JDAI AT 25

JUVENILE DETENTION ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE
INSIGHTS FROM THE ANNUAL RESULTS REPORTS

THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION
The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private philanthropy that creates a brighter future for the nation’s children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit www.aecf.org.

© 2017, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, Maryland
The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative® (JDAI™) is a nationwide effort of local and state juvenile justice systems, initiated and supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, to eliminate unnecessary and inappropriate use of juvenile secure detention and to reduce racial disparities. Begun in 1992, JDAI has grown to become the most widely replicated juvenile justice reform initiative in the United States, reaching youth in more than 300 local jurisdictions across 39 states and the District of Columbia. JDAI sites submit annual results reports to the Foundation for two primary purposes: (1) to gauge the progress of their own JDAI collaboratives on an annual basis for the benefit of local system stakeholders; and (2) to generate initiative-wide aggregate measures and comparisons among sites to deepen our understanding of the overall impact of the detention reform movement.

Since 2009, JDAI has summarized these aggregate measures of progress to share with the JDAI network and the public at large. In recognition of JDAI’s 25-year milestone, this document presents the first results reports’ analysis that draws on data from multiple years — 2008 through 2016. The results reports provide evidence that JDAI sites have achieved significant reductions in both juvenile incarceration and juvenile crime; and in most sites, those reductions have been sustained or deepened over time. Yet the results reports also indicate that despite sites’ best efforts, racial and ethnic disparities have persisted or worsened overall; and in some sites, the momentum of detention reform appears to have slowed in recent years. In addition to sharing insights from this longitudinal perspective, this document reflects on the strengths and weaknesses of the results reports as a tool to advance data-driven practices across the detention reform movement. Finally, this document sets forth some new strategic goals for improving the current results reports, with new tools and strategies designed to help JDAI sites do better, innovate and sustain the improvements they have achieved through 25 years of JDAI.
BACKGROUND: THE ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT PROCESS

Every year, JDAI sites report data on their use of secure detention for pre- and post-adjudicated youth, the number of youth committed to state custody, overrepresentation of youth of color in the juvenile justice system and indicators of public safety and compliance with the court process. Changes in these indicators over the course of a site’s participation in JDAI — between a pre-JDAI year selected by the site (the baseline year) and the current results reporting year (the recent year) — show the difference detention reform has made within sites, and those changes can be rolled up to the initiative level to tell a broader story about JDAI’s nationwide impact.

As of 2016 there were 197 active JDAI sites, pursuing detention reforms based on JDAI core strategies. Some of these sites serve multiple counties and independent cities, so the total number of local jurisdictions involved in JDAI was more than 300. Roughly 10 million youth ages 10 to 17, about 30 percent of the national total, live in these communities.¹

The start and end dates used for the baseline and recent reporting periods are selected by each site. For the 2016 reporting year, all the 12-month reporting periods for the sites that submitted reports ended between December 31, 2015, and September 30, 2016. All results reports data are self-reported by JDAI sites, and although they are reviewed for completeness and internal consistency by Foundation staff, they are not independently validated. Some reports have valid information on some indicators but not on others, so the number of reports included in the analysis of a given indicator in one or more given years may be lower than the total number of reports received. Foundation staff supplement the results reports data with the most recent data available from the Census Bureau, so that our analysis of the results reports can be informed by the sites’ demographic context.

For the 2016 reporting cycle, 164 sites submitted results reports. This is the second-highest total to date, and more than twice the number received in 2009, the first year that results reports were systematically collected in something close to their current form (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1
RESULTS REPORTS RECEIVED FROM JDAI SITES BY REPORTING YEAR

![Graph showing results reports received from JDAI sites by reporting year.](image-url)
Insights from the Annual Results Report Indicators Through 2016

The annual results reports provide evidence that JDAI sites have achieved significant reductions in both juvenile incarceration and juvenile crime (Table 1).

