formally processed and served by the FL DJJ.
 - Requires collection of similar measures of risk factors empirically established to enhance the likelihood of juvenile delinquency.
 - Requires Florida Network youth are matched to similarly situated (based on common risk factors) FL DJJ youth through appropriate analytical techniques.
 - Matching to specific FL DJJ program service types (diversion, probation, community commitment, residential) allows for estimated costs of dollars the Florida Network-served youth would have cost had Florida Network services not been provided.
- Actual costs of Florida Network and FL DJJ services are available
 - FL DJJ contracted dollar amount costs are published annually in the Comprehensive Accountability Report (CAR) published by FL DJJ.
 - Actual costs for Florida Network-served youth include both the FL DJJ contracted dollars for the Florida Network services plus the actual FL DJJ contracted dollars spent on Florida Network-served youth that (re)offended and ended up requiring FL DJJ services as well.
- Cost savings consist of expected FL DJJ contracted dollar costs minus actual costs of Florida Network services and minus the FL DJJ services for Florida Network youth that are subsequently placed in FL DJJ services.

Developing risk profiles of Florida Network youth

In an effort to assess cost avoidance from the provision of Florida Network services, a risk profile of both Florida Network youth and FL DJJ youth must be developed that will allow for matching Florida Network youth to similarly situated FL DJJ youth (based on identical risk profiles). There are factors are worthy of consideration in this endeavor:

² Early et al., 2011, which demonstrated approximately \$160 million in cost avoidance or a return of \$5.50 for every FL DJJ contract dollar spent on Florida Network services.

- The risk profile indicators must be available for both Florida Network and FL DJJ youth (e.g., the same data points, measured similarly);
- The risk profile of FL DJJ youth must be specific to each service type (e.g., diversion youth will likely have different risk profiles than residential placement youth)
 - These profile differences will be differences in degree not in kind (e.g., extent of each risk factor, not different risk factors).

Notably, one of the strongest risk factors/best predictors of juvenile justice involvement is past juvenile justice involvement (e.g., best predictor of future behavior is past behavior), with early onset of juvenile referrals (under 13 years of age at first referral/arrest), frequent arrests, and arrests over several years of adolescence predictive of future arrests even into adulthood for both males and females.³ Notably, prior delinquency referrals and early onset are associated with future offending among Florida's youth engaged in delinquency.⁴ However, the majority of youth served by the Florida Network have no prior official delinquency referrals to FL DJJ. As such, the risk profiles are developed from empirically demonstrated predictors of future delinquency other than criminal history (prior offending).

Fortunately, both the Florida Network and FL DJJ each use a statewide standardized, comprehensive risk/need assessment tool to better understand the risks, strengths, and adversity of the youth they serve. There is a great deal of overlap in the measures of these two assessments, allowing for the development of risk profiles across these common measures and the comparison of Florida Network youth with FL DJJ youth.

The FL DJJ uses the Community Assessment Tool (CAT), which was implemented in July 2019 and is administered to every youth formally processed into the juvenile justice system in Florida. The CAT is a fourth-generation risk/needs assessment that classifies youth as Low-, Moderate-, Moderate-High-, or High-risk to reoffend. The CAT includes both risk and protective items across domains of criminal history, school, relationships, family, alcohol and drugs, trauma and mental health, attitudes and behaviors, and aggression.⁵

The Florida Network administers the Network Inventory of Risks, Victories, and Needs Assessment (NIRVANA) to all youth served. The NIRVANA was implemented in January 2022 and is research-based assessment of risks, strengths/protective factors, and childhood adversities in efforts to provide a holistic overview of each youth's circumstances related to the strongest empirical factors germane to the prevention of juvenile delinquency. The NIRVANA includes risk and protective items across domains of delinquency history, firearms, school, employment, peer associations,

³ DeLisi & Piquero, 2011 ; Farrington, 2003; Loeber et al., 2000; Loeber & Dishion, 1983; Piquero et al., 2012; Tracy & Kempf-Leonard, 1996.

⁴ Baglivio et al., 2014.

⁵ Notably, the domains listed in text are those included in the CAT prescreen assessment. The CAT Full Assessment (provided to all moderate-high- and high-risk youth, as well as those being considered for residential placement) additionally includes domains of use of free time, employment, and social skills. As not all FL DJJ youth were administered the CAT Full Assessment, only those items in the CAT Prescreen were able to be leveraged to create risk profiles.

family/living arrangements, alcohol and drug use, mental health/suicidal ideation/trauma, attitudes and behaviors, aggression, and skills. The NIRVANA additionally provides a comprehensive assessment of strengths to include the 10 items of the Benevolent Childhood Experiences (BCE) scale, as well as the 11 Positive Childhood Experiences (PCE) demonstrated to reduce the likelihood of delinquency and shown to mitigate the negative impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) on juvenile delinquency in Florida.⁶ Lastly, the NIRVANA incorporates childhood adversity by including each of the 10 adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).⁷ ACEs refer to abuse (emotional, physical, sexual), neglect (emotional, physical), and household dysfunctions (domestic violence, household substance abuse, household mental health problems, parental separation/divorce, and household member incarceration). Exposure to more ACE types has been linked to many of the leading causes of death (e.g., heart disease, diabetes, cancer) as well as alcohol/drug use, suicide attempts, poor education/employment outcomes and other behavioral health problems, with individuals having exposure to six of more of the ten ACE indicators dying (on average) nearly 20 years earlier than those with no ACE exposures.⁸

The incorporation of ACEs into the NIRVANA is further justified by Florida-specific research showing the deleterious effects of ACE exposures on juvenile delinquency. Specifically, ACE exposures:

- Increase risk of suicidal behavior;
- Increase odds of gang involvement by age 18;
- Increase the odds of youth offending and lead to faster reoffending;
- Each ACE exposure increases the odds of serious, violent, and chronic offending as a juvenile by 35%;
- Each additional ACE exposure by age 12 increases the odds the youth will be placed in a juvenile justice residential program by age 18 by 20%;
- ACE exposures are higher among FL DJJ youth who are also victims of human trafficking.

These are merely a select few of the results from published research examining FL DJJ youth.⁹

Fortunately, the FL DJJ CAT assessment and the NIRVANA have substantial overlap in the items used to assess youth. This allows for direct comparison of Florida Network youth to FL DJJ youth

⁶ BCE scale from Narayan et al., 2015; PCE FL-specific research from Baglivio & Wolff, 2021; Craig et al., 2021; Craig et al., 2022; see also Bethell et al., 2019 and Crandall et al., 2020 related to the impact of positive childhood experiences on adult health.

⁷ See Felitti et al., 1998.

⁸ Brown et al., 2009.

⁹ Baglivio et al., 2015; Fox et al., 2015; Perez et al., 2018; Reid et al., 2017; Wolff & Baglivio, 2017; Wolff et al., 2017, 2020; Zettler et al., 2018.

on those overlapping items. It is these items plus demographic indicators that are used to develop the risk profile for each youth:

1. Age at Admission
2. Gender
3. Race/Ethnicity
4. Emotional Abuse
5. Physical Abuse
6. Sexual Abuse
7. Emotional Neglect
8. Physical Neglect
9. Family/Domestic Violence
10. Household Substance Abuse
11. Household Mental Health Problems
12. Parental Separation/Divorce
13. Household Member Incarceration
14. Dropped Out of School
15. School Conduct Problems
16. School Attendance Problems
17. School Performance (grades) Problems
18. Antisocial Peer Association
19. History of Running Away
20. Parental Supervision/Monitoring Problems
21. Problems with Parental Authority
22. Child Welfare System History
23. Alcohol Use Causes Problems
24. Drug Use Causes Problems
25. Witnessed Violence
26. History of Depression

These risk indicators were used to match Florida Network youth with FL DJJ youth with statistically identical risk profiles, which allows for determining the expected costs of each Florida Network youth had Florida Network services not been available (see below for methodology).

