

BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES & PHILOSOPHIES

VISION

Successful Youth, Strong Families, Safer Communities.

MISSION

To guide youth involved in juvenile justice to a successful future and to support public safety.

VALUES

Quality Service, Integrity, Transparency,
Teamwork, Leadership, Respect.



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services is committed to supporting our youth involved in juvenile justice as well as to the safety of our communities. Staff work together to provide support by surrounding youth with services that lead to their success.

This Blueprint provides a model and framework of guiding principles that enhance our work with adjudicated youth including assessment and screening, case planning, treatment, and reentry. It is intended to give a sense of our evolution as a Division, telling the story of where we've been and where we are going.

The development of the plan is a compilation of the work completed by staff during the three day strategic planning sessions as well as the culmination of the collaborative work by the Quality Improvement Unit, the agency's leadership, and participation in the Juvenile Justice Reform and Reinvestment Initiative that has helped us build upon and sustain an evidence based platform.

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the following partners in the development of this Blueprint: Frontline staff, union representatives, supervisors and managers, Quality Improvement Unit, Office of Defense Services, Department of Justice, Family Court, and the Director's Office.

Additionally, we are grateful for the guidance and technical assistance provided by the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University, Shay Bilchik and Catherine Conly, and Peabody Research Institute at Vanderbilt University, Dr. Mark Lipsey and Dr. Gabrielle Chapman.

Nancy S. Dutz



BACKGROUND

The Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services is the lead juvenile justice agency serving youth ordered to our care through the judicial system. We are responsible for assessing the needs of youth and collaborating with their families, school, and support systems to coordinate services aimed at addressing the factors which contributed to delinquency.

Youth who are involved with DYRS receive services and supervision through the program areas:

Civil Citation- Statewide civil alternative to formal arrest and prosecution of youth under 18 who commit specific low level misdemeanor offenses.

Community Services- Pretrial, probation and aftercare case management for youth who are court ordered to the Division in either pre-adjudication status or post adjudication status.

Detention Services- Secure care supervision of detained youth who have pending charges in Family Court and were ordered to secure detention as part of the bail disposition or for youth who have been adjudicated and are awaiting transfer to a treatment facility.

Residential Alternatives to Detention- Staff secure supervision of youth in pre-adjudication status in contracted facilities.

Secure Care Treatment- Residential services designed for youth who pose a risk to themselves or public safety and require intensive residential services. Services are provided through placements located in state or through programs contracted out of state which provide specialized treatment. These placements are considered level IV or level V.

We are committed to providing the best opportunity to achieve positive outcomes for the youth and families we serve. As such, we have

embraced continuous quality improvement as a self-evaluating measure of systemic factors that have affected the population we serve.

Our focus on quality is a result of incorporating best practices and tools to serve our youth.

Prior to our use of a risk assessment tool, bond determination and sentence recommendation was based largely on a youth's charged or adjudicated offense. There was little consideration at the time of sentencing for the needs and risk level of the youth determined by a validated risk instrument. As a result, populations in level IV and level V facilities were comprised of youth committed for violent offenses, misdemeanors, drug court sanctions and violations of probation. At the beginning of the millennium, Delaware enacted legislation to increase penalties for youth based on certain offenses. This led to longer stays in detention and created overpopulation and fiscal impacts for our facilities. State residential treatment facilities were at maximum capacity. There were no prescribed criteria for committing youth to placement beyond the charged offense. In the fiscal year of 2001, Ferris School for Boys was at 100% capacity with an average of 72 youth for the daily census. New Castle County Detention was 184% over capacity with an average daily population of 118 youth for the same fiscal year.

