



COUNTY OF YOLO

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Positive Youth Justice Initiative Grant at Work in Yolo County

(Woodland, CA) – In October, Sierra Health Foundation announced that Yolo County was one of six California counties selected as partners in the Positive Youth Justice Initiative. The initiative was developed to support counties as they transform their local juvenile justice systems to improve the education, employment, social and health outcomes of crossover youth — youth who have been formally involved in the child welfare system, who have experienced documented neglect, abuse and/or trauma, and who currently are engaged in the juvenile justice system. Selected counties received a one-year, \$75,000 planning grant to develop local partnerships and strategies that support youth.

With this grant, Yolo County, in partnership with both public agencies and community-based organizations is working to develop a diverse menu of services, opportunities and supports for the target population with the following elements: positive youth development supports and principles; an innovative behavioral health approach known as ‘trauma-informed care’; a service delivery model known as ‘wraparound services’; and a strengthening of Yolo County’s juvenile justice infrastructure through policy and operational capacity improvements.

“Research suggests that crossover youth experience extremely poor adult outcomes, including contact with the criminal justice system, high use of mental health services and poor educational attainment,” said Marlon Yarber, Yolo County Interim Chief Probation Officer. “We are endeavoring to build a program with a holistic approach to meet the needs of our youth who come through the public safety and/or law and justice systems. The Positive Youth Justice Initiative grant is supporting our efforts to identify our community’s current strengths and challenges, and to develop an approach which increases opportunities for our youth to explore their interests and promotes their healthy development while simultaneously having their needs met in areas such as trauma, education, substance abuse or family conflict.”

Yolo County’s collaborative partners in this program include: Yolo County departments of Agriculture, Alcohol, Drug & Mental Health, Employment & Social Services, General Services, Health and Probation; the offices of the Yolo County District Attorney and Public Defender; Yolo County Farm Bureau; Yolo County Office of Education; Yolo County Superior Court; Yolo Family Resource Center; CommuniCare Health Center and the UC Davis Agricultural Sustainability Institute.

To learn more about the Positive Youth Justice Initiative, visit: <http://www.sierrahealth.org/pyji>.

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