

DYD Youth Diversion

In 2017, the LA County Board of Supervisors called for a countywide effort to divert youth from the juvenile justice system. This approach evolved out of concern for youth and in recognition of the collateral consequences youth may experience due to arrest or incarceration, such as increased likelihood to drop out of high school, engage in substance use, or experience negative life outcomes.

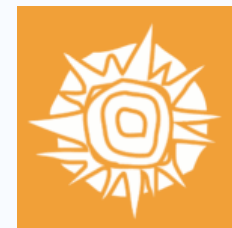
What is Diversion?

The Department of Youth Development partners with community-based providers to offer diversion as an alternative to arrest or court involvement. When a young person is stopped by law enforcement, they may be connected to a community-based diversion provider instead of being arrested or going to court. Youth who complete a diversion program do not have any criminal record related to the incident that took place.

Diversion Services

Restorative Justice • Care Coordination • Art • Music • Physical Health • Education
Leadership • Sports Activities • Mentorship • Mental Health • Substance Abuse Treatment

Community-Based Diversion Providers



Testimonials

“It was a useful program to help me get through my decision and amend and bring back the relationships I had damaged, especially through the restorative justice circle, that was helpful.” - Youth Participant

“Completing that service plan, and you can hear it in their voice, they’re following through on things, they turn into a better form of themselves while they’re still growing. That’s growth within a youth...along with completing those goals we set in their services plan.” - Diversion Service Provider

“It was a good program because when we sent them (youth) to that program, we would follow up on that. Instead of getting citations and discipline, they’d get support.” - Law Enforcement Officer

DYD Diversion Highlights

The Department of Youth Development partners with community-based providers to offer diversion as an alternative to arrest or court involvement. Youth are referred by countywide partners, including the District Attorney’s Office and 82 of 86 local law enforcement agencies.

Referrals Since 2019

Total Youth Referred

9,296

Total Youth Enrolled

3,740

Total Youth Completed

2,897

Figure 1

Annual Referrals: 2019-2025

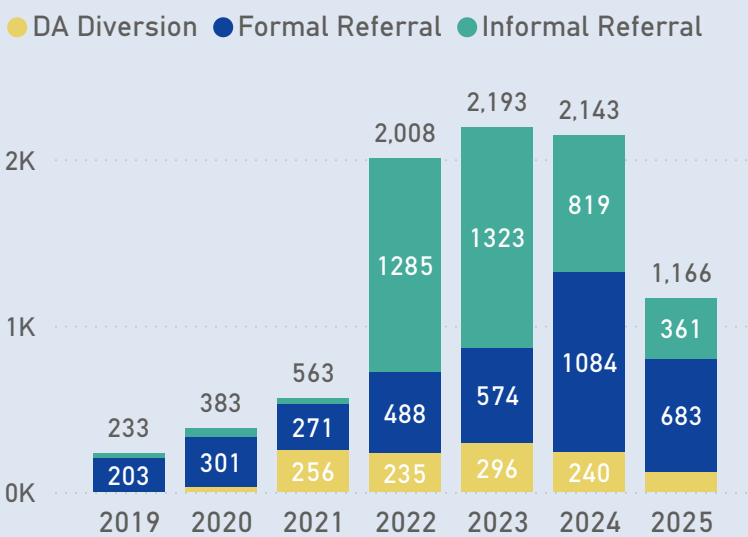
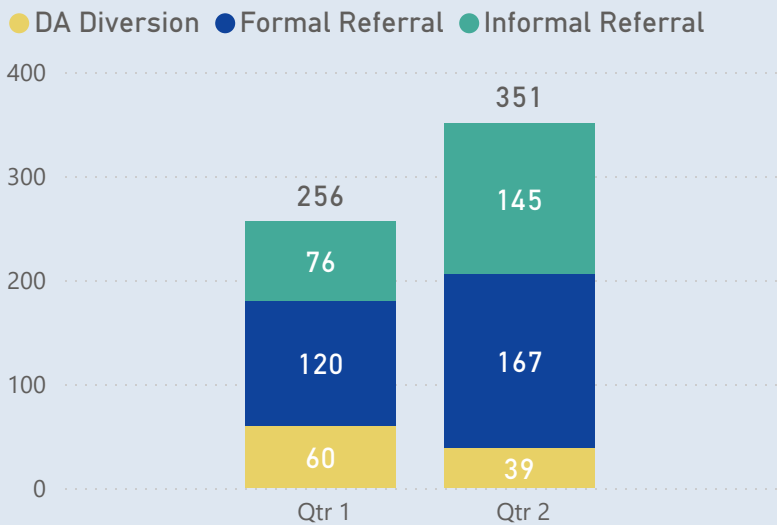


Figure 2

Quarterly Referrals: 2026



Diversion Incident Data

Most common alleged felony offense: **vandalism**.
Most common alleged misdemeanor: **battery**.