To address the increase in facility populations, we engaged a collaborative of stakeholders and began working with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to implement the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI). Through this process, an impartial and standardized risk assessment instrument was implemented for use at the time of a juvenile's bond hearing. Stakeholders developed legislative reform which identified detainable offenses and mandated residential alternatives for status offenses. Along with the systemic reforms, the Division expanded



the resources available for pretrial support and supervision. As a result, there was a significant reduction in the amount of youth detained. The effect can be seen in the fiscal year 2010 average daily population at New Castle County Detention Center which was reduced to 77% capacity with 49 youth. Ferris School for Boys reduced their population by 8% with 66 youth as a daily average for that same year.

After seeing the positive impact of reform for deep end youth, we focused our efforts on restructuring our Community Services unit to address the needs for front end youth. This program area was suffering from problems similar to those which the detention and residential facilities were facing before their reform. Sentencing was not determined by a valid risk/needs instrument and level of probation was decided based on offense causing caseloads to be drastically high. In 2001, there were 6,184 active cases assigned to probation officers. In 2010, this number decreased by 31% to 4,293 active youth. This was a result of increased diversion through courts and an effect from Annie E. Casey reforms. In 2010, caseload sizes for youth sentenced to level II, considered to be low to moderate youth, were in excess of 70 cases. Caseload sizes for level III sentenced youth, considered to be moderate-high or high risk, were in excess of 55 per probation officer. Though there was a reduction in overall cases, caseloads for probation officers still remained high and allowed little time to do much more than monitor compliance with court ordered conditions.

Reform was necessary to improve the outcomes of the youth involved with the Division. The reform was aided by the development of the Juvenile Justice Collaborative and the Division's participation with the Juvenile Justice Reform and Reinvestment Initiative (JJRRI) with technical assistance led by the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University. These two events

created an opportunity to form a responsive evidence based decision making platform for serving youth by matching services to address their criminogenic needs. Several initiatives through these partnerships allowed us to reduce community caseload sizes by another 42% to 2,470 for the fiscal year 2015. Those successes include utilizing a risk instrument post adjudication for all youth, realigning probation officers to create a unit to specialize in initial assessments, and contracting for low level service providers who offer services appropriate for youth at a low risk level. The shift to limit low level youth's contact with the system, enabled probation officers to focus on moderate, moderate high and high risk youth on supervision or aftercare status. To enhance the resources available to address the criminogenic needs of these youth we:

1. Contracted with Evidence-Based services to provide the best opportunity to address youth needs and prevent deeper end services.
2. Increased services to enhance the continuum to match with the criminogenic needs found in the assessment.
3. Mandated Trauma-Informed training for all division staff in an effort to become more responsive to the underlying causes of a youth's system involvement.
4. Tailored the intensity of services to match youth's risk level while maintaining criteria for flow between levels to address behavioral concerns.
5. Coordinated with academic partners through grant opportunities to organize committees to review practices from diversion through placement.
6. Implemented use of Standard Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™) to determine effectiveness of program services offered to youth.



7. Developed the dispositional matrix with stakeholders and implemented its use within DYRS to guide sentencing recommendations based on a youth's risk and offense.
8. Focused on staffing levels to maintain safety and **quality of service**.

These system and service strategies allow us to focus on our role as a neutral decision maker. We rely on validated tools to guide youth assignment, case planning, and service evaluation to be more informative during the dispositional process. The use of tools has improved the consistency and objectivity of staff recommendations regarding supervision and services. We are also in a position to evaluate our outcomes over time since the decision making is driven by data which can be measured.

As a Division, we recognize efforts for successful outcomes do not happen in a silo. Each step of reform has been inclusive of our system stakeholders which has led to the success that has been achieved. In order for the youth and families we serve to be successful we must continue to work collaboratively and in step with system stakeholders. Those system stakeholders include:

- **Courts**
- **Community**
- **Department of Education**
- **Department of Justice**
- **Family Services**
- **Law Enforcement**
- **Legislature**
- **Office of Defense Services**
- **Prevention and Behavioral Health**

Building Blocks

The strategies contained in this Blueprint are supported by current research and best practices which indicate the use of assessment tools coupled with services which address dynamic needs reduces recidivism. Along with working toward this goal, the Division is committed to helping youth develop pro-social skills to strengthen the likelihood of positive outcomes.

