

Intervention Subcommittee -- December 13, 2023

Topic: Statewide Special Investigation Staff

Volunteer for Summary Sheet Development: Beth McNalley

Opportunities				
Name	How could Colorado benefit from the implementation of a statewide absconder unit for youth in care?	What are three key elements that must be present for success in Colorado?	Based on the models provided to the group from other states, what tools and methods would be effective in Colorado and why? (Be specific)	What has to be true for an absconder unit to happen in Colorado (consider things like funding, rural vs. urban, etc.)
Brian Cotter	<p>Additional resources on such an important issue is never going to be negative. Having a group of specialists who can focus efforts on the recovery of children would be beneficial to these children.</p> <p>Opportunity to provide more detailed, more focused response for children/youth who run away from care</p>	<p>Strong data sharing with Human Services and law enforcement.</p> <p>Significant labor commitment.</p> <p>Clear expectations and defined authority.</p> <p>Vehicles and travel tools</p> <p>Would want the response based out of law enforcement because they already have skills, conduct similar investigations, resources, training, vehicles supervision etc.</p>	<p>Closer partnership with law enforcement supported by expectations in law, data sharing, and necessary funding.</p> <p>Initial and ongoing training</p> <p>Narrow role: boots on the ground, searching for children</p> <p>Close relationships between law enforcement, CDHS, etc.</p>	<p>It would require significant funding. I don't know that we've been able to collect or obtain the volume of children who are absent care but I imagine it's high and these investigations can be very labor intense.</p> <p>Approach would be different based on community; have a standardized curriculum</p> <p>Would require legislation for information and data sharing and collaboration</p>
Beth McNalley	<p>Providing immediate intervention could prevent youth from harm/victimization, and future incidents from missing from care.</p>	<p>Standardized Training, clear protocol amongst multiple systems (LE/DHS), MDT approach</p> <p>Trauma-informed approach; integrating prevention approach as part of the intervention to reduce risk of child/youth running again</p> <p>For officer training - Mandate having CIT build into officer academy training and mandating</p>	<p>Tennessee Recovery Checklist.</p>	<p>Funding</p> <p>Clarify the purpose of the absconder unit; would recommend a multi-disciplinary approach (they are not in trouble); how can we streamline approach; would not want to keep with law enforcement as not the most trauma-informed approach</p>

		<p>refresher training; training on engaging high risk youth</p> <p>Could include building out a safety plan and skill-building, and safe place to go (in lieu of going right back to the place they ran from) as part of the intervention</p>		
<p>Becky Miller Updike</p>	<p>It could provide resources for providers to clarify options when kids are at risk for running</p> <p>Could be a huge opportunity to partner with researchers– higher education- to maximize the opportunity to utilize data in most meaningful ways</p>	<p>It needs to be a resource and not a “gotcha” for providers trying to help stabilize and keep kids safe. To that end–</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clear expectations of protocols (training) 2) Resources (money) to fund adequate staffing levels 3) Clear definitions of eminent risk 		<p>It would be costly to do it well. It needs to not duplicate existing structures to just add more red tape and regulation for providers. Should be multi-disciplinary and not solely limited to CDHS oversight.</p>
<p>Elizabeth Montoya</p>		<p>Could look similar to crisis response teams that include partnering LE with therapist; LE could help locate the child/youth and therapist or [other support] could address the unique needs of youth</p>		<p>After reading the notes from the previous discussions, I feel that I'm in agreement that this program would be costly, and as Becky states, should not be solely limited to CDHS.</p>
<p>Norma</p>		<p>Assess youth for why they ran and interrupt the pattern of behavior going forward</p> <p>units would need to be trained in a number of different interventions and have a menu of options based on the needs of the child</p>	<p>Partner with hospitals (may have a child with significant MH needs and may need to be hospitalized to stabilize and for safety); currently, the bar for hospitalization is high; would be to assess the child/youth's mental health and ensure they are in a place to make good decisions for themselves and use</p>	<p>Don't think it would make sense to house with police; have a number of different ways the unit could respond;</p>

			the time to assess needs	
Anna	Should identify the absconder unit as the initial response			Will still need to flesh out standardized response, including aspects/duties that fall outside of the absconder unit;

Challenges			
Name	What are the downsides in considering the implementation of an absconder unit in Colorado?	Based on the models seen in other states, what would not work in Colorado given local context?	Additional considerations
Brian Cotter	Funding. This will be extremely expensive and in many ways duplicative of existing law enforcement efforts.	A dedicated unit outside of law enforcement would be a challenge to make successful because the skills needed to be effective are in line with current law enforcement missing person investigations.	An expansion of legal tools, penalties for those who harbor, and funding for existing law enforcement efforts would probably be more successful.
Becky Miller Updike	Funding and access to qualified workforce		
Elizabeth Montoya			If take a LE approach and train law enforcement; will want to make sure each officer puts kids as priority; would recommend at least a dual team with SW or MH provider; will also need to determine where to place kids and how to intervene Ensuring that there is use of all requisite data

			sources and databases (national and state)
Would need to define what the intervention would be			Would need to define what the intervention would be and then determine who the right people (e.g. law enforcement) for the intervention might be; regardless of training, hard for children to trust LE