Figure 4

Formal/DA Referrals for Most Common Offense Categories*

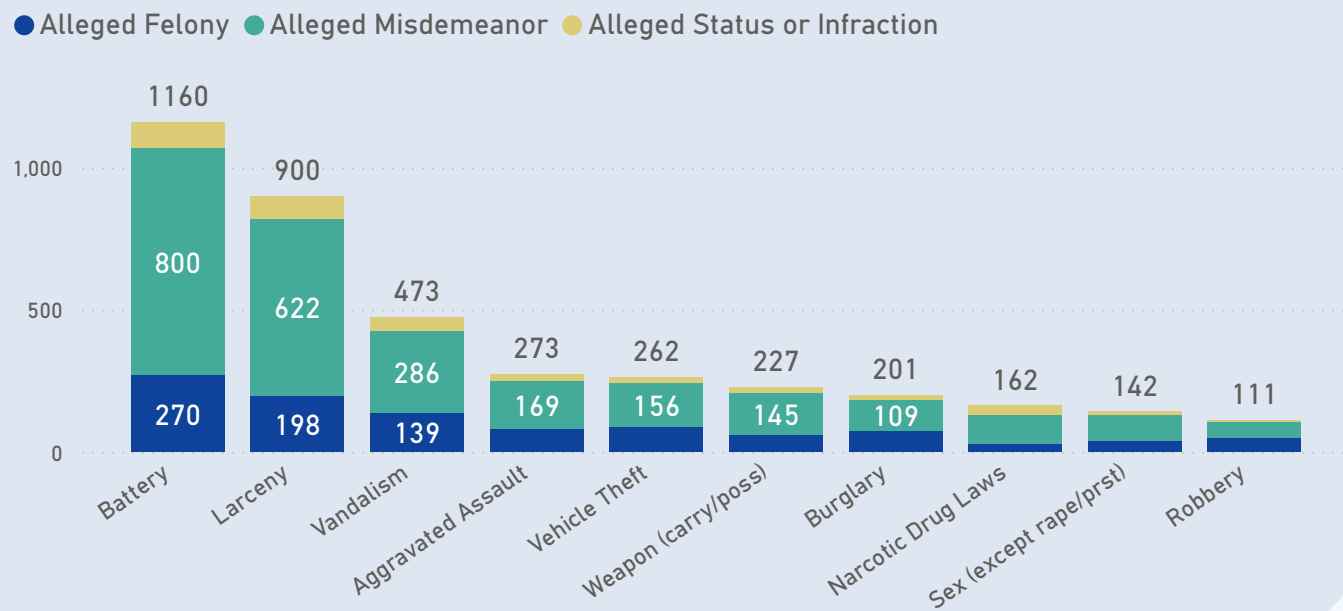
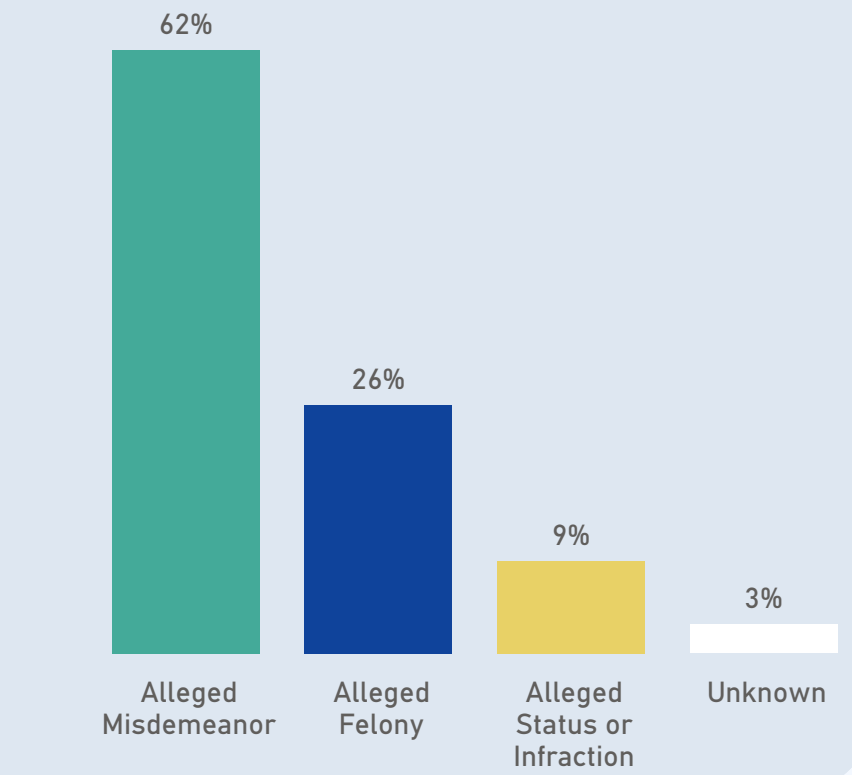


