



BURLINGTON COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER

2024 Annual Report



The Burlington Community Justice Center (CJC) is proud to release its very first annual report. We consider this part of our ongoing efforts to inform the community about what we do, be transparent with our data, and invite your questions and critical thinking to our work.

We are continuing to strive to provide more meaningful data that accurately portrays what is working for those whom we serve, and where we could improve.

The dedicated and talented staff at the CJC are behind the data you see in this report, as are our committed volunteers and, of course, the parties who have voluntarily engaged in the vulnerable and courageous processes of our programming.

OUR MISSION

The Burlington CJC uses **restorative practices and community values** to foster healing, accountability, and repair for people impacted by, and responsible for, harm, conflict and crime in our community.

OUR VISION

We work towards a community where the roots and impacts of harm, conflict, and crime are addressed in ways that foster **healing, accountability, self-empowerment, and connection for all.**



Rachel Jolly
BCJC Director

OUR VALUES



Community



Empathy



Equity



Dignity



Accountability



Innovation



Empowerment



Public Service

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

Francis Manga
Ken Schatz
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Balla Sankareh
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Lauryn Crutchfield
Lisa Pepe
Maghon Luman
Morgan Donhoff*
Olivia Taylor*
Rachel Jolly
Rachel Lawler
Stuart Recicar
Torin Olivetti*
Virginia Litchfield

*indicates staff members who have since departed

88%

of the BCJC budget is funded by
grants and program fees

\$1,473,790

raised in FY24

For every \$1 paid by
the city of Burlington,
the BCJC brings in

\$7.21

in grant funding

“ —

This was very eye opening to me. Corey helped me find the motivation to want to change my behavior once and for all and make better choices with my life. It is precious and I am thankful that I am still here and have the chance to change.

- Tamarack Participant



Conflict Assistance Program

Conflict Assistance Program (CAP) helps residents address conflict constructively through support services and skill-building opportunities offered on a sliding scale or free of charge, ensuring **accessibility for all**.

In FY24, CAP helped with conflicts involving:

21

conflicts supported

66

participants received:



* In CAP, we define "success" as having meaningful engagement & resolution.

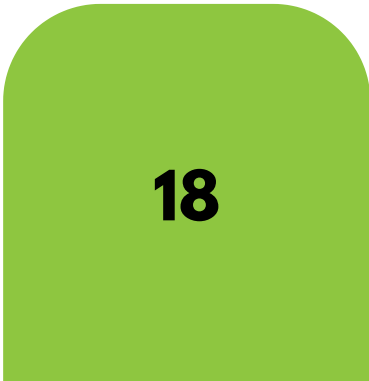
32



Conflict Coachings

Confidential and ongoing one-on-one sessions designed to help individuals navigate challenging relationships or situations.

18



Restorative Dialogues

Structured group discussions to foster understanding, explore the roots and impacts of conflict, reach agreements, and strengthen relationships.

6



Mediations

A facilitated conversation to find solutions for a conflict through open dialogue and mutual agreement, though not always within a restorative framework.

10



Inquiries

Brief, focused conversations—30 minutes or less—offering guidance on addressing conflicts and generating actionable solutions without further CJC involvement.



Jules Wetchi (right), host of the African Variety Show, interviewed Barbara (left) to learn more about CAP

80%

of CAP participants surveyed recognize a lack of conflict assistance services in their community

CAP aims to fill that gap

12
workshops
128
participants

CAP hosts community workshops with our partners at the Essex CJC



Workshops include:

- Exploring Conflict
- Expanding Communication
- Victim Assistance
- Communication & Co-Regulation
- Expanding Your Skills Toolbox

“Something I learned from this process is that a majority of the issues stemmed from misunderstanding and miscommunication. My facilitator was an amazing listener. [They] gave great feedback and asked really pertinent questions to help me move forward.”

- CAP Participant



Barbara (left) & Torin (right) during a workshop designed for NPA Steering Committee members

Want to connect with the CAP Coordinator?

