JUVENILE TRANSITIONS

The Maricopa County Education Service Agency Juvenile Transitions initiative works to meet the educational and social needs of youth involved with the juvenile justice system by building a collaborative system that supports seamless transitions between detention or incarceration and school and community.

The initiative is based on:

- The belief that, with the proper conditions and supports in place, every youth in Maricopa County can succeed - no exceptions.
- The principles of restorative justice, which stress the learning of hopefulness and the earning of redemption.
- A commitment to creating environments for youth where gaining knowledge, and developing productive skills and abilities for the future are priorities.

Driving our work are two overarching goals:

- Reduce recidivism and re-entry of juveniles into the juvenile justice system.
- Increase supports and opportunities for youth to reduce factors that lead to future delinquency and/or incarceration.

The Juvenile Transitions initiative is structured around the four research-based stages of transition: entry into the justice system; in residence; exit from incarceration; and aftercare. The MCESA Transition Team addresses these stages of transition by:

- Developing and maintaining coalitions among county agencies, detention and correction facilities, profit and non-profit organizations, the Arizona Department of Education, local school districts and charter schools, and statewide county educational services agencies.
- Improving student achievement and reducing recidivism for youth that have been detained, incarcerated, or otherwise involved with the juvenile justice system by facilitating implementation of evidence-based educational programming through provision of a support system for meeting local needs of juvenile justice schools in support of transition and placement for youth.
- Providing professional development training for correctional and alternative educators and other related agency staff who serve this specific population of students both in the correctional facilities and in the community.
- Conducting research and facilitating the use of data in program development and supporting and evaluating progress utilizing local, state, and national coalition partners and contacts.
- Facilitating compliance with quality standards and assessments through the AdvancED/NCA regional accreditation process for juvenile justice schools.
- Facilitating support services and providing information for parents and guardians to prepare them to successfully advocate for and facilitate transition services for their youth.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT JUVENILE TRANSITIONS

What issues facing our county does the Juvenile Transitions initiative address?

It addresses critical social, educational, fiscal and public safety issues. Students returning to school after incarceration are highly at risk of dropping out of school while youth achieving educational success are more likely to see the benefits of education, transition away from delinquency and be more productive later in life. How well youth transition can have a lasting positive or negative outcome for the future of both the youth and the community. It is estimated that the total economic costs of one youth dropping out of high school for a life of crime and substance abuse ranges from $4.2 million - $7.2 million dollars over a lifetime.

What is transition?

Transition has been defined as “a coordinated set of activities for the youth, designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes successful movement from the community to a correctional program setting, and from a correctional program setting to post-incarceration activities.”

What are the three elements of successful transition?

The three elements of successful transition are:

1. It is coordinated.
2. It is an outcome-oriented process.
3. It promotes successful movement between the facility and the community.

The first element, coordination, requires individuals from multiple systems to work together to ensure that a youth involved in the juvenile justice system receives appropriate support services at all stages. The primary individuals involved are, of course, the youth/student and his or her family or adult advocate. An assigned point of contact, such as a transition counselor or specialist, school placement specialist, or staffing coordinator, is also extremely important in leading and coordinating the process. Others who should be involved in the process include court and probation personnel, administrators and staff from detention and corrections institutions, and personnel from a student’s community school (e.g., principal, guidance counselor, and teachers). Additional involvement may come from representatives of agency-based service providers in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, child welfare, and employment services. Ultimately, the individuals required to support a specific youth will depend on the unique needs of that child and his or her transition plan, and they will need to be identified case by case. The second element, an outcome-oriented transition process, focuses on the goals of successful youth engagement with school and/or employment, avoidance of recidivism to the juvenile justice system, and reduction of the likelihood of future entry into the adult criminal justice system. The third element, successful movement between the facility and the community, requires the youth to become positively engaged with his or her community by acquiring appropriate academic, vocational, behavioral, social, and independent living skills. Therefore, an effective transition process and high-quality support services within that process are essential for a youth to successfully live in the community following incarceration.

What are the stages of transition?

There are four research-based distinct stages of transition: Stage 1 – Entry into the Justice System; Stage 2 – In Residence; Stage 3 – Exit from Incarceration; Stage 4 – Aftercare. (NDTAC Transition Toolkit 2.0). The TJST
collaborative aligns Transition Stages 2-4 with the stages of change (Adjusted from Tuckman’s 1965 Behavior-Development Model) in operationalizing services and supports for TJST referred youth.

**Figure 3: ECAP and the Four Stages of Transition**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Stage 1: Entry into Justice System</th>
<th>Stage 2: In Residence</th>
<th>Stage 3: Exit from Incarceration</th>
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<td>Continuing Hope High Schools Placement</td>
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<td>Outside the Scope of the Education Program</td>
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<td>Maintain Affiliations with Home and Family, Hobbies &amp; Recreation, Community &amp; Service, Education &amp; Career</td>
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<td><strong>Mental Health Services Provided as Appropriate</strong></td>
<td>Mental Health Services</td>
<td>Mental Health Services</td>
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**TJST Stages of Transition**

- **In Residence:** Forming, Norming, Storming, Performing
- **Exit from Residence:** Transforming, Sustaining
- **Aftercare:** Reforming, Relapse, Reestablish Case Plan, Acknowledge Accomplishments, Teach for Non-Repeat, Active Affiliation Engagement, Circle of Support/SAE, Caring Adult, Work towards Consistency

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**MCESA**
Maricopa County Education Service Agency
OVERVIEW OF WHAT WE DO

TJST Frequently Asked Questions

❖ Who is TJST?