Through research and education, we have learned low risk and moderate risk youth are best served in community, non-residential programs. This limits their exposure to youth with more serious delinquency events and prevents them from incurring risk which is inherent with the experience of being committed to placement. We know most low risk youth will not return to the juvenile justice system. Coordinating services for these youth which are consistent with addressing their needs and limiting their contact with the justice system creates best outcomes. By treating these youth at a level consistent with their risk, community services and residential programs can focus on the smaller population of higher risk youth they serve. Services can be more individualized and concentrate on treatment oriented approaches which include trauma informed care, cognitive behavioral therapy, family engagement, and early reentry planning.

This Blueprint is one step in our journey to educate and incorporate the key concepts at the center of our evidence based platform. It is intended to help us operationalize distinct strategies to promote the sustainability of what we know works to reduce recidivism and promote positive outcomes.



HISTORICAL TIMELINE

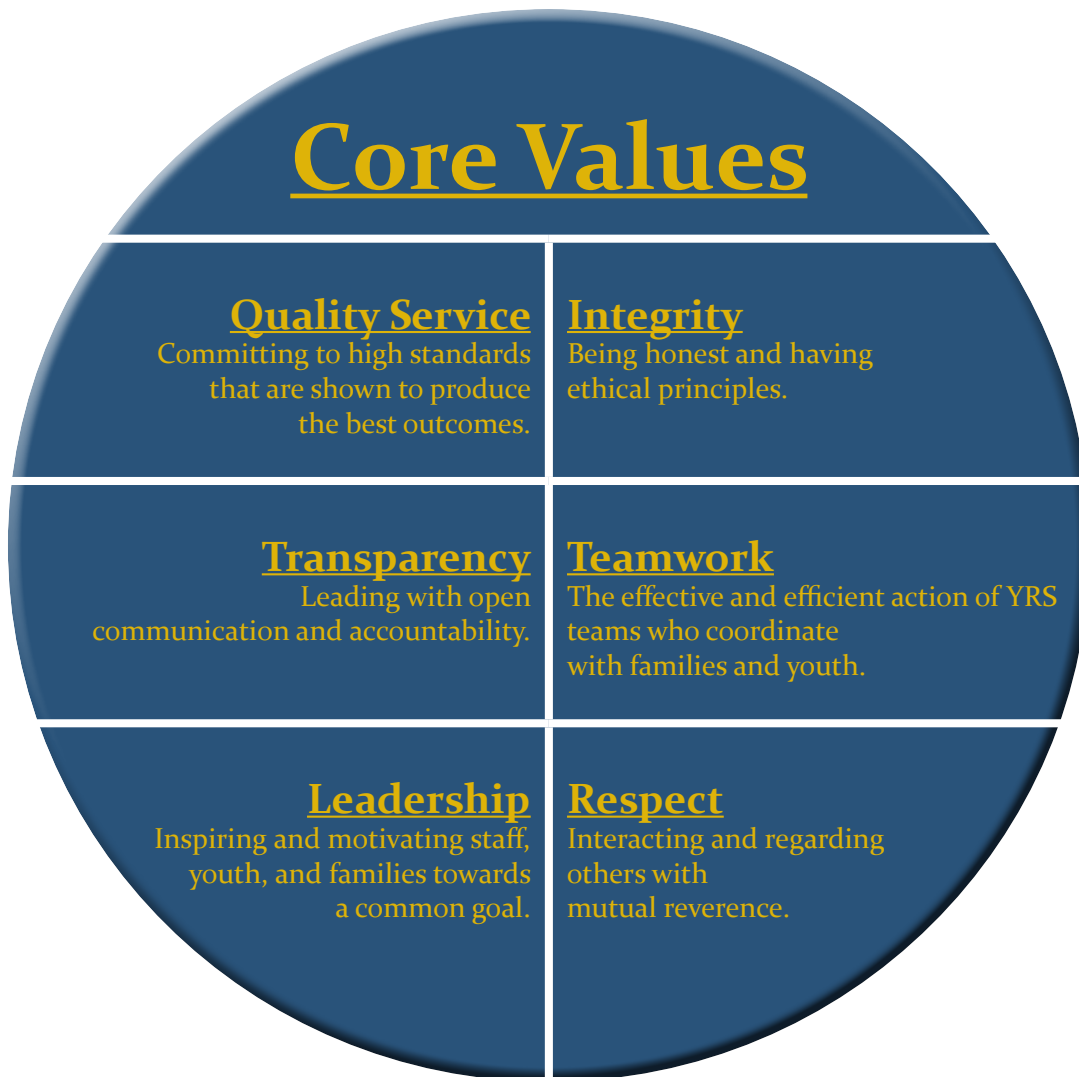
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| 1983 | The Department of Services for Children Youth and Their Families is created and incorporates Youth Rehabilitative Services, Prevention and Behavioral Health Services, and Family Services. |
| 1992 | In December of 1992, the New Castle County Detention Center opens. |
| 1995 | American Civil Liberties Union settlement in regards to overcrowding and conditions of confinement at the New Castle County Detention Center. |
| 1995 | The Division develops a range of alternative services to Ferris School, including day treatment programs, residential treatment, specialized foster care, and intensive supervision. |
| 1997 | The New Ferris School for Boys opens. |
| 2002 | The New Stevenson House Detention Center opens. |
| 2002 | House Bill 210 goes into effect, increasing the populations in secure detention. |
| 2002 | Annie E. Casey works with the State of Delaware to address overcrowding in detention facilities. |
| 2005 | Delaware begins using a Risk Assessment Instrument for youth bond hearings. |
| 2005 | Delaware opens the state staff-secure facilities, Grace Cottage for girls and Snowden Cottage for boys. |
| 2007 | Legislature enacts mandatory residential sentences for certain felony offenses. |
| 2008 | The DYRS creates a specialized unit within Community Services for youth with Inappropriate Sexual Behavior. |



