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Ohio Department of Youth Services Recognizes 20th Anniversary of RECLAIM *Program supports community-based programming to rehabilitate youth locally whenever possible*

Columbus, Ohio — The Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) is proud to announce its twentieth year of RECLAIM Ohio. For two decades, RECLAIM has supported juvenile courts in providing local programs to rehabilitate youth and prevent delinquency in their communities.

RECLAIM (Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors) is a funding program that lets juvenile courts implement community-based programs in order to provide alternatives to juvenile incarceration for youth. The funding for counties is based on an equation that refunds counties for the time youth would have spent if they had been committed to a DYS facility. Through RECLAIM and the Youth Services Grant, all 88 counties receive funding from a combined allocation of \$47.3 million annually.

Through RECLAIM, courts have been able to implement community programming that has significantly reduced the DYS facility population while at the same time expanding services for Ohio's youth. RECLAIM programs, ranging from prevention through intensive intervention and treatment services, help prevent youth from going more deeply into the juvenile justice system while holding the youth accountable for the harm they have done and maintaining public safety.

According to the Office of Criminal Justice Services, nearly 18,000 youth under the age of 18 were arrested in 2013.

"Youth in Ohio come into contact with juvenile courts for all kinds of reasons. For some it's skipping school, fighting, and shoplifting, but for others, there are offenses of a more serious nature," said Harvey J. Reed, Director of DYS. "The important thing is to hold youth accountable for their actions with rehabilitation that both fits and works."

Community options help youth maintain ties to family and other supports, which improve the chances of long-term success. A [study](#) by the University of Cincinnati found that RECLAIM programs have been both highly effective and cost-efficient.

"Ohio figured out early that many kids did not need the harsh treatment of a juvenile lockup, but did much better in community-based treatment settings," said Evelyn Lundberg Stratton, who retired as a justice from the Ohio Supreme Court. "Ohio has now become a national leader for the RECLAIM model, with lower commitment rates and a wide-range of community resources to divert young people away from the criminal justice system."

The idea for RECLAIM came when DYS experienced record high numbers of youth incarcerated in its facilities. In January 1994, the agency housed an average of more than 2,000 youth in its 10 facilities. Today, DYS has an average of 463 youth served in 3 state-operated facilities and several specialized placements. After

