

# What is Juvenile Detention Reform?



## Purpose of Juvenile Detention Reform

Using eight interconnected core strategies, Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) seeks to help participating jurisdictions safely reduce reliance on secure detention for youth charged with delinquent offenses.

## Juvenile Detention Reform Objectives

1. Eliminate inappropriate or unnecessary use of secure detention.
2. Minimize delinquent behavior by youth in the period between arrest and adjudication, and ensure young people's appearance in court.
3. Redirect public finances saved through the reduced use of detention to support effective alternatives to detention and other proven strategies to minimize future offending and promote youth success.
4. Reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the use of detention.
5. Ensure safety and appropriate care for youth confined in secure detention facilities.



## Eight Core Strategies

- **Collaboration**  
Establish an inter-agency collaborative to plan and assess reform strategies.
- **Data-Driven Decisions**  
Compile and make effective use of accurate, timely data to guide policy, program and practice decisions.
- **Objective Admissions**  
Develop and utilize objective criteria and screening instruments to guide detention admission decisions.
- **Alternatives to Detention**  
Expand the use of new or enhanced programs offering non-secure alternatives to detention.
- **Expedited Case Processing**  
Introduce case processing changes to reduce length of stay and expedite the resolution of cases.
- **Special Detention Cases**  
Develop strategies to minimize the use of detention in warrant, violation of probation and “awaiting placement” cases.
- **Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities**  
Identify causes and develop solutions to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the use of secure detention.
- **Conditions of Confinement**  
Monitor and improve conditions of confinement to ensure safety and enhance services for youth confined in detention facilities.