

# North Dakota Juvenile Justice: Reform, Strengths, and Challenges

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# STRENGTHS

- Updated Juvenile Code
- Required assessments and screenings earlier in the process
- More transparency
- More collaboration between systems
- Right to counsel for every child
- Statewide detention screening tool process
- Competency assessment process
- Developmental lens: Growth focused case management – focus on youth's future vocational goals



# CHALLENGES / SUGGESTIONS

1. Comprehensive state prevention plan – delivery of services outside of the traditional government systems
2. Mobile crisis responders in real time, in every county
3. Increased home-based, family services available in every region
4. Family resource centers in every region – more peer-to-peer support
5. Restoration services for youth found not competent or those with intellectual disabilities who come into contact with law enforcement
6. Youth substance abuse treatment longer than 30 days with a halfway house component similar to Hazelden Betty Ford or care bed model
7. “No eject, No reject” law – don’t allow psychiatric facilities to turn away complex cases

# Our Juvenile Justice System should not be a difficult maze; Too many paths in and too few ways out

- Too many paths into the justice system
  - Deliver prevention services outside the system
- Too many paths lead to detention or placement
  - Expand services that can be delivered at the child's home, in the child's community
  - Focus on the family and skills building
- Multiply clear routes out of the justice maze
  - More alternatives to detention
  - More alternatives for services in your home community
  - More alternatives to residential placement
  - More alternatives for access to acute psychiatric crisis beds and a way to stabilize a situation without using detention



The Juvenile Justice system should not be the default service provider; it should be the system of last resort