Figure 3

Formal/DA Referrals by Alleged Offense (n=5,173)*

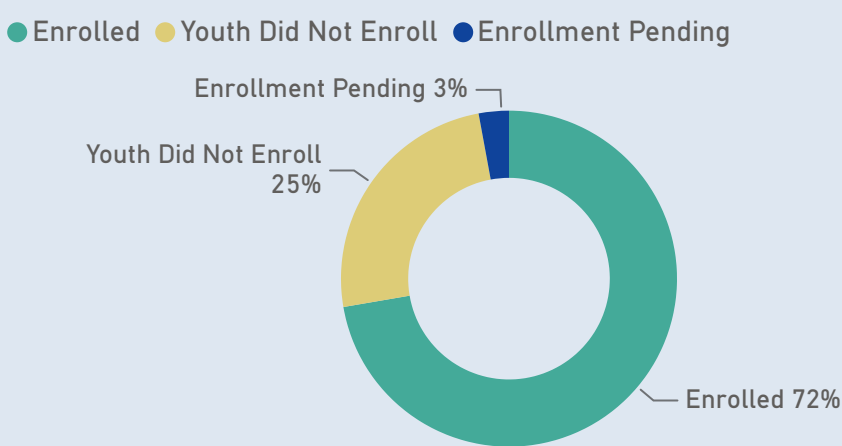


*Note: These figures represent all-time referrals since 2019.

Enrollment and Participation

Figure 5

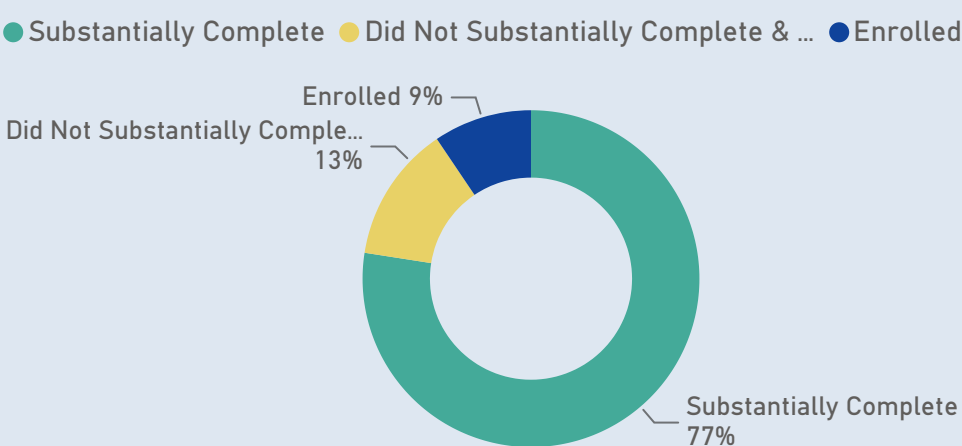
Formal/DA Referred Youth Enrollment Status (n=5,173)*



About 72% of youth who are diverted formally or by the DA choose to enroll in a diversion program.

Figure 6

Formal/DA Referred Youth Current Status (n=3,740)*



Whether a young person is referred for an alleged misdemeanor or felony does not significantly impact enrollment or completion.

Source: [DYD Diversion Outcome and Equity Report](#)

Protective Factors and Satisfaction

Figure 7

Average Participant Assessment Scores*

Participants who substantially complete diversion programming show meaningful improvement across all protective factors, rating themselves higher at exit than at entry on a scale of 1-7.