Contact Barbara Shaw-Dorso
bshawdorso@burlingtonvt.gov
(802) 264-0765

Parallel Justice Program

Parallel Justice (PJ) is a victim-centered approach that works parallel to (but independent from) the criminal legal system. We provide information, resources, and support to people who have experienced crime and harm in Burlington, **even if the incident is not reported to the police.**

2186
people contacted

314
people supported



The BCJC team at Burlington's 2023 Pride Parade

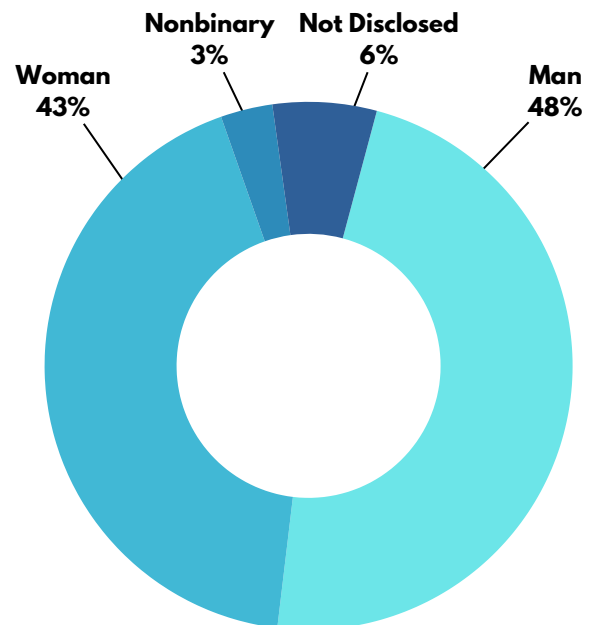
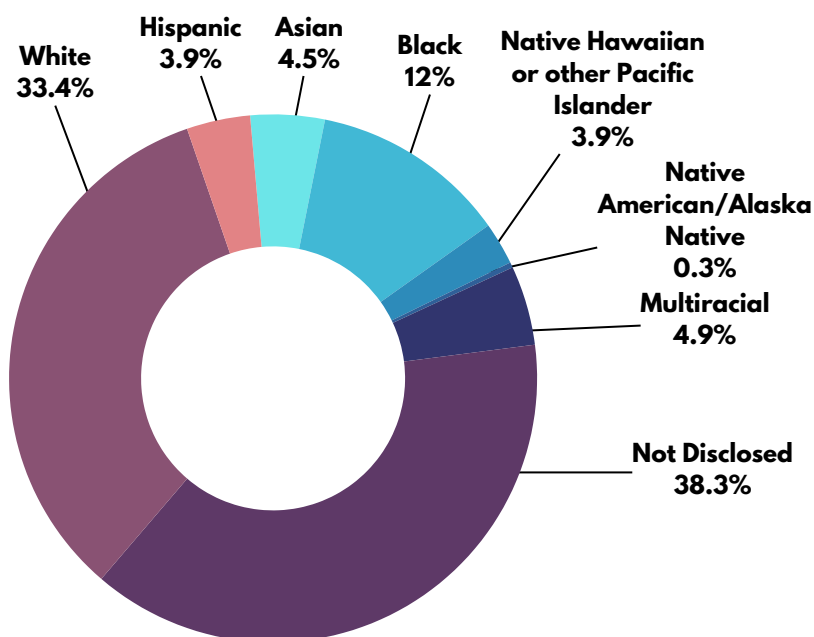
In FY24, PJ provided participants one or more of the following:

- information & referrals **190** times,
- advocacy & accompaniment **141** times
- support navigating systems **21** times.

We strive to **fill the gaps** in victim support services identified by community members who are marginalized within current systems.

Hannah Brislin and **Lauren Monaco Eddings** received the **2024 Community Engagement Award** from the VT Center for Crime Victim Services for their work on the Parallel Justice Program

Parallel Justice is for **everybody**



FY24 Participant Demographics

Adult Programs

FY24 Referrals & Closures
closures include cases referred in the previous FY

Pretrial Services

connect adults with mental health care, substance misuse treatment, and other community resources while they navigate the court process. Referrals are made by a judge.

