

# Youth, Rights & Justice

## 2021-2025 Strategic Plan

### Vision

We envision a just and equitable society that creates opportunities for children, parents, and families to imagine and achieve their aspirations.

### Mission

Youth, Rights & Justice advances the rights of children, parents, and families through advocacy in the courts, schools, legislature, and community.

### Values

Our work is grounded in the belief that our clients are at the center of all that we do. Our values guide our interactions, decisions, goals, and strategy. They serve as the touchstone for open communication in the office, with clients, and in the community.

- **Collaboration:** We believe that working together internally and externally results in better outcomes. We seek opportunities to build effective coalitions with our partners. We value each individual's contribution to ensure our high standards of professionalism. We listen, learn, teach each other, and push ourselves to improve.
- **Equity:** We actively and urgently take steps to counter the racism and bias that permeates our juvenile justice, child welfare, and education systems. We seek opportunities to ensure those most affected have a significant role in decision-making.
- **Openness:** We encourage our employees to speak up and are willing to listen to all ideas. We embrace diverse opinions, even if they challenge our beliefs and push us to grow.
- **Compassion:** We acknowledge the trauma inherent in our work, embrace empathy, and treat those around us with dignity, respect, and kindness.
- **Integrity:** We stand by our commitments and we are invested in building meaningful relationships. We communicate honestly and respectfully with our clients and each other. We are committed to investing in the success and well-being of our employees.
- **Agility:** We adapt, affect change, and innovate to bring equity, fairness, and client voices to the systems in which we work.

### Position

YRJ provides holistic legal services and policy advocacy for children, parents, and families in Multnomah County and statewide. We:

- Serve as public defenders in juvenile cases in both trial and appellate courts.
- Advocate for students to ensure they have equitable access to education.
- Provide leadership to reform the juvenile justice, dependency, and education systems statewide through programs, policy advocacy, consultation, training, and impact litigation.

### Imperatives

#### Rebuild Our Internal Culture

### Objectives

- Increase in the number and percent of BIPOC employees in board, management, and attorney level positions by 2025.
- Year-over-year increase in the retention rate of BIPOC employees over 2021 baseline.
- Improve employee satisfaction as measured by an employee survey. (One option is the Gallup Employee Engage Survey; if this survey is selected, target an average annual score of 4 or higher (out of 5) for all facets of employee engagement.)

### Initiatives

- Complete a thorough review of hiring, onboarding, management, employee attraction, and employee retention practices for inclusion
- Implement diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training for staff aimed at improving employee relations and reducing bias/prejudice/micro aggressions in the workplace
- Complete a full round of performance evaluations with an emphasis on goal setting, professional development, and promotion/advancement coaching
- Launch a needs assessment to determine what kind of complaint process is needed; assess current processes and change (or redesign) to create an effective and safe process

#### Enhance our Advocacy Capacity

- Complete data research, collection, and analysis project by 2025 (Y/N)?
- Year-over-year increase in clients served pre-filing (pre-court family advocacy) over 2021 baseline.
- Year-over-year increase in delinquency clients served post-disposition over 2021 baseline
- YRJ has a capacity of 4 attorney teams (lawyer, case manager, legal assistant, and investigator) qualified to handle waiver cases by 2025 (Y/N)?
- By 2025, YRJ has identified and is offering professional development opportunities to increase attorney teams' (lawyer, case manager, legal assistant, and investigator) ability to handle complex delinquency cases (Y/N)?
- Year-over-year increase in the number of children served through YRJ School Works Program over 2021 baseline.
- Year-over-year increase in client satisfaction score over 2021 baseline.

- Launch data research, collection, and analysis project to inform decision-making at YRJ
- Develop and invest in a process for post-disposition work
- Enhance YRJ capacity to handle waiver cases
- Build attorney skill, expertise, and capabilities to handle complex delinquency cases
- Implement diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training for staff aimed at dismantling racist systems and better understanding the experiences of the clients they serve
- Establish pre-petition representation program
- Expand School Works to better meet community needs

#### Enhance Our Legislative & Policy Work

- Increase in financial resources allocated to support legislative policy work by 2023.
- Increase in the number of staff/FTE to support legislative and policy work by 2023.
- Adoption of client survey seeking input into legislative priorities by 2023 (Y/N)?

- Identify and implement legislative and policy strategies with short- and long-term goals/outcomes
- Assess legislative/policy work constraints resulting from YRJ's current non-profit status (501c3); consider 501c4 if appropriate
- Create and successfully hire for a Policy/Community Outreach Director position
- Establish an approach and process to gather input from impacted communities when developing YRJ's legislative priorities