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Bill # / Title: SB093 - Juvenile Court – Jurisdiction  
Committee: Judicial Proceedings Committee (JPR)  
Position: Support

## **ABOUT ROCA**

Roca is an internationally recognized organization moving the needle on urban violence by working relentlessly with young people at the center of it. Roca's four-year Intervention Model features relentless outreach to young people; a highly portable and relatable version of cognitive behavioral theory (CBT); and opportunities to practice skills, relapse, and repeat, through trauma-informed employment, education, and life skills programming. And because it takes all of us, Roca helps institutions like police, probation, and parole change the way they work with traumatized young people.

## **ROCA BALTIMORE**

In 2018, Baltimore's civic and corporate leaders invested in launching Roca's first national replication in the City of Baltimore. Four years into this work, Roca Baltimore has worked with 445 young men (ages 16-25) in the city and achieved unprecedented coordination with the Baltimore Police Department, Maryland Department of Juvenile Services, and Maryland Department of Probation & Parole. Roca leadership has also been working with the Baltimore County Executive and his team to plan and launch work with up to 40 young men in Baltimore County, focusing on the Essex/Dundalk Area. Roca has already begun to meet with young men referred from MD DJS. The Roca Impact Institute has also provided several trainings for Baltimore County Police on brain science and emotional regulation.

## **Roca 2019-2022 Outcomes**

- ✓ 445 Young Men Served
- ✓ 79% **NOT** Re-Arrested after 2 Years of Enrollment
- ✓ 98% **NOT** Re-Incarcerated after 2 Years of Enrollment

## **ROCA IMPACT INSTITUTE AND MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES GRANT**

Roca and the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) are engaged in a unique joint initiative designed to accelerate juvenile justice transformation and emphasize models of violence prevention that focusses on adolescent brain science, the impact of trauma, and Roca's unique Rewire cognitive behavioral theory as a community-based intervention.

In 2021, DJS received a federal grant from the US Department of Justice of more than \$996,000 designed to ensure that youth under DJS supervision will learn skills for emotional regulation and healthy decision-making and ultimately promote successful leaders in the community. Through the partnership with Roca's Impact Institute (RII), DJS is working to expand upon its current agencywide reform agenda to complete an intensive planning process that includes the use of data and review and restructure of community-based services, ensuring that services are best aligned with the pressing needs of the highest-risk young people and allowing probation staff to deliver interventions that are



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research-based, trauma informed, and aligned to the developmental needs of young people in their care.

#### **ROCA COORDINATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Under the consent decree, the Department of Justice has approved that The Roca Impact Institute will prepare BDP staff to train an estimated 2,000 Baltimore City Police Officers in Rewire<sup>4</sup>, an adapted version of Rewire CBT that is designed for police working on the front lines of violence. This work will launch in 2023. Rewire<sup>4</sup> is different from traditional police training, which is often focused on tactics, but does not necessarily address why people react the way they do in the moment. Rewire<sup>4</sup> is designed to build a foundational understanding of brain science and how the impact of trauma fuels many common high-intensity encounters. Rewire<sup>4</sup> then teaches officers research-based methods to better engage with the community when policing, increase understanding of adolescent and young adult behavior, and promote officer wellness.

#### **ROCA SUPPORTS SB 93**

Roca's mission is centered around identifying and connecting evidence-based efforts to young people at the center of violence. Roca's actions directly focus on healing the trauma young people experience and creating pathways for behavior change, which has resulted in a reduction of violence and a reduction of incarceration for those young people we serve. To that end, Roca very much believes that young people should be treated in the system best designed to meet their individual needs based on their adolescent development, and therefore firmly supports ending the automatic charging of youth as adults in Maryland.

We know young people can change; we know when we invest in young people, we create safer communities. Together with engaged institutions, violence prevention collaborations, and the commitment to equip frontline staff with the tools to support behavior change - Maryland is positioned to forward and effectively implement the provisions of SB 93.

For these reasons, Roca urges a favorable report on SB 93.