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Ohio Department of Youth Services

Responsible Public Policy

The Department of Youth Services (DYS) touches the lives of thousands of youth in Ohio. Beyond youth in DHS facilities and those on parole, DHS funds and supports over 610 direct service programs throughout the state offering nearly 110,000 youth (based on annual program admissions) opportunities and services to effect positive change.



Supporting Community-Based Services

DYS has established a variety of community initiatives to reach youth, support families and build communities. In collaboration with our numerous community partners, DHS uses a comprehensive community-based service delivery system that is designed to provide appropriate services and supports for youth by matching risk level with the least restrictive program setting. This is being achieved by expanding evidence-based community program capacity to provide services for youth and engage families closer to their homes. The basis for the regional system is RECLAIM Ohio, which has been building capacity in the juvenile courts and incentivizing community corrections since its statewide implementation in 1995.

The increase in effective local program alternatives, building on the strong platform for prevention and early intervention programs provided through RECLAIM Ohio and supported by the locally-based Community Correctional Facilities, has contributed to the significant reduction in daily population at DHS facilities from an average daily population of over 1800 youth in 2007, to about 950 youth in 2010, to about 500 youth today.

Here is an update regarding some of our community-based services:

Targeted RECLAIM

Targeted RECLAIM funds evidence-based interventions focused on risk and need principles. It's provided to courts that historically have committed the most youth to the department and that commit to reduce and then maintain DHS admissions. Initially, this included Cuyahoga, Hamilton, Franklin, Summit, Montgomery and Lucas Counties, but the initiative expanded to eight additional counties (Allen, Ashtabula, Licking, Lorain, Mahoning, Medina, Stark and Trumbull) beginning in FY 2012. The participating counties have reduced admissions to DHS facilities by a total of 712 over the last three years.

Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice

Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice (BH/JJ) allows for the identification and diversion of deep-end youthful offenders with serious behavioral health needs from DHS. BH/JJ funds the implementation of evidence-based practice (EBP) treatment models. Currently BH/JJ efforts are in place in Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lucas, Montgomery and Summit Counties.

Community Correctional Facilities

DYS funds nearly 100% of the operating costs for 12 Community Correctional Facilities (CCFs). There are 355 funded beds available for referral from all 88 juvenile courts. These facilities are operated locally and used to treat felony adjudicated youth who would otherwise be committed to a DHS facility. We have been helping to convert the programming at all of the CCFs to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in order to improve outcomes for youth and shorten length of stay.

Parmadale Treatment Alternative for Females

In partnership with Parmadale Institute and Beech Brook, DHS offers a community residential treatment option for females with behavioral health needs. The community alternative is an 8-bed secure setting in Parma, Ohio designed as a step-down option for females shortly after being committed to the department or after showing progress in a DHS facility. This community alternative provides comprehensive behavioral health treatment, gender-specific care and evidence-based programming. Youth receive comprehensive case management, group and individual counseling and family sessions.

