

# GEORGIA JUVENILE JUSTICE INCENTIVE GRANT



# EVALUATION REPORT

**YEAR 9**  
2021–2022



Carl Vinson  
Institute of Government  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA





Georgia Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant  
Year Nine | 2021-2022

# FY 2022 Evaluation Report

## **SUBMITTED TO**

The Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

## **PREPARED BY**

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# Evaluation Report

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# Table of Abbreviations

ART	Aggression Replacement Training	JJIG	Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant
BSFT	Brief Strategic Family Therapy	JTS	Juvenile Tracking System
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	MDFT	Multidimensional Family Therapy
CHINS	Children in Need of Services	MST	Multisystemic Therapy
CJCC	Criminal Justice Coordinating Council	MST-PSB	Multisystemic Therapy – Problem Sexual Behaviors
DAI	Detention Assessment Instrument	NCCD	National Council on Crime and Delinquency
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice	OHP	Out-of-Home Placement
EBP	Evidence-Based Program	OJJDP	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
FY	Fiscal Year	PDRA	Pre-Disposition Risk Assessment
FFT	Functional Family Therapy	STP	Short-Term Program
GED	General Education Development	TF-CBT	Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act	T4C	Thinking for a Change

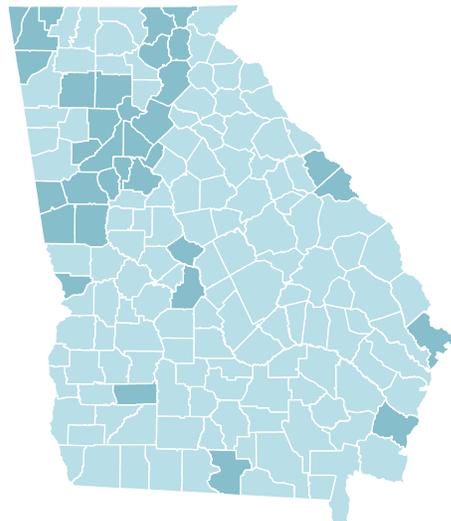
## Acknowledgements

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Georgia Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant (JJIG) is a competitive grant offered to juvenile courts to fund evidence-based programs (EBPs) for juvenile offenders in their home communities. Grant implementation began in October 2013, with the goal of reducing recidivism and out-of-home placements (OHPs), which include short-term program admissions (STP) and felony commitments to the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), while maintaining public safety. Using EBPs as alternatives to OHPs keeps youth in the community and reduces the high cost of juvenile detention. The EBPs funded by the grant help reduce recidivism among juveniles and promote positive relationships among the youth, their families, and their communities.



In Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, the ninth implementation year, the grant served 872 youth in 25 grantee courts across 33 counties in Georgia. These counties were home to 66% of Georgia's at-risk youth, defined as juveniles age 16 and younger (Puzzanchera, Sladky, & Kang, 2021). Using nine EBPs, the JJIG diverted youth from STP admissions and felony commitments to DJJ.

Highlights from FY 2022 include:

- **Impact of COVID-19.** Grant implementation activities were still impacted by COVID-19 disruptions, resulting in a continuation of some of the temporary changes to grant programming first initiated in FY 2020. Most individual-based family therapies were delivered in person or in a hybrid format, while group-based programs were implemented in person, virtually, or through a hybrid format. For in-person services, public health safety measures remained in place. Varying state, local, and agency guidelines and practices in response to COVID-19 continued to impact program participation, program outcomes, and reductions in OHPs (see page 12).
- **Most utilized evidence-based programs.** Based on the number of youth served and the number of grantees offering these programs, Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Multisystemic Therapy (MST), Aggression Replacement Training (ART), and Thinking for a Change (T4C) were the most used EBPs (see page 13).
- **Program participation.** Grantees served 872 youth through nine grant-funded EBPs and other services (see page 14).
- **Program outcomes.** The overall successful completion rate was 70%, with 528 successful completions from grant-funded EBPs (see pages 15–16).

- **Model fidelity.** The Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council continued providing model fidelity technical assistance support and training, though was unable to conduct full model fidelity site visits in FY 2022 due to COVID-19 disruptions (see pages 17–19).
- **Participant demographics.** Males comprised 76% and females comprised 24% of participants served; 72% of participants identified as Black/African American. Participants were typically in public school (67%), 15 or 16 years-old (58% combined), and in ninth grade (30%) (see pages 20–23).
- **Pre-Disposition Risk Assessment.** Almost all youth served in grant programming (99%) scored medium- or high-risk on the Pre-Disposition Risk Assessment (PDRA) — the appropriate target population for this grant (see page 24).
- **Reduction in out-of-home placements.** With the exception of Fayette County, all grantees demonstrated a reduction in OHPs compared to their 2012 baseline, with a grant-wide reduction of 74% (see pages 26–30).

# INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the ninth year of programming activities for Georgia's Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant (JJIG). The JJIG, which began in October 2013, is a competitive grant offered to Georgia juvenile courts to fund evidence-based treatment programs for juvenile offenders in their home communities.

These evidence-based programs (EBPs) provide support and supervision to address youth needs; promote a positive relationship among the youth, their families, and their communities; and ultimately reduce recidivism. These community placements also serve as alternatives to detention for youth who would otherwise be committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), thereby prioritizing secure facility resources for higher risk juvenile offenders.

The overarching grant goals are to increase public safety through an effective juvenile justice system and to demonstrate potential cost-savings for taxpayers through the use of EBPs. To achieve these goals, the JJIG addresses six objectives:

1. **REDUCE** out-of-home placements (i.e. short-term program admissions and felony commitments to DJJ) in each target jurisdiction.
2. **INCREASE** the use of evidence-based practices and programs in Georgia's juvenile justice system by initiating community-based juvenile justice programs.
3. **REDUCE** the recidivism rate of youth involved with Georgia's juvenile justice system.
4. **REDUCE** the annual secure detention rate of each target county.
5. **REDUCE** the annual secure confinement rate of each target county.
6. **DEMONSTRATE** a cost-savings to Georgia citizens through the provision of research-informed services to youth in the juvenile justice system.

In the ninth implementation year, 25 grantee courts served 872 youth across 33 counties in Georgia, which were home to approximately 66% of Georgia's at-risk population (Puzzanchera, Sladky, & Kang, 2021). In the counties covered by the grant, there have been substantial reductions in the number of youth committed to DJJ each implementation year.

## BACKGROUND

In 2012, the Special Council on Criminal Justice Reform for Georgians (Council) partnered with the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Annie E. Casey Foundation to conduct a comprehensive review of Georgia's juvenile justice system designed to identify approaches to improve outcomes and help develop data-informed policies.

The Council found that although the number of youth in Georgia's juvenile justice system declined from 2002 to 2011, the costs of detention remained high. Furthermore, approximately a quarter of youth detained in out-of-home placements (OHPs) were there as a result of misdemeanor or status offenses. By 2013, nearly two-thirds of DJJ's budget went toward operating state-funded OHP facilities, which can cost more than \$90,000 per bed per year<sup>1</sup> (Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform, 2012). At the same time, the recidivism rate for juveniles released from those facilities remained steady from 2003 to 2011, with over half reoffending within three years of release. Considering the high costs to taxpayers and the low return on investment, the Council viewed these recidivism rates as unacceptable (Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform, 2012). The Council also found that risk-assessment results were often not available in time to aid judicial officers with placement and supervision decisions and that these assessments were inconsistently used.

On the eve of the 2013 Georgia General Assembly, the Council released a set of recommendations focused on two main areas: (1) reserving OHPs for high-level offenders and (2) reducing recidivism by strengthening evidence-based practices and improving government performance. The lack of community-based alternatives to detention in many areas of the state left judges with few disposition options for delinquent youth. Consequently, status offenders, misdemeanants, and low-risk youth were routinely committed to OHPs (Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform, 2012). To address this issue, the Council recommended reinvesting juvenile justice dollars to divert youth from incarceration toward community-based EBPs.

During the 2013 legislative session, the Georgia General Assembly, informed by the Council's recommendations, crafted a significant juvenile justice legislative reform package under House Bill 242. Changes to the juvenile code took effect January 1, 2014, implementing the recommendations to reduce the use of juvenile incarceration. Code changes include the following:

- Secure placement of juvenile offenders is limited to repeat and felony offenders (O.C.G.A. §15-11-601).
- Secure placement is reserved for the most serious juvenile offenders, known as designated felons (O.C.G.A. §15-11-602).
- Prior to detaining or incarcerating a youth, juvenile courts are required to use standardized risk and needs assessments to determine the youth's risk of reoffending and

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<sup>1</sup> In a more recent analysis completed in 2020, the cost of secure confinement of youth in Georgia was estimated to have risen to over \$112,000 per youth per year (Justice Policy Institute, 2020).

types of services needed (O.C.G.A. §15-11-410; O.C.G.A. §15-11-505; O.C.G.A. §49-4A-1 (6)).

- Except in rare instances, children in need of services (CHINS) cases, such as truancy, may not be detained in secure facilities and must be treated in the community (O.C.G.A. §15-11-410).

In concert with the legislative changes recommended by the Governor's Office, the Georgia General Assembly initially provided \$5 million in funding for the JJIG to establish community-based diversion programs for juvenile offenders. This was augmented through an additional \$1 million in federal funds from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) for a total of \$6 million in funding for implementation in fiscal year (FY) 2014. In FY 2022, the ninth year of implementation, the JJIG received \$7.9 million in state funding, with almost an additional \$160,000 in Title II funding administered by OJJDP, for a total of \$8.1 million in grant funding.

Ongoing evaluation efforts are built into the grant in order to help assess progress on the established goals and objectives. In 2013, DJJ, in cooperation with the JJIG Program Funding Committee, contracted with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia to assist with implementing the grant evaluation plan and serve as the evaluator for the JJIG. Since then, the Institute of Government evaluation team has provided strategic planning assistance, coached grant applicants on program selection, managed and helped develop an online data collection tool, participated in grantee site visits, and provided ongoing training and support for grantee staff on the data collection process. The Institute of Government receives monthly data submissions and monitors the data for completeness, consistency, and adherence to grant requirements. These submissions include individual-level data on program participants from grantees and a report of STP admissions and felony commitments to DJJ from DJJ's Juvenile Tracking System (JTS). The Institute of Government developed and maintains a data warehouse for reporting and evaluation.

Using the reported data, the Institute of Government evaluation team produces quarterly, annual, and ad-hoc reports. They also provide quarterly data snapshots to state and local stakeholders, including key target data and programmatic information. These data are also used to assess grant objectives and to create a sustainable framework for data-driven decision-making at the state and local levels. The Institute of Government coordinates with the Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) and DJJ to carry out these responsibilities.

During the first implementation year (FY 2014), 29 juvenile courts received grants to provide community-based treatment for 1,122 youth. These grantees had a service area spanning 49 counties, which covered approximately 70% of Georgia's at-risk population, defined as juveniles age 16 and younger (Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform, 2014; Georgia Juvenile Justice Data Clearinghouse, 2014; Puzzanchera, Sladky, & Kang, 2021). In FY 2015, some JJIG counties transitioned to the DJJ-funded Community Services Grant program, a companion grant that began in 2014 to provide EBPs to counties not covered by the JJIG. By FY 2016, every county in Georgia was eligible to access EBPs through the JJIG or the Community Services Grant program.

Both grants require grantees to use the Pre-Disposition Risk Assessment (PDRA), a standardized risk assessment that aids decision-making, when screening potential program participants. To qualify for grant-funded services, youth must score medium-to high-risk on the PDRA, thus prioritizing funding for youth that otherwise may have been committed to DJJ. In the third implementation year, CJCC began conducting model fidelity site visits to ensure that EBPs were being implemented appropriately. The findings from model fidelity site visits help grantee courts select the appropriate EBPs for their court and the youth population served, thereby promoting the strategic use of grant funds to maximize successful outcomes (Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, 2016).

In FY 2022, grant implementation activities were still being impacted by COVID-19 from the continuation of temporary changes first initiated in FY 2020 (see page 12). While some services remained entirely or primarily virtual for the reporting period, other programs that were temporarily suspended or virtual transitioned back to a hybrid or primarily in-person delivery method. These implementation changes and other responses to COVID-19 may have continued to impact grant participation totals, EBP completion outcomes, school enrollment, model fidelity monitoring, and OHP totals for the fiscal year.

# EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

The JJIG funds EBPs in an effort to promote cost-effective alternatives to detention that reduce recidivism and criminogenic behavior, while concurrently supporting positive change in youth and their families. EBPs target specific risk and protective factors related to delinquent behavior, juvenile justice system involvement, or other adverse events. Risk factors are aspects of a person or their environment that increases the likelihood they will experience a negative outcome. These include antisocial behavior, aggression, family conflict, or negative peer influences. Protective factors are aspects of a person or their environment that have a positive influence and serve as a buffer against negative outcomes. These include positive social skills, positive parental/caregiver involvement, greater connection to school, or prosocial peer influences. The main goal for EBPs is to strengthen existing protective factors, build new ones, and reduce risk factors in youth. Grantee courts select EBPs deemed “effective” or “promising” by CrimeSolutions.gov, an EBP registry sponsored by the National Institute of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs. New applicants – or existing grantees who add or change EBPs – can select from seven interventions (Seven Challenges, ART, FFT, MST, T4C, TF-CBT and/or MST-PSB). However, grantees can continue interventions used in the previous grant year, even if not listed above (see Appendix A for a list of grantees using each EBP). The nine EBPs used in FY 2022 were the following:

1. Aggression Replacement Training (ART) – a group-based intervention that addresses aggression and violence by improving moral reasoning and social skill competency.
2. Botvin LifeSkills Training (Botvin LST) – a group-based intervention that addresses the social and psychological factors that contribute to substance use, delinquency, and violence.
3. Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT) – an individual-based family intervention that addresses adolescent behavior problems, family functioning, and prosocial behaviors.
4. Connections Wraparound (Connections) – an individual-based family intervention for probated youth that addresses emotional and/or behavioral problems, and uses youth and family teams to coordinate services.
5. Functional Family Therapy (FFT) – an individual-based family intervention that addresses delinquency, violence, substance use, and/or disruptive behavior disorders by reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors.
6. Multidimensional Family Therapy (MDFT) – an individual-based family intervention that addresses substance abuse, delinquency, and behavioral/emotional problems, while promoting positive attachments to pro-social supports.
7. Multisystemic Therapy (MST) – an intensive individual-based family intervention that addresses the environmental factors that impact chronic and/or violent youth offenders.

8. Thinking for a Change (T4C) – a group-based intervention that addresses the criminogenic thinking of offenders by developing problem-solving and social skills.
9. Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) – an individual-based family intervention that addresses posttraumatic stress, fear, anxiety, depression, and behavioral difficulties in children and caregivers by enhancing processing skills, parenting skills, and family communication.

EBPs are categorized into two distinct delivery mechanisms: an individual-based family therapy or group-based therapy. A model-trained therapist delivers individual-based family therapies, usually in the youth's home, and addresses issues that are specific to the youth and family. Most group-based programs have trained facilitators that work with a number of youth at the same time, allowing for interactions and feedback from a group of peers with similar delinquency issues. EBP duration varies from several weeks to several months and is contingent on EBP model guidelines and clinical oversight.

In addition to implementing one or more of the EBPs, grantee courts are committed to using objective tools, such as risk and needs assessments, to inform key decisions at various stages in the juvenile justice process. The Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI) and the Pre-Disposition Risk Assessment (PDRA) are two validated assessment instruments developed by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) in conjunction with DJJ and the Annie E. Casey Foundation that are currently used in Georgia.

# IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON FY 2022 PROGRAMMING

In FY 2022, JJIG implementation continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency that began in FY 2020. While the Statewide Judicial Emergency declaration ended just prior to the start of FY 2022, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia continued temporary rules for much of the grant year to allow greater flexibility for courts to utilize video conferencing when needed due to local conditions. Local governments, public schools, universities, community organizations, and other organizations throughout the state also continued or reinstated similar temporary policy changes for parts of FY 2022 as local conditions changed. CJCC continued to implement temporary policies and procedures suspending in-person site visits and other on-site activities in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

During FY 2022, all grantee courts were conducting group-based services using the same format as they had ended FY 2021. Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, and Walker continued to conduct these sessions remotely, whereas Augusta-Richmond, Bartow, Columbia, Douglas, Fulton, Glynn, and Gwinnett continued with in-person services. In FY 2022, only Cobb continued to deliver these individual-based family services in an entirely virtual format, while Douglas delivered FFT sessions virtually and Botvin LST in-person. Fulton and Henry shifted to, while Gwinnett and Walker maintained, a hybrid delivery system in FY 2022. All 13 grantee courts that provided services through Evidence-Based Associates/Grace Harbor transitioned to primarily in-person sessions by February of FY 2022, and Augusta-Richmond, Houston, and Union maintained an in-person or primarily in-person format.

Telemental health technologies, including phone or video-teleconferencing, can help minimize the disruption of essential services due to office closures and social distancing guidelines. While not all cases are appropriate for these delivery methods, including clients in crisis situations or with barriers (cultural, lingual, or technological) to access these services, telemental health can aid in maintaining service delivery during a public health emergency. Beginning in the spring of 2020, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services instituted temporary measures giving providers greater discretion in using existing video and text applications to deliver services. Therapists and facilitators must remain compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) by using secure messaging and video-conferencing platforms, as well as taking other cybersecurity precautions. These temporary adaptations allowed continued delivery of these essential services during this major public health crisis.

# FINDINGS

## EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM UTILIZATION

In FY 2022, most participants were enrolled in FFT, MST, ART, or T4C (see Figure 1). Overall, 70% of youth served by EBPs enrolled in an individual-based family therapy (BSFT, Connections, FFT, MDFT, MST, and TF-CBT), and 30% enrolled in group-based therapy (ART, Botvin LST, and T4C). This is very similar to the participation in individual-based family (72%) versus group-based programs (28%) in the previous grant year. Note that some participants were enrolled in more than one EBP during this period, so the number of participants served by each EBP sums greater than the 872 total served. A total of 16,281 EBP sessions were delivered across all grantee programs during the ninth grant year (see Figure 2). Although there was a slight increase in the number of youth served from the previous grant year (821), referrals to grant-funded EBPs in FY 2022 were still down due to the impacts from COVID-19.

Figure 1  
**In FY 2022, most participants were enrolled in Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Multisystemic Therapy (MST), Aggression Replacement Training (ART), or Thinking for a Change (T4C).**  
 July 2021–June 2022

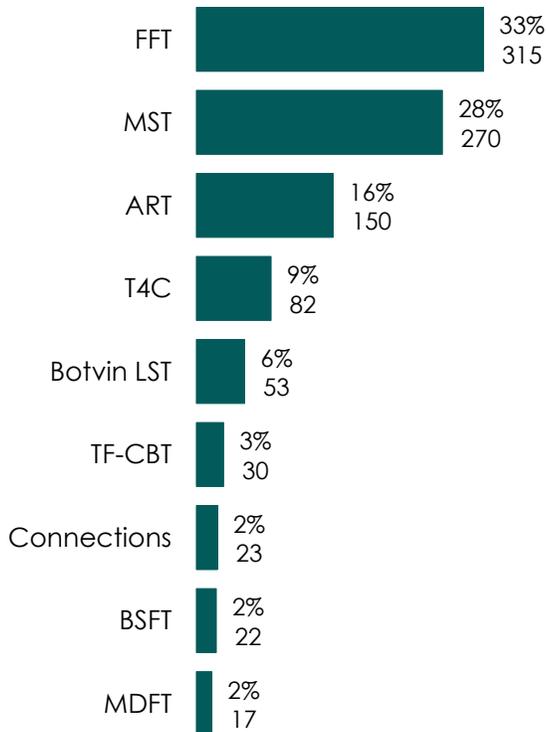
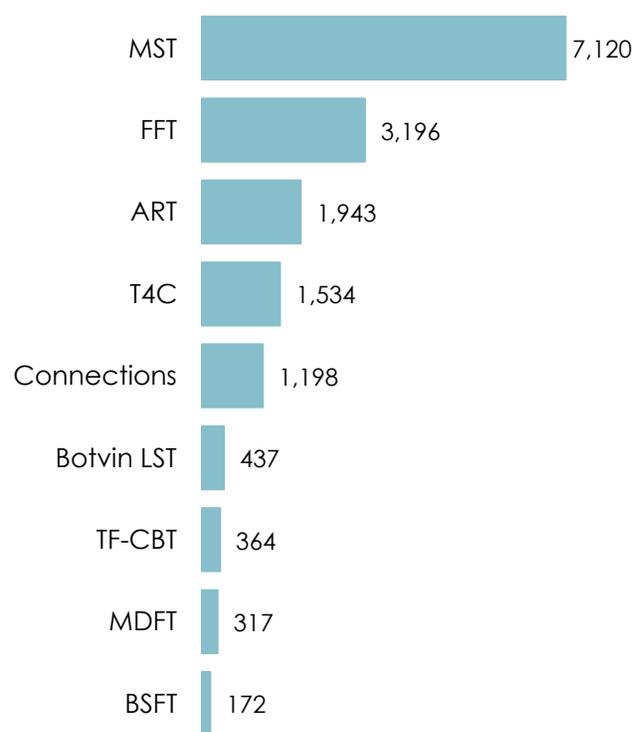


Figure 2  
**In FY 2022, the number of sessions delivered across all evidence-based programs was 16,281, with MST and FFT again making up a majority of total sessions.**  
 July 2021–June 2022



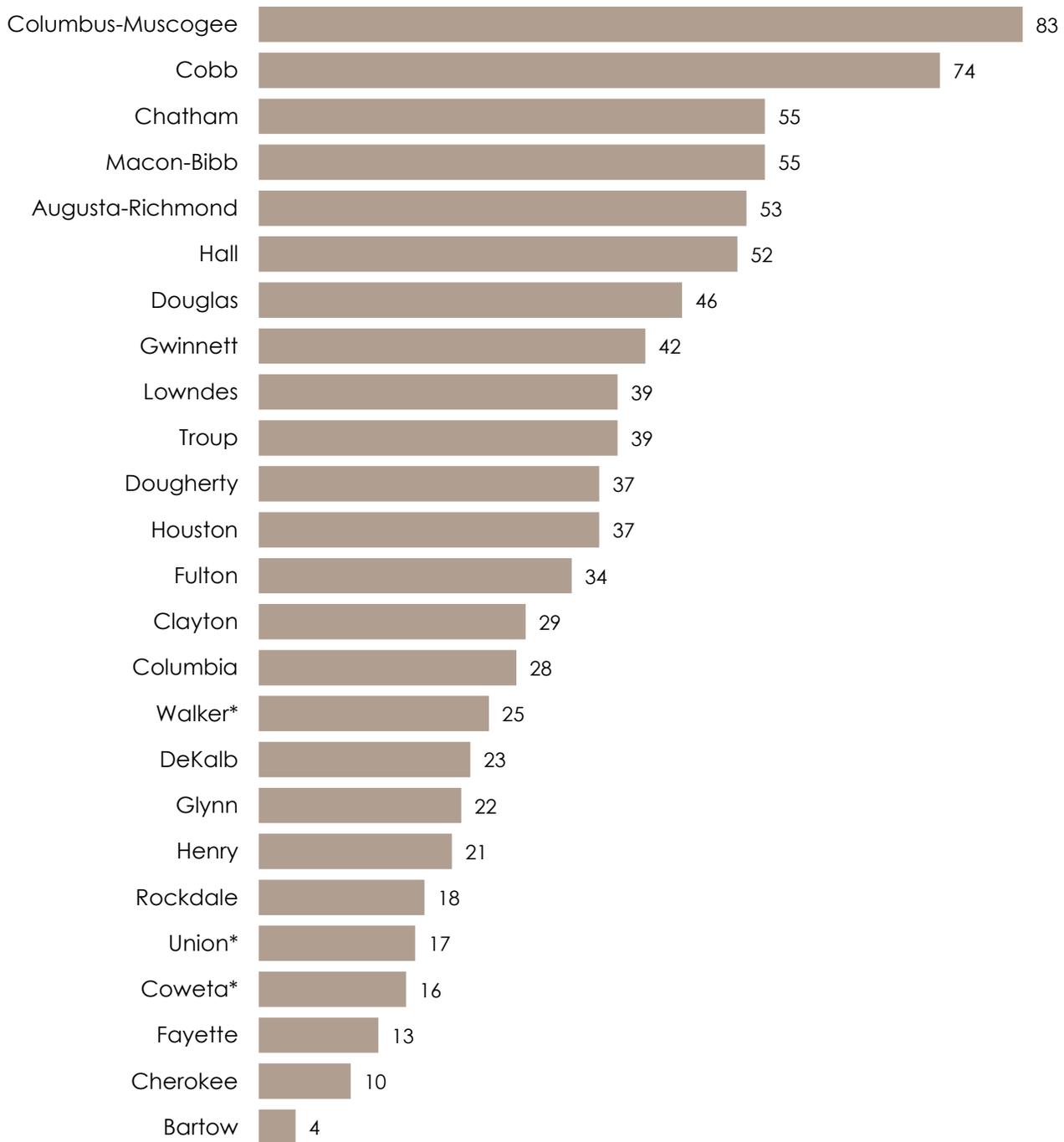
The JJIG funded services for 872 youth in FY 2022, with individual grantee participant counts ranging from 4 to 83. Figure 3 shows the number of youth served in each grantee court from July 2021 through June 2022. While most grantee courts represent a single county, three represent more than one county: Coweta, Union, and Walker. Appendix B presents a list of grantee courts and the counties they served.

Figure 3

**Grantee courts served 872 youth in grant-funded programming in FY 2022.**

July 2021–June 2022

\*Grantee court serves multiple counties.



## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Figure 4 shows the number of successful completions, dismissals/removals, and administrative discharges from each EBP. The JJIG calculates the successful completion rate for each EBP as the number of successful completions divided by the total exits from the program (successful completions, dismissals/removals, and administrative discharges). FFT, MST, ART, and T4C had the highest number of youth successfully complete programming. Successful completion rates ranged from 41% (TF-CBT) to 91% (MDFT), with an overall completion rate of 70% across all programs. The dismissal/removal rate was 20% and the administrative discharge rate was 9%. See Appendix C for a breakdown of EBP exits by grantee.

Figure 4

**In FY 2022, seven out of the nine evidence-based programs reported successful completion rates of 63% or higher.**

July 2021–June 2022

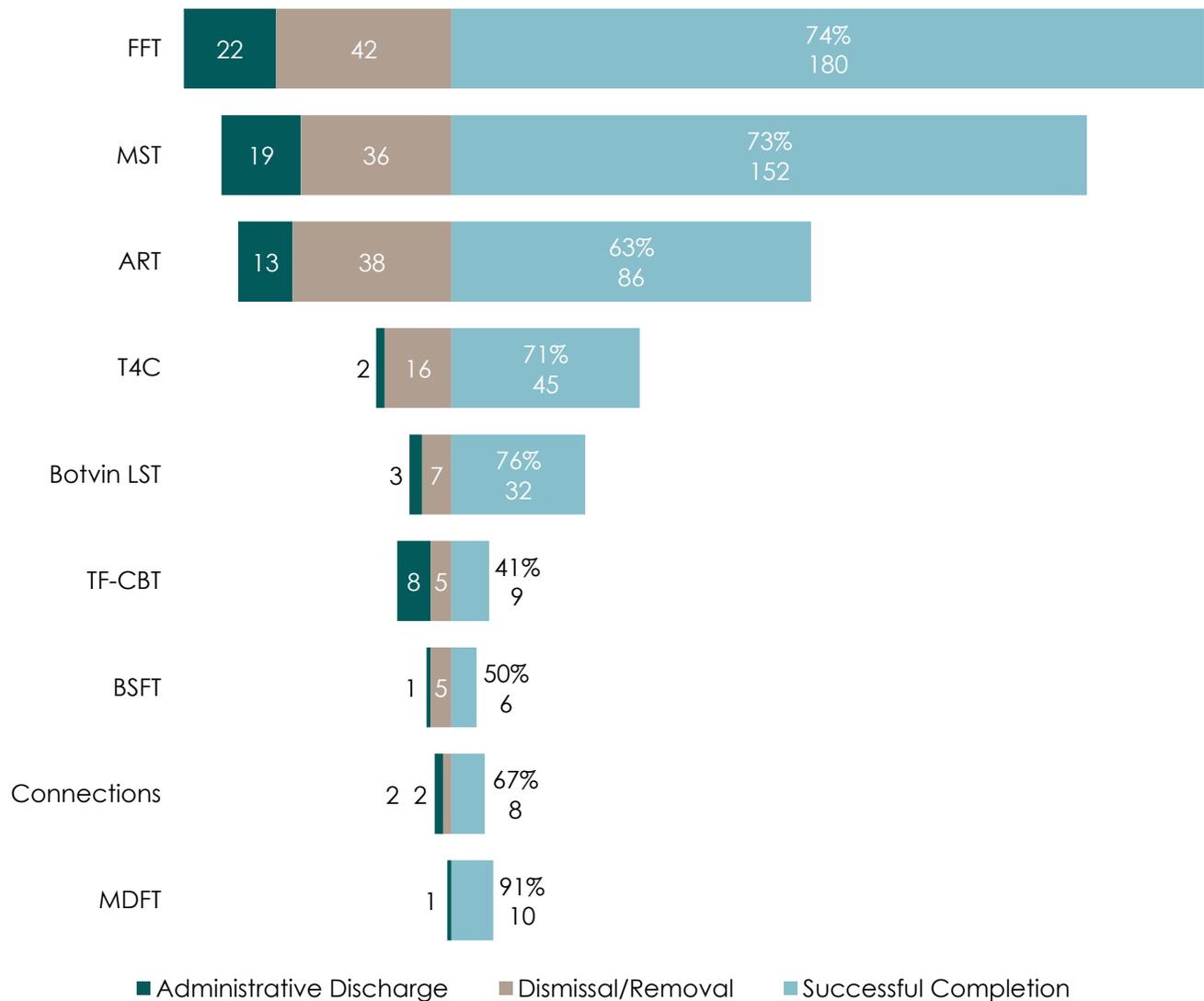
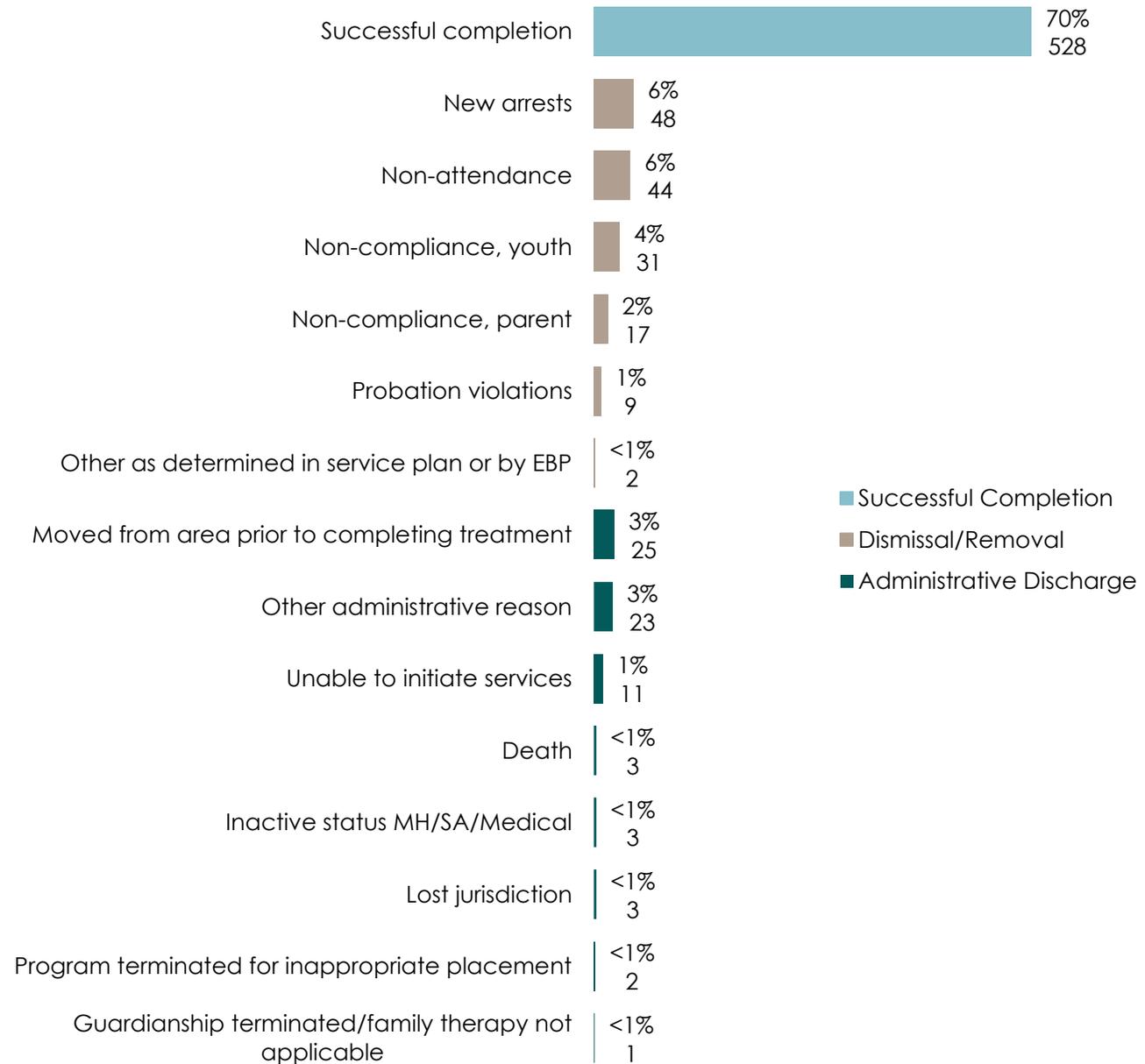


