

Cook County Criminal Justice Committee Meeting
Cook County Violence
January 19, 2021, 10:00 AM

As an organization that has provided vital services to Illinois residents for over 45 years, TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) supported the passage of the resolution titled "Declaring Gun Violence as a Public Health Crisis" last year. We are glad to see the Cook County Board of Commissioners convene committee hearings to carry-out the purpose of the resolution and search for solutions to bring safety and well-being to all communities.

TASC is currently involved with several deflection and diversion initiatives. One of which is the Juvenile Justice Collaborative (JJC), in partnership led by Ann & Robert Lurie Children's Hospital, and several other community-based organizations. The mission of the JJC is to minimize further involvement of arrested youth in the justice system and reduce racial disparities by facilitating and coordinating access to comprehensive support services that meet adolescents' developmental needs.

Between 2017 and 2020, 26% of the youth referred to JJC were charged with Assault and Battery, 10% had a weapons charge, and another 10% had multiple offense charges. During the same time period, 58% of referents successfully completed the program. There was only 18% recidivism, of the group who successfully completed the JJC program, as compared to 32% recidivism for All Chicago youth first arrest data.

The JJC is an example of strength-based partnerships that could be strengthened with public partners, to reduce and eliminate gun violence in Cook County. TASC is eager to be a part of the conversation and the solutions to this public health crisis.

Respectfully submitted,

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