



Project Analysis

March 26, 2018

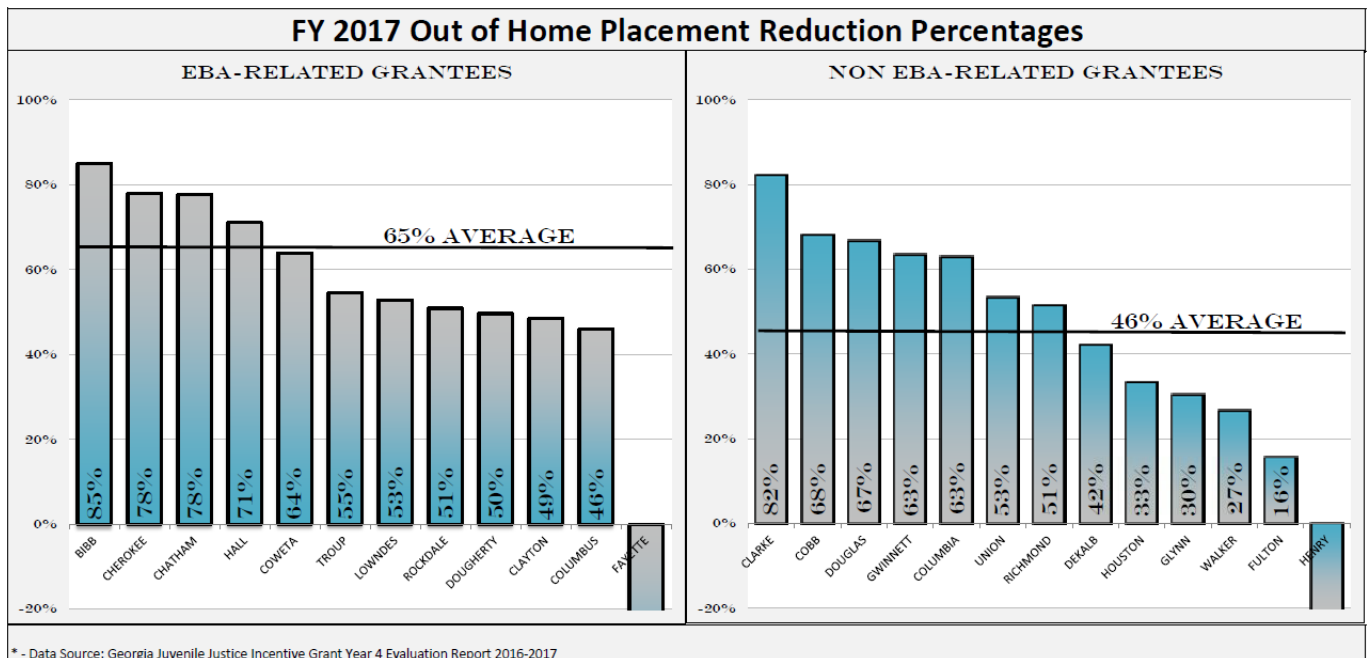
Contact: Dan Edwards (843) 343-8747

## Georgia Counties Significantly Reduce Juvenile Placement Rates Adopting Evidence-Based Programs with Implementation Support

*Georgia counties that adopt researched programs and utilize a Managing Entity model see continued reductions in youth incarceration*

The State of Georgia significantly reduced its reliance on the incarceration of juveniles in FY 17, a key policy objective of Gov. Nathan Deal (R), according to a comprehensive statewide report released by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. The 'Georgia Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant Year Four Evaluation Report' showed that county-administered, community-based programs had effectively reduced juvenile commitments to the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) by 56% compared to the baseline year of FY 12.