Table 1: Overall 2016 Results on Frequently Cited Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Pre-JDAI Baseline</th>
<th>2016 Results</th>
<th>Numerical Change</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
<th>Sites Included in Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detention Population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Daily Population (ADP)</td>
<td>8,780</td>
<td>4,964</td>
<td>-3,816</td>
<td>-43%</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Admissions</td>
<td>188,948</td>
<td>95,939</td>
<td>-93,009</td>
<td>-49%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disparities in Detention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth of Color ADP</td>
<td>6,209</td>
<td>3,679</td>
<td>-2,530</td>
<td>-41%</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Non-Hispanic ADP</td>
<td>2,049</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>-1,115</td>
<td>-54%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth of Color Admissions</td>
<td>119,287</td>
<td>66,968</td>
<td>-52,319</td>
<td>-44%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Non-Hispanic Admissions</td>
<td>50,952</td>
<td>20,826</td>
<td>-30,126</td>
<td>-59%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth of Color Detention Rate per 100,000</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>-67</td>
<td>-45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Non-Hispanic Detention Rate per 100,000</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>-22</td>
<td>-49%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitments to State Custody</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17,457</td>
<td>7,432</td>
<td>-10,025</td>
<td>-57%</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth of Color</td>
<td>12,381</td>
<td>5,593</td>
<td>-6,788</td>
<td>-55%</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Crime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felony Petitions</td>
<td>79,391</td>
<td>48,770</td>
<td>-30,621</td>
<td>-39%</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delinquency Petitions</td>
<td>42,562</td>
<td>29,351</td>
<td>-13,211</td>
<td>-31%</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Arrests</td>
<td>33,511</td>
<td>14,333</td>
<td>-19,178</td>
<td>-57%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals/Intakes</td>
<td>32,526</td>
<td>17,298</td>
<td>-15,228</td>
<td>-47%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ADVANCES**

Reduced reliance on juvenile detention. Across the 164 JDAI sites that reported in 2016, there were more than 3,800 fewer youth in detention on an average day in 2016 than before those sites undertook JDAI — a reduction of 43 percent. That means that over the course of a year, sites use about 1.4 million fewer days of juvenile detention than they used prior to JDAI. There were roughly 93,000 fewer admissions per year to juvenile detention facilities in JDAI sites — a decrease of 49 percent — compared with pre-JDAI levels.
Reduced commitments to state custody. Although the primary focus of most JDAI sites over the years has been the use of juvenile detention, the initiative has always strived to reduce other forms of youth incarceration as well. For that reason, the results reports ask sites to provide information on the number of youth they commit to state custody each year. As of 2016, the 162 sites providing this information reported committing 10,000 fewer youth to state custody each year — a reduction of 57 percent — compared with pre-JDAI levels.

Reduced juvenile crime. The results reports allow sites to select a juvenile crime indicator (JCI) and ask them to report on it annually, to see how youth behavior and public safety are changing while detention reforms take hold. For the 127 sites providing this information in 2016, juvenile crime was well below pre-JDAI levels across all JCIs used, by an average of more than 40 percent. The most frequently used JCI, the number of felony petitions filed against juveniles in a year, was down by 39 percent among the 79 sites using that indicator. Decreases in the less frequently used indicators ranged from 31 percent for sites reporting on the number of delinquency petitions filed to 57 percent for sites reporting on juvenile arrests.

These gains have been achieved across a wide diversity of JDAI sites.

Detention reductions across the vast majority of sites. Of the 164 sites reporting in 2016, 140 (85 percent) had a lower detention population than before JDAI.

Reductions in both urban and non-urban communities. Eighty-one of the sites were predominantly urban and 83 were not. Although the urban sites reported larger reductions than rural sites, most sites in both groups relied less on detention than they had prior to JDAI. As of 2016, urban sites had reduced their overall detention population by 45 percent, with 90 percent of the sites showing reductions, and non-urban sites had reduced by 35 percent, with 80 percent of the sites showing reductions.

Reductions across multiple states and all regions. Thirty-five states were represented among the sites reporting in 2016. In 31 of those states (89 percent), the 2016 detention population in local JDAI sites was lower than their pre-JDAI baseline; in 32 states (91 percent), most local JDAI sites had reduced their use of detention. Large overall reductions were reported across all regions of the United States (ranging from 35 percent among sites in the South to 56 percent among sites in the West), and the vast majority of sites in all regions reported using less detention than before JDAI (ranging from 82 percent of sites in the Midwest to 91 percent of sites in the Northeast).

Looking across the results reports received in recent years, it is possible to see that these overall gains have been sustained and deepened (Figure 2).
FIGURE 2
TRENDS IN FREQUENTLY CITED INDICATORS
Overall reductions in incarceration across JDAI sites have been sustained or deepened...