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| 2009 | The DYRS focuses on creating Residential Alternatives to Detention. Community Services focuses reengineering efforts to address the youth on the front-end. |
| 2010 | The Juvenile Competency Law is passed. |
| 2011 | The DYRS implements Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) as an assessment instrument for youth in Community Services. |
| 2012 | <p>Community Based Standards (CBS) is implemented in state staff-secure facilities.</p> <p>The evaluation completed by the Comprehensive Strategy Group, “The Little Engine That Could,” is published.</p> <p>Community Services establishes umbrella services to address criminogenic needs.</p> |
| 2013 | The DYRS opens the Cleve White Building to be used as the formal education facility for youth in state staff-secure programming. |
| 2014 | <p>The DYRS opens the Multi-Purpose Building for Level IV youth to use for programming, meals, and staff office space.</p> <p>The DYRS begins using the Standard Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™) on programs offered in the community.</p> <p>Performance Based Standards are implemented for in-state secure programming.</p> |
| 2015 | <p>The Division establishes a Quality Improvement Unit.</p> <p>The Civil Citation program is initiated.</p> |
| 2016 | <p>SPEP™ extends to programming offered in the staff-secure facilities and secure facilities.</p> <p>Legislation passes establishing Civil Citation as a statewide program.</p> <p>A Dispositional Matrix is implemented for court recommendations for all of the DYRS involved youth.</p> |



CORE VALUES



STRATEGIES

Service Level

Successful Youth:

Use of an assessment tool enables the Division to reduce recidivism by helping the youth under supervision increase their personal accountability and make positive changes in their attitudes and behavior. Implementation of the PACT is the cornerstone in our revised dispositional process to create a responsive case management and supervision continuum whereby youth are assigned to appropriate supervision options based on their risk to re-offend and connected to services, supports, and programs that address criminogenic needs, promote youth success, and reduce recidivism at their level.