Evaluation Samples

The Florida Network sample leveraged for the current evaluation was inclusive of all youth admissions from the implementation of the NIRVANA (January 1, 2022) through June 14, 2023 (N= 17,729). Data was provided by the Florida Network from their Network Management Information System (NETMIS) and was inclusive of case information (intake date, date of birth, gender, race/ethnicity, Florida Network program name, and service type such as community counseling, respite service types, or SNAP®), as well as every NIRVANA assessment completed

from implementation January 2022 through June 14, 2023. A common case number in both files allowed for matching each case (each intake of each child) to the NIRVANA assessment completed at intake (the risk profile of the youth when services began). The resultant file contained every case for each youth served from January 1, 2022, through June 14, 2023, with a completed NIRVANA administered at intake (17,729 unique cases).

The FL DJJ sample was provided by the FL DJJ and included all youth who completed a community-based service (e.g., diversion, probation, community commitment/post-release supervision), as well as those that completed non-secure or high-risk residential placements during fiscal year 2020-21 (July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021). Maximum risk residential completions were excluded from the evaluation (as were FL DJJ expenditures for such programs in the cost calculations detailed below). The two data files provided are the “probation” and “residential” files used in the 2022 annual Comprehensive Accountability Report (CAR) in which FL DJJ reports relevant outcomes (e.g., recidivism, completion rates, releases, etc.).

Additionally, FL DJJ provided all of the Community Assessment Tool (CAT) assessments completed for each of those youth that completed either a community-based or a residential placement during fiscal year 2020-21. This allowed for selecting the CAT assessment completed at admission for each youth. Notably, as the CAT was implemented in May 2019, any FL DJJ youth who completed services during fiscal year 2020-21 that was admitted more than 180 days prior to May 2019 was dropped from the analysis. This ensures the CAT assessments used for each youth is an accurate depiction of the youth’s risk profile at admission to services. Based on these criteria, the final FL DJJ sample consisted of 10,482 youth who completed services during fiscal year 2020-21 and who were assessed with the CAT assessment at admission.

Table 1 provides the number of unique cases (youth placements) and the proportion of each service type that compose the evaluation sample (inclusive of Florida Network and FL DJJ diversion, probation, community commitment, and residential placement).

Table 1: Cost-Benefit Evaluation Samples

	N	%
Florida Network	17,729	62.84
DJJ Diversion	3,209	11.37
DJJ Probation	5,067	17.96
DJJ Community Commitment	894	3.17
DJJ Residential Placement	1,312	4.65
Total	28,211	100

Program Costs

Program costs were based on fiscal year 2020-21 FL DJJ contract dollars derived from the 2021 CAR Report (meaning the costs are, appropriately, from the same time period in which the FL DJJ youth completed services).¹⁰ Importantly, costs did not include any federal funding or state funding from any source other than FL DJJ contracted dollars. Importantly, these are *actual costs*, not any type of cost estimate. The diversion, probation, community commitment, and residential release cost calculations are provided below:

Diversions Costs

Diversions costs are inclusive of Intensive Delinquency Diversion Services (IDDS) and Juvenile Diversion Alternative Program (JDAP) releases, with expenditure data obtained from the 2021 CAR Report.¹¹

Total Diversion Expenditures	\$6,780,098.38
Diversion Releases	2,323
Cost Per Diversion Release	\$2,918

Probation Costs

Probation expenditures are inclusive of probation supervision (provider), day treatment, Redirections, and probation enhancement services (PES) releases, with expenditure data obtained from the 2021 CAR Report.

Total Probation Expenditures	\$19,272,401.55
Probation Releases	4,945
Cost Per Probation Release	\$5,516

¹⁰ The 2021 CAR Report Prevention, Probation, and Residential chapters are available at: <https://www.djj.state.fl.us/research/reports-and-data/research-reports/comprehensive-accountability-report>.

¹¹ Note: there was an additional \$1,709,773.42 of diversion contracted costs reported in the CAR Report for “CSP-Central Region- BAYS”, and “CSP-South Region CSP- BAYS” that were not included in the total diversion expenditures or the cost per diversion release calculations.

Community Commitment/Post-release Supervision Costs

Community commitment expenditures are inclusive of minimum risk commitment, conditional release (CR) provider, and post-commitment probation (provider) releases, with expenditure data obtained from the 2021 CAR Report.¹²

Total Community Commitment Expenditures	\$1,800,009.34
Community Commitment Releases	101
Cost Per Community Commitment Release	\$17,822

Residential Costs

Residential expenditures are inclusive of non-secure and high-risk residential releases, with expenditure data obtained from the 2021 CAR Report.¹³

Total Residential Expenditures	\$127,040,165.31
Residential Releases	1600
Cost Per Residential Release	\$79,400

Analytic Strategy

The ROI evaluation occurs in a series of steps that include:

- Descriptive statistics of the risk factor profile of each service type (Florida Network prevention, as well as FL DJJ diversion, probation, community commitment, and residential placement).
- Following description of the full sample, the Florida Network sample is disaggregated into non-residential (community counseling, intensive case management, SNAP®), residential youth (shelter and staff secure placements), and Respite (detention (DV), probation, civil citation, and FYRAC respite).
- Next, to enable comparison of Florida Network youth to the various FL DJJ service types the Jonckheere-Terpstra test (J-T test) is employed. The J-T test is a nonparametric statistical

¹² Notably, Redirections Aftercare (post-release counseling services provided in the community) expenditures were included in the Probation Costs and not the Community Commitment Costs (explaining the left-over small number of community commitment releases reported. Importantly, there was an additional \$11,888,432.25 expenditures to “transition” services (services for youth released from residential placement) that were excluded from any program type’s expenditures. This large exclusion means that the costs per release for residential youth is larger than reported due those \$11.9 million going towards the services for residential youth.

¹³ Maximum risk residential program releases/expenditures were excluded from this evaluation.

procedure for ordered differences among classes, which, in the case of the current evaluation, is used to determine the association between service types (e.g., diversion, probation, community commitment, and residential) and the demographic and risk factors. J-T test results allow for calculating a “Social History Risk Score” for each youth in the sample (FL DJJ youth as well as Florida Network youth). As the service types are ordered in a particular direction (diversion to residential placement moves from least to most restrictive) the J-T test is an appropriate statistical technique.