Figure 5 shows a breakdown of exit reasons across all nine EBPs. Dismissal/removals accounted for 20% of total program exits and were due primarily to new arrests, non-attendance, or non-compliance by youth or parent. Administrative discharges constituted 9% of total program exits, mostly due to moving from the area prior to completing treatment, other administrative reasons, or being unable to initiate services. See Appendix D for a full list of dismissal/removal and administrative discharge subcategories.

Figure 5

**Out of 750 exits from grant-funded evidence-based programs in FY 2022, 528 (70%) were successful completions.**

July 2021–June 2022



## MODEL FIDELITY

Adherence to model fidelity is an important component of successful program outcomes. EBPs are effective in reducing recidivism in juvenile populations when the programs are implemented as designed. Deviations from the program model may hinder reductions in the recidivism rate and in some cases increase the recidivism rate (Barnoski, 2004).

In FY 2016, CJCC added a Model Fidelity Coordinator to its Juvenile Justice Unit to assess the fidelity of EBP implementation through fidelity monitoring and site visits. The Model Fidelity Coordinator assesses program fidelity measures and challenges using various methods, including reviewing grantee program materials, interviewing program staff, examining case files, observing group sessions, and surveying participants (Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, 2016). During model fidelity site visits, grantees are scored on group overview, general group content, use of effective reinforcement, use of effective disapproval, established professional rapport and active listening, structured skill building, and cognitive restructuring. These areas are summed to provide a total score on model fidelity. The Model Fidelity Coordinator uses the findings from site visits to provide technical assistance and support to grantees on EBP implementation. Additionally, the Model Fidelity Coordinator conducts a six-month follow-up observation after each site visit to assess grantees' progress. The *Model Fidelity Handbook for Group-Based Therapies* outlines the fidelity practices that are required as a condition of JJIG funding, as well as other non-mandated practices for improving model fidelity (Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, 2017).

In FY 2016, CJCC began the first round of annual model fidelity site visits, prioritizing the two most used group-based therapies (ART and T4C). These EBPs share similar fidelity components and challenges, enabling them to be monitored using similar guidelines; however, fidelity standards specific to each program's curriculum are also evaluated. Note that BSFT, FFT, MDFT, and MST have program fidelity monitoring provided by their respective training and dissemination organizations, which includes the most widely used EBPs (FFT and MST). From FY 2017 to FY 2020, CJCC conducted three to eight model fidelity site visits each grant year. Note that in FY 2020, CJCC was only able to complete three model fidelity site visits, though additional site visits were planned. Due to COVID-19 office closures, safety protocols, and travel restrictions, these additional visits were postponed indefinitely.

In FY 2021 and FY 2022, no model fidelity site visits were conducted due to the ongoing public health concerns. For model fidelity scores from past grant years (FY 2016 to FY 2021), see Appendix E. However, other model fidelity activities continued throughout the year. Due to the pandemic, model fidelity activities were modified, allowing model fidelity staff to continue assisting grantees in implementing group-based programs while maintaining safety protocols.

Throughout the grant year, Model Fidelity staff did conduct group observations for counties implementing ART and T4C, which included grantees delivering programming virtually or in person. These group observations could be formal or informal. Formal observations were

conducted in person, following the same structure as the six-month follow-up observation. For counties implementing virtual programming via Zoom, informal group observations were held and the Informal Group Observation document was completed. Virtual debrief meetings were scheduled after all observations to discuss feedback. Table 1 summarizes the group observation activities for ART and T4C.

Table 1

**Summary of Model Fidelity Site Visits and Observations for ART and T4C in FY 2022**

Activity	Description	Count
Model Fidelity Site visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suspended to maintain safety protocols.</li> </ul>	0
Formal group observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Followed the same structure as the six-month group observation.</li> <li>Conducted in person.</li> <li>Provided feedback to grantees with strengths, focus areas, and recommendations.</li> <li>Provided virtual debrief meetings to discuss feedback from observations.</li> </ul>	2
Informal group observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduced for grantees implementing virtual programming.</li> <li>Observed groups via Zoom.</li> <li>Completed the Informal Group Observation document—includes three strengths, three focus areas, recommendations, or technical assistance plan for focus areas.</li> <li>Provided virtual debrief meetings to discuss feedback from observations.</li> </ul>	13

For counties implementing ART or T4C, model fidelity staff provided ongoing coaching and technical assistance support to grantee staff. These activities included assisting with implementation planning, conducting debrief meetings at the end of each program cohort (as needed), providing routine check-ins, and offering individualized technical assistance to address specific challenges grantees encountered. Table 2 outlines details of the technical assistance provided to grantees in FY 2022.

Table 2

**Summary of Coaching and Technical Assistance Support for ART and T4C in FY 2022**

Activity	Description	Count
Implementation meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Met with grantees before services began to discuss:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cohort schedules</li> <li>○ Policy and procedure manuals</li> <li>○ COVID protocols</li> <li>○ Facilitator duties</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	11
Debrief meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held after each cohort as needed.</li> <li>• Also utilized when discussing feedback from group observations.</li> </ul>	26
Phone check-ins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check-in with grantees to see:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How services went each week</li> <li>○ Updates about upcoming cohorts, staffing, or other programming needs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	50
Email check-ins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check-in with grantees to see:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How services went each week</li> <li>○ Updates about upcoming cohorts, staffing, or other programming needs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	300
Microsoft Teams meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check-in with grantees to see:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How services went each week</li> <li>○ Updates about upcoming cohorts, staffing, or other programming needs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	62
Individual technical assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed individualized plans to assist each grantee with specific challenges they were encountering.</li> </ul>	16

Grant and other court staff were offered several training opportunities throughout the grant year, including the All-JJ Training Series hosted by CJCC and the Institute of Government. These trainings focused on general juvenile justice topics or specific EBP and were offered in either in-person or virtual formats. Table 3 summarizes the grantee trainings offered in FY 2022.

Table 3

**Summary of Grantee Trainings Offered in FY 2022**

In-person and Virtual Training Opportunities	Count
General training	15
ART training	3
T4C training	2

## PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Grantee courts report monthly individual-level information on youth participating in grant-funded programming. The data reported in this section include Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Educational Status, Grade Level, and Age.

### GENDER

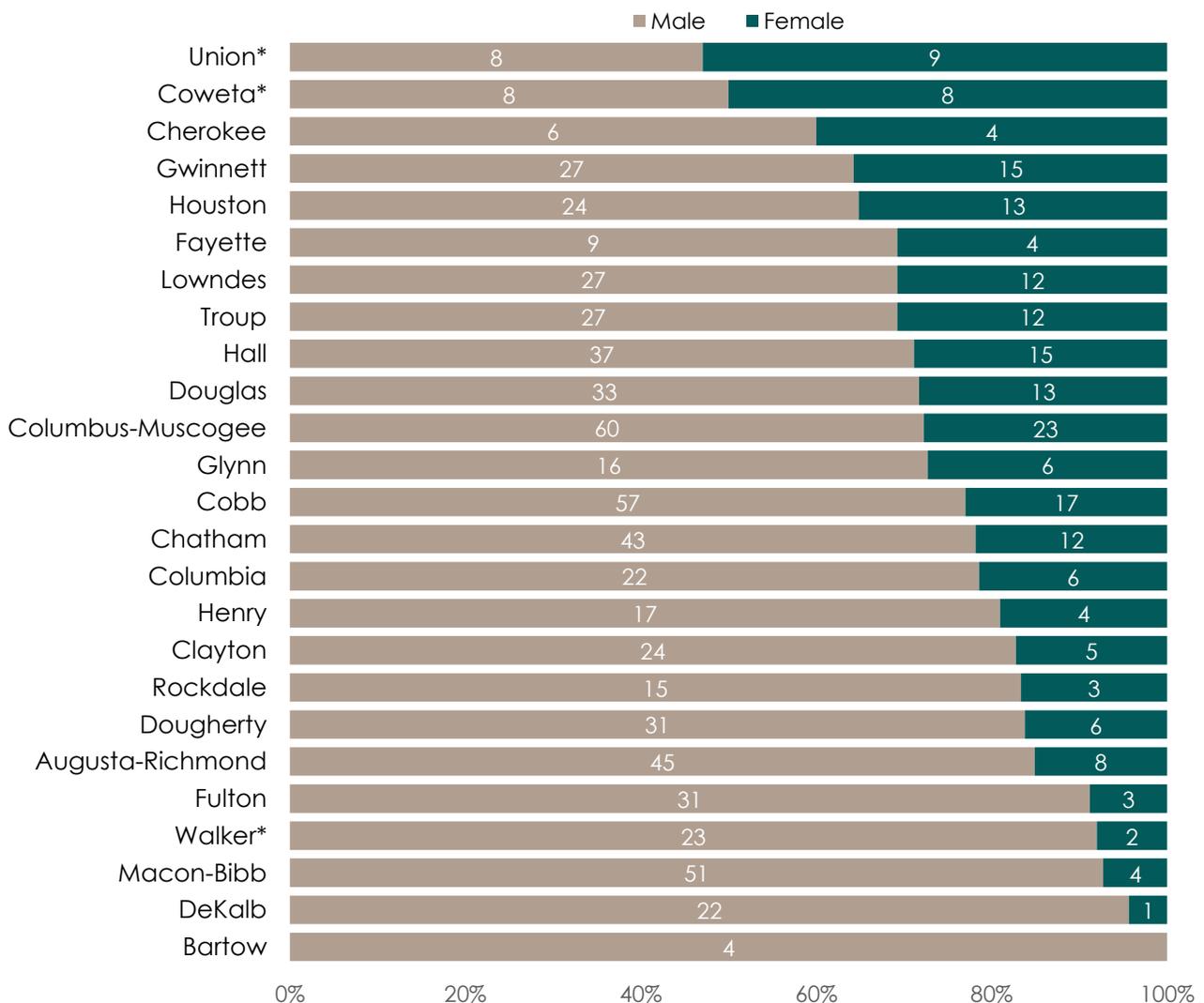
Since the grant serves at-risk youth facing an STP admission or a felony commitment to DJJ, program averages are compared to existing data on STP admissions and felony commitments to DJJ. Grant-wide in FY 2022, males and females comprised 82% and 18%, respectively, of total out-of-home placements (OHPs). Likewise, more males (76%) enrolled in grant-funded programs than females (24%) (see Figure 6). This comparison shows that a slightly higher proportion of females were enrolled in grant programming compared to females receiving OHPs.

Figure 6

**Males comprised 76% and females comprised 24% of youth served in grant-funded programs.**

July 2021–June 2022

\*Grantee court serves multiple counties.



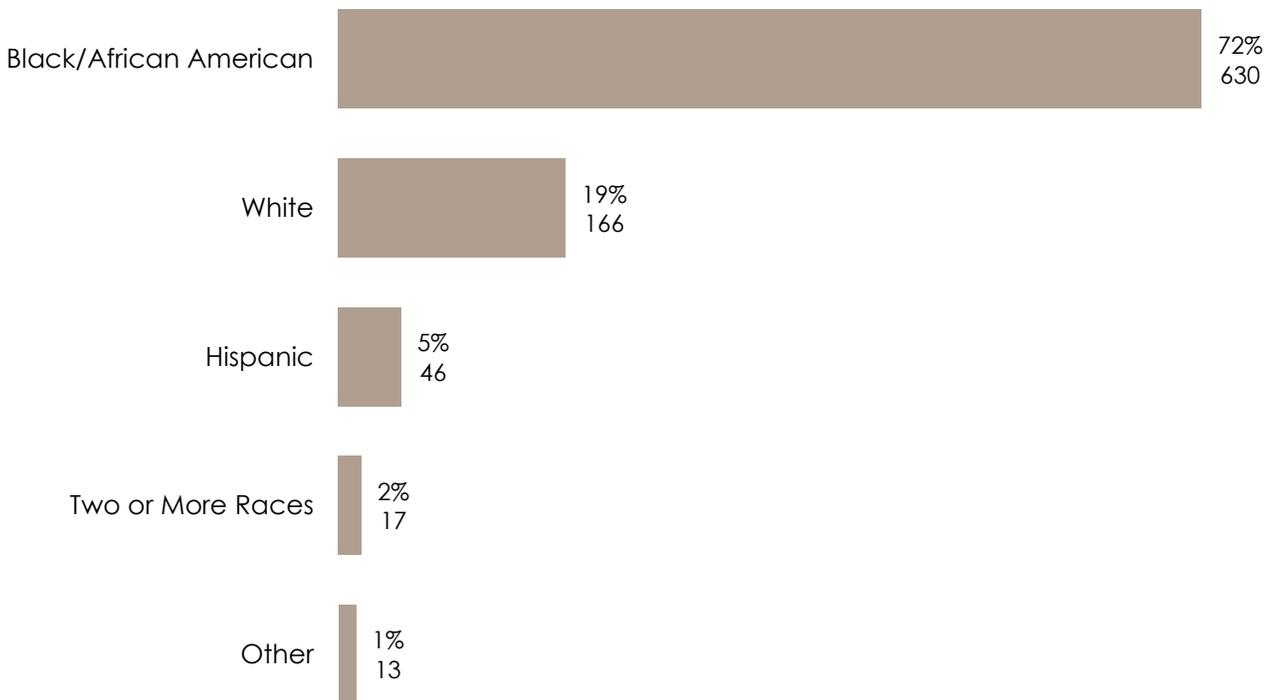
## RACE/ETHNICITY

In FY 2022, 72% of participants identified as Black/ African American, 19% as White, 5% as Hispanic, 2% as two or more races, and 1% as other (see Figure 7). During the same period, the breakdown of youth receiving OHPs in JJIG counties was 73% Black/ African American, 18% White, 8% Hispanic, and 2% other. These percentages suggest that the population of youth served in these community programs is relatively proportional to those receiving OHPs in those same communities. Note that “two or more races” is not a DJJ-utilized category, so a direct comparison for this category is not available.

