



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY YOUTH COMMISSION**
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 374-A
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
<https://youthcommission.lacounty.gov>



Thursday, July 30, 2026

6:30 PM

Video for the entire meeting. (26-4025)

Attachments: [Video](#)

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Land Acknowledgement. (26-3919)

Co-Chair Christian Gudiel called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. County Staff conducted Roll Call. Co-Chair Gudiel read the County's Land Acknowledgement.

Present: Co-Chair Christian Gudiel, Co-Chair Evelyn Karina Rodriguez (arrived later in the meeting), Commissioner Miguel (Josh) Boykin, Commissioner Jessica Castillo, Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Commissioner Cristopher Espino, Commissioner Amanda Hernandez, Commissioner Jasmine Jordan, Commissioner Jania Llerenas, Commissioner Clarissa Peña, Commissioner Joseph Roa, Commissioner Florencia Flo Valenzuela and Commissioner Yin Qiao Zhang

Absent: Commissioner Mercedes Jackson and Commissioner Martine Jones

2. Awareness Video entitled, Know to Say No: To All of Us, by DCFS, Vimeo. (26-3920)

The Awareness Video entitled, Know to Say No: To All of Us, by DCFS, Vimeo, was shown.

Attachments: [Video](#)

3. Approval of minutes from the regular meeting of June 25, 2026. (26-3921)

On motion of Commissioner Amanda Hernandez, seconded by Commissioner Josh Boykin, and duly carried, the minutes from the meeting of June 25, 2025 were approved by the following vote:

Ayes: 8 - Co-Chair Christian Gudiel, Commissioner Miguel (Josh) Boykin, Commissioner Jessica Castillo, Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Commissioner Amanda Hernandez, Commissioner Jania Llerenas, Commissioner Clarissa Peña and Commissioner Joseph Roa

Abstentions: 4 - Commissioner Cristopher Espino, Commissioner Jasmine Jordan, Commissioner Florencia Flo Valenzuela and Commissioner Yin Qiao Zhang

Absent: 3 - Co-Chair Evelyn Karina Rodriguez, Commissioner Mercedes Jackson and Commissioner Martine Jones

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. DISCUSSIONS

4. Roundtable Discussion with the Department of Youth Development (DYD) on Diversion Program Updates, DYD's Reentry Action for Youth (RAY) Program Update, Programming in the Probation Facilities, and Extending Supports to Former Foster Youth Exiting the Child Welfare System.

- David Carrol, Director, DYD
- Taylor Schooley, Interim Chief Deputy Director, DYD
- DYD Representatives (26-3922)

David Carrol, Director, DYD, introduced himself and Interim Chief Deputy Director Taylor Schooley. Director Carrol emphasized strong engagement with the Youth Commission and noted that their recommendations have shaped DYD programs. He reviewed DYD's history, Youth Justice Reimagined (YJR), its mission/vision, and the Continuum of Care for Youth Development in L.A. County.

Kelly Fischer, Youth Development Branch Director, presented the Youth Development and Diversion Program, the Youth Development Network (YDN), Youth Voices, and Youth Spaces.

Marjan Goudarzi, Diversion Program Director, outlined the Diversion Model, its background, partnerships, and a prevention focused pilot program with DCFS.

Stacey Urauchi, Program Manager, School Based Initiative Team, described the Emerging Former Foster Youth Support Program (Emerging Program). The program supports exiting foster youth, one year prior to exit and continues two years post exit. She shared the *Bridging the Gap: My Life My Way Blueprint* (MLMW), detailing the Architect of Stability and Coaching and Transition Continuum. The program implementation is pending funding.

The panelists responded to questions posed by the Commissioners and provided the following information.

- DYD has requested \$5 million for the MLMW Program from Care First Community Investment (CFCI); the response is pending. A smaller pilot program might launch sooner and could help secure full future funding, and philanthropy is also being explored. YDN can support foster youth as well.
- The MLMW is youth-led and includes pathways to housing. Components of the program will commence upon available funding, and some elements may be integrated into existing resources. MLMW is TAY-focused and may support youth up to age 26 if needed.
- DCFS provides programs for youth leaving the system from ages 18 to 21. The Emerging Program is designed to provide services thereafter.
- The Diversion Model includes full wraparound services available to former youth involved in gang life and/or have a substance abuse disorder, and services are provided for a longer length of time. Older individuals can obtain services through the Justice Care Opportunities Department.
- Individuals that enter the Diversion Program are paired with a Case Manager that assesses the young person's needs and serves as a mentor with an individualized care plan.

The Commissioners provided the following suggestions:

- The need to inform older youth about available resources. Director Carrol noted that extending services beyond age 26 would require balancing funding, waiting times, and staffing resources.
- Implementing the Emerging Program on a smaller scale to more accurately assess the needs of foster youth exiting the system and quantify available resources. Also, administering a survey to gather feedback from youth to evaluate the Program's strengths and areas needing improvement.