290
referrals

362
closures

Community & Precharge

interventions occur before a situation reaches civil or criminal court. Referrals may come from the community, police departments, or the State's Attorneys Office.

91
referrals

120
closures

Court Diversion

offers a restorative justice alternative to the traditional court process for adults charged with a crime. Referrals come from the State's Attorneys Office.

316
referrals

269
closures

Tamarack

is a form of supportive court diversion for adults with substance misuse treatment or mental health care needs. Referrals come from the State's Attorneys Office.

139
referrals

111
closures

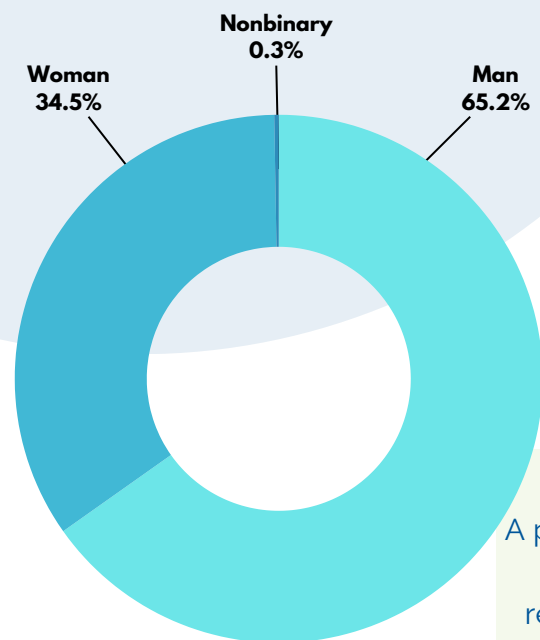
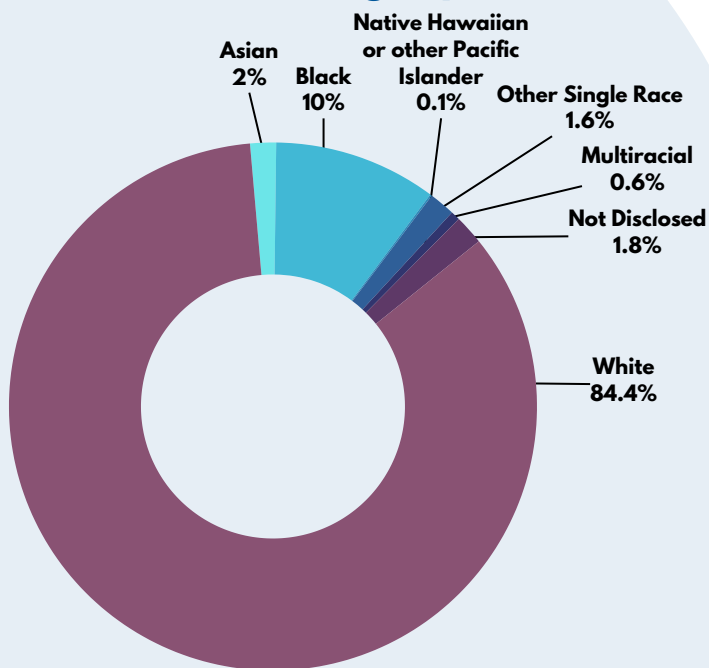
Reparative Probation

provides a pathway for adults who have been convicted of a crime to complete a restorative process. Referrals come from the Department of Corrections.

29
referrals

24
closures

Adult Demographics



In FY24, we closed

524 adult

restorative processes

between Precharge, Court Diversion, Tamarack, and Reparative Probation

365

participants engaged

Engagement means

participants created a restorative agreement in collaboration with any victims who wanted to be involved, community volunteers who support the process, and BCJC staff who coordinate.

159

did not engage

What happens after?

A person who does not engage or does not complete the restorative process will have their case returned to the referring agency for prosecution.