- With each youth now having a summative Social History Risk Score (based on the J-T test), coarsened exact matching was used to match Florida Network prevention youth to FL DJJ youth across service types who evidenced the same Social History Risk Score. As there were more Florida Network youth than FL DJJ youth in the sample (17,729 and 10,042, respectively), we allowed matching with replacement (meaning multiple Florida Network youth could be matched to the same FL DJJ youth). Matching was conducted with Florida Network youth being matched to each FL DJJ service type separately, beginning with FL DJJ residential placement youth, followed by community commitment, probation, then finally diversion.¹⁴
- Graphical depictions of the proportion of youth across each service type with each risk factor are provided for visual representation of the extent to which each service type evidenced each risk factor.
- Return on investment (ROI) was calculated based on the cost per release for each service type (described in the Program Costs section above), and the number of Florida Network youth that matched to each of those FL DJJ service types.
 - The number of matched placements was multiplied by the actual cost per placement (of FL DJJ contracted dollars) to arrive at total estimated cost of what the Florida Network youth would have cost had they been placed in the matched FL DJJ service.
 - The total estimated cost was then reduced by the cost of Florida Network services (FL DJJ contracted dollars for those services) *and* reduced by the cost of any subsequent FL DJJ placement of the Florida Network youth (such as if a Florida Network youth was referred to FL DJJ and received a diversion placement then the cost of that diversion placement was subtracted from the total estimated cost).
 - Notably, subsequent placements for the FL DJJ sample (due to the recidivism of those youth) were not included, making Return on Investment (ROI) estimates presented herein demonstrably conservative.
 - This provides a total cost avoidance due to Florida Network services provided as:
 - Total dollars of cost avoidance, and
 - Total dollars saved for each dollar spent on Florida Network services.

¹⁴ Notably, had the matching started with FL DJJ diversion youth and ended with FL DJJ residential youth the proportion of the Florida Network youth matched with each FL DJJ service type would have differed (e.g., more youth matched to diversion, less to residential). We note, however, that the strategy employed did indeed match Florida Network youth with statistically identical youth (on the risk factors and demographic indicators included).

RISK PROFILES of SAMPLE YOUTH

Table 2 details demographic characteristics (age at admission, gender, and race/ethnicity indicators) as well as the proportion of youth that evidenced each ACE exposure and risk factor by service type (FL Network prevention, diversion, probation, community commitment, and residential placement).

Table 2: Social History Risk Factor Profile of Youth

	FN			Community	
	Prevention n = 17,729	Diversion n = 3,209	Probation n = 5,067	Commitment n = 894	Residential n = 1,312
Age at Admission	13.33	15.25	16.00	16.74	16.02
Youth Gender (= Male)	54.8%	68.7%	78.0%	84.2%	87.7%
White	33.7%	48.2%	34.1%	28.2%	29.6%
Black	33.7%	34.1%	49.4%	55.7%	57.6%
Hispanic	22.3%	17.0%	16.0%	15.8%	12.6%
Other Race/Ethnicity	10.2%	0.7%	0.5%	0.3%	0.2%
Emotional Abuse	23.6%	12.7%	14.3%	9.5%	38.3%
Physical Abuse	15.0%	8.5%	10.0%	13.1%	17.1%
Sexual Abuse	9.1%	5.5%	5.8%	9.6%	8.5%
Emotional Neglect	25.3%	7.5%	10.9%	7.9%	21.0%
Physical Neglect	11.7%	4.8%	8.3%	12.2%	17.1%
Family Violence	25.9%	18.1%	16.1%	21.1%	27.7%
Household Substance Abuse	22.1%	7.4%	9.9%	11.9%	19.5%
Household Mental Health Problems	27.9%	4.5%	5.5%	5.7%	9.8%
Parental Separation/Divorce	39.9%	46.7%	51.8%	53.7%	63.7%
Household Incarceration	31.1%	23.5%	29.4%	36.1%	47.2%
Dropped out of School	2.3%	6.2%	14.8%	11.5%	27.2%
School Conduct Problems	49.5%	21.8%	17.8%	7.7%	31.6%
School Attendance Problems	38.8%	15.2%	18.7%	6.7%	33.5%
School Performance Problems	41.1%	19.9%	17.9%	5.8%	31.2%
Antisocial Peers	30.1%	42.5%	44.9%	33.6%	78.7%
History of Running Away	5.1%	2.6%	6.4%	11.9%	20.2%
Parental Monitoring Problems	51.8%	15.6%	21.7%	26.2%	43.1%
Problems with Parental Authority	11.8%	3.3%	5.4%	4.0%	32.8%
Child Welfare History	21.1%	9.5%	13.3%	20.5%	24.0%
Alcohol Problems	1.5%	0.4%	0.6%	0.3%	2.3%
Drug Problems	5.2%	1.6%	1.9%	1.0%	9.8%
Witnessed Violence	12.7%	36.2%	48.6%	65.9%	69.6%
History of Depression	20.0%	26.3%	30.1%	35.0%	45.8%

As shown, Florida Network prevention youth are a few years younger, a lower proportion male, a lower proportion Black than probation, community commitment, or residential (but similar to diversion), and higher proportion Hispanic, on average than FL DJJ youth. Notably, the proportion of Florida Network youth was closest to FL DJJ residential youth and predominately higher than other FL DJJ service types for each of the adverse childhood experiences (ACE; emotional abuse through household incarceration in the Table). This demonstrates the substantial exposure to potentially traumatic circumstance and household dysfunctions evident among Florida Network youth. Related to other risk factors, Florida Network youth evidenced a lower proportion who had dropped out of school, but had more conduct problems in school, worse school attendance, and worse grades (school performance) than FL DJJ youth across service types. A lower proportion of Florida Network youth (on average) associated with antisocial peers/gang members, but a higher proportion had issues with parents not knowing where they are or who they are with (parental monitoring) and issues with obeying parental authority. The child welfare system history of Florida Network youth was similar to that of FL DJJ residential and community commitment youth, and the proportion of Florida Network youth with alcohol and drug use problems was higher than all FL DJJ service types except residential placement. Notably, a substantially smaller proportion of Florida Network youth had witnessed violence, and smaller proportion espoused a history of depression-related feelings.

Table 3: Social History Risk Factor Profile of Florida Network Youth

	Respite Services n = 583	Residential Prevention n = 4,389	Non- Residential Prevention n=12,757	Sig. Group Differences?
Age at Admission	15.39	14.61	12.80	Yes
Youth Gender (= Male)	50.9%	49.7%	56.7%	Yes
White	30.9%	35.8%	33.2%	Yes
Black	39.6%	39.1%	31.6%	Yes
Hispanic	17.3%	14.8%	25.2%	Yes
Other Race/Ethnicity	12.1%	10.3%	10.1%	No
Emotional Abuse	60.3%	45.6%	14.3%	Yes
Physical Abuse	50.4%	32.4%	7.4%	Yes
Sexual Abuse	22.4%	18.8%	5.2%	Yes
Emotional Neglect	60.8%	46.2%	16.5%	Yes
Physical Neglect	26.2%	21.2%	7.8%	Yes
Family Violence	48.7%	40.1%	20.0%	Yes
Household Substance Abuse	38.6%	35.3%	16.8%	Yes
Household Mental Health Problems	47.9%	40.9%	22.6%	Yes
Parental Separation/Divorce	56.3%	50.0%	35.7%	Yes
Household Incarceration	54.9%	50.9%	23.2%	Yes

Dropped out of School	10.6%	4.5%	1.2%	Yes
School Conduct Problems	59.2%	57.2%	46.4%	Yes
School Attendance Problems	45.5%	41.6%	37.6%	Yes
School Performance Problems	47.2%	44.2%	39.7%	Yes
Antisocial Peers	36.0%	32.7%	28.9%	Yes
History of Running Away	19.2%	13.8%	1.5%	Yes
Parental Monitoring Problems	84.5%	77.1%	41.6%	Yes
Problems with Parental Authority	24.5%	16.4%	9.6%	Yes
Child Welfare History	54.5%	37.8%	13.9%	Yes
Alcohol Problems	5.7%	3.7%	0.5%	Yes
Drug Problems	19.9%	11.8%	2.2%	Yes
Witnessed Violence	25.2%	22.0%	9.0%	Yes
History of Depression	30.7%	32.0%	15.3%	Yes

Note: All group differences significant at $p < .001$, with the exception of “other” race/ethnicity which did not significantly differ across groups.

Similarly, Table 3 provides a snapshot of the differences between Florida Network youth served through their Respite services (Detention, Probation, and Civil Citation respite), residential services (e.g., shelters and domestic violence respite), and Florida Network non-residential services (e.g., community counseling, intensive case management, SNAP®). Whether proportions shown for each measure were significantly different across groups (respite, residential, non-residential) is provided in the far righthand column of the Table. Notably, respite youth had a higher proportion of every single risk factor, with the exception of depression history, than residential and non-residential youth, and substantially greater risk than non-residential youth across risk factors and ACE exposure. The most dramatic difference was in the proportion that dropped out of school, which was 10.6% for respite youth, compared to 4.5% of residential youth, and only 1.2% of non-residential youth, followed by the proportion with child welfare out-of-home placements (54.5%, 37.8%, and 13.9%, respectively). Florida Network residential youth (shelters and domestic violence respite) were more likely female and older at admission but evidenced more ACE exposure and risk factors than non-residential Florida Network youth. For example, Florida Network residential youth had over three times the proportion of youth with emotional abuse and with emotional neglect histories, 4.5 times the proportion with physical abuse histories, over 3 times with sexual abuse, twice the proportion with domestic violence in the home, household substance abuse, and mental health problems in the household as non-residential Florida Network youth. Additionally, twice the proportion of residential youth had a history/current incarceration of household members. Notably, 4 times the proportion of residential youth dropped out of school and nearly 8 times the proportion with a history of running away. Further, a higher proportion of the residential youth had school-related problems (conduct, attendance, and performance/grades), antisocial peer/gang affiliations, less supervision and monitoring by parents, nearly 3 times the proportion with child welfare system histories, twice the proportion with depression-related symptoms, and double the proportion who has witnessed violence. Lastly, compared to non-residential youth, Florida Network residential youth

evidenced over 6 times the proportion with alcohol-related problems and over five times the proportion with drug-related problems (where such use causes family conflict, disrupts education, has led to health problems, contributes to criminal behavior, or evidences tolerance or withdrawal problems).

SOCIAL HISTORY RISK SCORE DEVELOPMENT

As stated in the Evaluation Methodology section, the J-T test was used to test the association between the Social History Risk Factors and the restrictiveness/severity of supervision placement (diversion, probation, community commitment, residential). The J-T test produces a test statistic (the Std. J-T Statistic) that is a weighted association that can be used to create a cumulative Social History Risk Score. Table 4 provides the results of the J-T test. Notably, each of the demographic, ACE, and risk factors examined has a significant relationship to supervision restrictiveness/severity. Positive associations (positive values) indicate that youth with the given characteristic were more likely to be involved in higher levels of supervision restrictiveness, while negative values (relevant only for Hispanic and “Other” race/ethnicity) are associated with lower levels of supervision. The size of the J-T Statistic shows the strength of the relationship with supervision restrictiveness/severity, demonstrating that some measures have a much stronger relationship with supervision level. For instance, the strongest relationship with supervision level is shown for age at admission (66.28) and witnessing violence (64.94), followed by being Black race, household incarceration, antisocial peer/gang associations, being male, and problems with parental authority.

Table 4: Jonckheere-Terpstra Test Statistics

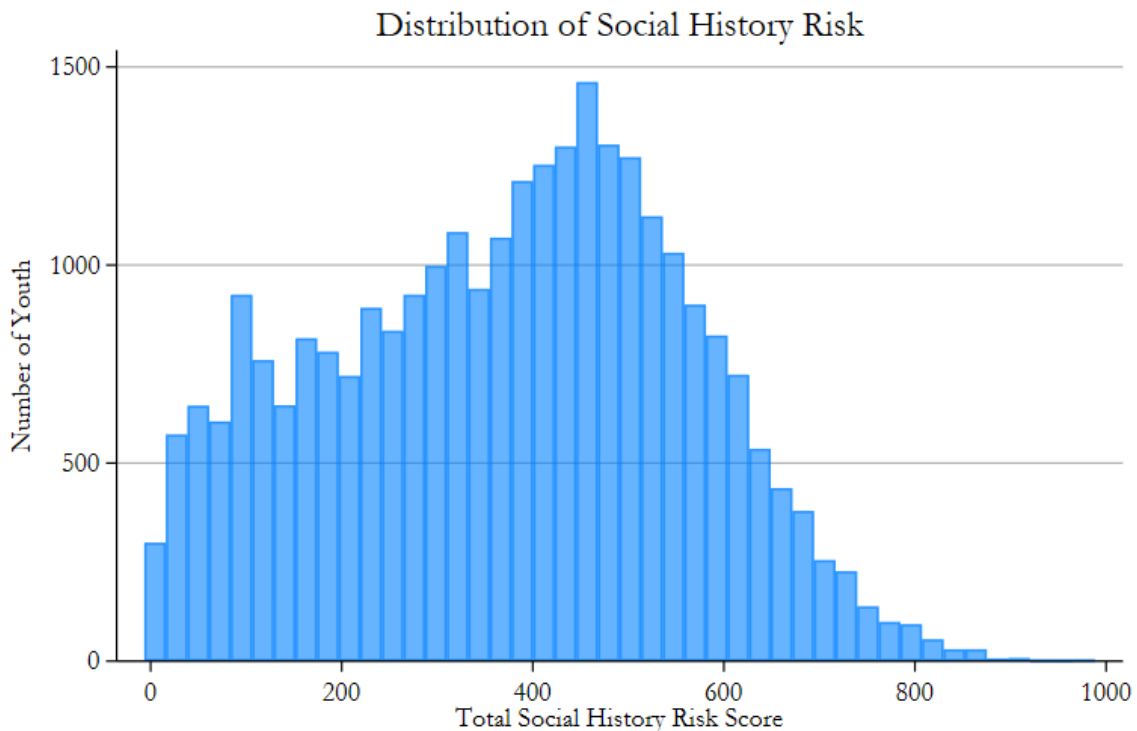
Measure	J-T Stat
Youth Gender (= Male)	37.29
Age at Admission	66.28
Black	49.61
Hispanic	-6.63
Other Race/Ethnicity	-0.97
Emotional Abuse	29.55
Physical Abuse	13.99
Sexual Abuse	6.41
Emotional Neglect	18.21
Physical Neglect	21.16
Family Violence	12.30
Household Substance Abuse	18.52
Household Mental Health Problems	7.69
Parental Separation/Divorce	27.38
Household Incarceration	39.29
Dropped out of School	32.87

School Conduct Problems	1.07
School Attendance Problems	18.44
School Performance Problems	3.76
Antisocial Peers	39.15
History of Running Away	28.82
Parental Monitoring Problems	25.23
Problems with Parental Authority	36.99
Child Welfare History	26.28
Alcohol Problems	2.33
Drug Problems	9.63
Witnessed Violence	64.94
History of Depression	30.75

Leveraging the J-T Statistic as a weighted score for each factor allows for calculating a Total Social History Risk Score (by adding up the total points each youth received). Higher Total Social History Risk Scores indicate a greater risk for being subject to a higher supervision level.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of Total Social History Risk Scores for the entire evaluation sample.

