

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 307-T01

Agency Name: Perseus House

Program Name: All Programs

Service Name: Sanctuary Group

Cohort Total: 14

Timeframe of Selected Cohort: Oct. 1, 2018 - Aug. 31, 2020

Referral County(s): Allegheny (3); Clarion (1); Erie (8); Washington (1); Westmoreland (1)

Date(s) of Interview(s): Sep. 16, 2020 & Sep. 16, 2020

Lead County: Allegheny County Juvenile Probation

Probation Representative(s): William Shultz, Placement Liaison

EPIS Representative: Christa Park, SPEP™ Data Manager

## Description of Service:

Perseus House, Inc. was founded in 1971 as a result of the deinstitutionalizing of the state treatment centers. Beginning as a "group home" for truant children with live-in staff, the organization has grown to approximately 245 full and part-time staff. Perseus House, Inc. now serves more than 1,500 children annually, birth through age 18, in both residential treatment facilities, as well as within its school systems, including 600 students in the Charter School of Excellence. Perseus House, Inc. provides a continuum of care services to the youth and families of the community, primarily serving the children and families in Erie County. Perseus House is certified in the Sanctuary Model® which complements their programming culture and treatment philosophy through the Seven Commitments: Non-Violence, Emotional Intelligence, Social Learning, Open Communication, Democracy, Social Responsibility and Growth & Change. Perseus House believes that a period of external discipline and assistance, however temporary, is at times necessary in a safe environment to interrupt maladaptive patterns of thoughts and behaviors in order to provide the foundation for a new beginning. Community Meetings are a core component of the Sanctuary® Model and help drive individuals becoming accountable to each other within the community. There are eight residential facilities in addition to the Shelter program. Each facility serves clients between the ages of 12 and 18 (shelter serves ages 10-18). Most of the clients are voluntarily placed through a county's mental health system in the residential treatment facilities (RTP). However, clients may also be court ordered from a county's Probation Department or Children and Youth Services Department. Average length of stay is eight to ten months. A client may be discharged to his/her biological family, a court-ordered guardian, foster care, independent living, or another placement provider. Several of the residential facilities are PREA-certified (Perseus House Residential Treatment Facility, Andromeda House Residential Treatment Facility, Andromeda House Intensive Treatment Unit, Perseus House Intensive Residential Treatment Program, and Shelter). In addition to the 16-bed, co-ed shelter located at 1510 State Street, Erie, Perseus House has 3 units specific to males and 5 units specific to females. Male specific units include: Perseus House Residential Treatment Facility: 12-bed capacity; located at 1510 State Street in Erie; Perseus House 7th Street Residential Treatment Facility: 10-bed capacity; located at 516 West 7th Street, Erie; Perseus House Enhanced Residential Treatment Facility: 6-bed capacity; located at 132 West 26th Street, Erie. Female specific units include: Andromeda House Residential Treatment Facility: 12-bed capacity; located at 39163 Mount Pleasant Road, Spartansburg; Andromeda House Intensive Treatment Unit: 12-bed capacity; located at 39163 Mount Pleasant Road, Spartansburg; Brighter Horizons: 10-bed capacity; located at 6101 West Road, McKean; Florence Crittenton: 8-bed capacity; located at 643 East 6th Street, Erie; Girls Enhanced Residential Treatment Facility: 6-bed capacity; located at 643 East 6th Street, Erie. Perseus House's alternative treatment programs are community-based. These programs serve both males and females, ages 5 to 18. The community-based programs have a varied length of stay. These programs include the: Alternative Education Program (AEP) for local school district referrals; Prison Education Program for voluntary referrals; Corry School District located on the Corry School District campus; Millcreek School District located at PHI Collaborative Learning Center; Collaborative Intensive Community Treatment Program (CICTP).

Perseus House incorporates a trauma-informed approach throughout the organization; each Perseus House site is certified in the Sanctuary Model®. The Sanctuary Model® drives clinical and organizational change by promoting safety and recovery from adversity through the active creation of a trauma-informed community. The Sanctuary Model® places equal emphasis on the importance of recognizing trauma is pervasive and impacts not only the people who seek treatment but equally on the people and systems who provide that treatment. The Sanctuary Model® is comprised of three primary components: The Seven Commitments that form the philosophical underpinnings of the Model; The trauma-informed shared language represented by the acronym S.E.L.F. (Safety, Emotions, Loss, Future); A set of practical tools known as the Sanctuary Tool Kit. Sanctuary psycho-education is one of the tools included within the Sanctuary Tool Kit. At Perseus House, the Sanctuary psycho-education is incorporated into a group format utilizing a staple set of materials provided by the Sanctuary Institute following Perseus House' initial certification several years ago. The Sanctuary Group, as Perseus House has named the service, teaches core Sanctuary Model® concepts in the language of S.E.L.F with the goal of helping children recover from the effects of trauma and chronic stress. The curriculum teaches children why and what happened to them that effects the way they act in everyday life and emphasizes education as well as the processing of feelings.

Milieu groups occur in the morning/afternoon/evening. Community Meetings focus on the day-to-day client interaction with peers and adults. The intention is to keep the interaction positive and therapeutic, to share information, solve problems as they arise, and begin to bring closure to the program. The Sanctuary Group consists of 16 lessons and are offered weekly. The Core Team has created additional lessons to enhance group materials. A variety of individuals contributed to the development of these additional lessons; lessons were "piloted" in various sites to assess youth engagement and interest. Roll-out of the newly developed lesson plans is scheduled to occur in the coming months.

"Blended Spirits" and Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) are used to enhance & support the Sanctuary Group. Through partnership with a local ranch, Perseus House offers "Blended Spirits" – an 8-week program intended to provide experiential, equine therapy that involves interactions between youth and horses. While participating in this service, youth learn how to properly care for and build connections with the horse. Youth are able to develop a variety of life skills through participation in this program. Time spent in the Blended Spirits Program was included in the amount of service delivery referenced below. TF-CBT addresses the multiple domains of trauma impact including but not limited to Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, externalizing behavior problems, relationship and attachment problems, school problems and cognitive problems. TF-CBT includes skills for regulating affect, behavior, thoughts and relationships, trauma processing, and enhancing safety, trust, parenting skills and family communication. TF-CBT was identified as a separate, stand-alone service per the SPEP™ process.

## The four characteristics of a service found to be the most strongly related to reducing recidivism:

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Group Counseling

**Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service?** No

**If so, what is the Service Type?** There is no qualifying supplemental service

**Was the supplemental service provided?** N/A

**Total Points Possible for this Service Type:** 30

**Total Points Received:** 30 **Total Points Possible:** 35

2. **Quality of Service:** Research has shown that programs that deliver service with high quality are more likely to have a positive impact on recidivism reduction. Monitoring of quality is defined by existence of written protocol, staff training, staff supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

**Total Points Received:** 20 **Total Points Possible:** 20

**3. Amount of Service:** Score was derived by calculating the total number of weeks and hours received by each youth in the service. The amount of service is measured by the target amounts of service for the SPEP™ service categorization. Each SPEP™ service type has varying amounts of duration and contact hours. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction.

**Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks:** 2  
**Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours:** 0

**Total Points Received:** 2 **Total Points Possible:** 20

**4. Youth Risk Level:** The risk level score is compiled by calculating the total % of youth that score above low risk, and the total % of youth who score above moderate risk to reoffend based on the results of the YLS.

12/14 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of youth 10 points  
5/14 in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 13 points

**Total Points Received:** 23 **Total Points Possible:** 25

**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 75 total points received out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP™ therapeutic service. (e.g. individual counseling compared to cognitive behavioral therapy, social skills training, mentoring, etc.)

**Note:** Services with scores greater than or equal to 50 show the service is having a positive impact on recidivism reduction.

**Program Optimization Percentage:** 79% This percentage compares the service to the same service types found in the research. (e.g. individual counseling compared to all other individual counseling services included in the research.)

### **The SPEP™ and Performance Improvement**

The intended use of the SPEP™ is to optimize the effectiveness of reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. Recommendations for performance improvement are included in the service Feedback Report, and these recommendations are the focus of the Performance Improvement Plan, a shared responsibility of the service provider and the juvenile probation department.

Sanctuary Group could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction by addressing the following recommendations:

#### 1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:

##### a. Written Protocol:

- i. Within the internal policy, detail procedures currently in place for using the YLS information to assist in addressing the youth's treatment needs related to the Sanctuary Group.
- ii. Within the internal policy, detail procedures for reviewing/revising materials, including pre-determined contacts with the developer, to ensure the most current version is in use.
- iii. Include a review/revision date on binder materials to ensure the most current version is in use

##### b. Organizational Response to Drift

- i. Within the Written Protocol, develop an overarching policy/procedure that describes how drift will be identified.
- ii. Ensure the policy/procedure contains an "if-then" approach for corrective action steps if service delivery departs from what is intended.
- iii. Within the policy/procedure, develop a process to document utilization of the drift policy.

#### 2. Regarding Amount of Service:

- a. Identify & analyze opportunities to increase the weeks/contact hours offered to better match research recommendations for the target amount of service (i.e., 24 weeks/40 contact hours).

#### 3. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served:

- a. Collaborate with the referring probation officer to consider each youth's responsivity factors (which are a portion of the YLS) during service delivery.