

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 0309-T01

Agency Name: Perseus House, Inc.  
Program Name: All Programs  
Service Name: Work Experience Program  
Cohort Total: 12, 11 for Risk  
Timeframe of Selected Cohort: Began service on or after March 1, 2018 and ended service on or before August 31, 2020  
Referral County(s): Allegheny (1), Butler (1), Clarion (1), Erie (6), Forest (1), Mercer (1), Westmoreland (1)  
Date(s) of Interview(s): January 20, 2021  
Lead County: Erie  
Probation Representative(s): Chris Boyle, Juvenile Probation Officer, Erie County Juvenile Probation  
EPIS Representative Shannon O'Lone, SPEP™ Implementation Specialist

## 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 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 (RTF). 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.

The Work Experience Program allows youth to acquire basic employability "soft skills" that apply universally to all workplaces regardless of their individual occupational goal. The program is designed to assist in the development of a positive work ethic through a variety of real work experiences while in a structured, staff-supervised work environment. The primary intent of the program is for youth to develop basic skills for self-confidence, self-management, responsible decision making, and time management so they can be successful employees. Monies earned through the Work Experience Program can be used to pay off restitution and/or court costs if owed.

The Work Experience Coordinator is responsible for the enrollment and supervision of youth, as well as teaching skills. Youth coming into facilities who may owe restitution and/or court costs are prioritized for this service. It is preferred youth be at least 14 years old; however, exceptions can be made for youth who would benefit from employability skill development. Perseus House has a workshop at the McKean facility for classroom instruction on soft skills. Youth may also participate in supervised work experiences at several work sites on a weekly basis. Work experiences include: landscaping, painting, floor installation, and power tool usage, etc.

It should be noted that Perseus House was in the process of making adaptations to the Work Experience Program at the time of this assessment, which included the addition of a Career Readiness piece that was being delivered in the classroom by PA certified teachers. This portion includes the Choices360 Curriculum as well as other elements of online learning utilizing Edgenuity® and Life Skills handbooks. Documentation outlining the connecting features and criteria for which youth were appropriate for this service and the criteria for youth to move from the classroom portion to the field experience is in development and was present during the Quality Measures Interview process. Given the differences in the service delivery currently, it was agreed by all parties to continue with the Baseline Assessment and classify the service as Community Service/Restitution and only utilizing youth in the cohort which received the field experience under such classification. The Work Experience Program may have enhancements and additional components incorporated into this service prior to the next SPEP™ Assessment cycle which may affect the Service Classification. All parties agreed that moving forward to incorporate the current changes into the upcoming Performance Improvement Process would be beneficial to increasing the quality components and the overall impact of the service.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Restitution/Community Service

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? No **Total Points Possible for this Service Type:** 15

**Total Points Received:** 15 **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:** 5 **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:** 6  
**Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours:** 4

**Total Points Received:** 10 **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.

11 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 12 points  
4 in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 13 points

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

**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 55 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:** 69% 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.

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### 1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:

#### a. Written Protocol:

- i. Develop an overarching written protocol which describes the service, how it is coordinated (step by step), the intent/purpose of the service and how it is intended to be utilized
- ii. Within the Written Protocol, clearly describe the fidelity and quality of how each component/resource is intended to be utilized for Work Experience Program
- iii. Within the Written Protocol, clearly describe how service delivery is to be documented, including use of various resources (checklists, schedules, sign out sheets, Unit logs "Supervision Notes", etc.)
- iv. Within the Written Protocol, clearly describe how the written protocol is to be reviewed/updated at predetermined time frames
- v. Better integrate YLS findings to match youth to service

#### b. Staff Training:

- i. Develop a specific training component on Work Experience Program
- ii. Develop a booster training to further develop staff knowledge of site-specific information to be considered during service delivery, and provide updates as needed
- iii. Develop a process to ensure specialized training is documented according to protocol
- iv. Within the Written Protocol, include provision for supervisors to be trained in the various components utilized for service delivery as well

#### c. Staff Supervision:

- i. Within the Written Protocol, include mechanisms for supervisors to monitor staff delivering the service to assess fidelity and quality
- ii. Within the Written Protocol, develop documentation to ensure service is delivered as described
- iii. Develop a schedule to supervise the delivery of this service
- iv. Ensure written feedback regarding service delivery is provided to staff delivering the service
- v. Ensure performance evaluations include a direct reference to the fidelity and quality of service delivery of Work Experience Program

#### d. Organizational Response to Drift:

- i. Within the Written Protocol, develop an overarching policy/procedure that describes how drift will be identified
- ii. Within the Work Experience Program policy, develop a process to document the utilization of the drift policy
- iii. Ensure the policy/procedure contains an "if-then" approach for corrective action steps if service delivery departs from what is intended
- iv. Develop mechanism/s to collect data on fidelity monitoring of service delivery (i.e., is the service achieving what it is intended to do?), such as through consistent direct observation of service delivery

### 2. Regarding Amount of Service:

- a. Improve communication with JPO to provide longer service participation, allowing alignment with research supported amounts of 12 weeks and 60 hour

### 3. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served

- a. Maintain collaboration between juvenile probation and Perseus House, Inc. to consider the appropriate risk level for each youth
- b. Maintain collaboration between juvenile probation and Perseus House, Inc. to consider each youth's responsivity factors during treatment