- Encouraged DYD to engage with the LAPD, Hollenbeck Division, in Boyle Heights, to learn about their in-house diversion program titled, *Get it Straight*. Director Carrol indicated that a meeting has already been scheduled.
- A budget analysis be conducted with DCFS and other departments that are already serving youth to mitigate program duplication. She also stressed the need for the Emerging Program start at age 18, when youth age out of the foster care system and are more vulnerable.
- Concerned about the Heart of Justice Reimagined and the access barriers that are being implemented. She then discussed the need for lived experience mentors that can address lifelong impacts.

Ms. Schooley provided a brief presentation on the In-Facility Programming Integrated Youth Engagement (IYE) Model. The program is oriented toward reentry, readiness, and reintegration. The three pillars of the program are Programming, Youth Development and Reentry Planning, and Youth Engagement. Director Carrol suggested that the panel return with an in-depth presentation regarding this program.

The Panelists responded to questions and concerns posed by the Commissioners as follows:

- Concern regarding qualifications of the staff administering the IYE Model program. Director Carrol responded that the program is managed in house, and youth are not visiting outside facilities where staffing issues might occur. He added that some facilities offer more programming than others based on their location, the age of the detainees, and their specific needs. A comprehensive inventory is being developed to identify the programming available in each facility unit, and Probation has created an electronic calendar so community-based organizations and other partners can view current offerings.
- How federal immigration policy is affecting programming and youth from immigrant and mixed-status families, as fear of engaging with community resources is increasing truancy, and may increase families' engagement with law enforcement and child welfare. Director Carrol agreed that family engagement has declined due to fear. DYD is partnering with organizations to help youth understand their immigration rights. Ms. Schooley added that YJR is working to ensure youth know their immigration rights through the Know Your Rights Campaign.

Ms. Urauchi added that DYD is identifying safe spaces due to a decrease in school enrollment and attendance and is connecting with the DA's office to redefine truancy. Ms. Matthews shared that Probation parental visitation has also decreased, so Youth are supported through mentorship and healing activities.

- The need to build relationships with law enforcement and noted differences in engagement between LAPD and the Sheriff's Department. Director Carrol stated that Sheriffs have less contact with youth than LAPD. He noted that there are 20 providers facilitating the RAY program, and roughly 100 service providers total through Diversion Providers and YDN.
- The recommendation to engage with Spirit Awakening. Ms. Matthews confirmed a meeting is scheduled with the organization.
- The need for safe spaces as voiced at all the District Listening Sessions, and partnering with the Department of Economic Opportunity, Parks and Recreation, and County Libraries. Disparities in activity supplies across Probation units was also highlighted.
- Ensure that anti-abuse safeguards for the programs that DYD is promoting are installed and needs to be a foundational requirement when programs are being implemented.

Member of the Public, Kate, California Youth Connection, addressed the Youth Commission.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

5. Presentation and Discussion on the Youth Mentoring Nexus program by the L.A. Opportunity Youth Collaborative

- Angel Racing, Youth Mentoring Nexus Engagement Coordinator
- Sherrie Bradford, Youth Mentoring Nexus Visionary, OYC Young Leader
- Iziko Calderon, Youth Mentoring Nexus Visionary, OYC Young Leader
- Korie Lampkins, Youth Mentoring Nexus Visionary, OYC Young Leader
(26-4709)

Co-Chair Evelyn Karina Rodriguez opened the floor to the presentation and discussion on the Youth Mentoring Nexus Program, by the L.A. Opportunity Youth Collaborative (OYC). Self-introductions were made by Angel Racing, Engagement Coordinator, Sherrie Bradford, Visionary, and Iziko Calderon, Visionary, Youth Mentoring Nexus, OYC Young Leaders (collectively Panelists). The Panelists presented the following:

- **Youth-Centered Recommendations for Improving and Sustaining Supportive Adult Relationships for Youth in L.A. County, a County-wide initiative that brings together, young people, community-based organizations, and systems partners, to strengthen consistent, caring adult relationships, and consists of 13 young leaders.**
- **Defining the concept that systems do not create opportunity - relationships do.**
- **The need for lived experience, lived expertise, youth-centered decision making, healing-centered practices and approaches, and authentic youth partnerships and system change.**
- **The foundation for the OYC is based on conversations with youth and their definition of a mentor.**

Ms. Calderon presented information on the year-long Youth Mentoring Nexus Program codesigned with youth, and she then presented the following:

- **Challenges of Mentorship - interaction with adults within the system are based on behavioral monitoring compliance. Young people need one trusted person who will commit to the relationship. This led to the discussion regarding the concept "Someone Who Cares" SWC, someone who demonstrates: Care. Consistency. Collaboration. Culture Respect, and Connection.**
- **Priority Areas - Cultural Responsiveness, Holistic Stability, Representation and Follow-through, Lived Experience and Systems Navigation, and Youth-Centered Pathways to Connection.**
- **Recommendations for Systems' Partners and Community-based Organizations. Short-and Long-term Indicators of Progress.**

The presentation concluded with the final thought that when relationships are protected, young people are more likely to thrive.