Assess and respond to strengths, needs, and risk of all youth served by DYRS.

1. Utilize a validated risk assessment tool to identify strengths and needs of all youth.
2. Address individual criminogenic needs and responsivity factors of youth by using evidence-informed practices and programming.
3. Ensure youth are placed in the least restrictive setting that matches their risk level.

The DYRS will maintain a continuum of services that match youth needs regardless of supervision level or geographic location. These services will be reviewed to incorporate the best available research on which treatment options produce the best results. The agency will use conscientious decision-making to pair youth and families with services that are responsive to their needs and aligned with their individual circumstances. The DYRS will help youth and families overcome any barriers that may impede them from receiving any services. The expectation of this support is to build a youth's skills and knowledge base around areas of need and to provide an opportunity to actively practice the behavior. The service continuum will be continually monitored to ensure it meets the needs of the population that the DYRS serves.

Implement and manage programs and services demonstrated to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes.

1. Provide rehabilitative services that are trauma informed and tailored to the individual needs of youth.
2. Deliver evidence-based services with fidelity that are family-focused and strength-based



- to promote positive pro-social behavior and build youth competency.
3. Maintain a plentiful service continuum to address youth needs.

Each youth's and family's culture is recognized as being personal and individual. A person's culture is exhibited through communication, task performance, relationships, and decision making. These qualities are addressed through individualized case planning which account for the unique characteristics of a youth. The DYRS is committed to developing interpersonal skills to enhance communication and to improve listening. Respect will be demonstrated by active listening, providing encouragement, supportive advocacy, and fair treatment.

Use interpersonal skills to effectively interact with and understand all youth from different cultures.

1. Approach each youth with **respect** and **integrity**.
2. Develop case plans and treatment goals that recognize individual needs of all youth.
3. Use practice models to ensure unbiased communication such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Motivational Interviewing(MI).

Stronger Families:

The best care for children can be achieved when the strengths of families are aligned with the supports put in place. Every individual's contribution to planning is respected for having value and worth. Services have a lasting impact when the decisions are made in collaboration with the family. To support the practice of family engagement when making decisions and setting goals, open communication is key. The goal will be to motivate and empower families to recognize their own needs, strengths, and resources to take an active role in change.

Focus on youth and families to develop skills and build on strengths.

1. Actively involve families in case planning and rehabilitation for our youth.
2. Educate families on youth services and treatment choices.
3. Deliver holistic services that take into account all circumstances of a youth's life, and motivate families to encourage pro-social change in their home environments.

The DYRS is committed to developing a system that appreciates and empowers families to understand that they are the greatest influence in their child's life and to create a business practice that provides the necessary supports that will foster this concept. The DYRS recognizes sustainable change needs to be supported by the family. For this reason, we are dedicated to including the family in all aspects of system involvement, from assessment to case closure. The goal of this involvement is to create long-term change by supporting the family to advocate for their child's needs and connecting them to community supports that can continue beyond their involvement with us.



Support families through an array of service options.

1. Provide **transparency** to families in decision making for youth.
2. Incorporate cultural competency into case planning and service delivery.

Safer Communities:

Public safety is a key consideration when working with youth who have committed violent offenses. In order to rehabilitate these youth, the community's involvement is necessary. Youth need to feel connected to their communities and to have a chance to succeed with meaningful opportunities. To encourage youth in the community, we will develop and implement separate criteria aimed at supporting high-risk youth. This criteria will include heightened responses to acts that put the community at risk. To aid with skills development and connection to communities, services targeting high-risk behavior will be added to the continuum to reduce the need factors which contribute to violent offenses.

Deliver evidence-based programs with fidelity to address recidivism needs for violent offenders.

1. Develop an effective criteria for a specialized supervision unit of high-risk offenders.
2. Hold high risk youth accountable for non-compliance behaviors through expedited response.
3. Target gang affiliation and firearm crimes by providing intensive programming and supervision to change thinking patterns and behaviors.
4. Create safety plans to support youth's change in risky behaviors and address public safety.