Figure 7

**In FY 2022, evidence-based program participants identified as Black/African American (72%), White (19%), Hispanic (5%), two or more races (2%), and other (1%).**

July 2021–June 2022



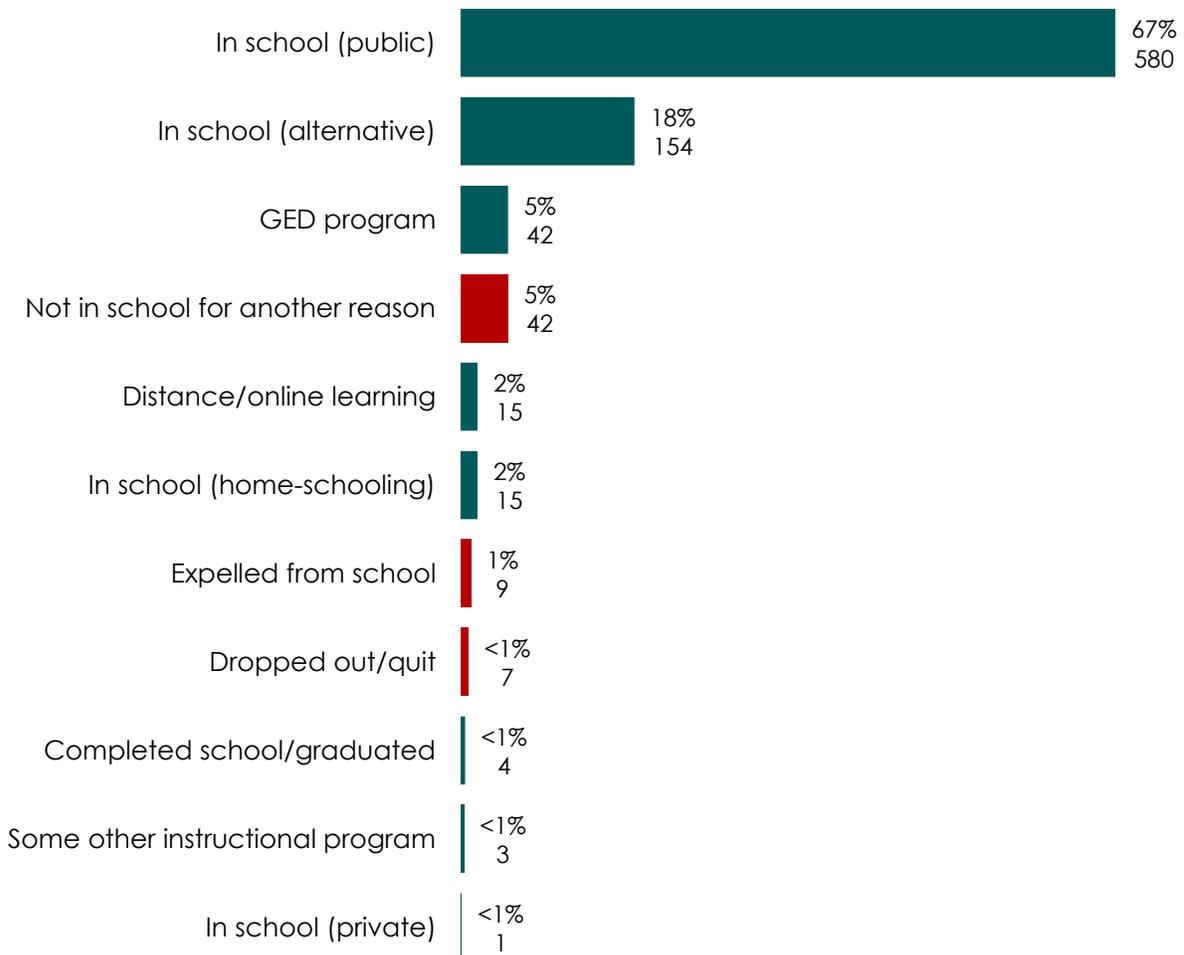
## EDUCATIONAL STATUS

Research continues to find strong correlations between lower school enrollment/poorer performance and involvement with the juvenile justice system. Youth that do not complete school or experience other significant disruptions to their education, including suspension or expulsions, are at greater risk of delinquency and continued criminal behavior in adulthood (Brownfield, 1990; Hawkins & Weis, 1980; Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2001; Jagers, Robison, Rhodes, Guan, & Church, 2016; Pettit & Western, 2004; Robertson & Walker, 2018; Thornberry, Moore, & Christenson, 1985; Wilkinson, Lantos, McDaniel, & Winslow, 2019). Because of this link between school and delinquency, grantees tracked the educational status of youth in EBPs each month. Figure 8 shows that a majority of youth received some type of educational programming, primarily in public school (67%) or alternative school (18%). Around seven percent were not involved in any type of educational programming, including those who dropped out/quit, were not in school for another reason, or were expelled.

Figure 8

**In FY 2022, 93% of program participants were enrolled in or had completed some type of educational programming while in grant-funded services.**

July 2021–June 2022



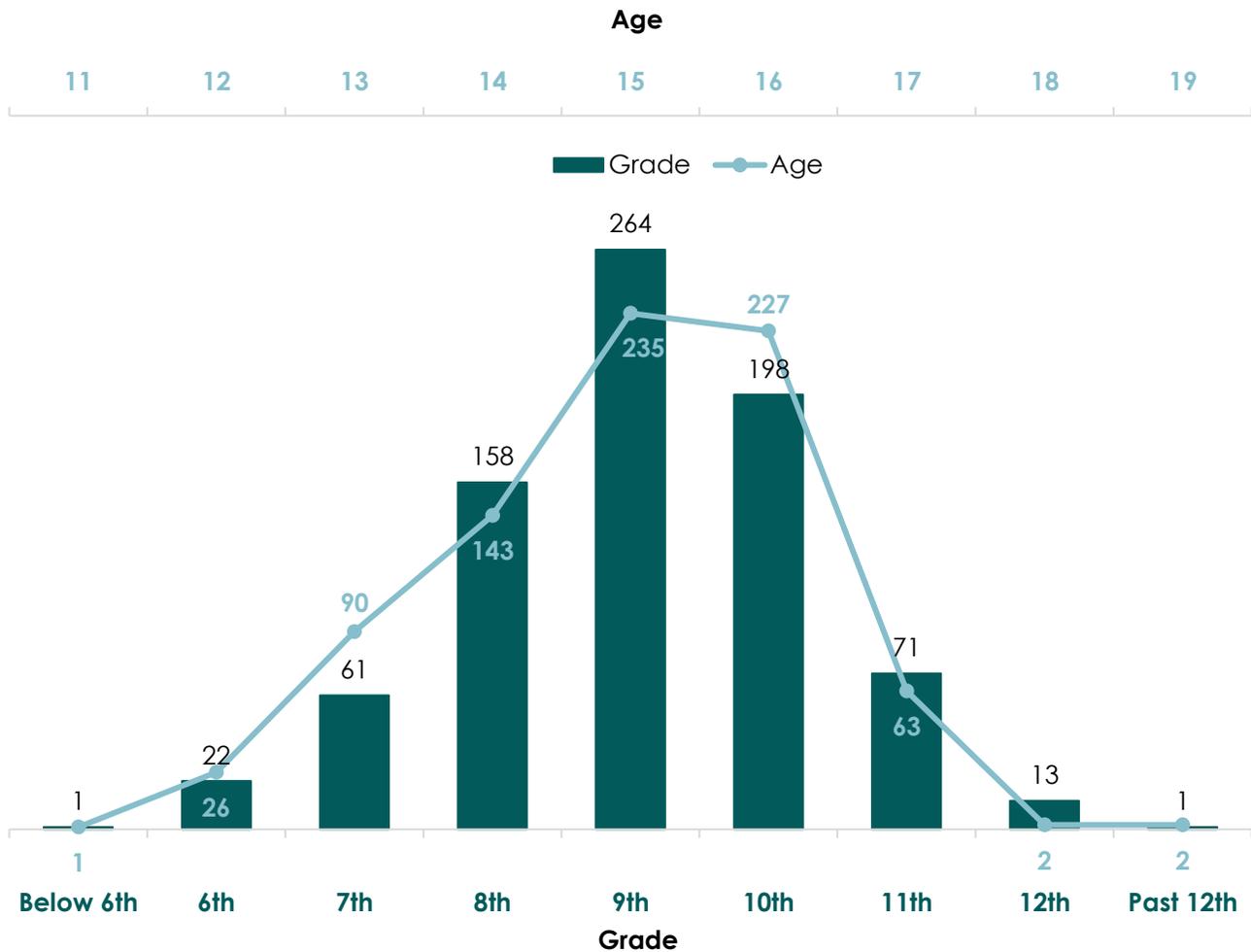
## GRADE LEVEL AND AGE

Figure 9 shows the age and grade levels of youth served in JJIG programs. In line with the national trends of juvenile delinquent populations, participants were on average behind in grade level based on their ages (Miller, Warren, & Owen, 2011; US Departments of Education and Justice, 2014). Of the total 872 youth served, 75% were age 14 to 16, with 15 and 16 (28% and 30%, respectively) being the most frequently occurring ages. The largest percentage of youth served were in the ninth grade (30%). Eighty-three participants reported their grade level as “N/A” because it did not apply to their educational status. This includes enrollment in other instructional programs (e.g. GED program), non-enrollment in school (e.g. expelled or dropped out), or school completion; their respective grade levels and ages have been excluded from the graph below.

Figure 9

**The majority of youth enrolled in evidence-based programs were age 14 to 16, and most were in eighth to tenth grade.**

July 2021–June 2022



## PRE-DISPOSITION RISK ASSESSMENT

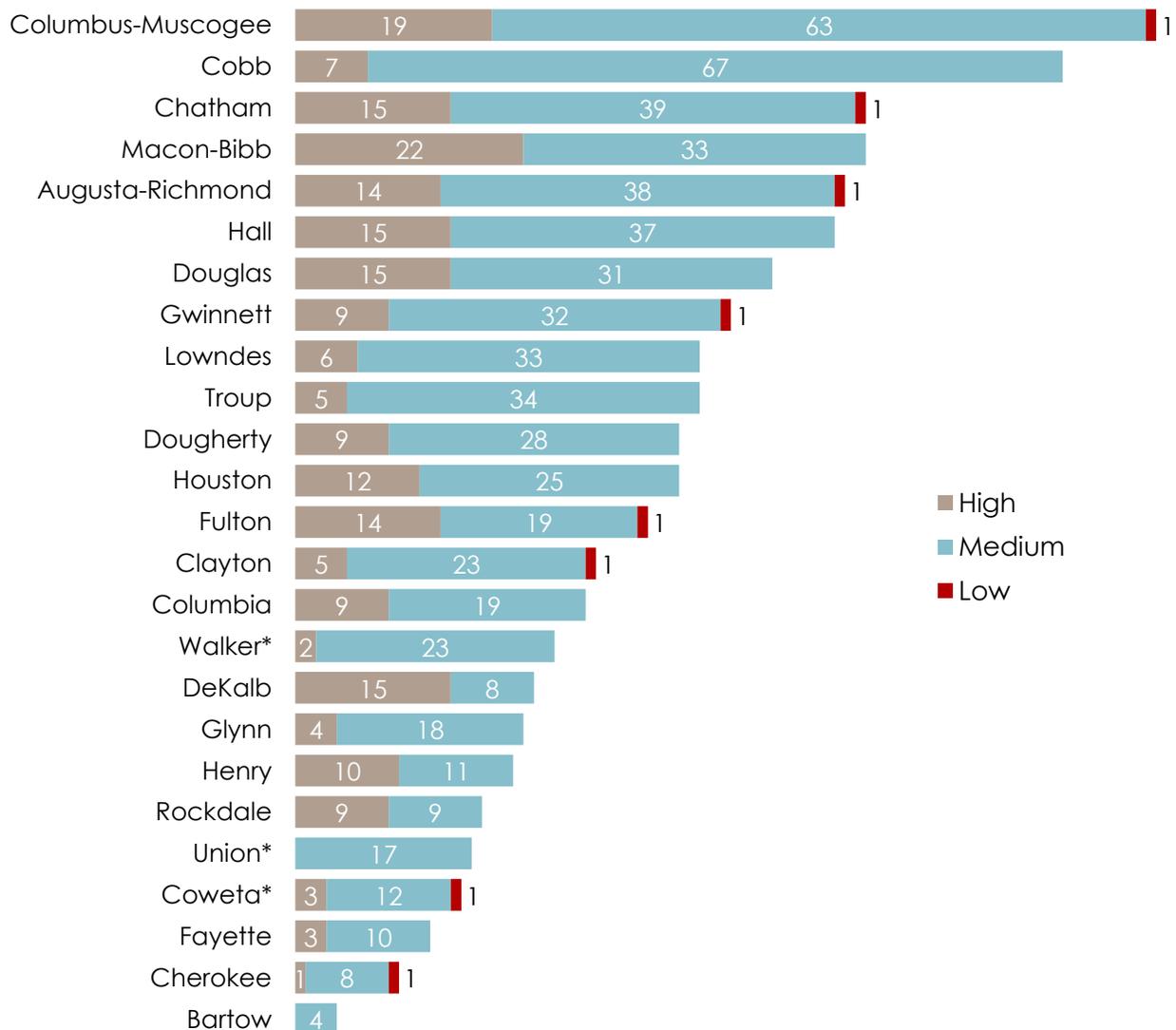
The PDRA measures the likelihood of reoffense and provides grantee courts with a standardized measure to determine appropriateness for evidence-based programming. This evidence-based criminogenic risk assessment tool was developed in 2013 by the NCCD, in collaboration with DJJ and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The NCCD completed an evaluation and validation of the PDRA in March 2017. Staff perform this assessment of youth between the adjudicatory hearing and the dispositional hearing. Only youth scoring as medium- or high-risk on the PDRA should be diverted to JJIG-funded EBPs. However, in FY 2022, a temporary amended eligibility waiver allowed grantees to submit requests for youth scoring low-risk on the PDRA but otherwise appropriate for these EBPs to be referred into services. These were reviewed on a case-by-case basis. In FY 2022, the JJIG program served eight youth with a low PDRA score (see Figure 10).

Figure 10

**Out of 872 participants served in FY 2022, eight youth were reported with a low Pre-Disposition Risk Assessment (PDRA) score.**

July 2021–June 2022

\*Grantee court serves multiple counties.