Commissioners provided the following suggestions:

- **The importance of mentors with lived experience as a former foster youth, and the importance of near peer mentorship, and utilizing trusted partners such as CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate).**
- **The need to address limitations of capacity building of mentors due to budget cuts. Ms. Racing responded that the work by Visionaries drives the overall nexus priorities. Also, the *Community of Practice*, a group**

who share a common goal, interact regularly to learn from each other, and improve how they do their work, engage with community-based organizations (CBOs) who assist with trauma-informed care, and interacts with various other CBOs to discuss issues such as capacity building, funding, mental health and other needs.

- The importance of relationship building due to older youth dismissing and vacating efforts of a relationship due to lack of common ground, experiences, or interest.
- The need to locate mentors based on the diversity of youth demographics. Ms. Racing responded that this is done with various systems leaders as well as a resource called the Finders Tool that serves as a hub of resources.
- Commissioner Amanda Hernandez discussed safe spaces and invited the OYC to the Youth Engagement Committee's (YEC) End-Year Event, and future YEC's meetings.

Co-Chair's Gudiel and Rodriguez provided closing remarks and thanked the OYC for their work, engagement with the community, and highlighting the needs of youth.

Member of the Public, Sarae Addison, Expand L.A., addressed the Youth Commission.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

III. REPORTS

6. Leadership Report. (26-3923)

Co-Chair Christian Gudiel announced that Commissioner Cristopher Espino will be resigning from the Youth Commission to pursue graduate studies. Co-Chairs Gudiel and Evelyn Karina Rodriguez expressed their appreciation for Commissioner Espino's professionalism, inspiring dedication, his insight and contribution, and diligent efforts in engaging with the community. Best wishes for his continued success were extended.

7. Commissioner reports on Activities and Events attended on behalf of the Youth Commission. (26-3924)

Co-Chair Christian Gudiel reported the following:

Commissioners Jania Llerenas, Josh Boykin, Amanda Hernandez, Clarissa Peña, and Cristopher Espino attended District 5 Listening Session in Pasadena on July 11, 2026. Commissioners Joseph Roa, Clarissa Peña,

and Jania Llerenas attended the TAY Resource Hub Listening Session on July 20, 2026. Commissioners Mercedes Jackson, Jania Llerenas, Clarissa Peña, and Co-Chair Christian Gudiel attended the District 2 Listening Session on July 25, 2026.

Commissioner Josh Boykin thanked Calibrate for facilitating the Fifth Supervisorial District's Listening Session and shared his personal reflections on the event. Commissioners Jania Llerenas, Clarissa Peña, and Co-Chair Gudiel also provided additional feedback and comments on the events they attended.

IV. UPDATES

8. Update on Key Strategic Partnerships and Board Motions that the Youth Commission is named in. (26-3925)

Executive Director (ED), Tiara Summers, reported that the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Team is continuing to discuss the plight of how to reach young people who may be pre-disposed to involvement with the Justice System. The Probation Oversight Commission (POC) has currently requested updated data from Probation who will be attending the upcoming POC meeting on August 13, 2026, for this purpose. ED Summers will provide information on the meeting and encouraged Commissioners to attend.

9. Youth Engagement Committee Update Committee by Chair Amanda Hernandez. (26-3926)

Commissioner Amanda Hernandez, Chair of the Youth Engagement Committee (YEC), reported that all Supervisorial District Listening Sessions have been completed. Phase II of YEC's work will be the Strategic Planning Session scheduled for November 7, 2026. She encouraged all Commissioners to begin considering the strategy for next year's listening sessions, including potential focus areas, the optimal time of year for scheduling, and any District-specific barriers to attendance. She requested that Commissioners come prepared to present their proposed strategy at the Strategic Planning Session.

10. Operations Committee update by Committee Chair Joshua Elizondo. (26-3927)

Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Chair of the Operations Committee (OPS), reported that production of the onboarding videos is currently underway. He will continue to keep the Commission informed of its progress. He then noted that a vacancy will be posted due to the resignation of Commissioner Christopher Espino. Applications submitted prior to the initial cut-off date

from the previous posting will not be reconsidered, as those applicants have already completed the evaluation process. Applications received after the cut-off date will be reviewed and considered. The new posting will open on July 21, 2026, and close on July 31, 2026. He outlined the first and second interview processes and indicated that a new Commissioner could potentially be announced by September.

OPS Chair Elizondo encouraged Commissioners who have not yet scheduled their Reflection Session to do so promptly. Newly seated Commissioners are exempt from the Reflection Session this year.

V. MISCELLANEOUS

11. Opportunity for members of the public to provide comments to the Commission on item(s) not on the agenda, that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. (26-3928)

No members of the public addressed the Youth Commission.

12. Commissioner discussion of matters not posted on the agenda, to be considered, and placed on the agenda at a future meeting of the Commission. (26-3929)

The following matters were requested:

- **Discussion on the creation of an Ad Hoc Committee regarding justice involved youth.**
- **Discussion on sending a letter to the Board of Supervisors in support of funding for the *My Life My Way Blueprint* through the DYD Emerging Program.**

13. Adjournment. (26-3930)

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 27, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

On motion of Commissioner Amanda Hernandez, seconded by Commissioner Josh Boykin, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 p.m.