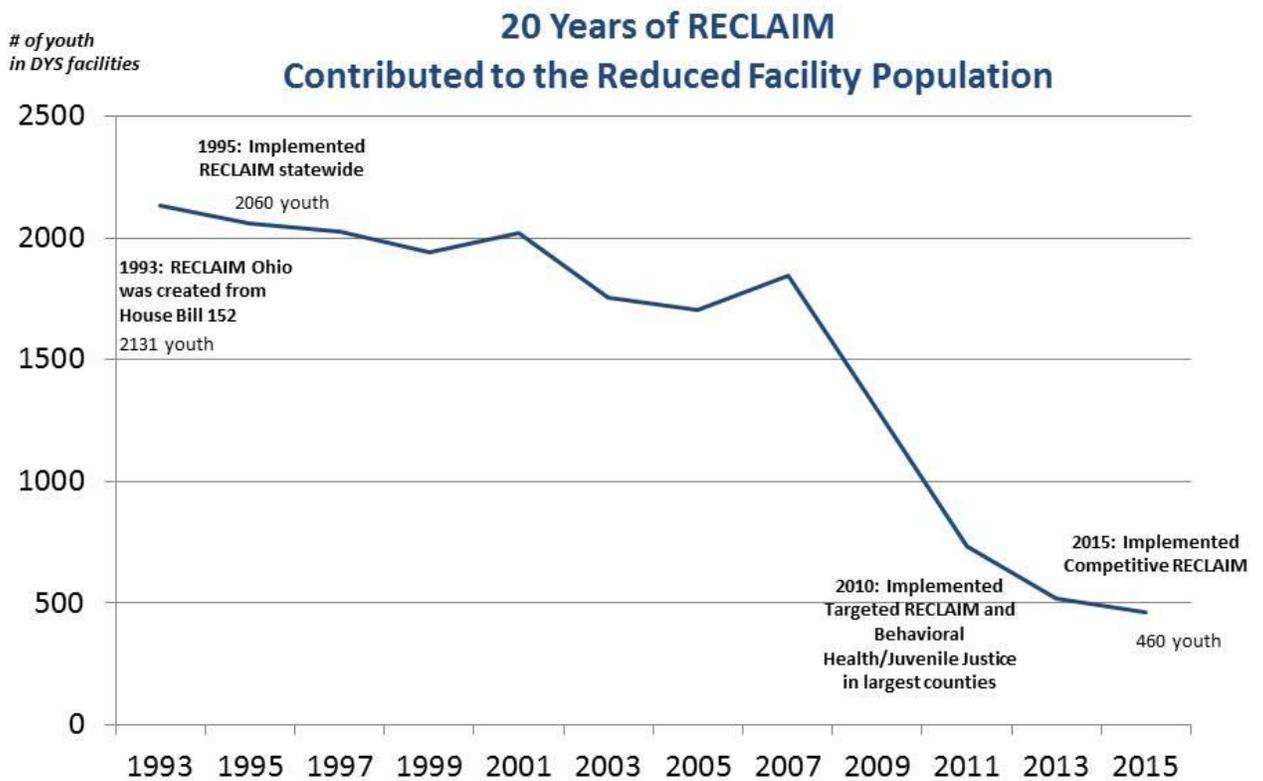
a successful pilot in 1994, RECLAIM was introduced statewide in 1995. Since its inception and continuing through Fiscal Year 2015, courts have retained \$579 million dollars at the local level and served hundreds of thousands of youth. Because of the reduced facility population DYS has been able to focus its programming and rehabilitative efforts on the more serious, repetitive felony-level youth.

RECLAIM has touched the lives of youth in every community in Ohio.

“Over the years in Montgomery County, RECLAIM has allowed us to build a continuum of services to reach thousands of youth and families in our community,” said Montgomery County Juvenile Court Judge Anthony Capizzi. Since 2009, there has been an 85% decrease in the number of youth from Montgomery County committed to DYS, according to Judge Capizzi.

Further, RECLAIM has served as a launching pad for expanded reform that focuses on supporting communities in research-supported programs. A total of \$11 million is provided annually to support:

- Targeted RECLAIM, which funds evidence-based interventions focused on a youth’s risk to re-offend, to courts that have historically committed the most youth to the department and that have committed to reduce and then maintain DYS admissions
- Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice (BH/JJ), which provides for the identification and treatment of youth with co-occurring juvenile justice and behavioral health issues, up to and including the diversion of deep-end youthful offenders with serious behavioral health needs from DYS
- Competitive RECLAIM, which helps juvenile courts and communities meet the needs of their young people with competitive grants to fund unique, research-backed diversion and intervention programs



of youth by average daily facility population by calendar year

Not only have admissions steadily decreased, but RECLAIM has impacted the juvenile justice system as a whole. The number of youth adjudicated for felony offenses has declined over the past decade (Fiscal Years 2004 to 2014) from 9,064 to 4,674. During the same time period, the percent of those committed to DYS has decreased from 18.8% to 9.4%, demonstrating the increased reliance on community programs. Further, RECLAIM has been used to support the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), which is working toward eliminating secure detention when inappropriate or unnecessary for youth.

DYS is the juvenile corrections system for the state of Ohio and is statutorily mandated to confine felony offenders, ages 10 to 21, who have been adjudicated and committed by one of Ohio's 88 county juvenile courts. DYS currently operates three juvenile correctional facilities, provides parole services from five regional sites and funds and supports over 600 community programs serving 80,000 youth throughout the state.

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