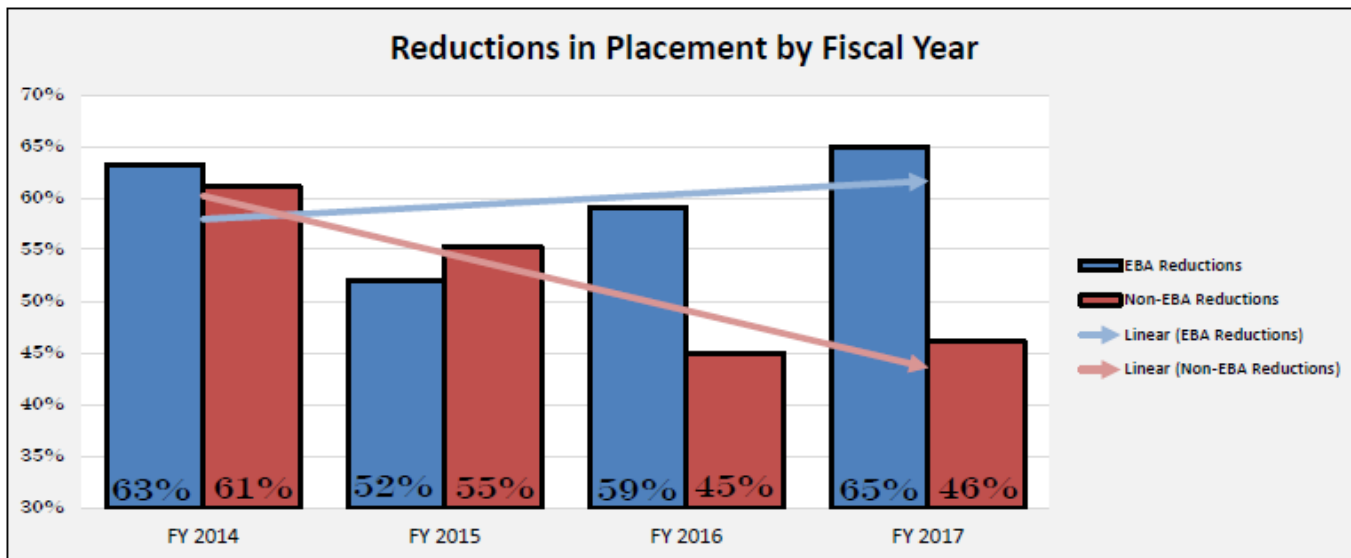
The report also validated the decision made by twelve Georgia counties to partner with Evidence-Based Associates (EBA) under a Managing Entity contracting framework: those that adopted this approach saw significantly greater reductions in youth incarcerations (65%) compared to counties that implemented programs on their own (46%).



EBA has been a partner in the initiative from the beginning, collaborating with the office of Gov. Deal, DJJ, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), and Georgia counties. EBA provides technical assistance and project management support, helping counties to identify appropriate evidence-based programs and to implement them with high fidelity to the program requirements. These evidence-based, community-based programs provide alternatives to Out-of-Home Placements (OHPs), including juvenile incarceration, which are largely viewed as ineffective, costly, and potentially harmful to youth who are already at significant risk to continue to engage in criminal behavior.

Since first awarding grants to participating counties in 2013, the Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant Program (JJIGP) has directed more than \$38 million to support evidence-based programs throughout the state. The program was recently recognized by the National Criminal Justice Association for its innovative approach and effectiveness in implementing programs that rehabilitated youth while working with their families (see <https://cjcc.georgia.gov/press-releases/2017-08-11/georgia-receives-ncja-outstanding-program-award-juvenile-justice-incentive>).

The most recent results highlight a growing trend of EBA-supported counties achieving dramatic reductions in Out-of-Home Placement rates relative to non-EBA counties whose reduction rates are positive but stagnating over time.



During the 2016-17 program year, EBA contracted with twelve counties in order to serve system-involved youth and families via locally-administered evidence-based programs including: Functional Family Therapy (FFT); Multisystemic Therapy (MST); and Thinking For a Change (T4C). In its project management role, EBA ensured that all program components were delivered in strict adherence to all prescribed fidelity measures. EBA also ensured that the evidence-based programs were implemented by experienced and effective clinical staff trained and certified in the respective models, and that all facets of implementation were rigorously managed, including management of referral protocols, performance data collection and monitoring, and fiscal oversight.

“We have been very pleased with the implementation support provided by EBA. The counties appreciate the subject matter expertise that EBA brings as well as their ability to troubleshoot in real time. We are seeing historic reductions in commitments by the courts in the counties where EBA has set up shop,” said Joe Vignati, Assistant Commissioner, Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice.

In 2012, the Pew Foundation reported that more than 70% of DJJ’s annual budget was spent on placing youth in out-of-home placements including secure detention and secure commitment. Youth recidivism rates were over 50%, suggesting that most youth who were placed in DJJ facilities were reconvicted of a delinquent act or a crime soon after their release. Pew estimated that an out-of-home placement in a DJJ correctional facility cost the state of Georgia approximately \$90,000 per bed per year. Community-based, evidence-based programs such as MST and FFT cost less than \$10,000 per youth and have thus far yielded recidivism rates nearly half that of youth released from incarceration.

For more information about the Georgia JJIGP, or about EBA and its programs in other states, please visit our website at [www.evidencebasedassociates.com](http://www.evidencebasedassociates.com).

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