We will focus on building relationships with community stakeholders. It is important to have community support for policy so that the youth involved in the juvenile justice system can access the resources that are important to their success. A component of building this trusting relationship between the DYRS and the community will consist of a public safety effort aimed at addressing the increase in violent gang affiliated youth. Through community out reach, the DYRS will share findings from research reports, garner feedback from the local community, and facilitate collaboration that supports positive change within the communities.

Include the safety of the community in decision-making processes for response or recommendation to youth who commit violent offenses.

1. Educate the community to build a common understanding of the effective strategies in



- juvenile justice.
2. Emphasize restorative justice principles while providing services.
 3. Support the community's role in the juvenile justice system by promoting volunteerism, engagement, mentoring, employment, and education.
 4. Identify chronic offenders and increase supervision to monitor activities more closely.

System Level Strategies

Quality Assurance & Improvement

We are committed to the ongoing process of self-evaluation and outcomes. Continuous system assessment will be conducted to lead initiatives and self-correct any Division issues. Studies of prevailing case management practices and services will be used to guide intervention selections to have the greatest effect on outcomes. Staff's use of principles of evidence-based platform is key to successful implementation and sustainability. Opportunities to create and maintain culture change will be sought to promote the concepts, tools, and knowledge needed for successful outcomes.

Incorporate principles of continuous quality improvement amongst staff and across agencies.

1. Develop and prioritize criteria for reviewing programs, case management, and services.
2. Report on outcome measurements for Division programs, initiatives, and services.
3. Include research on which preventions and interventions work best to reduce recidivism.
4. Create staff performance measures to evaluate culture change.

Quality Assurance will be accomplished by developing standards, monitoring compliance to standards, conducting quality case reviews, developing efficient processes for assembling and validating data, and creating a standard decision making tool. Monitoring and evaluation will include all program areas of the DYRS, including 6 residential secure facilities and community probation/aftercare services. Initiatives will target performance measurement to ensure effective case planning and interventions for youth and families.

Develop and maintain policies, practice standards and performance plans to drive the Division's framework of success.

1. Ensure that employees understand their role and have the proper training and tools to effectively deliver successful services.
2. Maintain a system that supports **teamwork** and accountability throughout the division.
3. Develop a culture and environment to support practices that meet national standards.



Data Development and Management

We value decision-making that can be verified through the use of data. When data is available to all levels of our agency, implementation can occur smoothly across the system. By sharing results in easy-to-view reporting tools, the culture can change to rely on data-driven decision making.

Rely on data to guide service selection based on risk and needs at the core of case plans and evaluate outcomes.

1. Collect accurate and useful data in a timely fashion.
2. Eliminate duplicate data collection, making use of partner agency data systems.
3. Make data available, understandable, and useful for workers, managers and, partners.
4. Use state-of-the-art reporting tools that make the data secure and available.
5. Partner with academic institutions for data analysis in a cost-effective manner.

To accurately report on the outcomes of initiatives, the DYRS will monitor data integrity. The information that is captured will be used to report results by integrating information from different program areas and combining it to provide guidance to serve youth in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Analysis is integral to planning, implementation, assessment, and outcome reporting. Availability of data to all stakeholders at every level will increase knowledge of our work and increase support for the outcomes to be achieved.

Use data to realign resources and/or reinvest in effective programs to produce positive outcomes.

1. Measure and evaluate the cost-effectiveness of all programs by collecting data on programs offered to youth and families.
2. Maintain a data system that is founded on **integrity, transparency,** and accountability.
3. Effectively track and measure youth outcomes with the goal of reducing recidivism.
4. Reinvest funding when opportunities for savings are realized.

Evidence-Based, Outcome-Driven Programs and Services

As an agency, we will continue to use a research-based decision making platform to inform service delivery. In order to view the outcomes of these services, a data collection tool will be created to streamline the process of reviewing the delivery, evaluating the quality of service, and determining the outcomes of service providers. Standard evaluation will consist of monitoring quality and reviewing the dosage and duration of services offered to



youth to match their risk level. Adjustments will be made from these evaluations to optimize the effects of the programs.

Develop performance standard metrics and use validated data to review performance.

1. Implement a plan that determines data needs, prioritizes service categories, and evaluates outcomes.
2. Incorporate standards into policies and procedures to maintain a proven service delivery structure focused on the needs of all youth.
3. Maintain a method to collect data that is valid and reliable.

We recognize that the youth served by the Division have varying needs. These needs are best met by a continuum of services that meet standards proven to reduce recidivism. These services will be monitored for their commitment to their service model, their duration, and their service delivery dosage. As agents with a foundation rooted in the positive effects of well-delivered evidence-based programs, we will continue to review the services offered to our youth to ensure they meet the standards for model efficacy.

Ensure youth programs are evidence-based, outcome-driven, and provide the right service, for the right youth, for the right amount of time.

1. Include evidence-based, outcome-driven requirement with all service provider contracts and requests for proposals.
2. Utilize the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol(SPEP™) tool to collect data and provide program improvement services to partners.
3. Review and evaluate program services to safeguard fidelity to the model.

Safety

Safety is important for all members of the system, from the youth we serve to our staff. To ensure we address areas for improvement, we will proactively review incidents, reports, and policy as a practice, to continually create the safest environment possible. Case management practices in the community will be reviewed to improve safety practices while maintaining a focus on ease for the families. Goals of improved safety can only be made if the data is known, so that the agency can be responsive to areas that show risk.

Implement procedures that provide the best safety outcomes for our youth and staff.

1. Develop risk management protocol to reduce accidents and unsafe practices.
2. Conduct field and facility inspections.
3. Create and maintain a safety dashboard.
4. Maintain a safe environment to employ the best practices for staff and youth supervision through the use of technology.



Staffing & Training

The Division's greatest resource is our staff. As evidence reveals outcomes and guides best practices, the DYRS is committed to the duty of ensuring a qualified workforce – not just at the time of hiring, but throughout their careers. Training staff in the best practices offered by the Division will result in more job satisfaction, higher quality service, and better outcomes. The DYRS is committed to providing staff who enhance program fidelity and contribute to better outcomes in a meaningful way.

Continue to train staff on best practices to grow their knowledge and provide best services to youth.

1. Train all new staff on the Division's policies, mission, and vision.
2. Offer Train the Trainer curriculum for in-house sustainability of services.
3. Establish a review panel to approve materials and update materials for services offered.
4. Provide opportunities for staff to develop direct-service programming.
5. Train staff to match services to youth's risk and needs.

Effective implementation of services, staff security, and client safety are all predicated on having an adequate number of staff to carry out the mission. With the right staffing levels, the Division can meet or exceed standards for addressing the needs of the youth and families we serve. This will create confidence in the services allowing both our staff, and our clients, to grow. Only through hiring the right people in the right positions at the right staffing levels, can we ensure that we will continue to keep up with the best practices toward influencing better outcomes.

Review staffing needs to ensure the right staff are hired to support practices for best outcomes.

1. Continue to focus efforts on recruiting the most skilled staff with a desire to work with our youth.
2. Review expectations on the demands of staff to ensure that goals are able to be accomplished.
3. Offer staff development opportunities to increase retention of staff that are meeting and exceeding performance standards.
4. Review workload to ensure proper staff to youth ratios for achieving best outcomes across program areas.
5. Create performance measures appropriate for each position to ensure that contributions toward youth outcomes are meaningful.



Coordinated Approach

We recognize that a coordinated approach is essential for the success of our youth and their families. It is our goal to connect youth and families with supports that are needs-based and can offer support for the areas contributing to risk. This cannot be accomplished through our agency alone. We will work to identify, collaborate, and engage service delivery partners to assist our youth with programs that will be the most effective.