While indicators of juvenile crime have remained low or improved

---

The trend lines show changes in various indicators from pre-JDAI baseline years. The graphs illustrate reductions in incarceration and changes in juvenile crime indicators from 2009 to 2016. The percentage changes are shown for different indicators such as Felony Petitions, Delinquency Petitions, Referrals, and Arrests. The data indicates a consistent decline in incarceration rates and improvements in juvenile crime indicators across the years.
Sustained and growing reductions in incarceration. As of 2009, JDAI sites had already achieved significant reductions in juvenile detention and state commitments. Yet over the next seven years, even as more new sites joined the initiative, the scale of those reductions increased. As a result, the overall reductions in detention ADR, detention admissions and state commitments that sites recorded in 2016 were the largest to date.

Sustained and growing reductions in juvenile crime. Over the past seven years of results reports, sites have also maintained or improved upon their overall reductions in juvenile crime. Because sites use different JCIs, the number of sites reporting on any single JCI in each year is much smaller than the number that report on the detention and commitment indicators. Therefore, the trends in these indicators are comparatively more volatile. Since 2010, there has been a notable trend among sites using the felony petitions indicator, with the decreases in felony petitions filed generally getting larger each year. The trends among the other three JCIs — which are used by fewer sites than the felony petitions indicator — have been generally flat. That is, the size of the overall reductions in those indicators stayed roughly the same from 2010 to 2016.

Challenges

The results reports also show that important challenges remain, including the persistence of racial and ethnic disparities and loss of detention reform momentum in some sites, characterized by rising lengths of stay.

Persistent, glaring disparities in the incarceration of youth of color. A defining characteristic of American juvenile justice is the overrepresentation of youth of color at every level of system involvement. JDAI sites strive to change this reality in their jurisdictions, but based on the results reports, little overall progress has been made. Among the 140 sites that provided disaggregated detention data in 2016,
youth of color accounted for 52 percent of the total youth population, but 80 percent of the detention ADP. This overrepresentation has changed little since the sites’ baseline years, when youth of color were 47 percent of the total youth population and 75 percent of the detention ADP. Among the 132 sites providing disaggregated data on state commitments, similar levels of overrepresentation were reported in 2016, with youth of color accounting for 78 percent of overall commitments in the baseline year and 83 percent in 2016 (Figure 3).

Looking across multiple years, the overrepresentation of youth of color has been remarkably persistent. The share of youth of color in the detained juvenile population in JDAI sites has fluctuated over the years, but has never fallen below 75 percent of the overall ADP, or 70 percent of detention admissions, across JDAI. Similarly, the percentage reductions in detention among all youth versus youth of color have fluctuated over the years; but in no year has the percentage reduction in detention admissions or detention ADP among youth of color exceeded the percentage reduction among all youth.
The growth of this disproportionality over time is due in part to demographic changes in JDAI sites (Figure 4). Since their baseline years, the 140 sites that provided disaggregated data in 2016 saw an overall 7 percent increase in their population of youth of color, while their population of white youth fell by 10 percent. Simply because youth of color are more likely to be detained than white youth, this demographic shift by itself would tend to increase the total use of detention across JDAI sites. If the only thing that had changed in JDAI sites since their baseline years was their community demographics, then the overall detained population would have been 3 percent higher than its baseline level. Instead, because these JDAI sites reduced their reliance on detention, their actual ADP was 44 percent lower than its baseline level. To accomplish that, sites reduced their overall detention rate (defined as the detention ADP per 100,000 youth ages 10–17 living in the site’s jurisdiction) among both youth of color and white youth by similar degrees. In 2016, a youth of color living in a JDAI site was about 45 percent less likely to be in detention and a white youth was about 49 percent less likely to be in detention than their peers were prior to JDAI.

**FIGURE 4**

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES ALONE WOULD HAVE LED TO MORE DETENTION; BUT SITES REDUCED THE RATE OF DETENTION BOTH FOR YOUTH OF COLOR AND WHITE YOUTH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-JDAI Baseline</th>
<th>2016 Demographics With Pre-JDAI Detention Rates</th>
<th>2016 Reporting Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Daily Population</td>
<td>6,209</td>
<td>6,641</td>
<td>3,679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Youth</td>
<td>2,049</td>
<td>1,835</td>
<td>934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth of Color</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-49%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Based on 140 sites providing disaggregated data on detention ADP.
It is encouraging that reductions in the detention rate have been similar among white youth and youth of color — but disparities remain large, and have widened across the three main indicators of juvenile incarceration collected through the results reports (the ADP in detention, the number of youth admitted to detention centers annually and the number of youth committed to state custody). Reductions in all three of these rates for white youth have been greater than the reductions for youth of color since sites began JDAI. Moreover, incarceration rates for youth of color in 2016 are still higher than those rates were for white youth even before JDAI (Figure 5).