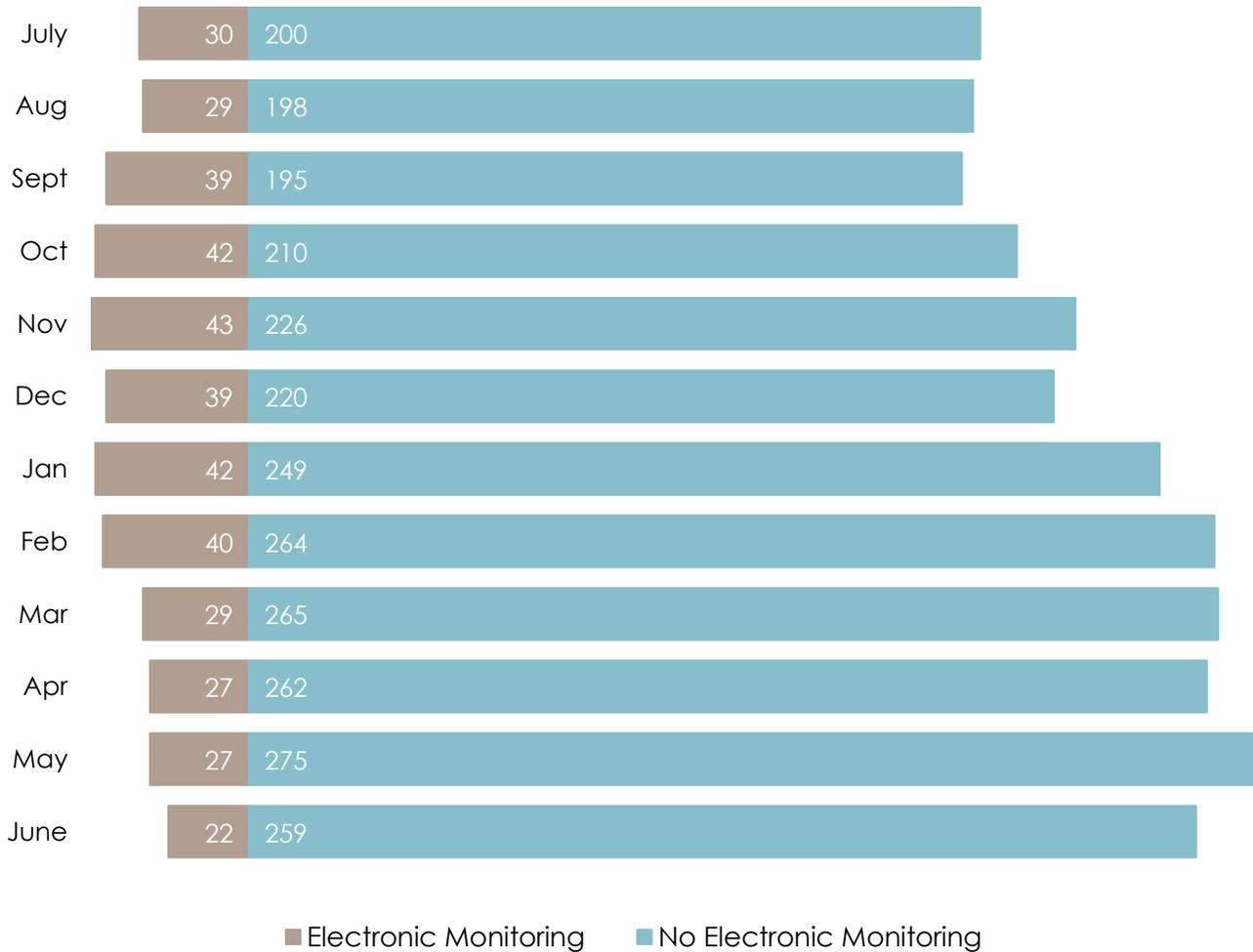
## ELECTRONIC ANKLE MONITORING

To support the use of community-based alternatives to detention, grantees provided optional electronic ankle monitoring services for program youth. Between July 2021 and June 2022, 20 of the 25 grantee courts reported using electronic ankle monitoring during at least one month and for at least one youth (see Figure 11).

Figure 11

**Between 22 and 43 youth (8% to 17%) were supervised via electronic ankle monitoring each month.**

July 2021–June 2022



## OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS

For this report, OHPs represent the total unique instances of STP admissions and felony commitments to DJJ reported during the grant term. Each instance of an STP admission or a felony commitment counts as a distinct occurrence; consequently, a youth may have more than one OHP during a given timeframe. To facilitate the evaluation, DJJ provided monthly data from JTS on STP admissions and felony commitments to DJJ.

A key objective of the JJIG is to reduce each grantee's OHPs as compared to their FY 2012 baseline – the pre-reform marker calculated by combining the total STP admissions and felony commitments to DJJ of juveniles within a grantee's jurisdiction during FY 2012. In most cases, grantees only provide services to one county, though in some cases, grantees serve youth in multiple counties (see Appendix B). For grantees serving multiple counties, baselines are calculated by aggregating the total OHPs for the counties they serve. The program-wide baseline for participating grantees is calculated by summing the total OHPs for counties contained in each grantee's service area. Grantee court baselines and the program-wide baseline are recalculated each year to include active counties that fiscal year.

**FY 2022 marked the ninth consecutive year of grant-wide reductions in the annual OHPs across the JJIG.**

The JJIG provides an alternative to OHPs for grantee courts, thus contributing to the reduction of OHPs in these jurisdictions. Table 4 shows that grantee courts collectively achieved a **62% reduction** in the nine months of implementation in FY 2014, exceeding the 15% reduction target from the FY 2012 baseline (from 2,603 to 989 total OHPs). In FY 2015, the first year that implementation spanned a full 12 months, the reduction target was set at 20%. Grantee courts collectively surpassed the 20% reduction target in FY 2015, FY 2016, FY 2017, FY 2018, FY 2019, FY 2020, and FY 2021 with **54%, 53%, 56%, 57%, 56%, 67%, and 78% reductions**, respectively, from the FY 2012 baseline each year.

In FY 2022, grantee courts again collectively exceeded the 20% reduction target. The total number of STP admissions and felony commitments to DJJ was 638 across the 33 counties served by the 25 grantee courts, resulting in a **74% reduction** from the FY 2012 baseline (from 2,487 to 638 total OHPs). This marks the ninth consecutive year of grant-wide reductions in OHPs. Note that some of the reductions in OHPs are likely due to the impact of COVID-19 on juvenile court operations and other activities across the state.

Table 4

**Out-of-Home Placement Reduction Targets and Outcomes for FY 2014 to FY 2022**

	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
FY 2012 Baseline – Total OHPs	2,603	2,664	2,616	2,513	2,552	2,562	2,562	2,561	2,487
Reduction Target of OHPs	<b>15%</b>	<b>20%</b>							
Percent Reduction Achieved	<b>62%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>74%</b>
Total OHPs	989	1,227	1,238	1,099	1,109	1,117	838	563	638
Implementation Period	9 months	12 months							
Number of Grantee Courts	29	29	28	25	26	26	26	26	25
Number of Counties Served	49	51	48	34	37	37	37	36	33
Number of Youth Served	1,122	1,666	1,723	1,465	1,390	1,350	1,051	821	872

Figure 12 compares each grantee’s FY 2022 OHP totals to their FY 2012 baseline. In FY 2022, 24 out of 25 grantee courts had a reduction in OHPs. Fayette exceeded its FY 2012 baseline, though it also had the lowest baseline of all grantees. See Appendix F for each grantee’s FY 2012 baseline, FY 2022 reduction number, and FY 2022 OHP number.

Figure 12

**In FY 2022, 24 out of 25 grantee courts had a reduction in out-of-home placements (short-term program admissions & felony commitments to DJJ) compared to their FY 2012 baseline.**

July 2021–June 2022

\*Grantee court serves multiple counties.

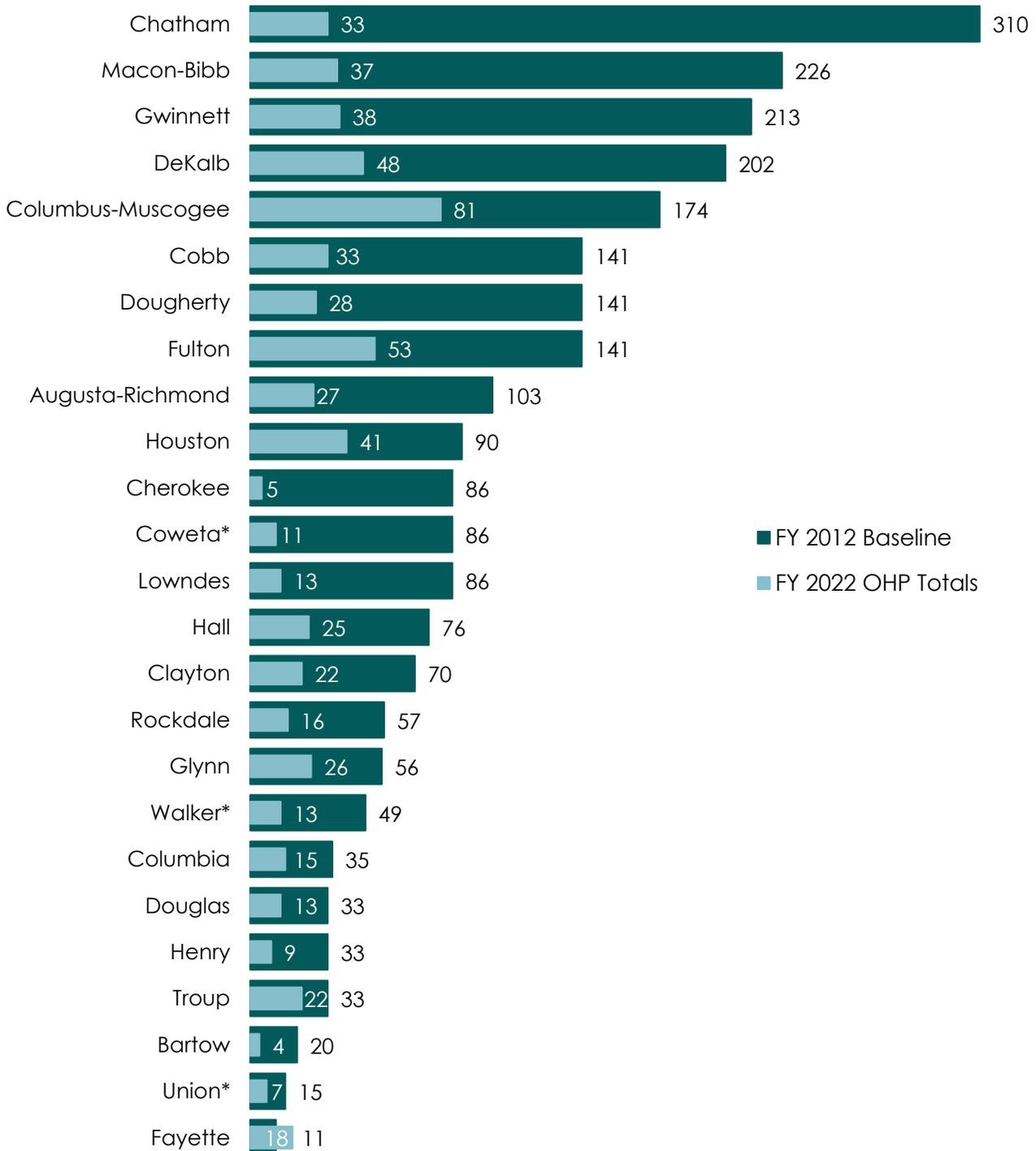


Figure 13 shows the OHP reduction percentage for each grantee court in FY 2022 compared to the pre-reform baseline marker (shown below in red). To meet this reduction target, a grantee court should achieve at least a 20% reduction in OHPs from its FY 2012 baseline. In FY 2022, 24 out of 25 grantee courts met the 20% reduction target. Cherokee (94%), Chatham (89%), Coweta (87%), and Lowndes (85%) counties had the largest reductions in FY 2022. For OHP reduction percentages by grantee court from FY 2014 to FY 2022, see Appendix G.

Figure 13

**In FY 2022, 24 out of 25 grantee courts met the 20% reduction target for annual out-of-home placement totals, with most reporting reductions over 50%.**

July 2021–June 2022

\*Grantee court serves multiple counties.

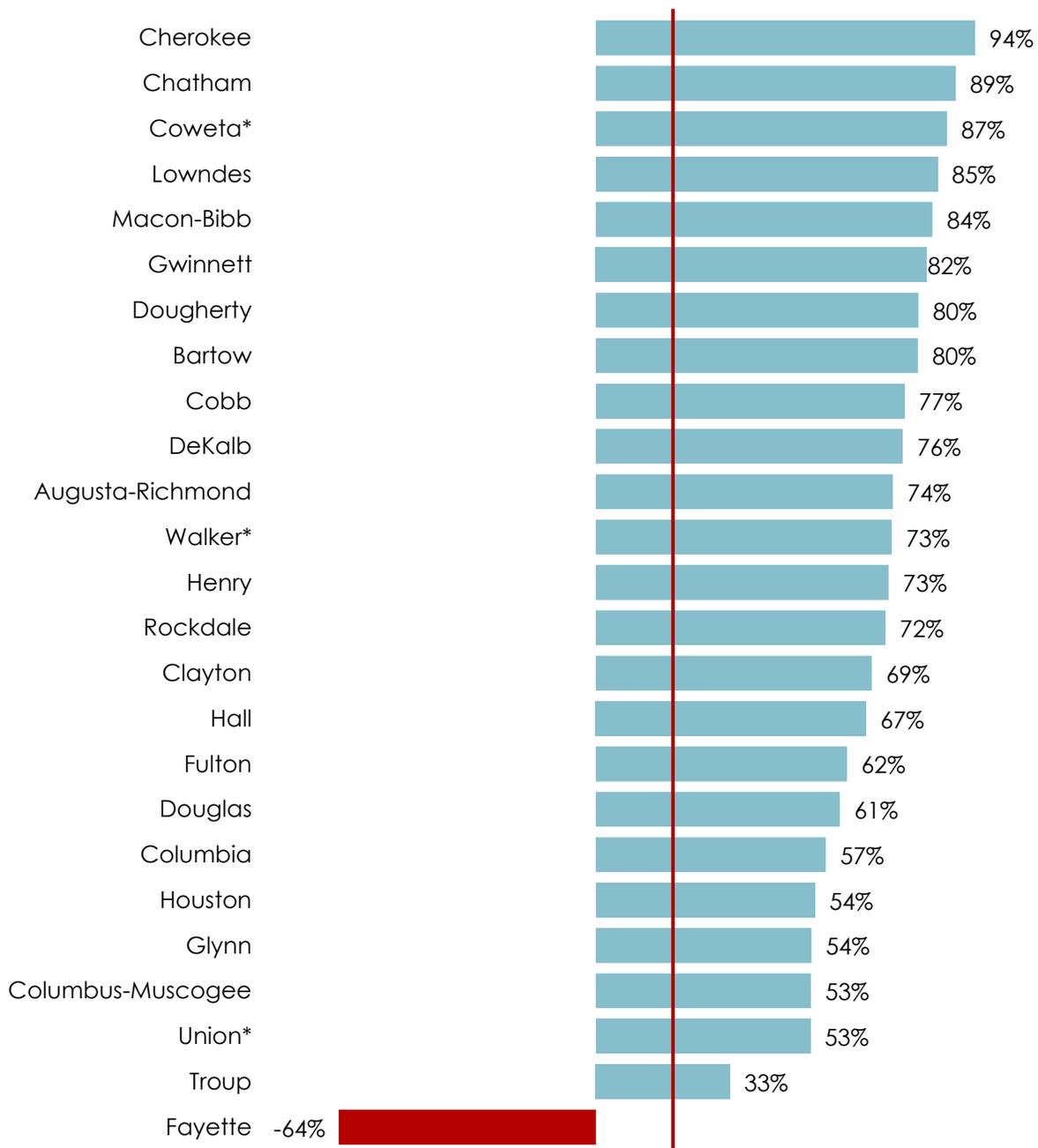
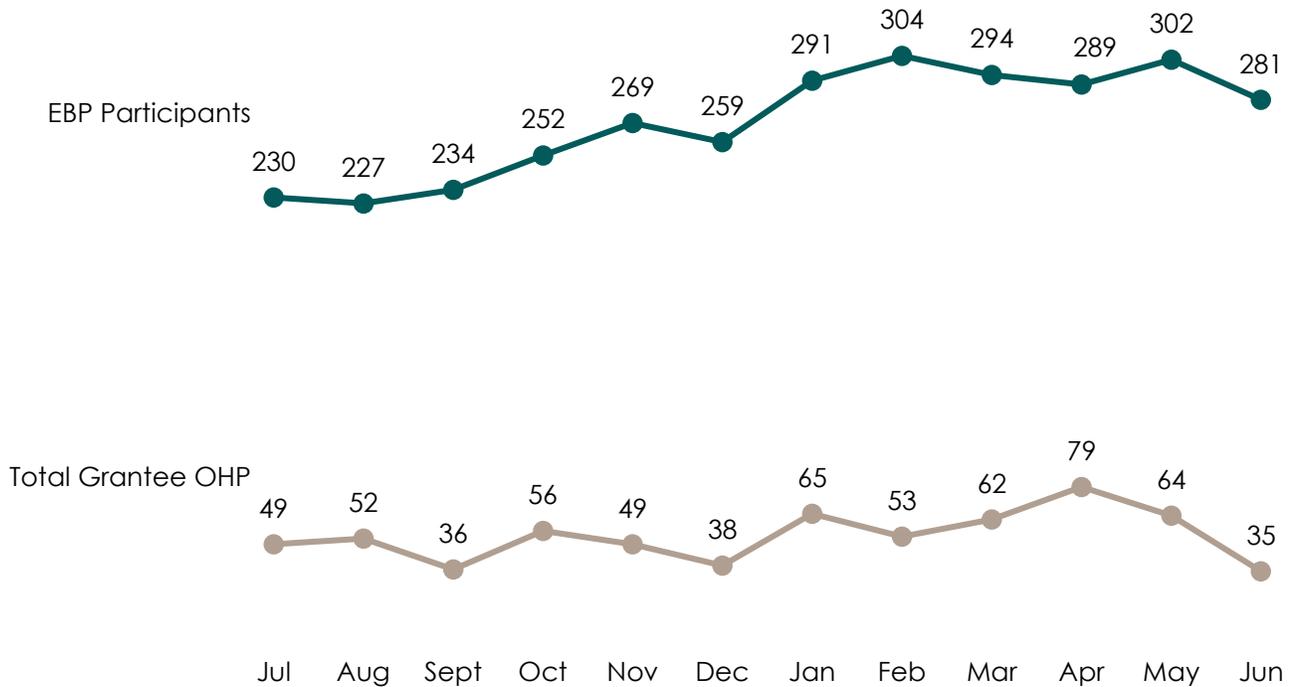


Figure 14 displays the monthly totals of OHPs and program participation for all grantee courts. In many instances, the monthly participation counts include the same participant over several months, as implementation of the EBP models occurs in multiple sessions over several weeks or months. Each OHP is a unique instance of an STP admission or felony commitment to DJJ during the reporting period.

