

Daily Alternatives

Daily Alternatives is a newsletter created to inform the public of the positive outcomes of Alternatives to Detention and other Quality Improvement work in the Bernalillo County Juvenile Justice system.

The Community Custody Program

What is it?

The Community Custody Program (CCP), part of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), is as an alternative to juvenile detention. The goal is to create a program that enables kids to be supervised in the community rather than be held in detention. The Community Custody Program has now been in operation for 10 years and has a 98% success rate.

Why choose this program rather than Detention?

Detention can be detrimental to youth. They become unprepared to face the community once they are out. They fall behind in their education, which can lead to a lack of motivation to finish school. Not only does detention negatively affect a youth's emotional and mental states, it is also a lot more expensive than choosing to put them in CCP. It costs the County 326 dollars a day to house them in detention while CCP is able to supervise these youth in the community for about 30 dollars a day. Youth also tend to be more successful pending their first hearing.

What are the requirements for a youth to enter this program?

Every youth is made eligible by a judge at the time of the detention hearing, however, they can only refer youth to the program. Youth are screened and assessed before they are released from detention. Supports are put in place for the youth and their families so that they can be successful in the community.

What does this program offer youth?

This program offers youth home detention options. It allows youth to go home to their families pending their dispositional hearing. It allows them to have the support of their family and the community. It also gives them structure to get back on track and prepares them for their court hearing. Youth attend school and can obtain a job. In detention, youth would be isolated of all these supports.

A Success Story

A young man who was an alleged youthful offender was supervised by CCP for a year until his hearing took place. CCP connected him to services in the community which encouraged him to start attending college. He also became a youth voice and leader in another JDAI program, LOUD. He even helped design a mural in the Bernalillo Juvenile John E Brown Justice Center court building (pictured below). This young man flourished thanks to the Community Custody Program and there are many other examples just like his.