**FIGURE 5**

**DECREASING RATES OF INCARCERATION, BUT INCREASING DISPARITIES**

![Bar chart showing decreasing rates of incarceration and increasing disparities between white youth and youth of color.](chart.png)

**Change in Incarceration Rates for White Youth and Youth of Color (YOC), Baseline to 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitments per 100K Youth Population</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>-65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Detention Admissions per 10K Youth Population</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>-58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detention ADP per 100K Youth Population</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>-54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disparity Index (YOC Rate as a Multiple of White Rate)**

- White: 3.8
- Youth of Color: 4.5

NOTE: Based on reports from 132 sites that provided disaggregated data on Commitments, Admissions and ADP.
Looking at the 132 sites that submitted disaggregated information on all three of these indicators in 2016:

- Before JDAI, the overall detention rate (ADP per 100,000 persons ages 10–17) for youth of color was 3.3 times higher than the white youth detention rate. In 2016, despite steep reductions in detention for both groups, that ratio had increased to 3.7.

- The rate of detention admissions (annual admissions to detention per 10,000 persons age 10–17) for youth of color was 2.6 times the rate for white youth before JDAI. In 2016, that ratio had increased to 3.0.

- The incarceration rate that has fallen the most across these JDAI sites is the commitment rate (annual commitments to state custody per 100,000 persons age 10–17). But while that rate was 3.8 times higher for youth of color than for white youth before JDAI, it was 4.5 times higher in 2016.

The results reports do not collect data disaggregated beyond the very broad category of youth of color. The reports therefore shed little light on the reasons that these disparities persist, nor do they help to identify practices that sites have used to mitigate them successfully.

**Increasing lengths of stay in detention among some sites.** Although sites have decreased their overall use of detention over the years, the rate of decrease appears to have leveled off since approximately 2012. Among the 40 sites that submitted results reports every year from 2008 through 2016 (nine consecutive years), this can be clearly observed. From their baseline years to 2008, these sites reduced their overall ADP by 27 percent. Over the next four years, from 2008 to 2012, they reduced by another 30 percent. But over the four years from 2012 to 2016, they reduced by only 2 percent (Figure 6).
To better understand this dynamic, trends in each of these 40 sites were examined and compared. This analysis found that while most of the sites (33 of the 40) had continued their progress in reducing ADP after 2012, a few (the remaining seven sites) did not. Up to 2012, the trajectories of these two groups were similar, with ADP reductions of around 27 percent between their baseline years and 2008, and around 30 percent over the four years from 2008 to 2012. But in the four years from 2012 to 2016, their paths diverged. ADP across the 33 sites that continued their downward trajectory fell another 15 percent, while the seven sites with an upward trajectory saw a 30 percent increase, reversing most of their progress since 2009 (Figure 7).

The population of a detention center (ADP) is a function of two factors: how many young people are admitted and how long they stay. The difference between the trajectory of sites that saw continued reductions and those that saw increases after 2012 was mostly due to changes in lengths of stay (Figure 8). Both groups saw continued decreases in admissions, but the seven sites whose ADP rose after 2012 also saw the average length of stay in their detention centers rise by more than 40 percent (from about 19 days to 27 days). Those that remained on a downward trajectory held their average length of stay to a much more modest 8 percent increase (from 17 days to 18 days).
Some of the factors that drive longer average stays in juvenile detention centers are well known, such as increasing use of these facilities to hold young people awaiting trial in adult courts (where cases typically take much longer to process than juvenile court cases) and the growth of post-dispositional placement programs that are housed in juvenile detention centers. Unfortunately, the results reports do not collect the necessary data to determine whether and to what extent these, or any other, factors are contributing to escalating lengths of stay across the initiative.

Need for renewed momentum in some sites. The results reports help to illustrate the importance of being able to distinguish not just how far a site has come since the start of its JDAI work, but also that site’s trajectory. Focusing on a larger set of 79 sites that submitted results reports for five consecutive years (from 2012 through 2016), four distinct groups can be identified based on two criteria: how much impact had the sites achieved in 2016, defined as whether the site’s reduction in ADP since their baseline year was greater than or less than 30 percent; and whether the site had momentum for further reductions at that time, defined as having a downward trend in ADP over the five-year period from 2012 to 2016 (Figure 9, left panel).

- The largest group (58 percent of sites) had achieved a large impact to date and continuing momentum (with ADP reductions of more than 30 percent from their pre-JDAI baseline and ADP trending downward over the 2012–2016 period).

- A smaller group (10 percent of sites) had not achieved as large an impact up to 2016; but did have momentum, with a downward trend in ADP over the past five years.
Another small group (15 percent of sites) reported a large impact as of 2016, with ADP much lower than their baselines. But they had lost momentum, with their ADP trending higher over the past five years.

The remaining group (16 percent of sites) did not report a large impact, with ADP increases, or reductions of less than 30 percent, compared with their baselines. They also showed a lack of momentum, with an upward trend in ADP over five years.

It is heartening that most sites are in the high-impact/high-momentum group. It is also encouraging that another one-fourth of sites are either trending in the right direction, or are able to take confidence from the fact that they have substantially reduced their use of detention since launching JDAI. But it is concerning that 1 in 6 sites face a rising trend in their detention population that either threatens to or already has negated any reductions they have achieved since beginning JDAI (Figure 10).

Clearly these distinctions matter: The sites in each group can be expected to present very different needs for technical assistance, training and other support, based on their impact to date and recent trajectory. Moreover, the greatest opportunities for further reductions in detention in the future reside among the minority of sites whose ADP is trending upward. Among the sites examined, although just 31 percent had a rising trend in ADP, those sites accounted for nearly half of the 2016 ADP (Figure 9, right panel).
FIGURE 10
ADP TRAJECTORIES BY MOMENTUM-IMPACT GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Momentum, small impact</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-13%</td>
<td>-37%</td>
<td>-59%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Momentum, large impact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Based on 79 sites providing reports each year from 2012 through 2016, plus their baseline year.

FIGURE 10
ADP TRAJECTORIES BY NO MOMENTUM-IMPACT GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No momentum, small impact</td>
<td>-60%</td>
<td>-50%</td>
<td>-40%</td>
<td>-30%</td>
<td>-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No momentum, large impact</td>
<td>-59%</td>
<td>-53%</td>
<td>-59%</td>
<td>-59%</td>
<td>-59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Based on 79 sites providing reports each year from 2012 through 2016, plus their baseline year.
Looking Forward: Priorities for Improving the Annual Results Report Process

In the past 10 years, both at the site level and across the initiative, JDAI has invested in the results reporting process to acquire evidence related to its original core aims: to reduce reliance on juvenile detention while preserving public safety, using strategies that can be replicated widely and adopted at a large scale. As demonstrated in this report, the results reports have provided encouraging evidence of success on these core goals. JDAI sites have achieved significant reductions in detention while reducing juvenile crime, and those gains have been sustained or improved.

But the scale and maturity of JDAI has arguably outgrown the current results reporting process and the current design of the annual results report itself. As valuable as results reports have been up to this point, the initiative’s experience with them has shown that they are limited in some important respects. Those limitations need to be addressed if the results reporting process is going to become what JDAI needs it to be: a tool for fostering and accelerating continuous improvement across JDAI sites.

Fundamental questions remain unaddressed. In some areas, the results reports do not ask for data needed to provide actionable information for sites or for JDAI technical assistance providers.

- Most prominently, the results reports disaggregate the detention and commitment indicators only by a single, overly broad racial and ethnic category — youth of color — that is inadequate to shed much light on the source of disparities in detention rates. While it is important to show overrepresentation, there is also a need to help sites diagnose and address its causes. Sites need to understand which specific demographic groups and communities are the most overrepresented in the juvenile justice system. That knowledge is an important starting point to building partnerships with those communities and developing targeted strategies to help prevent their young people from unnecessary exposure to and deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system.