Figure 14

**In FY 2022, the average monthly participant count was 269, with a high of 304 in February, and a low of 227 in August 2021.**

July 2021–June 2022



# CONCLUSION

During the ninth year of the JJIG, 25 grantees used one or more of the nine EBPs and other services to serve **872** youth across 33 Georgia counties. State and local partners, service providers, and participating families continued to adjust and meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting impact on programming throughout FY 2022. These programs provided grantee courts with alternatives to OHPs and assisted in reducing the number of STP admissions and felony commitments to DJJ by approximately **74%**. Since these 33 counties were home to 66% of Georgia's at-risk population (ages 0–16), targeting services in these local courts has a statewide impact (Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform, 2014; Georgia Juvenile Justice Data Clearinghouse, 2014; Puzanchera, Sladky, & Kang, 2021). Courts and their providers used a combination of individual-based family EBPs and group-based EBPs, with the majority of youth served by FFT (33% of enrollments), MST (28%), ART (16%), and T4C (9%).

During the ninth year of using community-based EBPs as alternatives to OHPs through the JJIG, grantees and the state of Georgia saw a number of programmatic successes including:

- **Reduction in out-of-home placements.** For the ninth consecutive year, grantees collectively saw reductions in STP admissions and felony commitments to DJJ, with a **74%** reduction in OHPs grant-wide. In addition, 24 out of 25 grantees exceeded their reduction targets.
- **Successful program outcomes.** Seven out of nine programs reported successful completion rates of 63% or higher. The overall successful completion rate in FY 2022 was **70%**—a 2% decrease from the previous year.
- **Use of evidence-based tools to refer appropriate youth into programming.** 99% of all EBP participants scored medium- or high-risk on the PDRA, the appropriate risk level for participants in the JJIG program. Enrolling youth suitable for each EBP contributes to their successful outcomes.
- **Model fidelity.** Due to the pandemic, CJCC temporarily suspended all FY 2022 site visits but provided ongoing model fidelity technical assistance support and training. Adherence to model fidelity is an important component of successful program outcomes. EBPs are most effective at reducing recidivism in juvenile populations when they are implemented as designed. The findings from the model fidelity group observations and other coaching support help strengthen program quality and improve outcomes for the youth receiving services.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: NUMBER OF GRANTEES BY EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM FOR FY 2022

Evidence-Based Programs	Number of Grantees using EBP	Grantee Court	
<b>Functional Family Therapy (FFT)</b>	12	Chatham Columbus-Muscogee Coweta DeKalb Dougherty Douglas	Fayette Hall Henry Lowndes Macon-Bibb Rockdale
<b>Multisystemic Therapy (MST)</b>	11	Augusta-Richmond Chatham Cherokee Clayton Columbus-Muscogee DeKalb	Fulton Gwinnett Hall Houston Troup
<b>Aggression Replacement Training (ART)</b>	7	Augusta-Richmond Clayton Cobb Columbia	DeKalb* Douglas Fulton
<b>Thinking for a Change (T4C)</b>	6	Bartow Cobb DeKalb	Glynn Gwinnett Walker
<b>Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)</b>	4	Chatham Douglas*	Fulton Gwinnett*
<b>Botvin LifeSkills Training (Botvin LST)</b>	2	Douglas	Union
<b>Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT)</b>	1	Cobb	
<b>Connections Wraparound (Connections)</b>	1	Walker	
<b>Multidimensional Family Therapy (MDFT)</b>	1	Union	

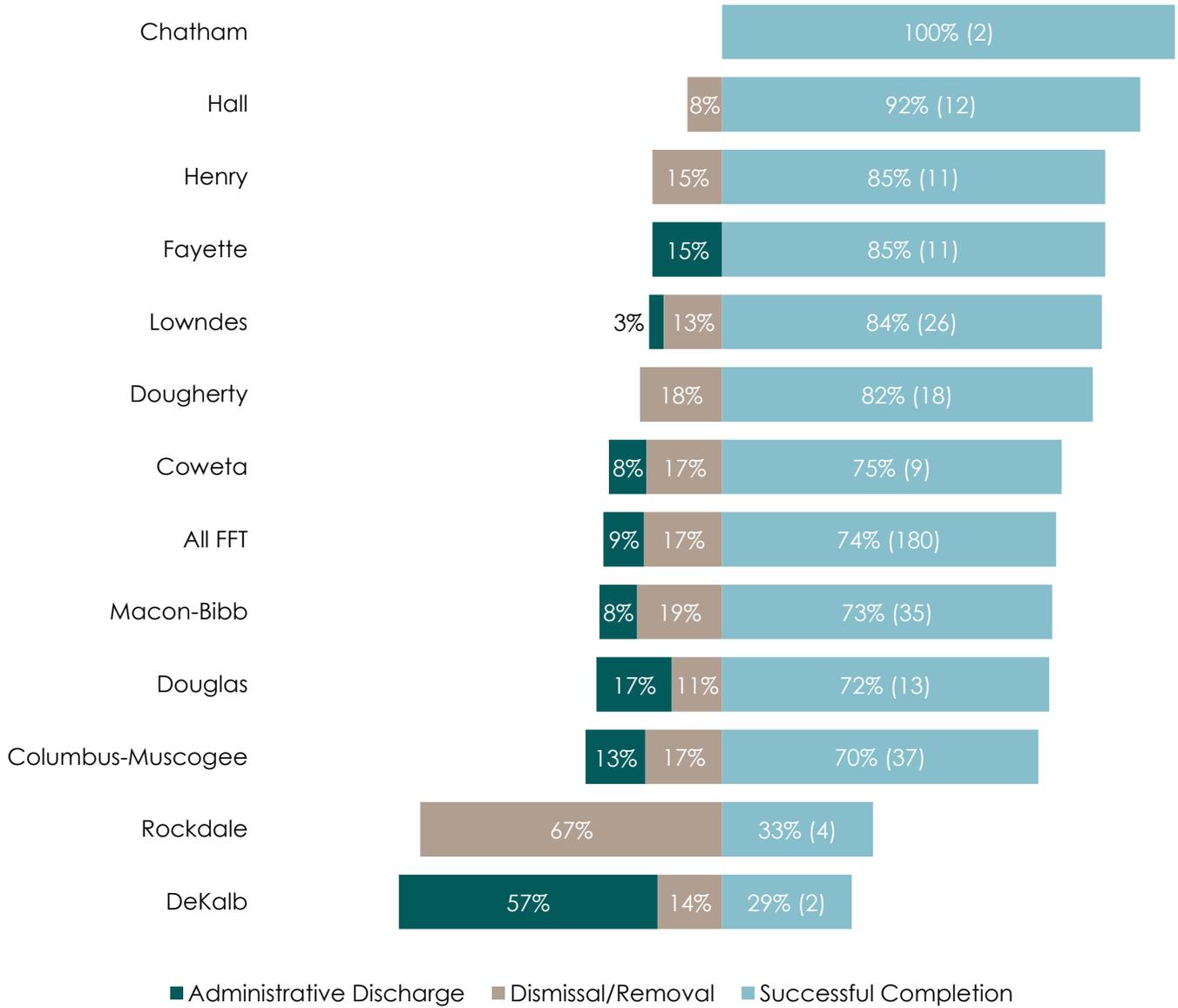
\* Indicates grantee planned on implementing this EBP in Year 9, but implementation was delayed due to COVID-19.

## APPENDIX B: GRANT AWARDEE SERVICE AREAS FOR FY 2022

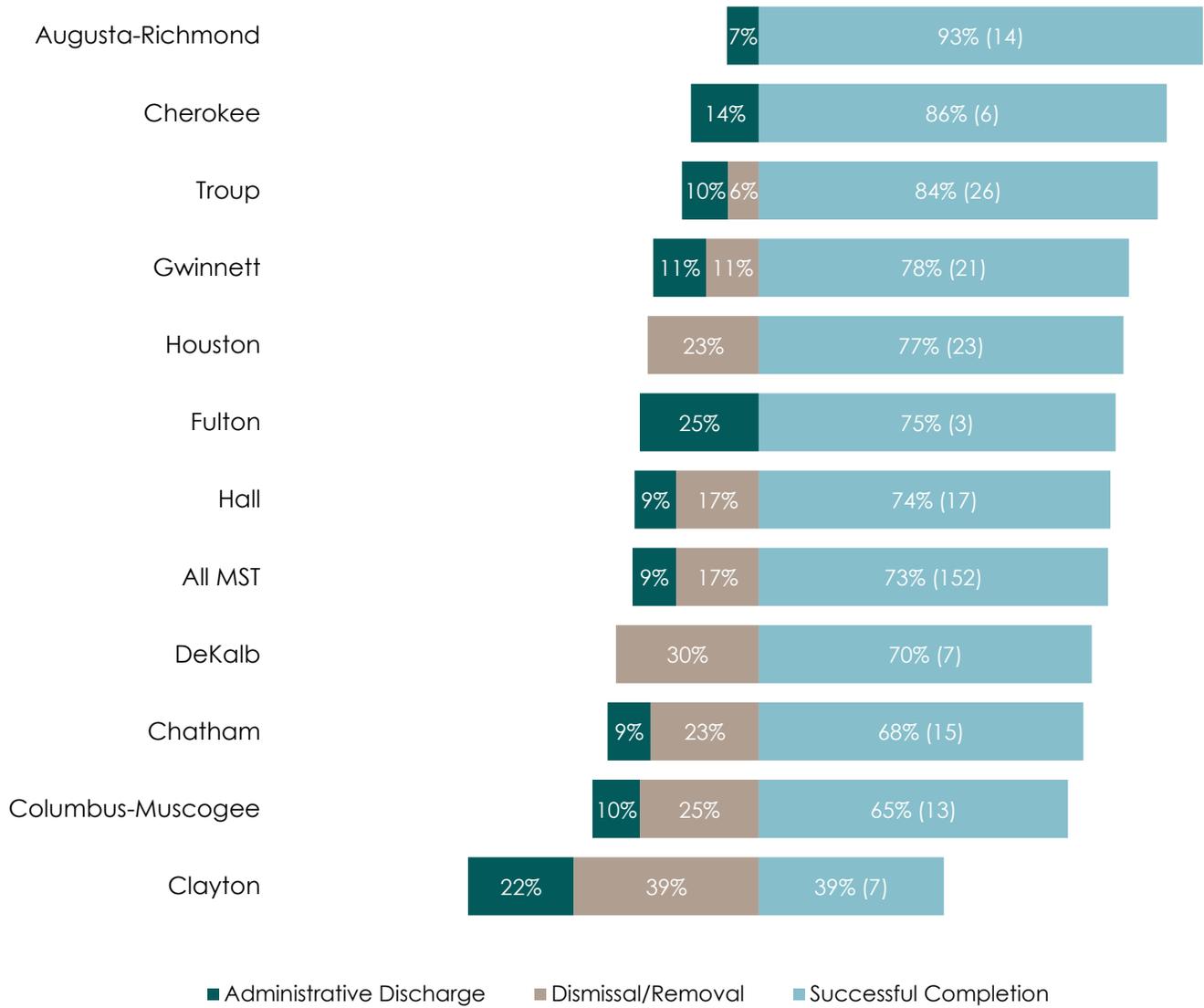
Applicant Agency	Primary County	Other Counties Served
Augusta-Richmond County	Richmond	
Bartow County	Bartow	
Chatham County Board of Commissioners	Chatham	
Cherokee County Board of Commissioners	Cherokee	
Clayton County Board of Commissioners	Clayton	
Cobb County Board of Commissioners	Cobb	
Columbia County Board of Commissioners	Columbia	
Columbus Consolidated Government	Muscogee	
Coweta County Board of Commissioners	Coweta	Heard, Meriwether
DeKalb County Government Board of Commissioners	DeKalb	
Dougherty County Board of Commissioners	Dougherty	
Douglas County Board of Commissioners	Douglas	
Fayette County Board of Commissioners	Fayette	
Fulton County Board of Commissioners	Fulton	
Glynn County Board of Commissioners	Glynn	
Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners	Gwinnett	
Hall County Board of Commissioners	Hall	
Henry County Board of Commissioners	Henry	
Houston County Board of Commissioners	Houston	
Lowndes County Board of Commissioners	Lowndes	
Macon-Bibb County Board of Commissioners	Bibb	
Rockdale County Board of Commissioners	Rockdale	
Troup County Board of Commissioners	Troup	
Union County Board of Commissioners	Union	Lumpkin, Towns, White
Walker County Board of Commissioners	Walker	Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade

# APPENDIX C: EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM OUTCOMES BY GRANTEE FOR FY 2022

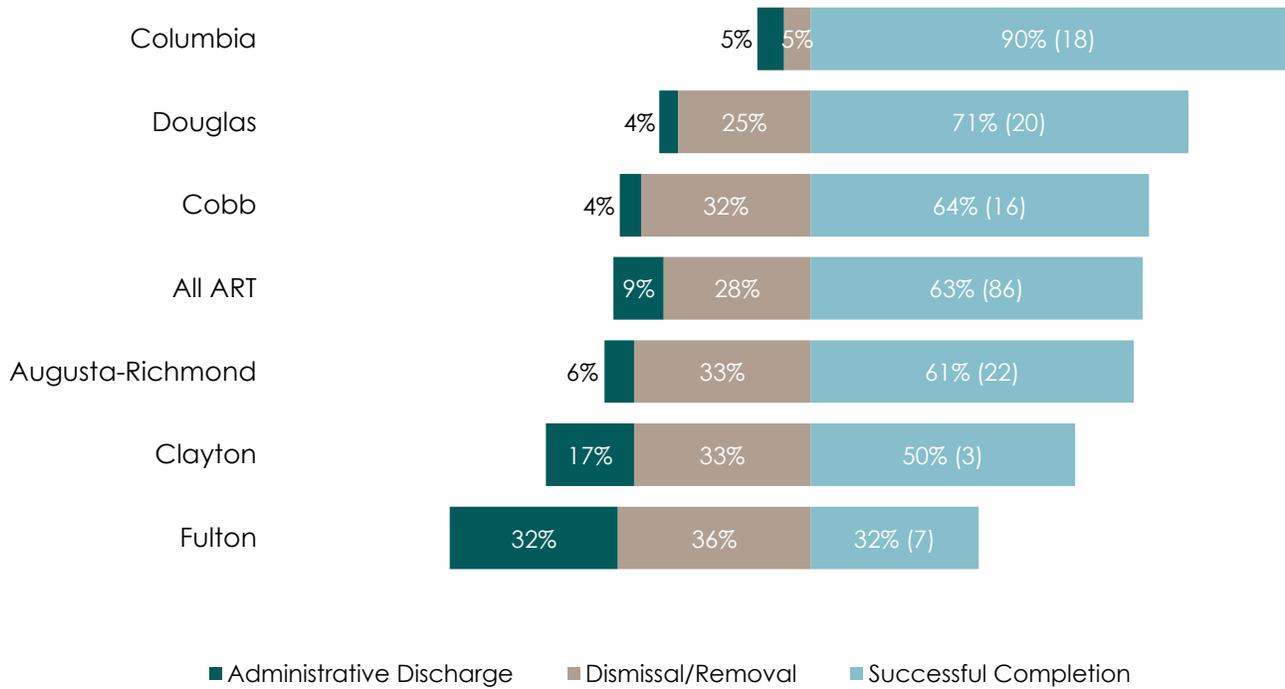
## FUNCTIONAL FAMILY THERAPY (FFT)



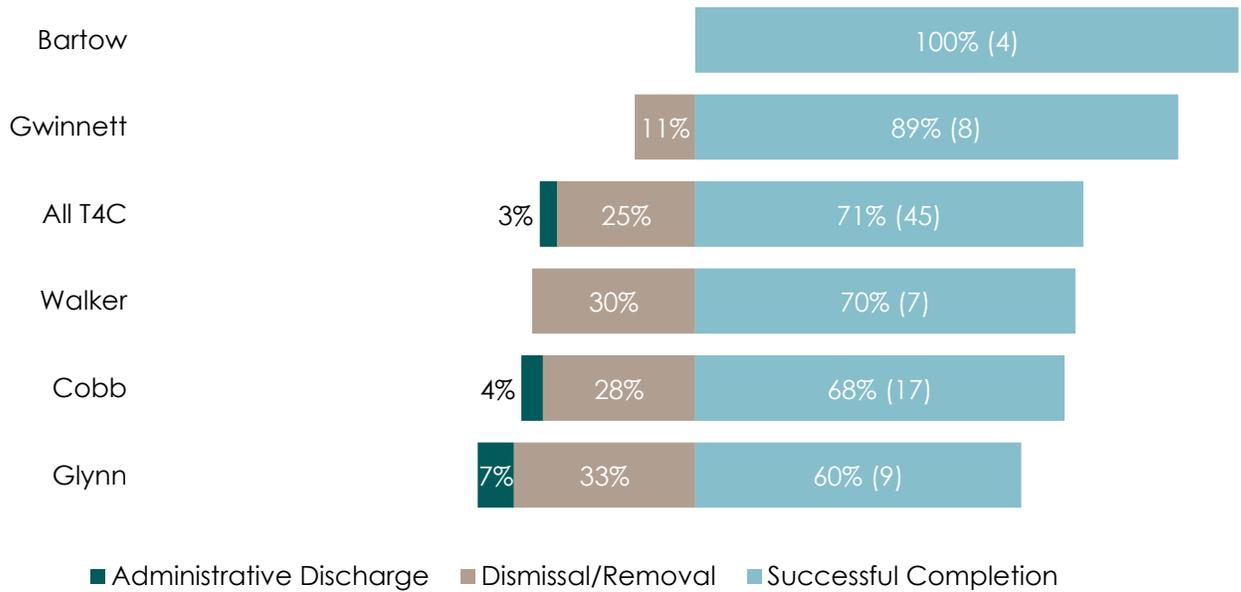
## MULTISYSTEMIC THERAPY (MST)



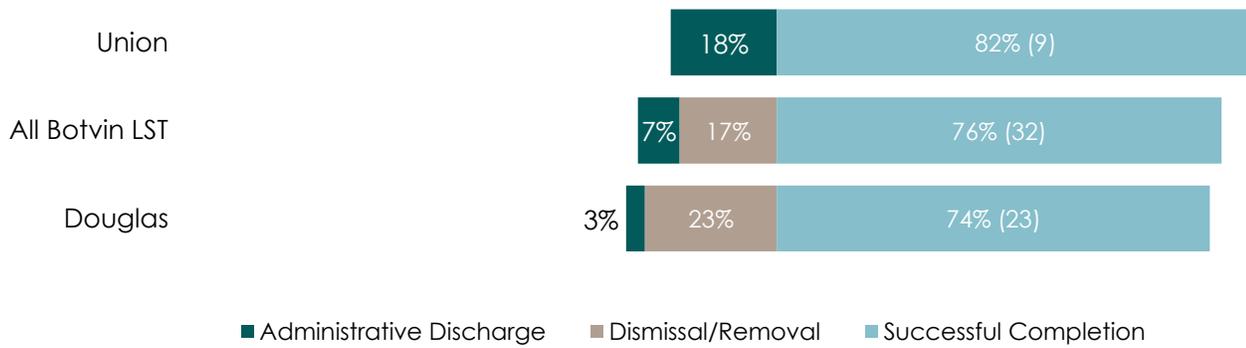
## AGGRESSION REPLACEMENT TRAINING (ART)



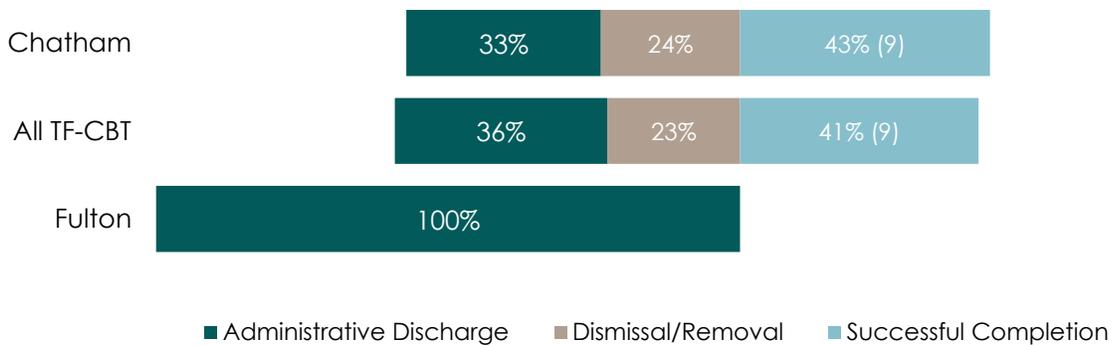
## THINKING FOR A CHANGE (T4C)



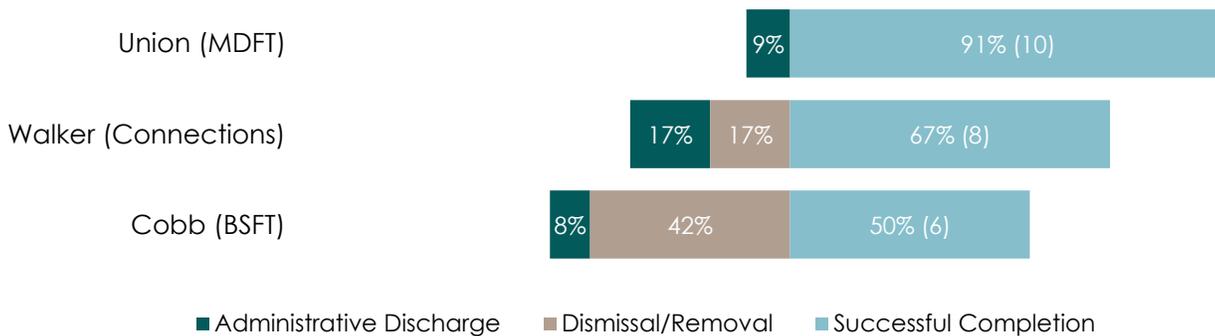
## BOTVIN LIFESKILLS TRAINING (BOTVIN LST)



## TRAUMA FOCUSED COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (TF-CBT)



## ALL OTHER EBPS



## **APPENDIX D: PROGRAM OUTCOME CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES**

Grantees report program exits each month using the following categories and subcategories:

### **1. Successful Completion**

### **2. Administrative Discharge Subcategories**

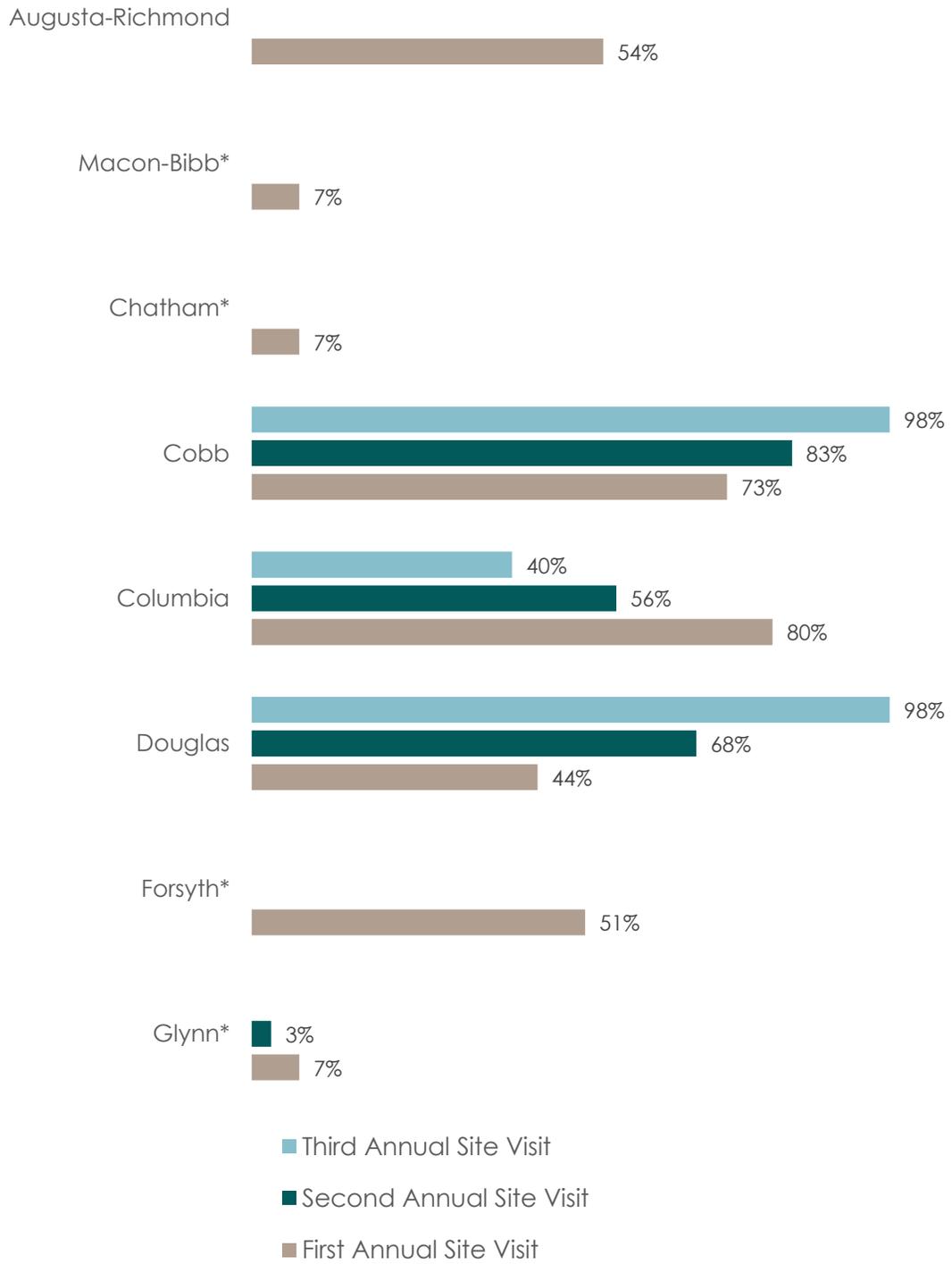
- a. Death
- b. Guardianship Terminated/Family Therapy Not Applicable
- c. Inactive Status Mental Health/Substance Abuse/Medical
- d. Lost Jurisdiction
- e. Moved from Area Prior to Completing Treatment
- f. Other Administrative Reason
- g. Program Terminated for Inappropriate Placement
- h. Unable to Initiate Services

### **3. Dismissal/Removal Subcategories**

- a. Failure to Pass Urinalysis Screens
- b. New Arrests
- c. Non-attendance
- d. Non-compliance – Parent
- e. Non-compliance – Youth
- f. Other as Determined in Service Plan or by EBP
- g. Probation Violations

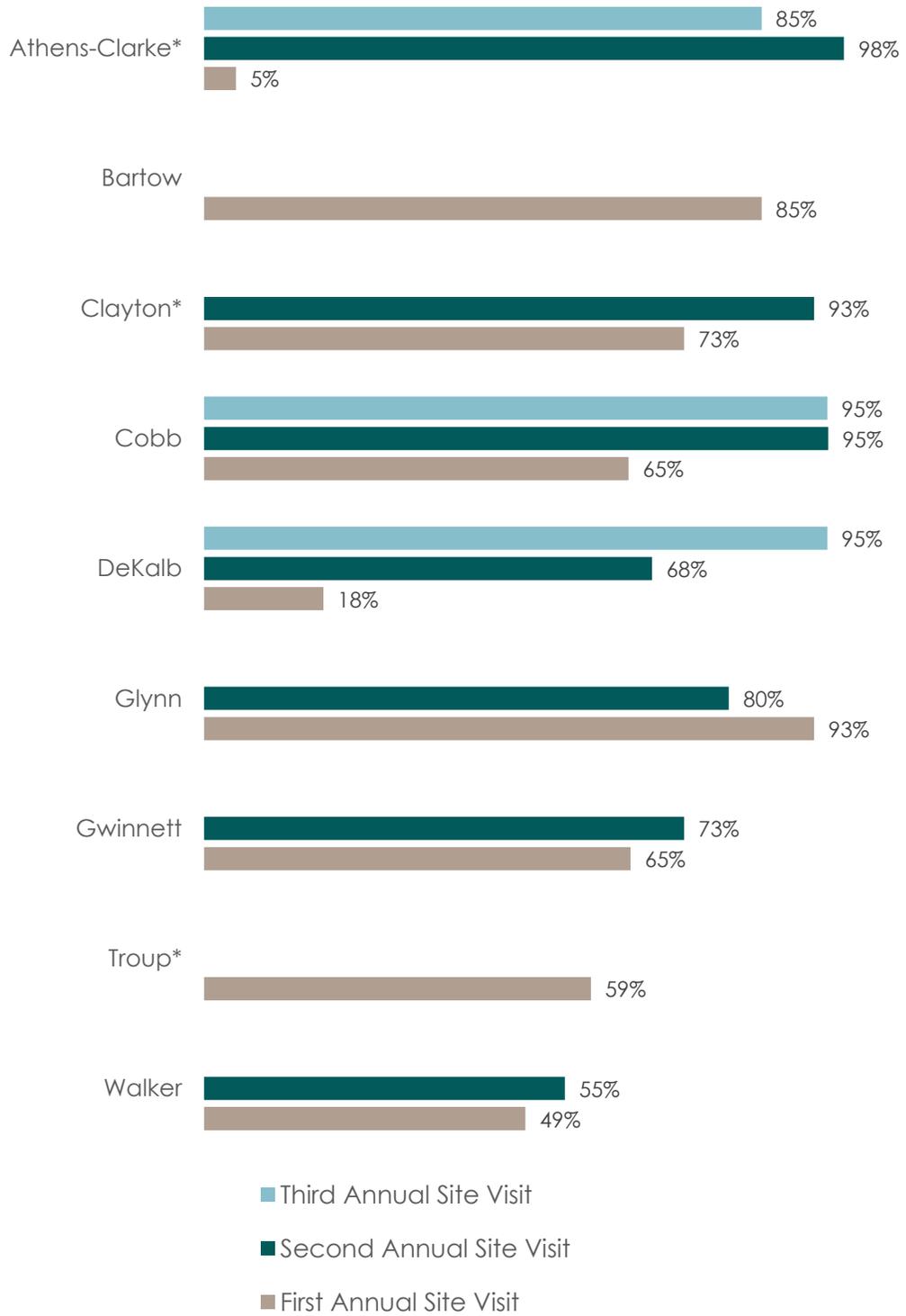
# APPENDIX E: GEORGIA JUVENILE JUSTICE INCENTIVE GRANT MODEL FIDELITY ANNUAL SITE VISIT SCORES FOR FY 2016 TO FY 2020

## AGGRESSION REPLACEMENT TRAINING (ART)



\*No longer active.