FIGURE 1. Distribution of Total Social History Risk



Total Social History Risk Scores were calculated for all Florida Network youth and all FL DJJ youth in the evaluation sample. Table 5 demonstrates the average, minimum, and maximum Total Social History Risk Score for the Florida Network, diversion, probation, community commitment, and residential samples, respectively. As expected, the more restrictive/severe the supervision level, the higher the average Total Social History Risk Score. Importantly, however, the minimum and maximum scores for each service type indicate there is substantial overlap between service types. This means that it is possible to match Florida Network youth to statistically identical youth (via the Total Social History Score) at each service level.

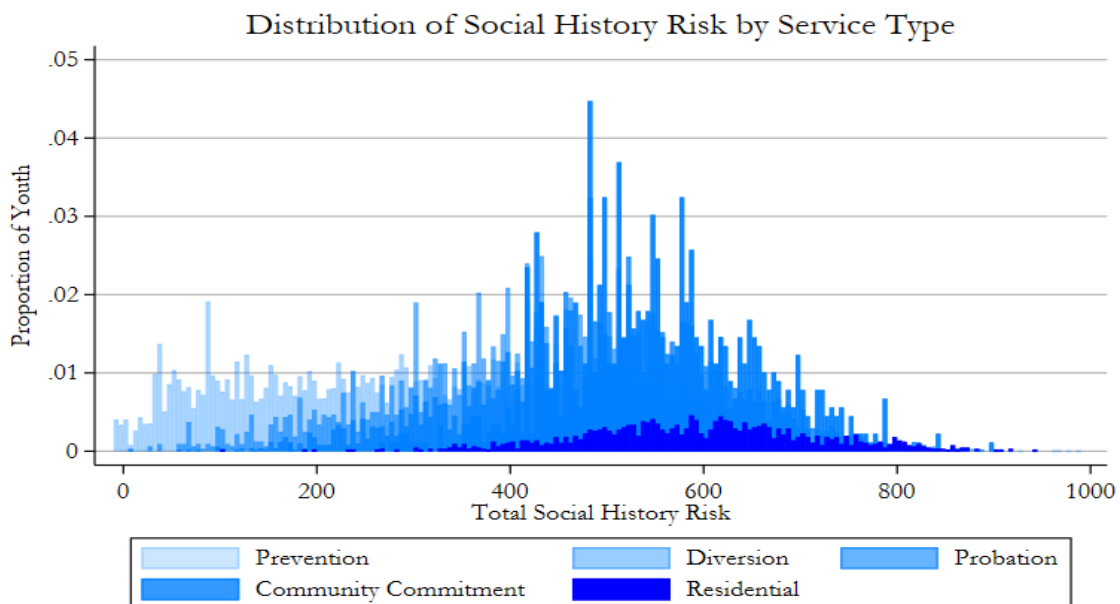
Table 5: Total Social Risk Score by Service Type

Service Type	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
Florida Network	304.7	180.4	-6.6	988.2
DJJ Diversion	416.1	133.7	7.5	879.8
DJJ Probation	494.6	123.7	8.8	907.2
DJJ Community Commitment	550.1	101.0	174.5	898.1
DJJ Residential Placement	593.1	121.1	101.9	941.6

NOTE: SD= Standard Deviation; Min.= Minimum sample value; Max= Maximum Sample Value.

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of Total Social History Risk Scores for Florida Network and each FL DJJ service level evaluation sample to, again, illustrate the overlap between service level groups.

FIGURE 2.

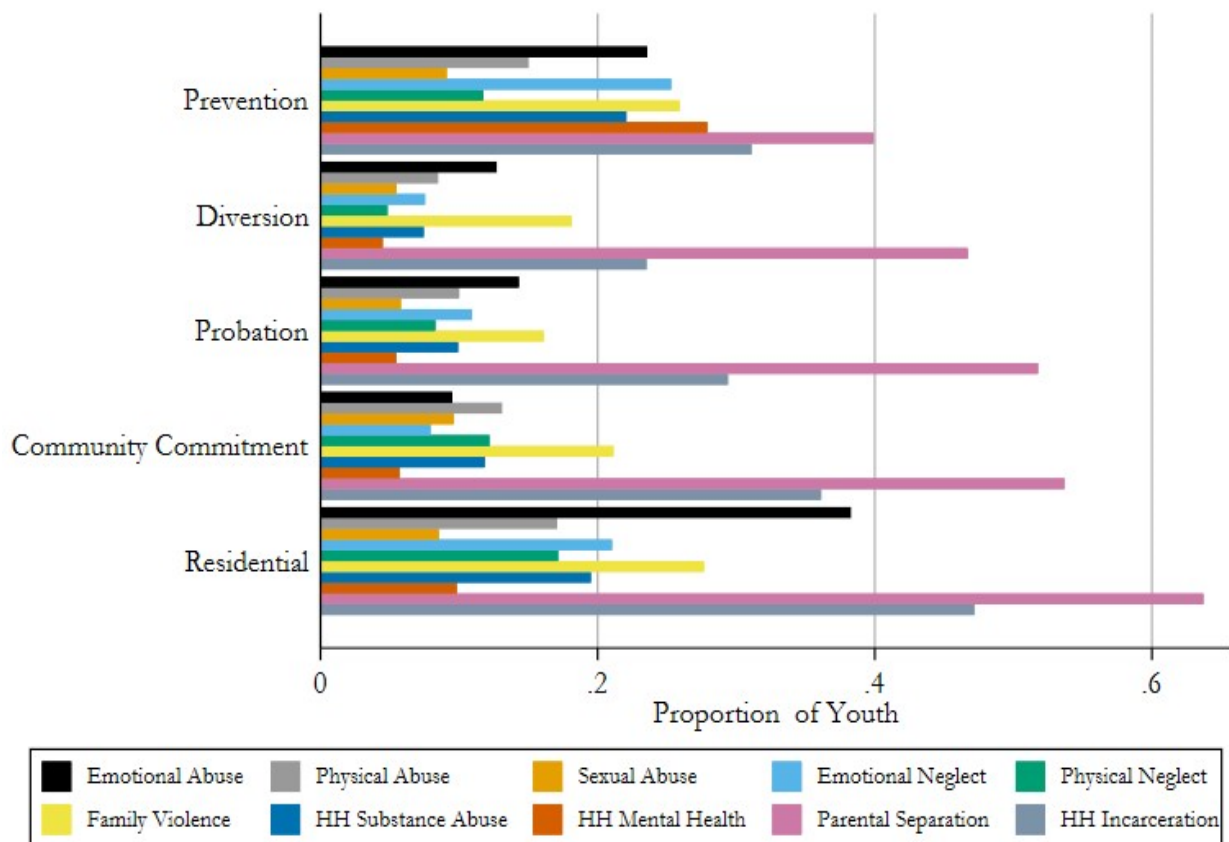


Note: Prevention= Florida Network prevention youth exclusively.

