



Multi-Agency Resource Center

(MARC), Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana

GOAL | to divert youth aged 6-18 from the juvenile justice system into suitable programs and services, while also significantly reducing wait times for access to community services from weeks to hours.



The Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) operates under the supervision of the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury. The MARC serves as a centralized hub that consolidates existing community support resources under one roof and ensures timely access to those that best meet the individual needs of the families served.

The MARC is a collaboration of various entities, including the 14th Judicial District Court's Family and Juvenile Court Division, Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's Office, School Board, District Attorney's Office, Public Defenders' Office,

as well as other key community stakeholders, and most importantly, the families it serves.

Upon referral to the MARC, each youth's needs are assessed through a comprehensive process involving evidence-based screenings, assessments, and authentic conversations with the youth and family. The information gathered aids in identifying the most suitable community-based resource(s) for addressing the individualized needs of youth and their families. By streamlining access to community resources,

the MARC significantly reduces wait times to access community services from several weeks/months to mere hours.

“We hope that the families will get what they need and that they will be able to be successful on their own, without any system involvement.”

**-OJJS Joshua Campbell
Assistant Director
(NAC Board Chair)**



The MARC's Collaboration

the MARC facilitates efficient and effective management of community resources

The Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) is committed to utilizing evidence-based screenings tools and referrals to redirect at-risk youth away from the juvenile justice system, guiding them toward appropriate and impactful services that foster improved outcomes for both youth and their families.

In partnership with Law Enforcement, the MARC aims to create pre-arrest referrals and serve as a resource for officers in lieu of arrest. However, when arrest or citation is necessary, the MARC has provisions for law enforcement to transport youth to the MARC. This ensures youth and family needs are addressed while at the same time allowing law enforcement to resume patrol duties. Along with identifying needs through an evidence-based screening process, the MARC Team works to connect youth with the most suitable placement option (I.e., home, community, etc.) and determine diversion eligibility. Connections to already existing community-based services and supports are made to support their identified needs.

For community referrals, efforts are focused on establishing a single contact point to minimize service duplication and streamline access to community-based resources through a walk-in or appointment basis. This allows youth and families to access MARC services on a voluntary basis. The center operates on data-driven principles and adapts to address specific community needs real time. Operating hours have been extended to Monday through Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 12 a.m.

The MARC's Goals:

- To establish a gateway for troubled youth aged 6 to 18 to access support services.
- To conduct timely and comprehensive assessments that connect youth and families with the most suitable community resources.
- To enhance student engagement and increase attendance rates among children receiving services.
- To decrease school suspensions and reduce the number of students at academic risk within the population receiving services.
- To develop and implement an integrated case management or referral system for all clients entering the MARC case management process, which includes outlining intervention needs and plans, making appropriate referrals, and monitoring service delivery while conducting assessments as necessary.
- To serve as an information resource for juvenile justice and children's policy-makers.

The MARC's Impact

With the MARC, case processing decreased from 17 days, to 3.9 days (for youth deferred directly). Their chances of re-offense decreased from 26% to 12% and status referrals decreased fivefold.

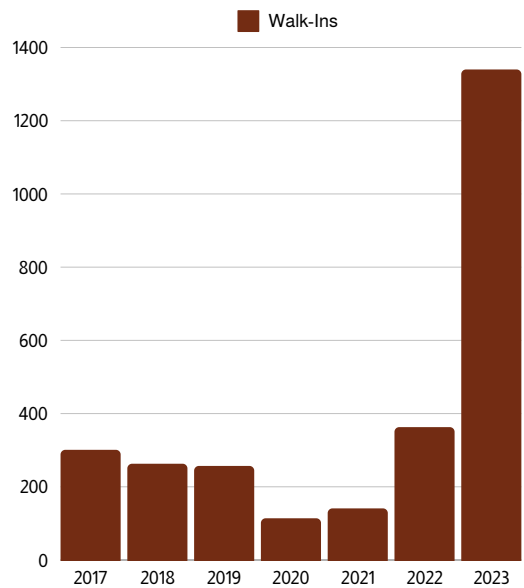
Do kids really have to be arrested, handcuffed, and placed in the back of a patrol car to get timely services? Is there a better way? Through the MARC, in 2014 voluntary walk-in services became a staple instrument for change through early intervention. With a goal to serve youth voluntarily, since 2019, the MARC has witnessed a significant increase in walk-in rates, soaring from 301 to 1340 in 2023. The community's increased commitment to decriminalize light level offenses is the primary driver for this increase.

To ensure continued buy-in for walk-in services, a high level of trust and alignment is maintained by attending law enforcement shift meetings, community gatherings, educational sessions for schools and principals, in-service training for service providers, expressions of gratitude via "thank you" emails, and fostering partnerships with probation services. These efforts collectively contribute to sustaining engagement and support from all stakeholders involved.

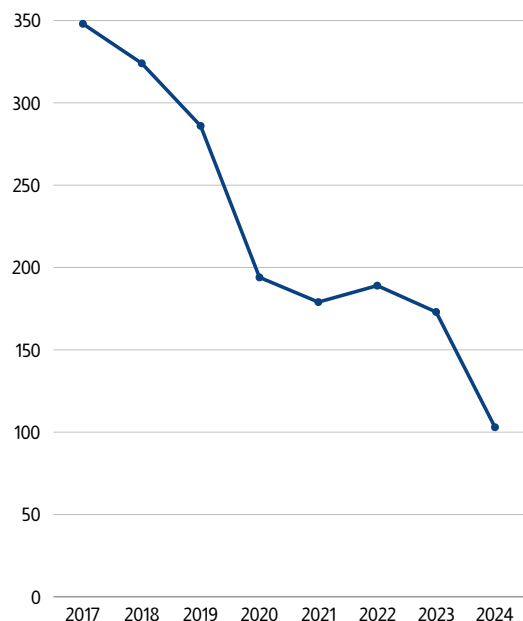
Knowing without a formal referral, a youth cannot be placed in detention, put on probation, petitioned to court, or further entangled within the system. This principle underscores the MARC's commitment to proactive intervention and support, aiming to prevent youth from becoming involved in the juvenile justice system whenever possible. By prioritizing early intervention and addressing root causes, they strive to create pathways towards positive outcomes and avoid unnecessary involvement in the legal system. Beyond avoidance of the legal system, intervening proactively drives down both the level and cost of interventions needed.

The increase in walk-in referrals and decrease in detention admission is possible through partnerships with community, schools, child protection agencies, law enforcement, and probation services.

Analyzing Walk-In Referral Trends at the MARC: 2017-2023



Positive Impact: MARC's Role in Decreasing Detention Admissions (2017-2023)





Jaw Dropping Decreases

The MARC's initiatives aimed at diverting youth from the juvenile justice system have yielded notable outcomes since 2014. Petitions have seen a reduction of 45%, while status referrals have decreased by 49%, and detention placements have dropped by 61%. Additionally, delinquency diversions have increased by 13%, indicating a positive shift in intervention strategies. Finally, walk-ins have shown a significant increase of 327%, reflecting enhanced community engagement and utilization of MARC services.

Two Fold Vision

The Two-Fold Vision aims to pool existing community resources for families to access and ensure timely access to those resources that best meet their identified needs. Since the MARC's inception in 2011, they have served 18,085 youth, providing immediate support to 42% of them within hours. Additionally, the MARC has successfully diverted 87% of those presented to their agency from court, and have kept 34% from involvement in the justice system at all.

MARC Contact Information:

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The MARC's significant impact revolves around the center's efforts to garner support and trust from community stakeholders.