## THINKING FOR A CHANGE (T4C)



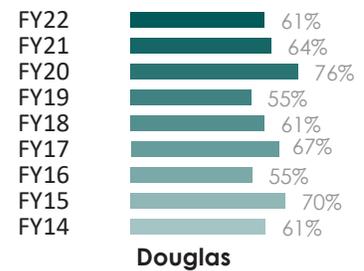
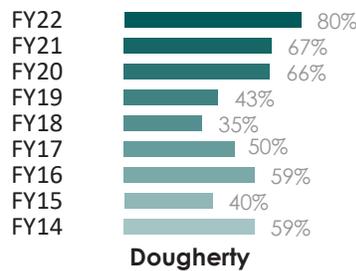
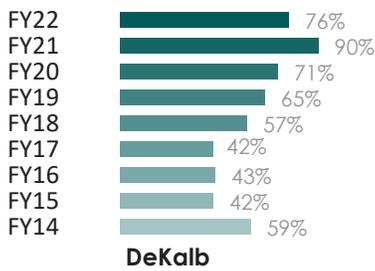
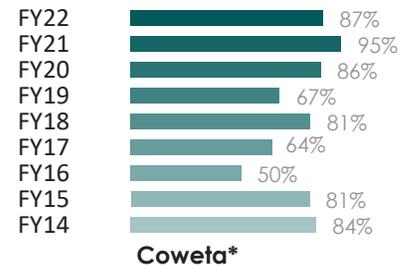
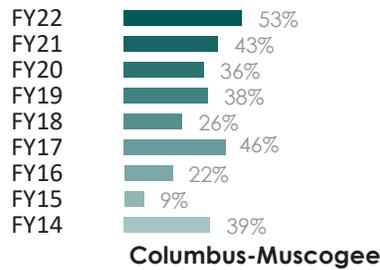
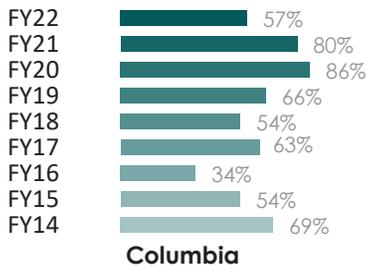
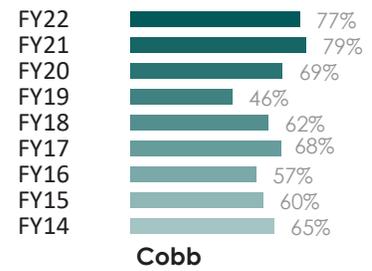
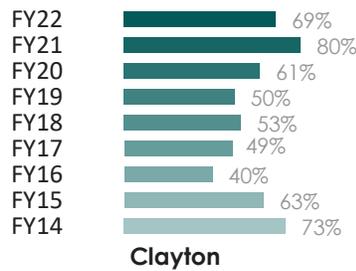
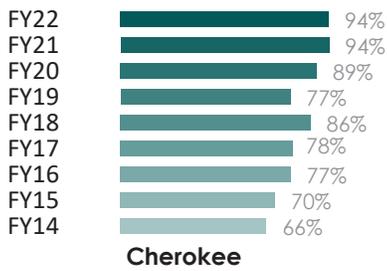
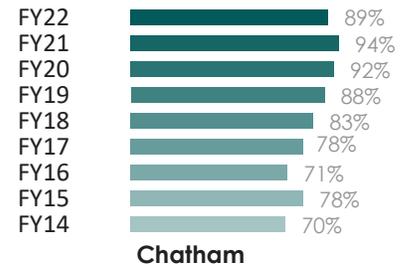
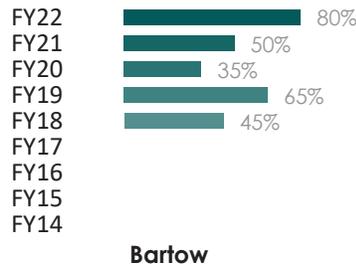
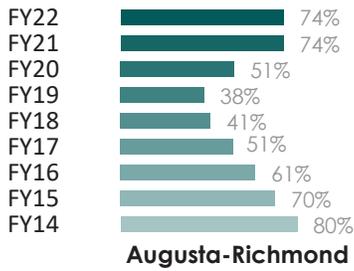
\*No longer active.

## APPENDIX F: OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS (COMBINED STP ADMISSIONS AND FELONY COMMITMENTS TO DJJ) FOR FY 2022

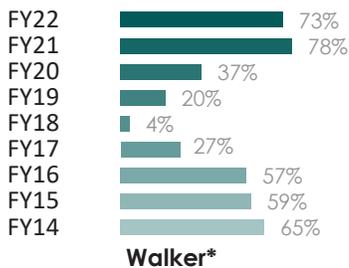
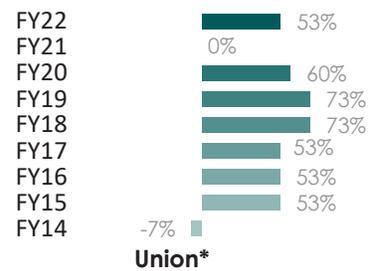
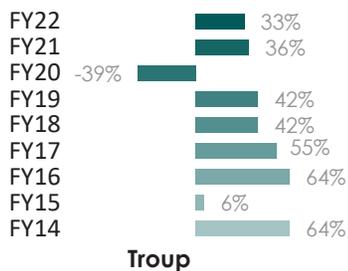
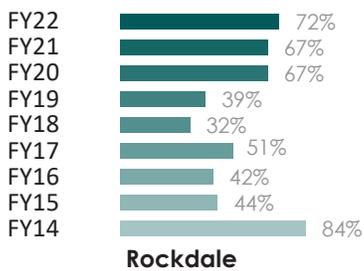
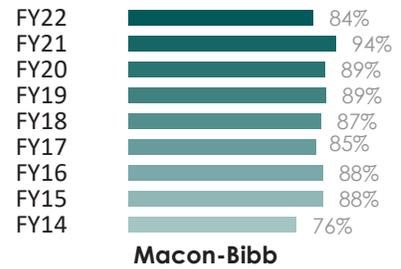
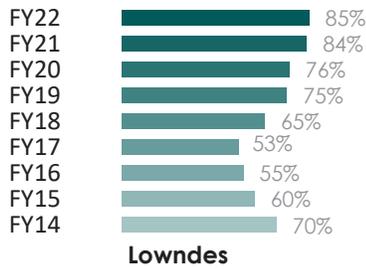
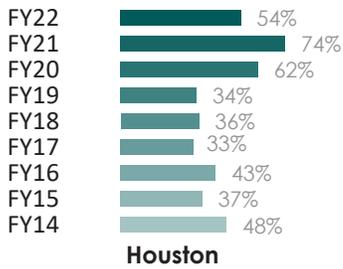
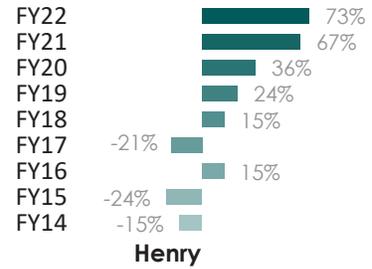
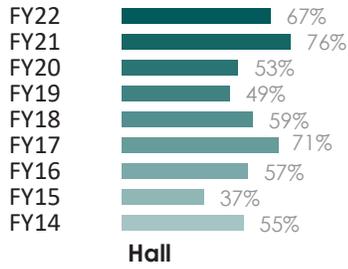
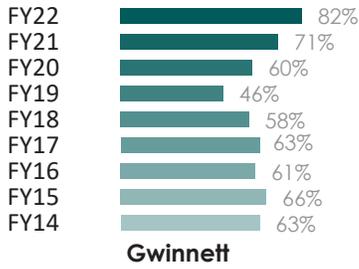
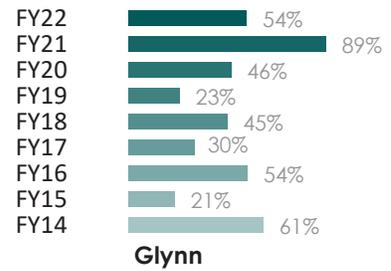
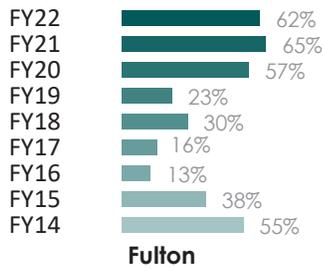
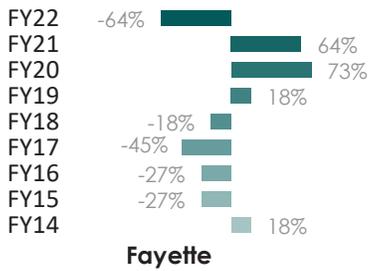
Primary County	2012 Baseline	OHP Totals	Reduction Number	Reduction %
Augusta-Richmond	103	27	76	74%
Bartow	20	4	16	80%
Chatham	310	33	277	89%
Cherokee	86	5	81	94%
Clayton	70	22	48	69%
Cobb	141	33	108	77%
Columbia	35	15	20	57%
Columbus-Muscogee	174	81	93	53%
Coweta*	86	11	75	87%
Dekalb	202	48	154	76%
Dougherty	141	28	113	80%
Douglas	33	13	20	61%
Fayette	11	18	-7	-64%
Fulton	141	53	88	62%
Glynn	56	26	30	54%
Gwinnett	213	38	175	82%
Hall	76	25	51	67%
Henry	33	9	24	73%
Houston	90	41	49	54%
Lowndes	86	13	73	85%
Macon-Bibb	226	37	189	84%
Rockdale	57	16	41	72%
Troup	33	22	11	33%
Union*	15	7	8	53%
Walker*	49	13	36	73%

\*Grantee court serves multiple counties.

# APPENDIX G: OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT REDUCTION PERCENTAGES FOR FY 2014 TO FY 2022

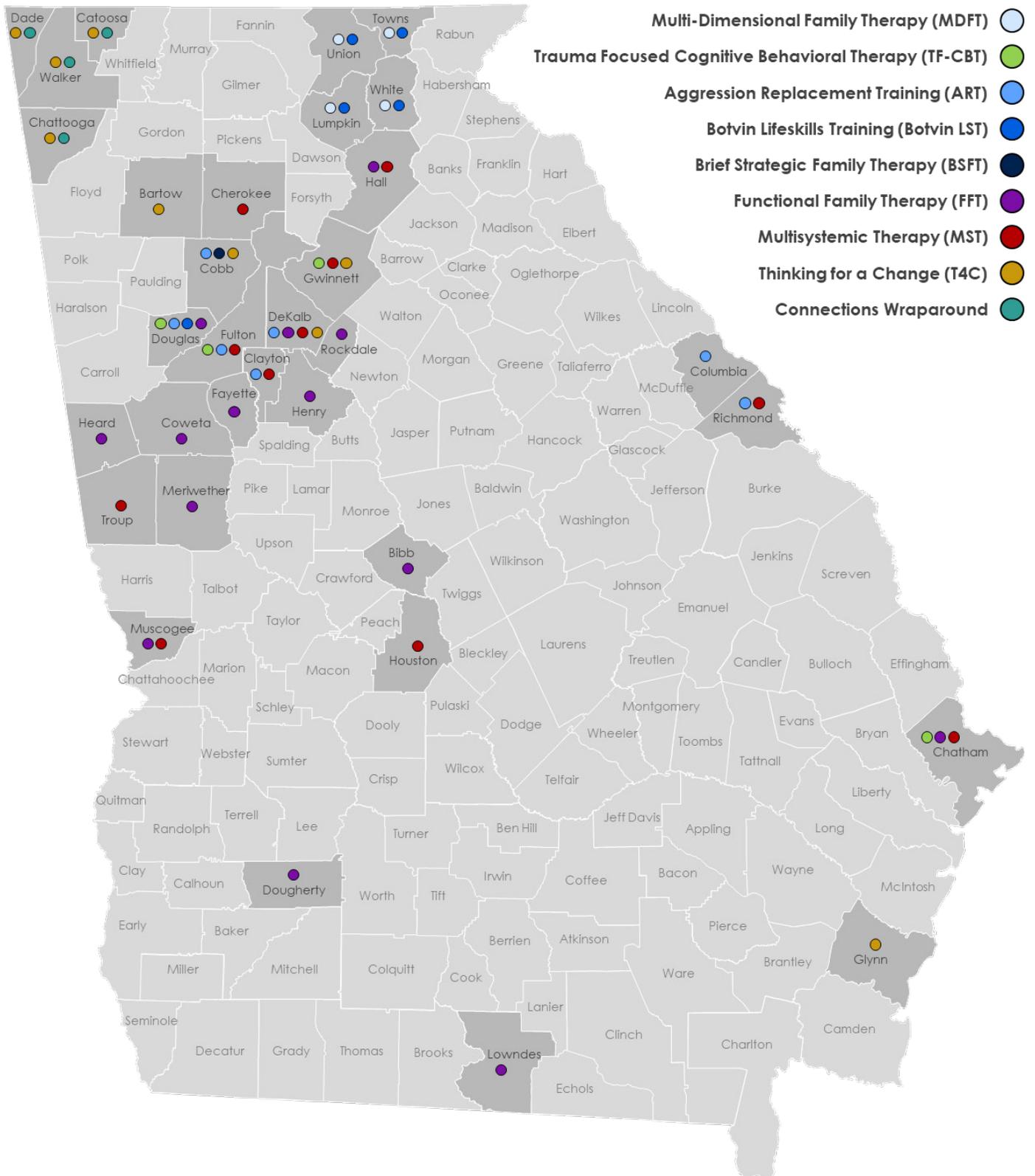


\*Grantee court serves multiple counties.



\*Grantee court serves multiple counties.

# APPENDIX H: GEORGIA JUVENILE JUSTICE INCENTIVE GRANT EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION FOR FY 2022







**Carl Vinson  
Institute of Government**  
**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

Since 1927, the Carl Vinson Institute of Government has been an integral part of the University of Georgia. A public service and outreach unit of the university, the Institute of Government is the largest and most comprehensive university-based organization serving governments in the United States. Through research services, customized assistance, training and development, and the application of technology, we have the expertise to meet the needs of government at all levels throughout Georgia. The Institute of Government's survey research and evaluation specialists support policy research and technical assistance activities for state and local governments as well as for other university programs. Evaluation experts at the Institute of Government are skilled at assessing the effectiveness of different endeavors, from individual programs to interdepartmental or even system-wide efforts.

## **GEORGIA JUVENILE JUSTICE INCENTIVE GRANT**

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**Year Nine 2021-2022 | Evaluation Report**