

Date: November 30, 2022  
To: Honorable Molly Baumgardner, Chairperson  
The Joint Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice Oversight  
From: Robert Sullivan, Director, Johnson County Department of Corrections  
Subject: Juvenile Crisis Intervention Center

**Background:**

The 2018 Kansas Legislature passed House Substitute for Senate Bill 179, which created and amended the law to establish juvenile crisis intervention centers and procedures for admitting juveniles to such centers. That same year the Kansas Department for Children and Families announced a request for proposals to provide juvenile crisis intervention centers and to fulfill the requirements of Senate Bill 179. Grants were to be awarded to viable facilities that were either currently able to comply with the statutory requirements or could soon be able to provide such services. In collaboration with the Johnson County Mental Health Center, the Johnson County Department of Corrections submitted a proposal on November 9, 2018, to operate a juvenile crisis intervention center with priority given to children residing in the eastern half of Kansas. On December 13, 2018, we were notified that Johnson County had received a grant award in the amount requested. Over the following weeks and months, we responded to several requests for information by representatives from the Department for Children and Families. Still, a contract was never drafted and provided to us. Finally, on April 5, 2019, after months of no communication, we notified the Department for Children and Families that Johnson County was rescinding its proposal to contract with the state to operate a juvenile crisis intervention center.

**Position Statement:**

- Johnson County believes a juvenile crisis intervention center has a place in our crisis continuum of care for children and their families.
- Provided there is sustainable state funding and renewed support from the Board of County Commissioners, Johnson County has an existing facility that could be used as a juvenile crisis intervention center in Olathe, Kansas.
- To better serve children and families, we propose amending the current law. The term “mental health” crisis is too narrow to adequately respond to the needs of children and families and does not include substance use disorders. Replacing it with the term “behavioral health” encompasses the full spectrum of frequently encountered mental health, substance use, and other dysregulated behavior.
- Behavioral health is an acceptable term recognized by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- The final determination of what constitutes a behavioral health crisis should remain with a qualified and licensed professional based on their clinical judgment.