



**CHILD PROTECTION**  
**OMBUDSMAN**  
of COLORADO

**Office of the Child Protection Ombudsman**  
**Division of Youth Services Program**

**Strategic Plan**

Quarters Two and Three,  
Fiscal Year 2018-2019

November 29, 2018

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## **Introduction**

Since becoming an independent agency in 2016, the Office of Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman (CPO) has seen a steady increase in the number of inquiries it receives regarding the Colorado Division of Youth Services (DYS). Those inquiries included individual cases centered on various concerns, including whether a juvenile received adequate medical care while in a facility and whether a DHS staff member's use of physical restraint was appropriate. Stakeholders and citizens have also asked the CPO to study the DHS through a broader lens, urging the CPO to analyze issues potentially impacting children and youth across the state. While the CPO has attempted to address these issues, the agency has lacked both resources and expertise to address such inquiries and complaints effectively. The CPO recognized the need for such expertise, and in Fiscal Year 2017-2018 began developing a strategy to build a program within the agency tasked with addressing issues within the DHS.

During the 2018 Legislative Session, the Joint Budget Committee granted the CPO's request for an additional employee to lead the agency in creating and running the CPO's DHS program. Acutely aware that the individual hired for this position would be responsible for building a program from scratch, the CPO was patient and deliberate in its hiring process. Ultimately, the CPO hired Natasha Mitchell to serve as the CPO's Chief Analyst, Division of Youth Services. Ms. Mitchell has more than 20 years of experience in the Colorado juvenile justice system, including a long career of working for the DHS. Ms. Mitchell has worked directly with juveniles in secure detention and treatment facilities. Prior to joining the CPO, Ms. Mitchell served as the DHS's Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Coordinator for four years.

Ms. Mitchell joined the CPO on October 1, 2018, and immediately started strategizing how best to build the CPO's new program. The program will serve a variety of functions, including responding to inquiries from citizens about the DHS, educating stakeholders and the community about the CPO's services and providing recommendations for improvements to the DHS. To ensure the public, stakeholders and legislators are informed of this process, the CPO has created the following supplemental to its SMART Act reports for Fiscal Year 2018-2019. This document outlines the CPO's strategy for building the program during Quarters two and three of this fiscal year. The strategic policy initiatives will be integrated into the CPO's Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Performance Plan.

## Supplemental Performance Plan for the Development of the CPO’s DYS Program

**1 STRATEGIC POLICY INITIATIVE: Develop and implement an outreach and education campaign to inform youth within the DYS, as well as DYS staff and leadership, about the CPO and its services.**

**STRATEGY ONE: Collaborate with the DYS to ensure there are clear communication lines between the CPO and the youth within the DYS, DYS staff and leadership and the juvenile justice community.**

**Critical Process – Collaborate with DYS leadership to install the CPO’s hotline number into the “blue phones” located within each of the 10 DYS facilities, enabling to contact the CPO confidentially and without interference.**

Key Metrics	
<p><b>Quarter Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with DYS leadership to discuss improving communication between youth within the DYS and the CPO.</li> <li>Work with the DYS to discuss logistics and resources required for installing the CPO’s number on DYS “blue phones.”</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quarter Three</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the CPO number has been installed on the DYS “blue phones,” work with DYS to educate youth about how to connect with the CPO.</li> <li>If the CPO number has not been installed, continue working with the DYS and other stakeholders to find solutions for getting the number installed.</li> </ul>

**Critical Process – Develop literature – such as brochures and posters – detailing the CPO’s services and authority and distribute the literature to DYS facilities, regional offices and the broader community.**

Key Metrics	
<p><b>Quarter Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete research to ensure the language in the CPO’s posters and brochures is appropriate and useful for youth in the DYS.</li> <li>Create an effective strategy for distributing materials across the state.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quarter Three</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with graphic artist to design and print posters and brochures.</li> <li>Distribute posters and brochures to the DYS facilities and coordinate with DYS staff to ensure the materials are available to youth.</li> </ul>