Figure 3 provides a visual representation of the proportion of youth that evidenced each ACE exposure by service type. In most instances a higher proportion of the Florida Network prevention youth have each ACE exposure, with the exception of FL DJJ Residential youth having the highest prevalence of most ACEs. Parental separation/divorce is the only ACE indicator where Florida Network prevention youth have the lowest exposure. Notably, Florida Network youth have the highest exposure to:

- ✓ Sexual Abuse
- ✓ Emotional Neglect
- ✓ Household Substance Abuse
- ✓ Household Mental Health Problems

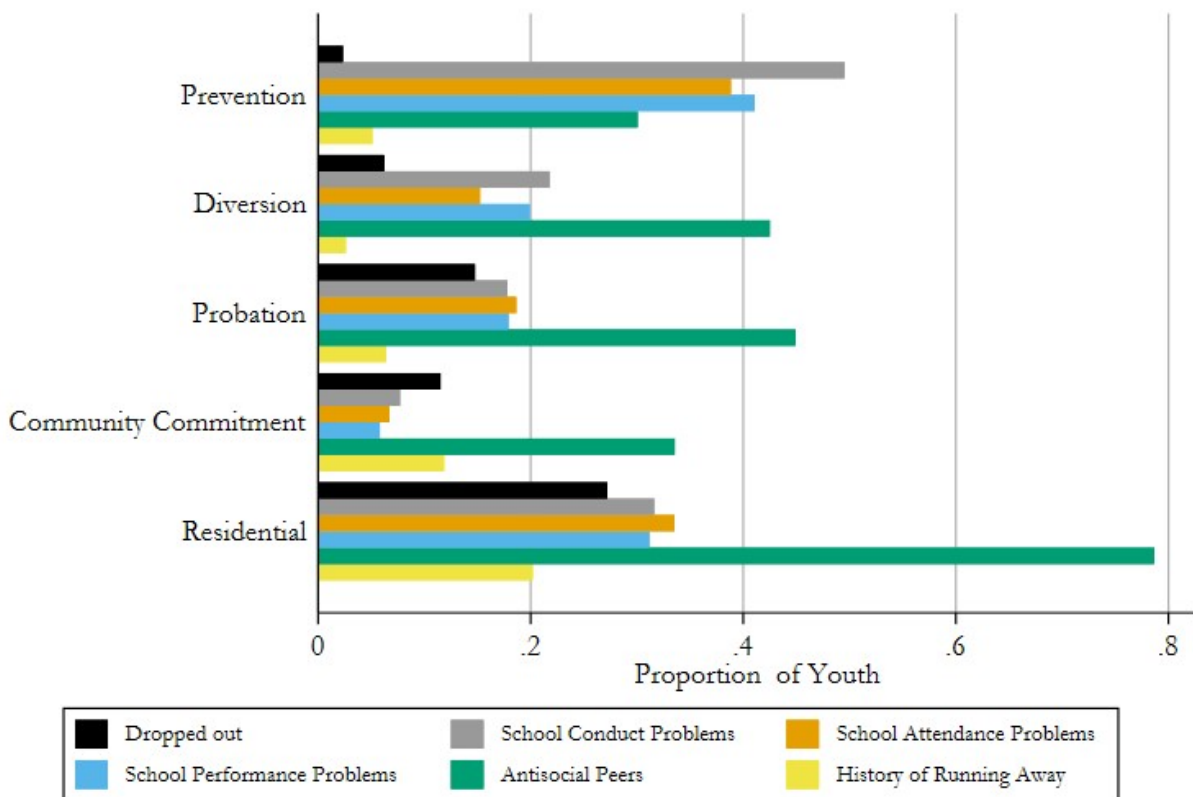
FIGURE 3. Proportion of Youth with each ACE Exposure by Service Type



Note: Prevention= Florida Network prevention youth exclusively.

Similarly, Figure 4 provides a visual representation of the proportion of youth that evidenced school-related, peer associations, and running away risk factors for Florida Network prevention youth and FL DJJ youth across service types. As shown, Florida Network youth have the lowest prevalence of dropping out of school and antisocial peer/gang associations, but have the highest prevalence of school conduct problems, school attendance problems, and poor grades (school performance).

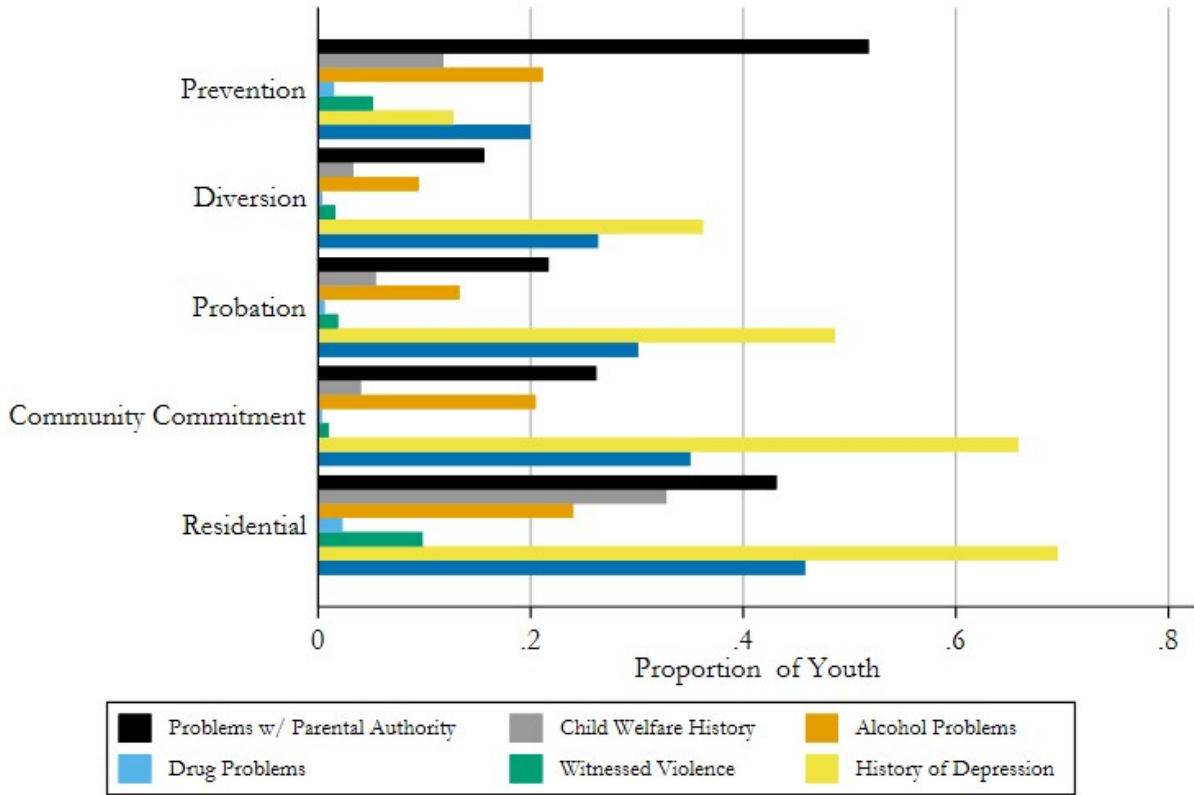
FIGURE 4. Proportion of Youth with Select Risk Factors by Service Type



Note: Prevention= Florida Network prevention youth exclusively.