25

processes did not complete

340

successful processes

93% success rate for people who engage

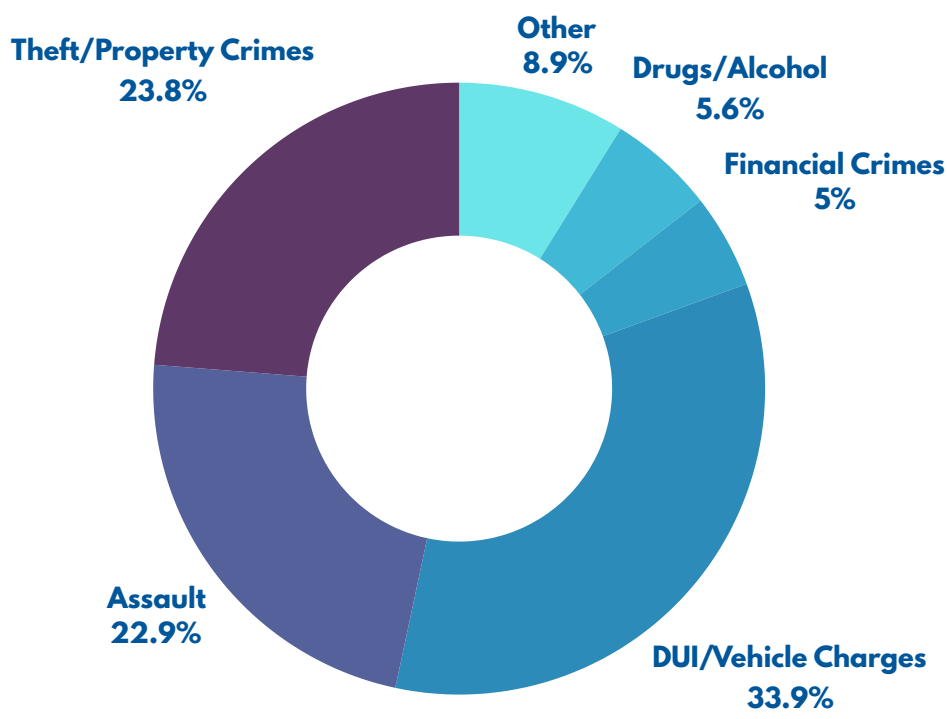
Participants are more likely to successfully complete the process when they participate in creating a restorative agreement.



“ Being held accountable in a way that was focused on growth and community healing gave me the opportunity to do better and be better and I'm very grateful for my experience.
- Court Diversion Participant

What kind of charges can restorative processes address?

Court Diversion cases referred in FY24 categorized by different types of charges:



311
misdemeanors

16 felony and 311 misdemeanor charges are now on the path to being **sealed and expunged**, allowing participants to access jobs, housing, or education without the barriers of a criminal record.

100
DUI referrals

DUI Diversion offers an alternative path for individuals facing a **first-time DUI** charge. This program aims to enhance public safety while helping participants regain their driving privileges. To qualify, participants must admit to the related civil suspension and **cannot have caused injury or damage to an individual**. Participants complete the Impaired Driver Rehabilitation Program (IDRP), which includes a risk assessment and substance misuse counseling. Participants conclude the program with a closing circle facilitated by BCJC staff.

DUI Diversion had **82** successful completions in FY24.

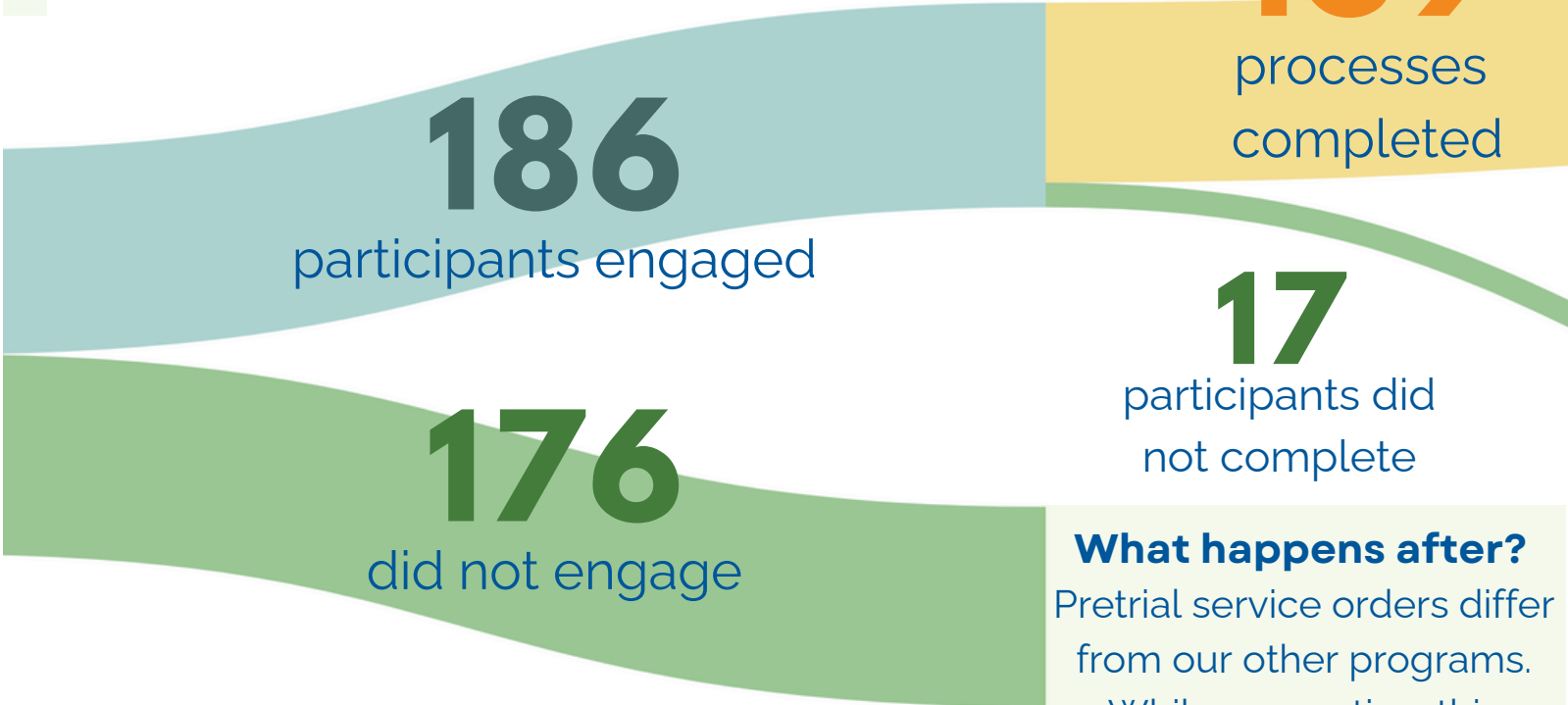
16
felonies

“ Very positive. Very nice people. It was not intimidating. I would strongly recommend this program to anyone who has ever been in this situation.
- Court Diversion Participant

“The staff was very helpful and helped me get into counseling that I have been trying to find for quite some time. Thank you very much. This has been hugely beneficial for me.

- PTS participant

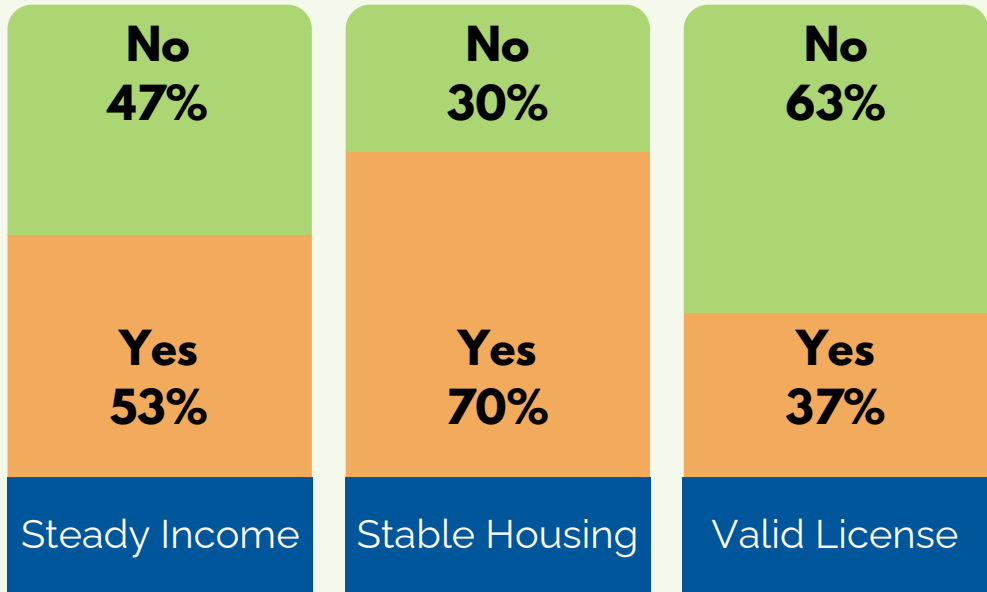
In FY24, we closed **362** pretrial service orders



What happens after?
 Pretrial service orders differ from our other programs. While supportive, this program does not involve a restorative process to address the original incident leading to court. Participants are still actively going through the court process and may or may not be referred to court diversion or reparative probation later. Failing to engage or complete the pretrial service program will not result in new charges.

Considerations for One’s Ability to Engage

When surveyed at intake, we found that our PTS participants had the following:



Other considerations we don't track but often hear about are basic needs such as access to healthcare, phones/internet, and transportation, as well as language barriers within the legal system.

Community Reentry Support

Community Reentry Support provides personalized guidance and resources to individuals transitioning back into the community following a period of incarceration.

17

people supported with re-entry and resource navigation

\$750

in ReSource vouchers distributed



Members of the COSA team celebrating at the summer BBQ

Circles of Support & Accountability

Circles of Support & Accountability (COSA) is a community-based model that aims for “no more victims” by connecting formerly incarcerated individuals with local volunteers who support them in navigating challenges and celebrate progress towards goals during their first year of reentry.



Elinor Yahm (1943-2023) was a long time volunteer at the Burlington Community Justice Center. She brought humor, thoughtfulness and always shared her honest perspective.

8

active COSA circles

25

volunteers meeting weekly

566

volunteer hours logged in FY 24

“

They actually put themselves in my shoes and were doing what they wanted me to do, which was open up, get to know them, and deal with problems as they were actually coming up... I haven't gotten in trouble in almost a year. That's a long time... I feel more part of the community than I ever have. I can walk around and not hold my head down.

- CoSA participant

Youth Programs

FY24 Referrals & Closures
closures include cases referred in the previous FY

Community & Precharge

is the earliest intervention for low-level misdemeanors and first-time offenses. Referrals come from police departments and Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ).

6
referrals

7
closures

Court Diversion

is a restorative alternative to the court process for youth charged with a crime. Referrals come from Chittenden Family Division, which oversees Juveniles and Youthful Offenders.

60
referrals

49
closures

Reparative Probation

offers restorative interventions for youth on probation to reduce and eliminate further involvement in the legal system. Referrals come from BARJ and Probation & Parole.

32
referrals

25
closures

YSASP

provides an alternative to the civil court process for youth who violate Vermont's underage alcohol and/or cannabis laws. Referrals come from all Chittenden County police departments.

269
referrals

189
closures

YASI Pre-Screens

are offered to all youth going through the Family Court process to assess risk, need, and protective factors. The results are considered in a prosecutor's decision on a case.

132
referrals

70
completed



Youth Justice Garden, where youth can give back to the land and the community (In FY24, 5 youth volunteered for 19 hours)

Our youth programming centers the values of **equity, voice, and connection.**

Programming includes:

- Process dependent on level of victim engagement (**see below**)
- Flexible options for restorative processes:
 - Impact Meetings
 - Restorative Circles
 - Restorative Group Conferences
- Skill-building workshops (**34 delivered in FY24**)
- Consideration of protective and risk factors

Youth Victim Support Services

Victim Liaisons work with affected parties to listen, offer support and create healing opportunities. Options for engagement are flexible and can include:

Participation separate from the responsible party's restorative process:

- Emotional support
- Safety planning
- Referrals to specialized organization(s)
- Systems advocacy
- Navigating restitution

Participation in the responsible party's restorative process:

- Direct participation
- Liaison shares impact
- Impact letter or creative project
- Direct participation for parents/guardians

55

victims contacted for youth cases

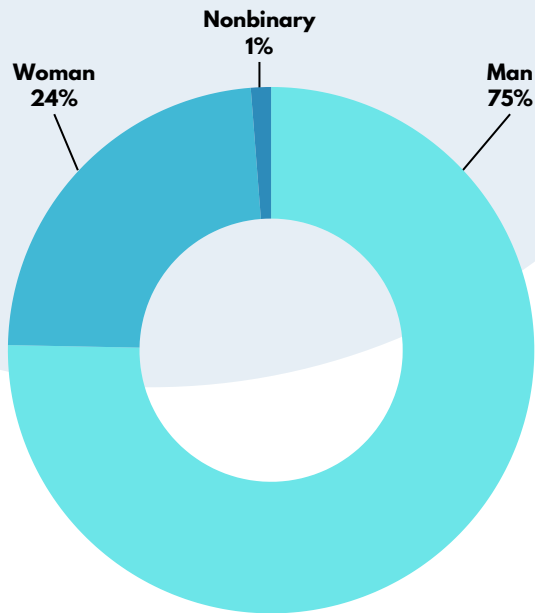
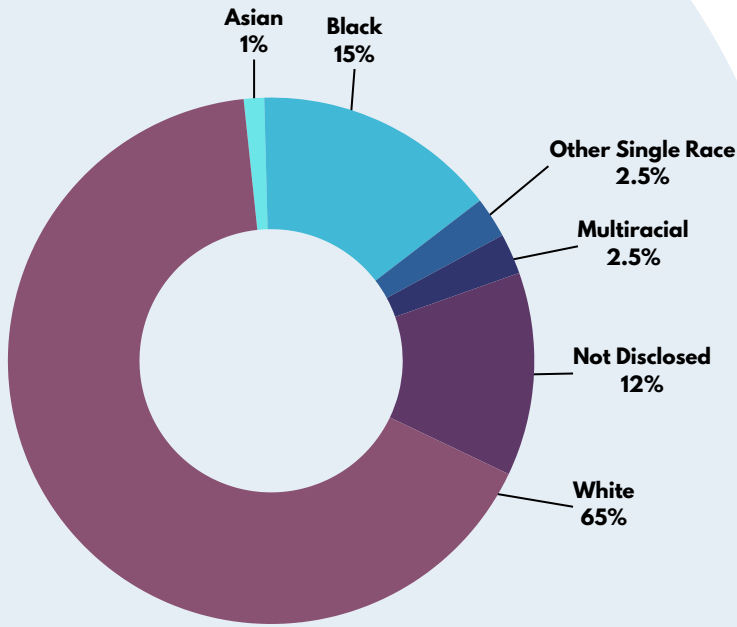
56%

engaged in services

“ You made it easier going through a situation where at the time I thought I would never get through and felt so defeated by. I am grateful for everything [the Victim Liaison] did. You helped me heal and helped give me the support I needed.

- Youth Victim

Youth Demographics



In FY24, we closed

81 youth

restorative processes

between Precharge, Court Diversion, and Reparative Probation

67

participants engaged

14

did not engage

What happens if a person does not engage or complete?

Their case returned to the referring agency for prosecution.

Engagement means

participants created a restorative agreement in collaboration with any victims who wanted to be involved, community volunteers who support the process, and BCJC staff who coordinate.

6

processes did not complete

61

successful processes

91% success rate for people who engage

Participants are more likely to successfully complete the process when they participate in creating a restorative agreement.