**STRATEGY TWO: Develop an outreach campaign to form strong working relationships with the DYS and the juvenile justice community.**

**Critical Process – Utilize existing stakeholder and community meetings to ensure the CPO is informed about ongoing projects and initiatives within the DYS and to educate stakeholders about the CPO’s findings and services.**

Key Metrics	
<p><b>Quarter Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compile a list of all relevant stakeholder groups, agencies and</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quarter Three</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin attending meetings regularly and create a rotating schedule so CPO staff</li> </ul>

<p>meetings that would be beneficial for the Chief Analyst to attend regularly.</p>	<p>are informed of the meetings the Chief Analyst is attending.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with stakeholders what information is useful for the CPO and inquire what information the CPO may provide.</li> <li>• Brief CPO staff about discussions and issues that are pertinent to the CPO's work.</li> </ul>
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**Critical Process – Facilitate robust group and individual conversations regarding the DYS and the role of the CPO.**

<p><b>Key Metrics</b></p>	
<p><b>Quarter Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule informational meetings with at least six stakeholders to discuss the CPO's new program and how the CPO can provide effective services.</li> <li>• Meet with DYS leadership to discuss the CPO's program, how the two agencies will interact.</li> <li>• Coordinate with the DYS to visit at least two facilities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quarter Three</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend the CPO's outreach to agencies or providers with which the CPO has yet to make contact.</li> <li>• Distribute CPO literature to all relevant agencies and providers.</li> <li>• Continue to host a monthly round table discussion among juvenile justice stakeholders.</li> <li>• Create a listserv of all relevant agencies and providers so the CPO may effectively and continuously keep stakeholders informed regarding the DYS program developments.</li> </ul>

**2 STRATEGIC POLICY INITIATIVE: Develop preliminary practices and procedures to effectively and efficiently study and monitor cases and systemic issues within the DYS.**

**STRATEGY ONE: Determine what data, policies and reports are necessary to effectively address citizens' concerns and efficiently monitor ongoing programs and issues within the DYS.**

**Critical Process – Coordinate with DYS to ensure relevant information is shared in a timely and confidential manner.**

<p><b>Key Metrics</b></p>	
<p><b>Quarter Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine what data sets, reports and policy manuals are necessary for the CPO to fulfill its charge in assisting citizens and analyzing DYS systems.</li> <li>• Attend all necessary stakeholder meetings to determine the availability of</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quarter Three</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with the DYS to begin collecting relevant data, policy manuals and reports.</li> <li>• Continue meeting with relevant stakeholders to ensure the CPO is accurately reading and interpreting the materials.</li> </ul>

<p>such information and effective methods for sharing it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate all stakeholders regarding the CPO’s authorizing statute, jurisdiction and confidentiality practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine best practices for CPO staff to receive, store and utilize such information.</li> </ul>
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**STRATEGY TWO: Ensure the Chief Analyst is effectively educating all CPO staff about relevant DYS practices, policies and any issues the Chief Analyst determines warrant further attention. This education should include briefing the Ombudsman and others about programs, legislation and events related to the DYS.**

<p><b>Critical Process – Establish timely and consistent briefings between the Chief Analyst and the CPO staff.</b></p>	
<p><b>Key Metrics</b></p>	
<p><b>Quarter Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide updates to CPO staff during the agency’s weekly staff meetings.</li> <li>Coordinate with the Deputy Ombudsman and the Policy and Legislative Analyst to ensure the Chief Analyst is aware of, and may provide insight on, any pending policies or legislation.</li> <li>Educate the CPO staff on current DYS practices and procedures.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quarter Three</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once the CPO has received all relevant policy manuals and reports, the Chief Analyst will provide these materials to the CPO staff.</li> <li>Coordinate with the Deputy Ombudsman and the Policy and Legislative Analyst to ensure the Chief Analyst is aware of, and may provide insight on, any pending policies or legislation.</li> </ul>