

Community Based Juvenile Justice Programs

Office of the Norfolk District Attorney

January 30, 2024

During 2023, the Norfolk District Attorney's office administered twenty-four community based juvenile justice programs (school safety forums) serving twenty-seven communities in the County of Norfolk. These programs were designed to help coordinate the efforts of school systems, law enforcement, the Norfolk County Juvenile Probation Department, the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families and the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, as appropriate, to help develop positive interventions for court-involved and at-risk juveniles. Additionally, these confidential forums may serve to identify those juveniles whose violent behavior could potentially pose a danger to school systems and communities, and to help coordinate informational resources and other potential interventions designed to help maintain school safety and help deter the recurrence of violence.

These collaborative school safety forums have been in place in the Norfolk District for more than twenty years. The Norfolk District Attorney's Office has taken a leadership position in scheduling these meetings, and in trying to facilitate and maintain open lines of communication between the partner agencies. The Norfolk District Attorney's Office encourages and supports the regular participation of relevant agencies, as appropriate. Partner agencies may choose to explain the specific services and interventions they may have available, as well as any relevant criteria and protocols for accessing such services. The forums have been an effective venue for agencies to share informational resources. The Norfolk District Attorney's Office endeavors to assign an Assistant District Attorney from the Norfolk District Attorney's Juvenile Justice Unit to each confidential forum. This Office initiates discussions about individual cases, and invites input from the collaborative agencies regarding individuals whose alleged conduct may pose a threat to schools, neighborhoods and communities. These collaborative agencies include Juvenile Probation, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Youth Services, as well as the schools and local law enforcement. General school safety concerns, precautions, and perceived trends are also discussed to further support school and community prevention efforts. In addition to the work NDAO has done for many years, in 2023, our office focused on increasing the number of programs the office can offer to juveniles. With a special focus on the struggles currently being faced by juveniles in the current climate of increased social media interactions, the office has contracted with agencies providing programs to offer to juveniles targeted to current needs.

The Norfolk Juvenile Court in Dedham services the nineteen communities of Avon, Canton, Dedham, Dover, Foxborough, Franklin, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Needham, Norfolk, Norwood, Plainville, Sharon, Stoughton, Walpole, Wellesley, Westwood, and Wrentham. There were approximately 75 felony cases prioritized for discussion at the community based juvenile justice programs in this service area. The Juvenile Session of the Quincy District Court services the seven communities of Braintree, Cohasset, Holbrook, Milton, Quincy, Randolph, and Weymouth. There were approximately 115 felony cases prioritized for discussion at the community based juvenile justice programs in this service area. There were approximately 6

felony cases prioritized for discussion in Brookline. Additional adult co-defendant court proceedings were also discussed as appropriate.

Currently, the Dedham Juvenile Court has a delinquency session two days per week and the Quincy Juvenile Court has a delinquency session three days per week. Brookline Juvenile Court holds a delinquency session once per month.

The Norfolk District Attorney's Office provides strategic, targeted prevention, education and training to our 28 communities and 34 public school districts. In 2023, following a review of our caseload and diversion referrals, we developed programming to target the leading causes of student discipline, court involvement and preventable death (substance use and impaired and distracted driving) with emphasis on mental and behavioral health.

We offered the following in 2023:

1. Hosted live Peer Leadership Conference for Norfolk County Public School Student Leaders at Gillette Stadium;
2. Provided TEAM RIVAL substance use prevention programming for 34 public high schools which included the following:
 - a. Fatal Vision Google Experience, a simulation of cognitive impairments that alcohol, marijuana and opioids have on vision perception distortion, reaction time, short term memory loss and problem solving;
 - b. Shifting Gears, an online distracted driving prevention education program for newly licensed teens in partnership with AAA;
3. Provided Until Help Arrives, an interactive critical safety training course created by Federal Emergency Management Agency and provided to Norfolk County Public High Schools;
4. Provided Signs of Suicide training to Norfolk County Public High Schools, a mental health initiative to students and school employees in partnership with MindWise Innovations;
5. Provided the Good Decision Class in partnership with Bay State Community Services as part of the Norfolk County Diversion Program, and to public high schools to incorporate in a disciplinary incident involving substance use and related risk-taking even if the teen is not court-involved;
6. Provided access to a master's level clinician at no cost for behavioral and mental health evaluations and referrals for treatment, if necessary, for teens and young adults in Norfolk County in partnership with Bay State Community Services;
7. Hosted monthly Community Coalition meetings for substance use prevention;

8. Hosted bi-monthly School/Youth Resource Officer meetings for substance use prevention and behavioral intervention;
9. Hosted county-wide Mandated Reporter training for schools and school resource officers in partnership with Norfolk Advocates for Children followed by a tour of the NAC facility;
10. Hosted live Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center's anti-bullying training;
11. Provided grant funding for 100 Naloxboxes placed in public school buildings and other municipal buildings;
12. Replenished the supply of Naloxone for public school districts in Norfolk County;
13. Provided Narcan Training to Norfolk County Public School and municipality staff;
14. Provided Safe Celebration Grants in the amount of \$500 to Norfolk County Public High Schools to defray the cost of alcohol-free post prom or graduation events to keep students safe;
15. Provided grant funding to Norfolk County Public School Districts to analyze and prepare visualization summaries in partnership with Trendline of Youth Risk Survey Data for use in parent presentations, school grant writing, and to guide the work of health educators in areas needing intervention and prevention;
16. Hosted Making Norfolk County a Safe Place to Live Conference for all who have a stake in behavioral and mental health issues: school administrators, counselors, school resource officers, police chiefs, fire chiefs, school nurse leaders, coalition leaders, public health nurses, etc.
17. Provided grant funding for Community Resource Dogs to support our police departments and schools in servicing children in crisis and enhance the trusted relationship between these agencies and local children and families;
18. Provided FireSense Diversionary Program in efforts to protect and reduce juveniles who set and play with fires;
19. Provide 3rd Millenium Diversionary Programming to individuals on Conflict Wise, Diversity Equity & Inclusion, Nicotine, Other Drugs, Respect & Resolve, THC 101, Under the Influence and shoplifting; and
20. Provided Fatal Vision Education: a live in-person marijuana and alcohol simulation experience that simulate cognitive impairments that alcohol, marijuana and opioids have on vision perception distortion, reaction time, short term memory loss and problem solving.