- **Transforming Juveniles through Successful Transition (TJST),** is a collaborative for system reform initiated by Maricopa County Education Service Agency (MCESA), grounded in Evidence-Based Principles (EBP) focused on changing the lives of juveniles at highest risk for returning to secure care. TJST partners with the Maricopa County Regional School District’s (MCRSD) Transition Learning Centers within the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department Detention Centers, Maricopa County Adult and Juvenile Probation Departments, Hard Knocks High within Maricopa County Sherriff’s Office (MCSO) and the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC).

- The mission of TJST is to increase the number of juveniles successfully reintegrated back into schools and the community through coordinated transition support for 1200 post release juveniles, thereby reducing recidivism and the expense to adult and juvenile detention and jail facilities.

- Through TJST, MCESA and its community partners will work together to create a systemic approach to transform juvenile transition which will include: coordinated support/services based upon the identified needs of each juvenile as they progress through transition stages; individualized support levels and services tailored to each juvenile’s needs; and an outcomes-oriented process to determine the success of each juvenile’s transition. The TJST Program also supports prevention programs for charter schools, district alternative education programs, and schools serving “at-risk” youth. TJST Program staff will assist in identification, training, and follow-up support for implementation of activities.
What role will the Transition Facilitator play?

- TJST Transition Facilitators are the individuals tasked with coordinating services for youth and families in four affiliation areas (Home & Family, Hobbies & Recreation, Community & Service and Education & Career) to help youth maneuver the multiple systems and services available and support their successful transition back to the community.

- While the youth is in secure care, the Transition Facilitator will assess the youth and family’s strengths and needs and help them set goals in four main areas: Home & Family, Education & Career, Hobbies & Recreation, and Community & Service.

- Once goals are set, the Transition Facilitator will help identify and connect the youth and family to resources and services available within the community needed to reach their goals.

- Upon the youth’s release, the Transition Facilitator will work with the youth and family to implement a plan to reach their goals.

When will Transition Facilitators meet with youth and families?

- Once TJST receives a referral from our partnering agencies, the transition planning process can begin.

Where will Transition Facilitators meet with youth and families?
• While the youth is in secure care, the Transition Facilitator will meet with the youth in the appropriate area designated by the facility staff.

• Upon the youth’s release, the Transition Facilitator will meet with the youth and/or family at an appropriate location within the community (e.g. youth’s home, public library, schools and community centers, etc.).

❖ Why is participation in TJST beneficial?

• The transition to adulthood is a major life event for any youth. While all youth experience challenges in finding the right path to success, youth in secure care face additional challenges stemming from court involvement. Without comprehensive support, court involved youth are more likely to drop out of high school, experience difficulty entering the workforce, decline postsecondary training, or re-enter the justice system.

• Transition services are designed to complement, not replace, other systems or services. Transition Facilitators have a unique role in the life of the youth. They interact with and/or members of the entire transition team connecting all services and agencies for the benefit of youth and families without some of the jurisdictional restrictions of other systems.

❖ How will TJST support the success of youth and families?

• Transition Facilitators provide support for youth and families through regular in-home and community meetings to connect them with the resources, services, and supports they need to reach their goals in the four affiliations: Home & Family, Education & Career, Hobbies & Recreation, and Community & Service.

• Transition Facilitators help youth and families to identify and address barriers to achieving their goals.

YOUR WHY- WHY DO YOU DO WHAT YOU DO? (What motivates you to come to work every day?)

As a team, TJST staff takes pride in guiding juveniles to success, both individually and collectively. Too many times juveniles are labeled as the “bad kids” and written off; we do what we do because we enjoy empowering youth and families. We believe in the Kids at Hope philosophy; “All children are capable of success, No Exceptions!”

HIGHLIGHTS FROM LAST YEAR

• Secured funding from the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors to launch Transforming Juvenile Through Successful Transition (TJST), a five-year collaborative for systems change in juvenile transition.

• Established the Interagency Board of Directors for TJST.

• Continued development of the MCESA Youth Transition Advisory Council (MYTAC) established in 2010 with 71 members representing 46 agencies.
• Recruited and Hired 13 new **AMAZING** staff members with the addition of 2 **REMARKABLE** staff transferred from other MCESA initiatives to operationalize TJST.

• Formalized collaborative partners to operationalize TJST through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with Maricopa County Regional School District (MCRSD), Maricopa County Adult and Juvenile Probation Departments, Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC), Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO) and TJST Alliance Partner Schools (i.e., Traditional, Charter, and Alternative Education Programs receptive to enrolling court involved youth)

• Facilitated the development of Efforts to Outcomes, a web-based data tracking system by Social Solutions which will allow TJST to capture incremental and long term successes of youth and families served.

**STATISTICS/DATA**

The use of the online Efforts to Outcomes data tracking system will not only allow the TJST Team to capture the incremental and long term successes of the youth and families served, but also to engage in data-driven decision making both at the youth and programmatic level. Through examining our data, we will be able to adjust the dose, duration, and scope of services provided to meet the needs of the youth and families served.
PICTURES

The group took a picture at the Kids at Hope Master’s institute

QUOTES FROM CLIENTS/PARTNERS

Various members of our partnering agencies have expressed their excitement about our collaborative and their belief that our services will enhance the lives of the youth we collectively serve.

“One of Maricopa County’s Strategic Goals is to reduce juvenile recidivism to 15% or less by 2015,” said Tom Manos, Maricopa County Manager. “We fully support the Juvenile Transition Program and its plan to reduce the number of juveniles who reoffend.”

“We are resolved to transform the opportunities and support for juveniles, freeing them from a life shackled to crime and prison by preparing them for a future as positive and productive members of any community they desire to live in,” said Dr. Don Covey, Maricopa County Superintendent of Schools.

“You and TJST are most wonderful partners and we are grateful for everything you do and for your ongoing support and advocacy of our ADJC programs.” Email correspondence from Dona Marie Markley, Assistant Director of the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC)