



Juvenile Justice Commission County of Santa Clara
191 N. First Street
San Jose, California 95113
Email: sccjcc@gmail.com

William F. James Ranch
2024 Inspection Report

Data Collected between September 2024- February 2025

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	5
INTRODUCTION AND AUTHORITY	6
JAMES RANCH EDUCATION	9
PROGRAMING	11
Rehabilitation Programing:	11
Recreational Programming:	12
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH	14
MEDICAL	15
OUTCOMES	16
EFFECTS OF COVID ON THE OPERATION OF JAMES RANCH	16
INCIDENT REPORTS, DUE PROCESS FORMS AND GRIEVANCES	17
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	17
CONCLUSION	18
Appendix A: James Ranch Youth Survey (English)	19
Appendix B: James Ranch Youth Survey (Spanish)	21

INTRODUCTION

The Juvenile Justice Commission (the JJC or Commission) is a court-appointed body that is required by the Welfare and Institutions Code Section 229 to inspect all facilities in Santa Clara County that house youth under the age of 18, at least once a year. Pursuant to this duty, nine Santa Clara County JJC Commissioners inspected the James Ranch (JR) facility between September 2024 and February 2025.

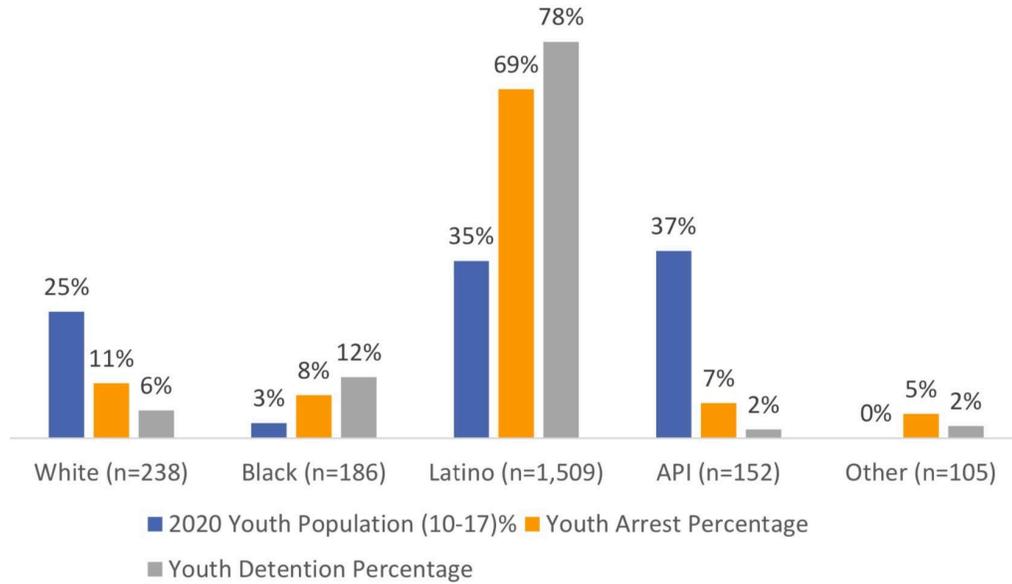
This inspection involved physical tours of the facility and meetings with management, staff and the youth and review of documents, including inspections of the facilities by other bodies. Some of the JJC's inspection sections were done virtually with cooperation from the JR staff. This inspection covers what has changed or is new since the JJC's James Ranch Inspection Report published in May, 2024.¹

The Ranch continues to be well-run and is ever-evolving for the benefit of the youth they serve. The education offered and programs that have been instituted to address the social and criminogenic needs of the youth keep improving.

The population at JR has ranged during the year 2024 from the high teens to low 20s.² These numbers are consistent with the overall reduction of youth in Santa Clara County that are kept in custody, but the statistics on the ethnicity of youth continues to be greatly disproportionate to the population of youth population in the county.

¹ http://www.sccscourt.org/court_division/juvenile/jjc_home.shtml

² The JJC receives the daily population statistics regarding the population in all in-custody facilities that house Santa Clara youth. Some Secure Youth Treatment Facility young persons are also housed at the JR facility in their less restrictive LIFT program (see: [SYTF 2024 report FINAL.docx](#)) the statistics of the number of youth at JR serving JR commitments must be deducted from the total population as reported in these statistics.

FIGURE 4: DISPROPORTIONALITY BY RACE/ETHNICITY IN 2023

3

Graph A

The JJC recognizes that Juvenile Probation (JP or JPD) has no control over the law enforcement agencies arrest statistics, but the percentage of those detained is within Juvenile Probation's control. Though these statistics have been consistently disproportional the JJC recommends that Santa Clara County recommits to resolving the root cause of this problem.⁴

³ Chart from Santa Clara County Probation Juvenile System annual report Data Book 2023 [Annual reports | Probation Department | County of Santa Clara](#)

⁴ Santa Clara county had vigorous activities prior to the Covid pandemic to attempt to understand and improve these disparities, but the subcommittees of the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council has failed to make progress since the reassumption of in-person meetings because of the inability to reach a quorum.

COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commendations:

One of last year's recommendations was to document the receipt of Grievances and the response of the JR management to each grievance. This procedure has been instituted.

Juvenile Probation and UCCI for continued fidelity to and improvement in implementation of the UCCI model used to assist youth's progress in the ranch.

Recommendations:

That JPD give youth greater access to contact family and resume home visits, prior to release in aftercare.

That JPD record all Incident Report (IR) numbers on the associated Due Process forms or create an IR for failed weeks after a Due Process Form has been generated.

That JPD address the youth's concerns regarding their post-Ranch education and employment.

That JPD and the Santa Clara County Office of Education (COE) explore expanded training in existing programs, including culinary skills, driving permits, language (Spanish), and a greater college curriculum.

That COE make the Wellness Center services available to JR youth the full number of school days a week.

That Facilities and Fleets follow through with previously promised/budgeted for/acknowledged the need for perimeter cameras, a second sally port and sports fields.

That Santa Clara County recommit to resolve the problem of disproportionality of youth at James Ranch.

INTRODUCTION AND AUTHORITY

The Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission is established in Division 2, Part 1, Chapter 2, Article 2 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code and Chapter II of division A6 of the County Ordinance Code. One of the charges to the Commission is “to inquire into the administration of justice in a broad sense, including but not limited to, operations of the Juvenile Court, Probation Department, Social Services Agency or any other agencies involved with juvenile justice or dependency.”⁵

James Ranch (JR) is a residential rehabilitative program operated by Santa Clara county’s Juvenile Probation. The program aims to give youth the tools that they can use to successfully reintegrate into their families and communities. The Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) inspects the county’s correction facilities to ascertain that the facilities comply with the requirements of Title 15. The JJC concurs with BSCC that JR meets those requirements. Since JJC published a comprehension review of the JR in April 2024, this inspection report focuses on the youth’s voice, the COE’s direction of education combined with University of Cincinnati Correctional Institute (UCCI) directed programming. This report also seeks to articulate what is new since the last report.

The focus of the JJC inspections previously has been on the institution, programs, staff⁶ and service providers. The JJC in this report starts with the response to our survey of the youth at the Ranch.⁷ This year we will use the youth voice as a focus for this inspection report.

Youth Survey

During the annual Ranch inspection, the JJC distributes anonymous youth surveys to document youth experiences. These surveys allow Ranch youth to express their concerns regarding county education, probation mentors, and community-based programming efforts. The JJC considers these responses as informative of the overall JR commitment as it relates to the youth and makes recommendations to JPO regarding their concerns.

This report includes a comparative analysis with the 2023 survey results. In response to previous feedback, the JJC continues to offer Spanish versions of the survey, modified according to the updated questions. During the inspection, 17 youth were present at the Ranch, and all 17 completed and submitted surveys. The English and Spanish versions of the Survey may be found in Appendices A and B.

⁵ See also (section 1.2 (B) of the Bylaws of the Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission; see also W&I 229).

⁶ Staffing at JR has remained consistent, with the exception that for a large portion of the year, the Division Manager staff operated with one person instead of two (filling a position managing leaves and retirements.)

⁷ JJC inspection reports have included a survey of the youth in JPO’s custody over the last six years.

The Format of the Survey:

The survey consists of four Likert-scale questions and seven open-ended questions.⁸

The questions are as followed:

1. I feel safe at the Ranch.
2. Adults at the Ranch are supportive and want me to succeed.
3. I feel good about the education I received while at the Ranch.
4. I have been able to stay in touch with my family.

Youth were also given open-ended questions.

1. How safe do you feel around your peers and mentors?
2. What has been the most difficult part of being at the Ranch? How can it be improved?
3. Are you involved in a career pathway (Culinary, Apprenticeship)? What other programs would you like to see?
4. Question #4 had two prongs which the youth answered correlating to their experiences with the UCCI pretest curriculum. The questions are provided below:

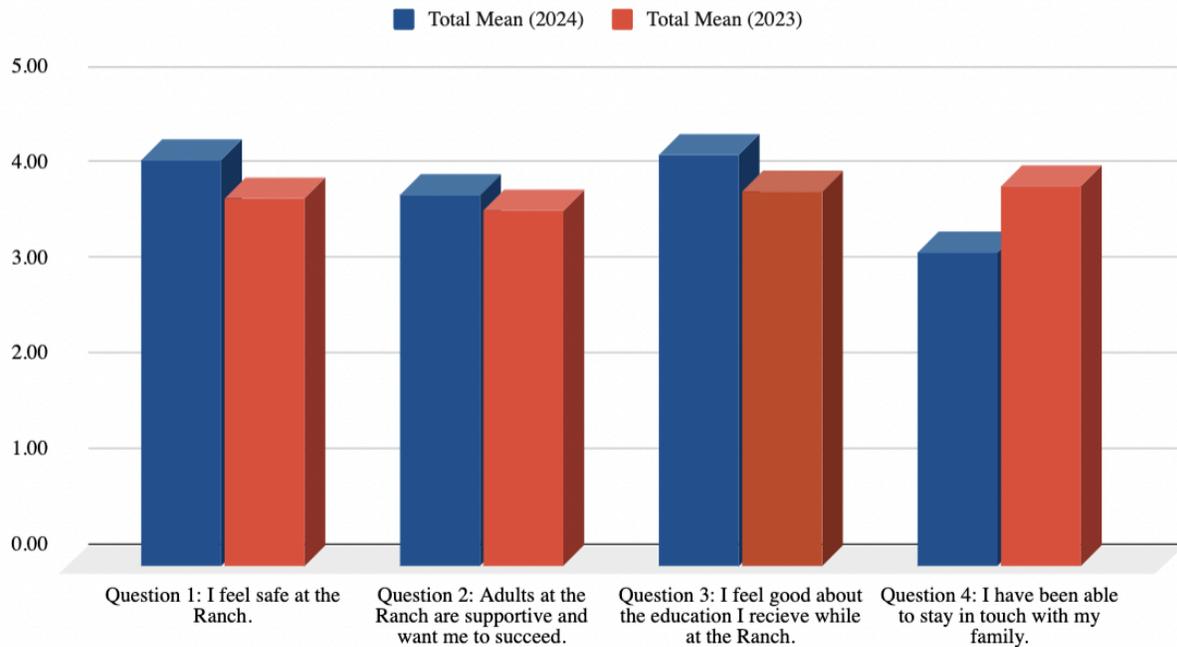
Answer the questions that relate to you:

- a. **If this is your first time at the Ranch:** Do you feel supported in learning to your abilities and exploring your career interests?
- b. **If you have been to the Ranch before:** How do you feel about the new programming? Did you receive clear instructions before your recent pretest?
- c. When you think about leaving the Ranch, what worries you?
- d. Is there anything else that is important for us to know?

Of the four satisfaction scale questions, youth responded most positively to Question Three: “I feel good about the education I received while at the Ranch,” with 76% of respondents selecting the “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” options. The improvement in responses to this question compared to previous years suggests that youth feel more encouraged about their education. In the free-response section of the survey, several youth mentioned their involvement in higher-level education. Youth have opportunities to take college courses through dual enrollment initiatives, and respondents highlighted their college liaison as a helpful mentor. The Commission also compared the mean scores of the satisfaction scale questions from the 2023 and 2024 youth surveys to identify any significant differences between the two years.

⁸ This is consistent with previous survey results.

Comparison of Mean Scores between James Ranch Youth in 2024 to 2023



Graph B

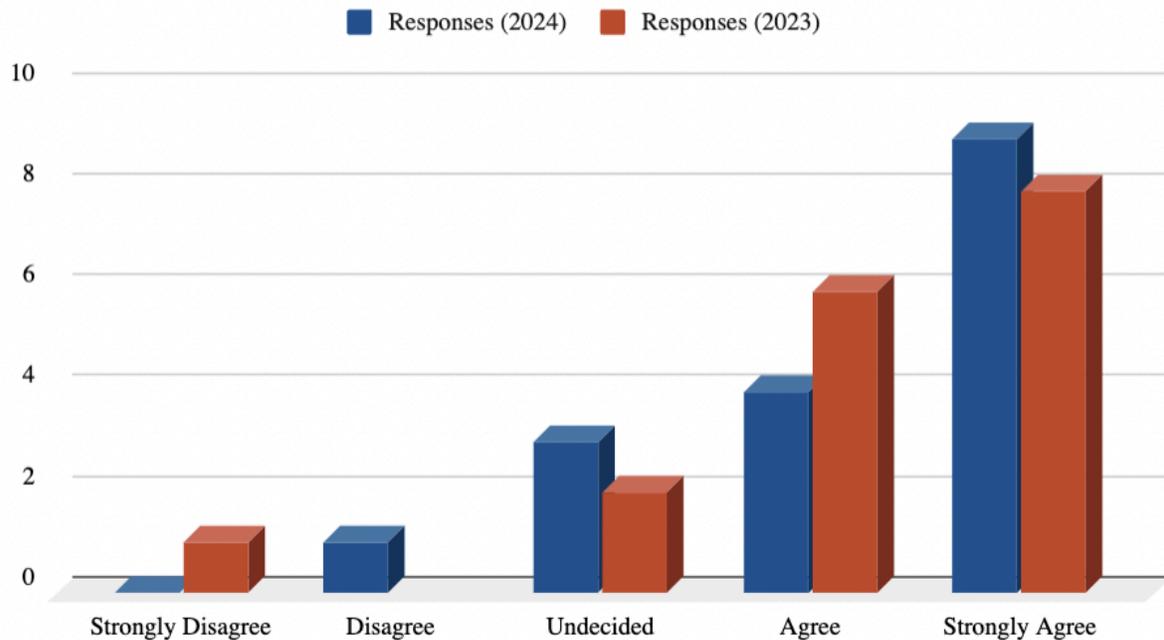
As displayed in Graph B, youth responses indicate an upward trend in satisfaction for Question 1: “I feel safe at the Ranch,” Question 2: “Adults at the Ranch are supportive and want me to succeed,” and Question 3: “I feel good about the education I receive while at the Ranch.” Youth expressed gratitude towards Ranch staff, education, and safety. However, the survey revealed a downward trend in satisfaction with family contact, specifically in response to Question 4: “I have been able to stay in touch with my family.” Several youth noted that their call times with loved ones are limited each week and expressed a desire for extended visitation hours.

In addition to previous Ranch youth surveys, commissioners asked youth to propose additional programs. Some youth expressed concerns about their post-Ranch education and employment. Four respondents requested expanded training in existing programs, including culinary skills, driving permits, language (Spanish), and college curriculum.⁹ Recidivism remains a concern for these youth, with three youth expressing anxiety about returning to the custody after leaving the Ranch.¹⁰

⁹ Copies of the English and Spanish versions are provided in Appendix A and Appendix B, respectively. With no significant changes from the 2023 survey, the four satisfaction scale questions offer five response options: strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, and strongly agree. For numerical aggregation of survey data, each response corresponds to a numerical value from 1 to 5, respectively, based on the selected answer.

¹⁰ These results are consistent with previous surveys. The education portion of this report attempts to address these issues raised by the youth.

Youth Responses to Question 1: "I feel safe at the Ranch"



Graph C

As depicted in Graph C, there is a slight decrease in the percentage of youth who feel safe at the Ranch between the 2024 and 2023 surveys. Safety has remained a recurring concern in previous youth surveys, with respondents informing commissioners about instances of gang violence in pods. To address these concerns, probation staff and the Youth Advisory Council work collaboratively to support youth and promote a safer environment.

JAMES RANCH EDUCATION

The Commission agrees with The National Institute of Justice, acknowledging that providing educational opportunities while youth are in custody is the most effective means to reduce recidivism. The youth enthusiastically embraced these opportunities at JR. The Blue Ridge School (BR) on the James Ranch campus is one of four schools run by the County Office of Education (COE.) Three commissioners met with the education faculty for James Ranch twice.

The academic education at JR includes all the core classes which allow students to graduate from high school with WASC¹¹ certification. To motivate the youth, the core classes consist of project-based learning that can cover greater than one academic or elective area. In math classes, for example, aquaponics are used as the basis to demonstrate farm to table for the culinary arts

¹¹ The Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC) is a world-renowned accrediting association. WASC is a voluntary dual-purpose process for schools to demonstrate that they provide high quality learning and model continued self-improvement.

program. Culinary arts classes teach math and science. Science classes use kits to teach youth practical applications of the materials.

The faculty of Blue Ridge continue to use the RenStar¹² testing every 45 days to evaluate youths' progress and focus on any deficiencies that need to be addressed. This allows the instruction to be focused on the needs of each youth. Faculty convene every two months to review data as it relates to a youth's progress and identify opportunities to motivate the youth in areas of weakness. For students in need of credit recovery the online program, Edgenuity¹³ is used. Another option for JR high school youth is to be dually enrolled in BR and college classes. High school graduates also have the option of taking college classes online.

During the onsite visit, commissioners met with the Vocational Education (Voc Ed) Coordinator and the Wellness Center Facilitator. A tour of the Wellness Center proved the space inviting and open to youth who needed to achieve emotional regulation to enable them to return to their education and programming. The physical room used as the Center is available one day a week to the youth, and on another two days, the Facilitator is available to bring his services to the youth in their units.¹⁴ This leaves the youth without the benefit of the Wellness Coach on two days a week when the facilitator is on another school's campus.

Voc Ed continues to expand the hands-on training available to the youth. These sites ranged from the culinary arts program to the use of heavy equipment, improved welding facilities and sites and where construction grade concrete has been poured. The Culinary Arts program took over the legacy¹⁵ cafeteria last year, when the dining tables were removed, a classroom area was set up, and a demonstration area was provided where the instructor's preparation of a dish was available to all the potential chefs with the use of an overhead mirror and monitor. A washer and dryer is available for the students to use to have clean white kitchen attire for each class. The previously-used meal prep kitchen for JR youth is now where the students prepare the foods following the instructor's demonstration. Youth receive science and elective credits from this program.

A new area for the welding program provides fire safety protection for the facility and new state-of-the-art equipment has been added for the welding training. Youth have practiced planning the construction grade reinforcement of concrete for this area, as well as pouring concrete for new walkways and a driveway and parking pad for the youth to hone their abilities in many construction-required skills. This combined planning and practice includes making Americans with Disabilities -compliant pathways. The construction equipment skill training includes forklift training and now adds training for new heavy equipment, including a medium-sized loader and an excavator. All the heavy equipment at JR has remote emergency

¹² Renaissance Star Assessments (RenStar) are both screening and progress monitoring tools to help educators identify and prioritize student needs. RenStar testing is used at the initiation of youth in custody to first understand a youth's educational level and where a youth needs the most help.

¹³ A program that has K-12 and electives available; it was used for the court schools at the beginning of the covid pandemic.

¹⁴ Wellness Centers are being added to many of the county's high schools.

¹⁵ All buildings that are in continued use after the completion of the new dorm, gym, administration building and cafeteria have been labeled as "legacy" buildings.

stop switches so that staff may avoid any misuse, mistakes, or safety concerns while youth are operating the equipment. Classes offer formal certification in 14 trades.

Youth have use of the expanded library, which is staffed by Santa Clara County librarians three days per week. Youth come from their pods with special bags used to take and return their book selections. The material in the library has been carefully selected to present information of interest to the youth but to avoid any materials that might encourage unacceptable behaviors. There is a theme of the month to encourage a variety of literary interests. Both the library and the Wellness Center are now inviting and comfortable spaces. The youths' reading habits have increased with the use of the library and its programs. A new music room encourages the youth to explore ways to make and appreciate multiple forms of music production is set up in the space that previously housed the library. Youth are always eager to make use of this option.

A building that has historically housed the wood shop, construction units and the Enterprise Program, has developed a separation in the roof area and has been condemned. The activities previously housed there have been moved into other buildings on the campus. And an exciting addition to Voc Ed is a bicycle shop fully-equipped to train youth on bicycle repair.¹⁶

PROGRAMMING

Rehabilitation Programing:

JJC commissioners met with James Ranch Programming staff (Program Coordinator, Treatment Supervisors, Quality Systems Supervisor) to discuss continuity and changes implemented in core motivational programming for the youth. This training is based on the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute's (UCCI) evidence-based programming model in the youth's curriculum. This program was developed over a number of years and is now fully integrated. Starting in 2021, JR sought transition from the previous rehabilitative model (evolved from the "Missouri Model") to UCCI's programming approach. The Programming was reviewed and revised based on JPO's engagement of the UCCI redesign and implementation of an evidence-based program model at the Ranch. An evaluation utilizing UCCI's evidence-based program at the facility included recommendations for greater program focus on criminogenic factors, ongoing use in individualized programming, and enhanced training for and communication with the staff. Better integration of contracted providers was among other recommendations.

In integrating the UCCI programming JR continues to be in consultation with UCCI. The programming is now in use across JR. A new sustainability leadership committee has been instituted, consisting of supervisors, managers, research and development staff, and evidence-based programming managers, who meet bi-weekly to discuss sustainable initiatives and to mediate checks and balances. The UCCI sustainability consultant evaluates ongoing programming elements with staff, then discusses measures of improvement for behavioral

¹⁶ In other site updates, there are new video cameras in the facilities buildings (which store recordings for 13 months), but the requested and (at times) budgeted-for perimeter cameras, a second sallyport and sports field have yet to be provided.

management initiatives. Following this process, the leadership collaborates with the UCCI consultant to monitor structured progress.

All JR staff have completed comprehensive training for UCCI Phase One and Two through Core Correctional Practices Training, which is focused on identifying social support mechanisms. Staff are encouraged to implement prosocial strategies to promote behavioral improvement.¹⁷ Overarching goals include motivating youth to evaluate the cause and effect of their actions prior to engaging in risky behaviors. Annually, staff receive refresher training on Cognitive Behavioral Interventions-Core Youth (CBI-CY) curriculum. Probation counseling committees conduct staffing adjustments throughout to optimize learning outcomes for youth. Guaranteeing that each youth is at the behavioral education level of their peers is imperative for the Ranch and UCCI's overarching goal of individualized mentorship.

This fully-implemented program includes a 47-module curriculum. Youth begin with a pretest to assess their behavioral education level and establish their training plan. Afterwards, youth take part in Phase 1 (10 modules), occurring in a group setting twice a week. Within the sessions, CBI-CY integrates components of behavioral and emotional learning to develop skills required for Phase Two. That phase encompasses a recurring curriculum randomly selected between 28 modules with all being offered to each youth at some time during his participation at JR, with the same set of youth participating each time. If a youth requires individual support, probation counselors provide sessions alongside youth while they are in their units.¹⁸

The JJC prioritizes assessment measures indicative of success. When questioned regarding this, staff responded positively, "this programming has exemplified a meaningful impact on youth." To corroborate, Quality Systems managers assess the early stages of programming, in which staff members are evaluated on their facilitation of Phase Two, ensuring consistency in learning benefits. Staff members are surveyed every 30-60 days, to identify areas of needed improvement in the newly-developed curriculum. Changes have been made to both the presentation and structure of the UCCI education. Individual evaluation sessions are conducted between youth and staff to address concerns with the curriculum.¹⁹

Probation has continued their efforts in rehabilitation programming through weekly counseling sessions. Counselors create Institutional Service Plans for each youth, based on cognitive ability, and conduct quarterly assessments.

Recreational Programming:

The JR continues to offer a wide range of programs to engage the youth. The JJC utilized the *James Ranch Youth Program and Services Guide* as a framework for recognizing the

¹⁷ During the site visit, a commissioner was able to observe the process of working through an issue, as a supervisor assisted the probation counselor in developing a strategy to use the UCCI model to deal with a youth's presenting behavior.

¹⁸ Post Phase 3 and 4 are currently in adoption and implementation stages, during which the Ranch plans to certify Aftercare youth upon completion. Currently, only LIFT youth have access to advanced curriculum.

¹⁹ The primary improvement goal for the following year's rehabilitation curriculum is to enhance leadership, support new training staff through Core Correctional Practices Training, and facilitate the seamless implementation of Phase 3 and 4 through the UCCI Sustainability Committee.

programs available for the youth.²⁰ Staff continue their two-pronged approach of exposure-based and service-based education. “Culturally responsive²¹” themes are integrated as part of a partnership with the San Jose Public Library pod rotations and Blue Ridge faculty who participate in collaborative service projects.

Youth advocacy programming has advanced through integrating Transforming and Reclaiming Youth Brilliance (TRYB), a new partner for JR’s Community Based Organizations (CBO). Weekly meetings focus on de-escalation solutions related to issues in the pod, advocacy for youth voices, enhancement of public speaking skills, and overall improvements within the Ranch to elevate accountability among youth. All of which continues in the now fully adopted UCCI training for the youth.

Led by the TRYB facilitator, the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is composed of two or three youth representatives per pod who lead advocacy efforts within the Ranch. Appointment to the council involves a comprehensive review process, including a written application and a verbal interview round, with youth nominated by their Probation Staff. Current efforts involve staff workshops that include role play to educate Ranch peers about supervision and aftercare. Depending on the youth’s timeline of involvement in the YAC, stipends ranging from \$100 to \$1,000 are provided to incentivize youth to join the program and encourage increased work time.

The Commissioners also asked about other popular youth activities and programs at the Ranch over the year. Sports and recreation remain on a set schedule daily. Every pod has the opportunity to rotate through Ranch facilities, including the gymnasium, weight room, and outdoor basketball court and in the summer, the swimming pool. The Ranch now provides yoga mats and recreational games such as pool, foosball, and ping pong for all. The Feet First Mindfulness Program, implemented through COE, provides youth with basic kickboxing skills along with weekly wellness sessions.

The Enterprise Program retains its strong demand among the youth, open to those above a certain behavior score level, allowing them to work off-ranch on projects with the Parks Department. Home furlough programs have not resumed post-covid, although family visits are consistently approved, including permission for younger family members to come to the visit.

Other active Programming include:

- Tattoo Removal Services: Removes tattoos at no cost for probation youth aged 15-25. Unlimited services are provided for any visible tattoo, regardless of size, even after release.
- YWCA Crisis Intervention (Ongoing - 24/7 hotline): Provides a 24/7 support hotline in English and Spanish. Offers crisis counseling, safety planning, shelter screenings, legal info, and referrals over the phone.

²⁰ The primary improvement goal for the following year’s rehabilitation curriculum is to enhance leadership, support new training staff through Core Correctional Practices Training, and facilitate the seamless implementation of Phase three and four through the UCCI Sustainability Committee. Staff noted the guide was updated across the year to include all 2023 programming.

²¹ Recognizing the disproportionality of the youth of color at the facility, the effort to provide themes around the ethnicities of the youth.

- Victim Awareness (six weeks): Workshop focusing on the emotional, physical, financial, and long-term impact of crimes on victims. It facilitates youth accountability and victim empathy.
- Victim Offender Mediation (Two to three hours per session): Brings victims and offenders together to address the harm caused. Voluntary participation fosters accountability and repair.
- New Hope For Youth (NHFY): Provides positive adult relationships and exposes youth to healthy alternative lifestyles. Offers 1:1 services and group programs for youth on Ranch.
- Young Women's Freedom Center (YWFC - Two-part program): Leadership program for girls on Ranch. Part one focuses on personal transformation and healing during their time in custody. Part two provides job training and internships post-release.
- Creative Writing (Weekly): Writing program encouraging empowerment, skill development, and creative expression. Covers various writing genres and fosters a sense of community. Presented by Art of Yoga facilitators.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The Behavioral Health team of four clinicians has been fully staffed since September, 2024. One clinician has been appointed to serve as lead clinician: supporting the BH staff at JR. The clinical operational team provides day-to-day coverage, crisis management and facilitation of therapeutic groups, which last an average of six to twelve weeks. They use several evidence-based practices including Seeking Safety and Motivational Interviewing, Dialectical Behavioral Health Therapy and TraumaFocus Cognitive Behavioral Health Therapy.

In addition to the services provided by the operational team of clinicians, individual therapy is provided by Custody Treatment Clinicians who work first with the youth at Juvenile Health and continue to see them at the Ranch as a part of their continuity of care.. Clinicians are trained to treat co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders. By all accounts this model is working well, since it provides continuity of service without the disruption that occurred in the past, when youth transferring to James Ranch were assigned to a new clinician. Family therapy is part of the treatment component and is tailored based on assessed needs of the youth and family. A program manager, who manages the programs at both Juvenile Hall and James Ranch is on site at James Ranch three to four days a week. Clinical staff have the capacity to provide services in Spanish, Vietnamese and Mandarin. They receive individual and group clinical supervision by a dedicated Licensed Clinical Supervisor.

The Probation Department also runs some groups, they consult with Behavioral Health Services to ensure consistency in messaging. Behavioral Health Services management report having a collaborative relationship with the Probation Department, even reporting jointly to the Board of Supervisors.

The biggest challenge faced by Behavioral Health Services is the lack of dedicated private space to meet with clients at the Behavioral Health JR building. Despite Probation's efforts, they are currently forced to use other buildings, interview rooms, counseling rooms and some legacy offices.

MEDICAL

Youth at the Ranch have access to comprehensive medical, optical and dental care, as well as specialty care as needed. Staff include: three physicians who specialize in adolescent health, six Registered Nurses, several licensed vocational nursing staff, one Medical Social Worker, three Medical Clerks and an Administrative Assistant. Telehealth video-conferencing care is available to JR youth as needed, but is used primarily for non-emergency after-hours care. Medical records are retained electronically, and any paper records may be scanned into their system. Any records begun at JH, at intake (or otherwise) will transfer with any youth who will be transitioning to the Ranch.

The medical facilities at JH are also used for JR youth who are at the clinic. They include exam rooms, office space for patient consultation, a medication room with a Pyxis Medstation (an medication dispensing system), a lab, basic onsite x-Ray facilities, a small waiting area and two infirmaries. A remodeled reception area at JH was completed in December 2024. There is now also a satellite exam space housed in the JR dormitory. Its proximity enables medical staff to more quickly respond to medical needs that arise.

The medical staff is very proud of the Peer Health education program for JR youth. This ongoing program instructs a group of youth leaders to teach their peers about relevant health education information. Thus far there have been two youth from the Ranch LIFT program and multiple youth from the YAC program who have been peer health educators in the Peer Health Curriculum. There is a six-week health curriculum covering general health, sexually-transmitted infections, substance use and reproductive health (e.g., birth control, pregnancy). This program has been very successful at the James Ranch and is now used at Juvenile Hall. The staff report that youth trained by a peer trainer respond well to their peers and tend to better retain the knowledge they receive. In addition, the trainers themselves develop leadership and communication skills because of this program.

Transition of Care

The staff, including the Medical Social Worker, are dedicated to preparing these youth (and in some cases the youth's parents) to manage their health care after release. They assist them with identifying insurance, and provide care coordination and support such as identifying eligibility for Medi-Cal, finding a primary care physician, and how to engage with medical personnel so they can be an advocate for their own care. They are also given a 30-day supply of any required medications. Medical Services can also utilize California Health and Human Services' Cal AIM (California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal) program for those enrolled in Medi-Cal. The staff also refers them to resources that can provide care for more vulnerable populations such as those who are system-impacted and justice-involved. Ideally the staff need about 90 days before the release date to fully prepare the youth, but often that date is uncertain or is given with short notice which makes for a more challenging preparation.

Youth, in general, enter the facilities with complex needs and often with a history of substance use disorders and other comorbidities. The medical team utilizes ever-evolving, comprehensive care for substance-use disorders, specifically opioid use disorders. Youth can request services or be started on services with consent when identified by the youth or others. Narcan is made

available to youth upon their release. The medical staff has ongoing MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team) collaborations with BHS and JPD as appropriate for comprehensive care and to support transitions into the community.

Overall, the JJC has been very impressed by the care given to youth at the facility. For some youth, this may be the first time that one of their medical needs is being addressed. The staff's dedication and innovative approach to medical care allows them to provide high-quality general and specialized services, which enables them to meet the needs of these youth from intake until their release.

OUTCOMES

Commissioners met with Ranch management to discuss the topic of tracking outcomes at different levels. This has been a persistent theme in many JJC reports and the 2023 report had several recommendations on this area, including the need to systematically track near-term outcomes of the JR youth as they leave the facility

It was positive to note that the JR management has finalized an approach with Research and Development (RAD) to track the Outcome status of youth as they leave the Ranch and until the end of their probation period. This database will collect the housing, education and employment status of the youth on a monthly basis from their probation officers. JR management and JJC are excited to see trends and implications from this data.

On a tactical basis, JR management mentioned the tracking of metrics such as IRs, Aftercare failures, and Aftercare ARRs. However, JR returns are not tracked, as this can happen across many years and reasons. Supervisors are encouraged to discuss IRs at the pod level to identify root causes and corrective actions. The JR Research and Evaluation Team team also systematically collects information around CBI-CY programming and completions.

EFFECTS OF COVID ON THE OPERATION OF JAMES RANCH

Though a number of restrictions implemented during the Covid pandemic have been lifted, the youth are still not receiving passes to visit at home. This was a pre-pandemic reward for reaching the highest levels of the JR program and a step in easing the youth back into their family and community. Families must now call to schedule visits, instead of just coming on the days scheduled for visitation for their youth's pod.

ProCom (a youth sports activity which competes with other ranches and alternative schools) has returned with flag football, with the team consisting of a cross-section of LIFT and regular JR youth. Work has commenced on a meditation area for use by staff and youth to be called "The Legacy Project." Youth are developing the plans, creating a blueprint, ordering materials and

contributing physical labor, with youth participating from both LIFT and JR. The YAC also combines youth and young adults from JR and LIFT units. Activities such as the high school graduation ceremony also had youth from all pods participating together.

INCIDENT REPORTS, DUE PROCESS FORMS AND GRIEVANCES

The youth at JR progress through their time at JR by “passing their week.” Positive behavior points balanced with negative contacts which could include a limited number of “reminders” for inappropriate behaviors, to automatic negative points for behavior that is unacceptable, such as tagging or aggressive activities. The unacceptable behaviors are mostly documented by Incident Reports (IRs) which are recorded in the computer system used by JPO. The youth has the right to accept or challenge the resulting discipline or failure to pass their week by the use of a Due Process form. The Due Process forms where the youth is challenging the discipline or failure is then reviewed by Management and can include a modification of the penalty assessed. The Due Process forms for 2024 were reviewed by the JJC. There was no indication that any systematic problem existed, but not all Due Process forms included Incident Report numbers so that the reason for the issuing of a Due Process form could be reviewed.

When a youth believes there is a violation of the rights as a JR youth, failure of the program, facilities or treatment that that youth perceives is unfair, the youth may file a grievance. Those forms were also reviewed by the JJC. One of last year’s recommendations was to document the receipt of those reports and the response of the JR management to the grievance. This procedure has been instituted and the resulting documentation was available for review

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The present two-volume Policies and Procedures manuals were adopted in October, 2022, and have received revision by adding two sections to the manual. The adopted sections are part of the Policy Manual that affects both Santa Clara County’s Juvenile Hall and JR. These sections regard orientation and reception²² and mostly affect youth’s initial intake at JH. The volume dealing with the JR facility has not been updated since then. JJC’s previous recommendations regarding this manual can be seen in our JR Inspection report published in May, 2024.

²² Policies Sections 501 and 504

CONCLUSION

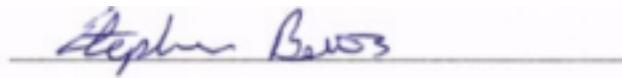
The JJC has completed its annual inspection report of the James Ranch facility, its programs and the youth it serves. This inspection was completed with on-site visits and interactions with the youth, probation, COE and other service providers, along with the review of documents, data and inspections by other agencies. The JJC finds those involved with providing services and programs within this facility are dedicated to provide for these youth and are open to learning new and better ways to mold these youth into responsible citizens..

Respectfully submitted,



Victoria BurtonBurke
Chair, James Ranch Inspection Committee

Date: March 31, 2025



Stephen H. Betts
Chair, Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission

Date: March 31, 2025

Appendix A: James Ranch Youth Survey (English)

Hello! We are the Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC), and we inspect James Ranch to make sure it is a safe and supportive place. By completing this survey, you will help us continue to improve the Ranch. Please DO NOT write your name on this survey. Your responses are confidential—meaning no one else sees your answers—and your honest opinion makes a difference. Thank you for your feedback!

Demographic Information

POD: _____ Age: _____

How long have you been at the Ranch? _____

How many times have you been at the Ranch? _____

For each statement, please select the number below which best represents your experience.

I feel safe at the Ranch.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Adults at the Ranch are supportive and want me to succeed.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I feel good about the education I receive while at the Ranch.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I have been able to stay in touch with my family.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please respond to the following questions about your experiences at the Ranch:

How safe do you feel around your peers and mentors?

What has been the most difficult part of being at the Ranch? How can it be improved?

Are you involved in a career pathway (Culinary, Apprenticeship)? What other programs would you like to see?

Answer the questions that relate to you:

1. **If this is your first time at the Ranch:** Do you feel supported in learning to your abilities and exploring your career interests?

2. **If you have been to the Ranch before:** How do you feel about the new programming? Did you receive clear instructions before your recent pretest?

When you think about leaving the Ranch, what worries you?

Is there anything else that is important for us to know?

Appendix B: James Ranch Youth Survey (Spanish)

Encuesta del James Ranch

Hola! Somos la Comisión de Justicia Juvenil del Condado de Santa Clara (JJC). Inspeccionamos James Ranch para asegurarnos de que sea un lugar seguro y de apoyo. Al completar esta encuesta, nos ayudará a continuar mejorando el James Ranch. Por favor NO escriba su nombre en esta encuesta. Sus respuestas son confidenciales. Nadie más ve tus respuestas. ¡Gracias!

Información Demográfica

¿En qué grupo estás?: _____ ¿Cuántos años tiene?: _____

¿Cuánto tiempo llevas en el James Ranch? _____

¿Cuántas veces has estado en el James Ranch? _____

Para cada declaración, elija el número que mejor represente su tiempo en el James Ranch.

Me siento seguro en el James Ranch.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Rechazada	En Desacuerdo	Indeciso	De Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo
<input type="radio"/>				

Los adultos del James Ranch me ayudan y quieren que tenga éxito.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Rechazada	En Desacuerdo	Indeciso	De Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo
<input type="radio"/>				

Me siento bien con la educación que recibo mientras estoy en el James Ranch.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Rechazada	En Desacuerdo	Indeciso	De Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo
<input type="radio"/>				

Puedo contactar a mi familia.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Rechazada	En Desacuerdo	Indeciso	De Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo
<input type="radio"/>				

Muy De Acuerdo Por favor responda a las siguientes preguntas sobre sus experiencias en Ranch:

¿Que seguro se siente entre sus compadres y mentores?

¿Qué ha sido difícil de vivir en James Ranch? ¿Cómo se puede mejorar?

¿Usted está involucrado en alguna trayectoria profesional (culinario o aprendizaje)? ¿Qué otros programas le gustaría ver a usted?

Answer the questions that relate to you:

1. **Si es tu primera vez en el Ranch:** ¿Se siente apoyado para aprender sus habilidades y explorar sus intereses profesionales?

2. **Si has estado en el Ranch antes:** ¿Cómo te sientes con la nueva programación? ¿Recibió instrucciones claras antes de su reciente prueba preliminar?

Si pudieras mejorar algo del James Ranch, ¿qué sería?

¿Hay algo más que sea importante que sepamos?

Appendix C:

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:

BSCC 2023-2024 Comprehensive Inspection, December 5, 2023
BSCC Title 15 Minimum Standards for Juvenile Facilities
Environmental Health Evaluation, October 19, 2022
Fleets and Facilities Inspection of James Ranch, June 11, 2024
Fire Alarm Inspection Report, James Ranch Campus, June 17, 2024
James Ranch Youth Program and Services Guide
PREA Facility Audit Report, James Ranch, March 18, 2024
 Coordinated Response Plan for Sexual Abuse or Assault April, 2023
University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute
 Evidence-Based Correctional Program Checklist
 Core Youth Pre-Test
 Core Youth Post-Test
 Cognitive-Behavior Interventions Overview of the 47-session curriculum

William F. James Ranch Youth Guidebook