Work with system partners and providers for the joint goal of positive youth outcomes.

1. Use assessment tools and the dispositional matrix when they can best be utilized to inform the court's decision during the dispositional process.
2. Collaborate with contracted, non-contracted, and state agency service delivery partners to support families.
3. Engage community agencies in learning opportunities to implement best practices.
4. Include criminal justice partners in strategic planning, system advocacy, policy enhancements, and development.
5. Create teams that facilitate collaboration across divisions or agencies for service planning and transitions.
6. Participate in education and cross-training opportunities with stakeholders and system partners to share knowledge of system process outcomes and best practices.



Outcomes

As we continue our journey to institute improvements aimed toward better outcomes, some successes have already been accomplished.

Evidence Based Programming

In 2007, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy was introduced into state detention centers and residential programs. Since then, more evidence-based programming has been utilized, including Aggression Replacement Therapy. Community Services offers Functional Family Therapy, Multi-Systemic Therapy, Sanctuary, Aggression Replacement Therapy and other related services. In 2012, supported through the Juvenile Justice Reform and Reinvestment Initiative and in partnership with Georgetown University, Vanderbilt University, and the Urban Institute, the process of evaluating services through use of the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™) began. Because of this measure, the **quality of service** has been able to be reviewed, and adjustments have been made to dosage, duration, and the type of youth referred to ensure that the program is achieving its maximum effect.

Decision Tools

In 2012, a risk/needs assessment tool was implemented to assist in making assignment and referral decisions. During the same year, the Division developed a response grid which considers a youth's risk and behavior to determine a fitting case response. In 2015, the dispositional matrix, created by a stakeholder committee, became the guiding tool in sentencing recommendations for youth being considered for residential placement. In 2016, the use of this dispositional matrix tool was expanded to be the model for all sentencing recommendations for youth involved with the Division.

Data

To measure the success of these system improvements, the DYRS started a Quality Improvement Unit. The unit consists of:

1. Quality Assurance Manager- role is to focus on tools, policy, and case management to improve data **integrity**, fidelity to service models, and education and training for staff.
2. Professional Standards Manager- role is to monitor the compliance and accreditation standards to maintain safety and quality across state operated services.
3. Data and Statistics Manager- role is to organize and analyze data to provide a snapshot of the Division's problems and progress.

Stakeholder and Partner Engagement

The Division is involved in multiple committees – consisting of criminal justice agencies and community partners – reflecting our value of **teamwork**. The Community Advisory Board is a chance for the Division to hear from and engage attendees in hopes of creating collaboration. The Juvenile Justice Collaborative is an opportunity for system stakeholders to develop policy and process improvements as a group. Internally, Division Management Meetings create an opportunity to have cross-collaboration between the disciplines of residential, detention, and community. Advisory groups, along with contracted providers, provide the ability to work together toward making services as effective as possible.



Public Safety

In an effort to address the most serious violent offenders, the agency has developed a unit dedicated to specialized case management for violent offenders charged with violent offenses. In 2016, the criteria for assignment to the Intensive Supervision Unit was reviewed using data from existing caseloads. The DYRS has expanded the complement of armed Probation Officers, known as the Serious Juvenile Offender Unit. This unit has the statewide responsibilities of offering adjunct services to youth who pose a public safety risk. This unit has been successful at partnering with law enforcement to enhance intelligence sharing.

Future

The Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services is committed to continuing our journey to examine outcomes, relying on research and evolving to meet the needs of the youth we serve and our communities. The values and principles that led to our current improvements are deep-rooted in our system. This Blueprint will help us leverage our resources to facilitate system improvements and guide youth to successful outcomes. By promoting what works and incorporating these approaches into our policy, procedure, interventions, and values, we will accomplish our vision...

Successful Youth, Strong Families, Safer Communities.

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