

PROJECT RISE

LEADER PROFILE: KEVIN GILBOY

“Humans make mistakes. It’s how we handle these mistakes that matter.” - Kevin Gilboy

Kevin Gilboy serves as the superintendent of the Milwaukee County Division Youth and Family Services (DYFS) at the Vel R. Phillips Youth Detention Center. His team supervises about 85 youth each day.

Gilboy joined DYFS 28 years ago as a youth correctional officer. At that time, the prevailing philosophy for youth offenders was to “lock them up,” and there was little thought about how to prepare youth for life after detention. Gilboy worked with the DYFS team to change the philosophy for youth justice, moving from a punitive approach to treatment focused on rehabilitation and therapy in the Youth Detention Center. Youth now participate in group therapy, educational programs, and instructional recreation. These programs teach coping skills, prepare youth for employment, engage them in the arts and more.

Gilboy serves as chair for the State of Wisconsin committee for assessment tools, working to put objective tools in place across the state to assess youth entering detention and make appropriate placements. In his previous role as a custody placement specialist, he used validated tools like the Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (DRAI) and the Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI) to assess a youth and determine their risk level, and appropriately place them in detention and in community-based programs to ensure the best results.