Finally, Figure 5 provides a visual representation of the proportion of youth that evidenced parental authority, child welfare system history, substance-related problems, witnessing violence, and depression risk factors for Florida Network prevention youth and FL DJJ youth across service types. As shown, Florida Network youth have the lowest prevalence of a history of depression yet have the highest prevalence of problems obeying parents (parental authority), and are most similar to FL DJJ residential youth with alcohol problems and drug problems. Importantly, Florida Network youth had the second highest prevalence of a history (or current) child welfare system involvement (second to FL DJJ residential youth).

FIGURE 5. Proportion of Youth with Select Risk Factors by Service Type



Note: Prevention= Florida Network prevention youth exclusively.

MATCHING FLORIDA NETWORK YOUTH TO FL DJJ YOUTH

The next step involved matching Florida Network youth to statistically identical FL DJJ youth, based on each youth’s established Total Social History Risk Score. Coarsened Exact Matching was used, which is a technique wherein continuous and ordinal characteristics are categorized into meaningful groups (i.e., coarsened) and then subgroups can be matched based on values of the categorical variables while retaining the original values of the matched data (in our case the indicators making up the Total Social History Risk Score).¹⁵ This provides estimated juvenile justice system involvement for Florida Network-served youth.

As shown in Table 6, 15,498 of the 17,729 Florida Network youth were successfully matched to FL DJJ youth. Importantly, 27% of those that matched were matched to FL DJJ residential youth, 14%

¹⁵ Iacus et al. (2012).

to community commitment youth, 36% to probation youth, and 10.7% to diversion youth. This means that just over 87% of Florida Network youth served had an estimated Total Social History Risk Score consistent with FL DJJ youth.

Table 6: Summary of Youth Matched to Specific DJJ Supervision Types

	# of FN Prevention Youth Matched	% of FN Prevention Youth by Type
Residential	4,819	27.2%
Community Commitment	2,417	13.6%
Probation	6,372	35.9%
Diversion	1,890	10.7%
Overall Matched	15,498	87.4%
Unmatched	2,231	12.6%

Matched using coarsened exact matching on total social history risk score.

To facilitate matching parent problems was collapsed to 0, 1, 2, or 3+.

Table 7 provides the average age at admission and the proportion of Florida Network matched youth across demographic, ACE exposures, and risk factors. As would be expected, and in concert with the proportion of ACEs and risk factors across FL DJJ service types, the Florida Network youth matched to FL DJJ residential youth evidenced the highest proportion of ACE exposures and risk factors.

Table 7: Post-Matching Descriptive Statistics of Social Risk by Placement Type

	Residential n=4,819	Community Commitment n=2,417	Probation n=6,372	Diversion n= 1,890	Any Match n=15,498
Age at Admission	15.61	15.12	13.00	10.03	13.78
Youth Gender (= Male)	54.0%	56.0%	56.5%	59.9%	56.0%
White	35.7%	30.4%	34.2%	34.2%	34.0%
Black	38.9%	33.2%	33.9%	33.8%	35.3%
Hispanic	15.7%	27.1%	21.6%	21.7%	20.6%
Other Race/Ethnicity	9.7%	9.4%	10.4%	10.3%	10.0%
Emotional Abuse	44.4%	31.3%	16.3%	5.1%	26.0%
Physical Abuse	29.4%	18.5%	10.1%	2.5%	16.5%
Sexual Abuse	17.7%	11.0%	6.0%	2.0%	9.9%
Emotional Neglect	44.7%	31.3%	19.6%	7.5%	27.8%
Physical Neglect	21.4%	15.0%	8.7%	2.8%	12.9%

Family Violence	40.6%	30.8%	22.7%	10.1%	28.0%
Household Substance Abuse	36.5%	26.9%	18.7%	7.1%	24.1%
Household Mental Health Problems	41.6%	32.4%	24.9%	14.9%	30.0%
Parental Separation/Divorce	51.5%	44.1%	39.9%	26.6%	42.5%
Household Incarceration	48.0%	37.6%	28.0%	11.3%	33.7%
Dropped out of School	5.3%	3.0%	0.9%	0.7%	2.6%
School Conduct Problems	51.1%	50.3%	53.6%	41.5%	50.8%
School Attendance Problems	44.4%	48.5%	37.0%	32.1%	40.5%
School Performance Problems	47.1%	46.2%	40.9%	30.3%	42.3%
Antisocial Peers	40.4%	35.0%	28.8%	18.3%	32.1%
History of Running Away	11.0%	6.1%	2.6%	1.4%	5.6%
Parental Monitoring Problems	83.5%	60.9%	43.9%	21.9%	56.2%
Problems with Parental Authority	16.6%	14.6%	11.2%	6.3%	12.8%
Child Welfare History	34.2%	25.3%	17.1%	10.4%	22.9%
Alcohol Problems	3.7%	2.0%	0.4%	0.4%	1.7%
Drug Problems	11.4%	7.8%	2.1%	0.7%	5.7%
Witnessed Violence	25.2%	16.4%	8.3%	2.2%	14.1%
History of Depression	30.5%	23.7%	16.9%	10.4%	21.4%

The average Total Social History Risk Score for the 15,498 matched Florida Network youth and the FL DJJ youth across each service type is shown in Table 8. As shown, the average Total Social History Risk Score is lower among Florida Network youth than the FL DJJ service types (but has a larger standard deviation). Importantly, the 2,231 (12.6%) Florida Network youth that were not successfully matched to FL DJJ youth had an average Total Social History Risk Score (136.36) that is 59.2% lower than the average Total Social History Risk Score of the Florida Network matched youth (333.90).

Table 8: Total Social Risk Score by Service Type after Matching

	Mean	SD
Florida Network	333.90	166.61
DJJ Diversion	419.45	130.88
DJJ Probation	492.13	122.05
DJJ Community Commitment	547.69	99.10
DJJ Residential Placement	584.75	115.32
Unmatched Prevention Youth	136.36	194.98

RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) EVALUATION RESULTS

The final step of the current evaluation was to analyze the return on investment (ROI). Using the number of Florida Network youth estimated to have Total Social History Risk Scores consistent with FL DJJ diversion youth (n= 1,890), FL DJJ probation youth (n= 6,372), FL DJJ community commitment youth (n= 2,417), and FL DJJ residential youth (n=4,819), we are able to use the actual average costs for each of those service types to arrive at the estimated justice system involvement costs of the Florida Network youth. Recall that actual costs are provided in the FL DJJ CAR report, and the actual costs used in the current evaluation were from the fiscal year 2020-21 expenditures to match the same time frame as the FL DJJ youth used in the matching analysis. Recall also (see above), that the average cost for diversion was \$2,918 per release, for probation was \$5,516, for community commitment was \$17,822, and for residential placement was \$79,400. Multiplying the number of Florida Network youth who had Total Social History Scores consistent with estimated service type placements yields an expected justice system cost of:

➤ Diversion: 1,890 youth * \$2,918 =	\$5,515,020
➤ Probation: 6,372 youth * \$5,516 =	\$35,147,952
➤ Community Commitment: 2,417 youth * \$17,822 =	\$43,075,774
➤ Residential: 4,819 youth * \$79,400 =	\$382,628,600
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$466,367,346

Importantly, the 17,729 Florida Network youth did indeed cost FL DJJ contracted dollars. During the same period used for actual costs for FL DJJ youth (fiscal year 2020-21) the Florida Network had 12,963 releases (youth served) (12,428 CINS/FINS and shelter + 535 Respite) and the FL DJJ contract dollars to the Florida Network was \$32,583,491.44, for an average cost per release of \$2,514. Using that average cost, the 17,729 Florida Network youth examined in the current evaluation (which includes those who were able to be matched to FL DJJ youth and those who were not) cost \$44,570,706.