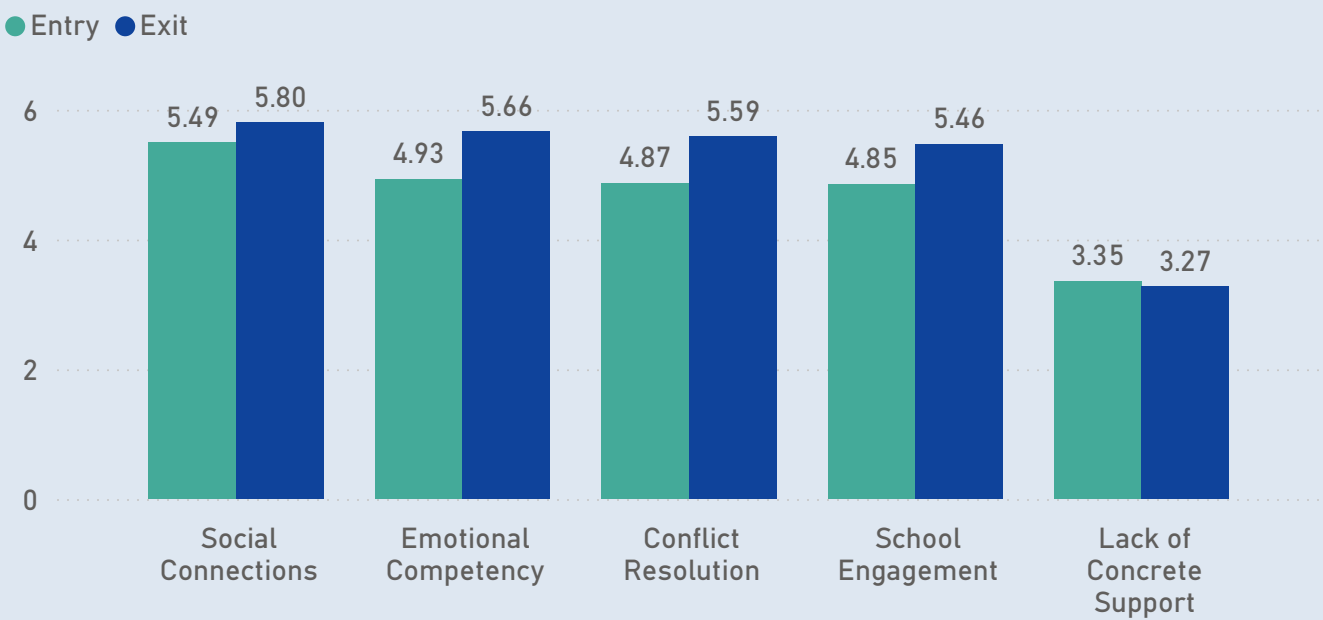


Figure 8

Average Satisfaction*

Participants who substantially complete diversion report high satisfaction with their experience in the program.

6.25
out of 7
satisfaction

*Note: These figures represent all-time referrals since 2019.

Equity in Youth Diversion

Check out the [DYD Diversion Outcome and Equity Report](#) for a comprehensive evaluation of the DYD Youth Diversion program, including a detailed equity assessment.

Equitable Access

DYD works to reduce the disproportionate arrest of Black youth and advance equitable access to community alternatives to justice system involvement by ensuring that youth are not disproportionately excluded from diversion referral, enrollment, or completion by race, age, or gender.

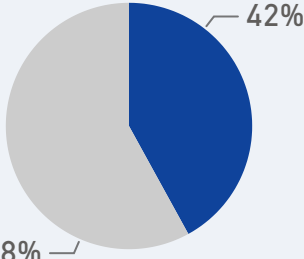
Law Enforcement Stops

Black youth are stopped by law enforcement at disproportionately high rates in LA County. About 7 out of every 100 youth are Black, but 28 out of every 100 stops involve Black youth.

About 16 out of every 100 youth are White, but only 11 out of every 100 stops involve White youth.

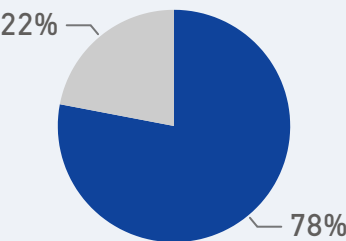
Youth Stopped Most by Law Enforcement (April 2019–December 2022)

17 Years Old



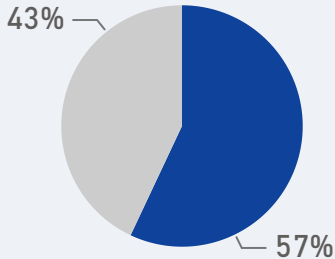
Category	Percentage
Dark Blue	42%
Light Gray	58%

Identify as Male



Category	Percentage
Dark Blue	78%
Light Gray	22%

Hispanic or LatinX



Category	Percentage
Dark Blue	57%
Light Gray	43%

Diversion Enrollment

Black youth enroll in diversion at lower rates than White youth. For every 100 White youth who enroll after a referral, only 93 Black youth do. Hispanic or LatinX youth enroll at rates equal to or higher than White youth. DYD is exploring strategies to help improve equitable enrollment.

Diversion Completion

About 82% of youth who enroll go on to complete diversion. Black and Hispanic or LatinX youth complete diversion at rates equal to or higher than White youth.