- Similarly, the results reports ask for just one piece of information about the use of post-dispositional out-of-home placements: the number of commitments to state custody. Yet we know from JDAI sites
that are pursuing deep end reforms that commitments are just one type of dispositional out-of-home placement that needs attention. As designed, the results reports can provide only a glimpse of this complex picture.

• The results reports also need to address some important areas of detention reform work — areas that are among the highest priorities in many sites — including: adherence to the recommendations of objective decision-making tools at the point of detention admission; appropriate use of alternative-to-detention programs (ATDs); and the use of graduated responses and case processing strategies to avoid detention based on probation violations. These approaches represent the bulk of JDAI work in many sites, and sites’ success in implementing them will help to determine how much further they can go in the future. At JDAI’s current level of maturity, these strategies belong front and center in the initiative’s data gathering.

**Laborious process, with incomplete data.** Despite diligent efforts across sites, JDAI as an initiative still struggles to assemble meaningful data about how to advance detention reform, especially with respect to key indicators of effectiveness, such as the rates at which youth who are not detained fail to appear for court hearings or are rearrested before their cases can be resolved. Even within the core reporting metrics, data are sometimes incomplete or based on nonstandard calculation methods (Figure 11).

![Figure 11](image_url)
STARTING IN 2017, the Casey Foundation will reach out to the JDAI community to formulate a new approach that builds on results reporting.

**Improving usefulness to sites and responsiveness to their needs.** Because JDAI’s process for analyzing and synthesizing the results reports is laborious and time consuming, sites need useful feedback from the results reports in a timely way. Moreover, the results reporting process should help sites that are tackling similar challenges to identify and communicate with one another and better capitalize on one of the most important potential benefits of having such a vast national network of sites. That some sites make the value judgment that submitting high-quality results reports is too costly could be related to the slow and centralized nature of conversations generated by the results reporting process. The reports come from the sites to JDAI leadership, and with some lag, aggregate numbers are shared through written reports like this one. But it’s not clear how well this relates to site-level reform efforts. The report gives sites clues to where they fit in to the broader JDAI community, but needs to provide them opportunities to plug in and engage with their peers.

For these reasons, the Casey Foundation is interested in exploring new ways to promote and support the development of good data practices among JDAI sites, so that sites can be better equipped to do better, innovate and sustain their progress. To that end, starting in 2017, the Casey Foundation will reach out to the JDAI community to formulate a new approach that builds on results reporting. Our goal will be to create a new infrastructure to support continuous data-driven learning and improvement across JDAI that:

- takes full advantage of the vast JDAI network;
- uses more advanced technology;
- goes deeper into racial disparities and other areas of focus for JDAI sites;
- is more responsive to the needs and challenges of sites across the initiative; and
- focuses JDAI’s data strategies, not just on measuring progress to date, but also on guiding the priorities and direction of detention reform into the future.

An initial concept paper outlining such an approach is planned for later in 2017, to be followed by an invitation to JDAI sites that wish to take part in building, and building upon, this new infrastructure.

JDAI has always emphasized the critical importance of data-driven policies and decision making as a core element of detention reform. Through this transition, we will hold fast to that principle — and as JDAI enters a new era, we will strive to realize that principle more fully than ever before.
As of 2017, the 197 active JDAI sites serve more than 300 counties and independent cities. Per U.S. Census Bureau statistics, the population of 10- to 17-year-olds in these jurisdictions was more than 10 million in 2015; while the national population of 10- to 17-year-olds was just over 33 million. Therefore, about 30 percent of the nation’s youth population lives in a community that participates in JDAI.

Most of the U.S. population lives in areas that the U.S. Census Bureau classifies as “urban” based on population density and other factors. About half of JDAI sites serve counties in which more than 90 percent of all housing units are in urban areas; and those sites are counted as urban for this analysis. Non-urban sites are those in which less than 90 percent of housing units are in urban areas.

Among the sites reporting in 2016, Northeast states were Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island; southern states were Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia; Midwest states were Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin; and western states were Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico and Washington.

The results reports define youth of color as youth of any race who identify as having Hispanic ethnicity, and youth of non-Hispanic ethnicity who identify as having a race other than white, based on the racial/ethnic categories used by the U.S. Census Bureau. The results reports do not further disaggregate any data by race or ethnicity, so we are unable to evaluate trends in JDAI sites at a more discrete level. Nor can we independently verify that sites are using these categories, although for purposes of this analysis we assume that they do.