However, this is not the only cost to FL DJJ for the 17,729 Florida Network youth. Any “recidivism” of those youth and subsequent FL DJJ placements need to be accounted for as well. For the purposes of this analysis, recidivism was defined as a referral to FL DJJ (e.g., an “arrest”) that occurred within 6 months of the day the NIRVANA assessment was conducted, and that was ultimately an adjudication/adjudication withheld or transferred to the adult court. Additionally, the subsequent placement (FL DJJ service type) of the youth that recidivated must be considered (as each service type has a different average cost). Importantly, as adult conviction data were not available, (and would not cost FL DJJ any contracted dollars anyway), only youth that were 17.5 years of age or younger were included in the analysis, and only those that had at least 6 months since

the NIRVANA assessment plus 2 additional months for court processes (meaning 8 months of follow-up to assess 6-month adjudication). There were a total of 12,607 Florida Network youth that met these criteria and could have recidivated (using the current evaluation’s methodology). Of those 12,607 Florida Network youth, 499 recidivated (4%). Related to subsequent disposition, 42 went to a FL DJJ diversion program, 373 to probation services, 1 to community commitment, 79 to FL DJJ residential, and 4 transferred to the adult court.¹⁶ As the sample able to be tracked for recidivism was not the full sample of Florida Network youth, the proportion of those that recidivated among the youth that could be tracked were converted to the proportion of the entire Florida Network sample as follows:

- Diversion: 42 of 12,607 recidivated and went to FL DJJ Diversion (0.33%).
 - Full sample $17,729 * 0.33\% = 59$ youth for Diversion costs
 - $59 * \$2,918 = \$172,162$ estimated FL DJJ contracted dollar costs.
- Probation: 373 of 12,607 recidivated and went to FL DJJ Probation services (2.96%).
 - Full sample $17,729 * 2.96\% = 525$ youth for Probation costs
 - $525 * \$5,516 = \$2,895,900$ estimated FL DJJ contracted dollar costs.
- Community Commitment: 1 of 12,607 recidivated and went to FL DJJ Community Commitment services (0.008%).
 - Full sample $17,729 * 0.008\% = 1$ youth for Community Commitment costs
 - $1 * \$17,822 = \$17,822$ estimated FL DJJ contracted dollar costs.
- Residential: 79 of 12,607 recidivated and went to FL DJJ Residential (0.63%).
 - Full sample $17,729 * 0.63\% = 112$ youth for Residential costs
 - $112 * \$79,400 = \$8,892,800$ estimated FL DJJ contracted dollar costs.
- Adult transfer: no FL DJJ contracted dollar costs.

TOTAL: The total FL DJJ contracted dollar costs from the 17,729 Florida Network youth related to their subsequent FL DJJ placements is estimated at \$11,978,684 (see Table 9 for calculations).¹⁷

¹⁶ Importantly, this over represents the actual number of Florida Network youth that reoffended. Unlike the FL DJJ annual CAR Report recidivism analysis which includes only successful completions of services, the current evaluation included every intake to services (whether successful or not) and tracked recidivism from the date of service intake (not service exit as FL DJJ examines). Further, as the data used was not solely completions, but was every intake, there were instances where the same youth may have several intakes to a service (such as a youth going into a respite shelter 3 times over two months) that, if the youth reoffended would have been counted for each placement within the six months of the recidivism offense (e.g., if the hypothetical youth with 3 respite stays in 2 months reoffended within 4 months of the last respite stay, that offense (if adjudicated/withheld) would count as 3 instances of recidivism: 1 for each of the 3 respite placements) even though it was only one youth, one offense, and one subsequent FL DJJ placement. As such, the costs attributed to recidivism of Florida Network youth are artificially inflated, making ROI estimates conservative.

¹⁷ As a reminder, the costs of subsequent placements due to recidivism of the FL DJJ youth sample were not included in the current evaluation, making the ROI dollars saved presented herein conservative estimates.

Table 9: Subsequent Placement Expenses

Actual System Involvement of Florida Network Youth	N	% of Sample Tracked	N After Conversion to Full Sample	Avg. Cost Per Supervision Level	Expense to FL DJJ
No FL DJJ Involvement	12108	96%	17,020	\$0	\$0
DJJ Diversion	42	0.34%	60	\$2,918	\$172,162
DJJ Probation	373	3.04%	539	\$5,516	\$2,895,900
DJJ Community Commitment	1	0.01%	1	\$17,822	\$17,822
DJJ Residential Placement	79	0.64%	113	\$79,400	\$8,892,800
TOTAL SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT EXPENSES					\$11,978,684

Return on Investment (ROI)

The ROI calculations take the expected FL DJJ service type costs (based on the matching of Total Social History Score) and subtract both the FL DJJ contracted dollar costs for Florida Network services and the FL DJJ contracted dollar costs for the Florida Network youth’s subsequent FL DJJ dispositions (using the recidivism measure described above).

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$466,367,346
FLORIDA NETWORK COST:	- \$ 44,570,706
<u>NETWORK RECIDIVISM COST:</u>	<u>- \$ 11,978,800</u>
TOTAL COST AVOIDANCE:	\$409,817,840

A \$409,817,840 cost avoidance from an actual cost of \$44,570,706 for Florida Network services converts to a \$9.19 return on investment, meaning that for every \$1 spent on Florida Network services the State of Florida receives a \$9.19 return on investment.

*Investment in Florida Network services is economically beneficial, providing a **\$9.19** return on investment for every dollar invested in Florida Network prevention services for Florida’s at-risk youth and families.*

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this evaluation was to examine the Return on Investment (ROI) from investing in the non-residential and residential prevention services provided by the Florida Network Youth and Family Services. A Total Social History Risk Score was derived from common measures assessed for all Florida Network and FL DJJ youth. This score was used to match Florida Network youth to FL DJJ youth across levels of supervision (diversion, probation, community commitment, and residential). This allowed for computing an expected cost for Florida Network youth (based on the

FL DJJ service level that each youth was matched to) from actual FL DJJ expenditures (e.g., actual cost per released youth for the fiscal year examined). The estimation of cost avoidance/savings projections based on the expenditure differences between the expected (FL Department of Juvenile Justice) and *actual* (FL Network) placements. Importantly, the ROI evaluation took into account the costs to FL DJJ for Florida Network services as well as the costs to FL DJJ for subsequent FL DJJ placements of that small minority of Florida Network youth that “recidivated” (new referral to FL DJJ/arrest within 6 months from the time of intake to FL Network). Results demonstrated substantial cost savings to the State of Florida from investing in Florida Network Youth and Family Services, on the order of over \$9 saved for each dollar invested. Notably, this estimate is conservative, as, while the costs for subsequent FL DJJ placement of the Florida Network youth were included, the costs for subsequent FL DJJ placement of the FL DJJ youth were not included.

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