



Youth – LEAD
(Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion)

July 15, 2024



Youth – LEAD aligns with the following Council Strategic Priorities:

- 1. Education**
- 2. Partnerships**
- 3. Public Safety**

+ Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

Purpose:

Support youth through accessing programs, services and activities that build protective factors and provide positive, healthy outlets so youth avoid juvenile justice involvement.

Background

- In 2020, a multi-disciplinary team participated in a juvenile probation transformation project with the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University, supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.
 - Included two additional years of technical assistance.
 - Implementing new and updated diversion policy within the Police Department was one of the goals identified.
- In August 2023, the City Manager appointed an internal workgroup and highlighted the implementation of a pre-arrest diversion initiative focused on providing wrap-around and holistic services to youth at-risk of court involvement.
- Support from Charlottesville and Albemarle County Police Departments, the City and County Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, 16th District Court Service Unit.
- Consulted with the UVA Law Clinic, Fairfax County, and a similar program in Los Angeles, CA.





Benefits:

- If arrested, youth become more likely to become arrested again and less likely to graduate high school.
- Keeps youth that don't pose a harm to the community out of the juvenile justice system as the risk of entering this pipeline increases with each justice system interaction.
- Frees up resources to focus on more serious and violent offenders.
- Potential to reduce racial disparities.
- Youth remain record free.
- Less likely to re-offend than traditional diversion programs.



How it works:

- Youth has encounter with a Police Officer:
 - If offense is on the list of eligible offenses **AND** youth and parent(s) agree – officer refers to Department of Human Services for an intake and assessment for community-based services.
 - If offense is not on the list of eligible offenses, or the youth and parent(s) do not consent, and/or the youth has a prior history with the juvenile justice system – officer proceeds with the standard juvenile intake process with the 16th District Court Services Unit.
- Department of Human Services offers:
 - **REQUIRED**
 - 4 sessions of Teens GIVE Service-Learning – for team community service activities
 - **OR**
 - 4 sessions of Mentoring 1-1 with a DHS staff.
 - **OPTIONAL**
 - A variety of pro-social activities such as gym memberships, classes, sports, etc.
 - **Funding:**
 - Covered by the Virginia Community Crime Control Act and a contribution from City Manager and Albemarle County Department of Human Services.

Outcomes

Successful Diversions:

- After 90 – days, youth has completed the required sessions with DHS. The youth is not formally charged.
- Youth gained access to support, resources, and additional skills to help prevent any further police encounters.

Unsuccessful Diversions:

- After 90 – days, youth did not complete the required sessions **OR** receives another charge. The youth's referral will return to the police department for formal processing with the 16th District Court Services Unit.

Thank You