In FY24, we closed **189** YSASP tickets

154
engaged after intake

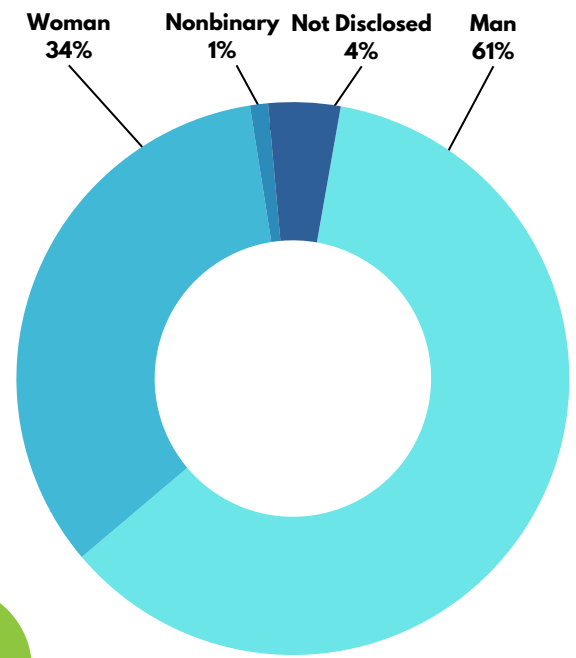
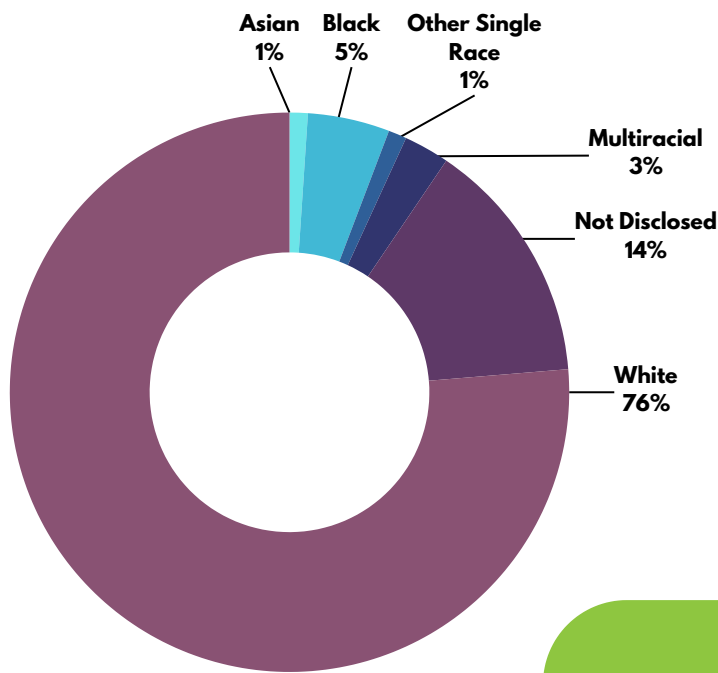
135
processes completed

88%
success rate
for people who
engage after intake

35
did not engage
or complete an intake

19
processes did not
complete

YSASP Demographics



30

16 & younger

40

17 years

62

18 years

35

19 years

22

20 & older

“ I felt like this was an important conversation, I feel like I learned a lot more about my mistakes than if I were to just receive a ticket. I'm prepared to follow my plan and do better in the future. YSASP is definitely helpful for keeping kids out of trouble.

- YSASP Participant



St. Joseph's Orphanage Restorative Inquiry

The St. Joseph's Orphanage in Burlington, VT was home to more than 13,000 children in its 140 years of existence. During that time, countless children were abused and neglected. The Burlington Community Justice Center was the host agency of a Restorative Inquiry which sought to understand and document the events of the orphanage through the voices, experiences, and stories of those most impacted (former residents); and then facilitated an inclusive process of accountability, amends-making, learning, and change.



“The initiatives taken on by the group are all testament to the driving motivation of their work: to ensure that children of Vermont's future never have to endure the dehumanizing and egregious harms that they did.

- Rachel Jolly

Projects & Initiatives

- Legislative Advocacy
- Writers Group (below)
- Engage child-welfare providers
- Oral Histories and Traveling Exhibition
- Memorial and Healing Space (right)



Cover of the St. Joseph's Orphanage Writers' Group Anthology



The group has been working with Burlington Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department to collaboratively design a memorial and healing space on the former Orphanage grounds. **The outdoor installation is slated to be complete by FY26.**

The Final Report of the St. Joseph's Orphanage Restorative Inquiry is now available to the public and can be found on their website:

www.stjosephsrjinqury.com