

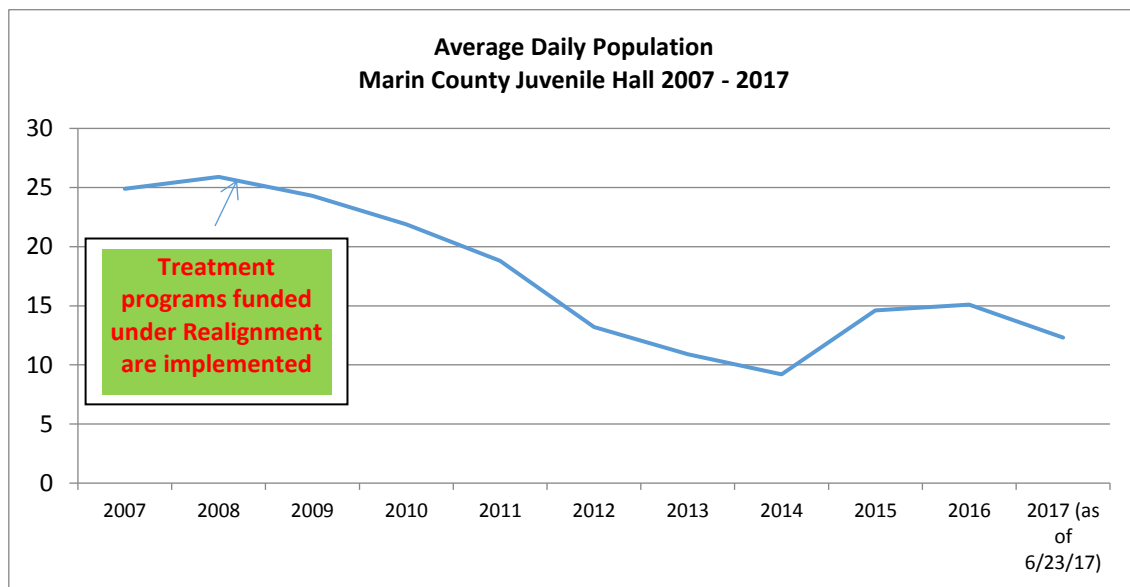


# CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS OF CALIFORNIA

## Conference Spotlight: Marin County Probation

In 2006, a significant percentage of those youth detained in our Juvenile Hall were in dire need of mental health services. Average daily population at our facility had remained fairly constant, between 24 and 28 youth, for nearly a decade. Fortunately, in 2007, our Department was awarded two competitive grants that allowed us to create a robust and effective set of treatment programs for youth and families. These programs provided the full range of services, including individual and family therapy, and they addressed both substance abuse and all other forms of mental illness. As expected, the existence of these programs offered Deputy Probation Officers more resources to provide for youth, and thus less of a need to rely on detention to ensure the safety of both the public and the child.

Both of these grants expired after three years, and in 2010, our Department chose to continue them using Youthful Offender Block Grant funds afforded under Realignment. As shown in the chart below, the average daily population of our Juvenile Hall continued to decline. It is important to keep in mind that there was also no corresponding increase in juvenile crime over this time period.



The key treatment program funded under Realignment during this time has been Programs of Responsive Treatment and Linkages (PORTAL). This treatment program consists of three Mental Health Practitioners and a Mental Health Unit Supervisor, all of whom are trained in Functional Family therapy (FFT). This program provides mental health services inside the Juvenile Hall, at school sites and in clients' homes. Since the program's inception, 378 of the highest risk youth and their families have received intensive therapeutic services, and several hundreds of youth detained in Juvenile Hall have undergone assessments, and been provided crisis counseling. The value of having well trained, experienced and

capable mental health professionals available to provide services is nearly incalculable. Certainly there have been other factors that have contributed to the drop in average daily population of our Juvenile Hall, but it is likely that the existence of PORTAL services is an important reason why we have seen such a reduction.