

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

*Service Score Results:* Baseline

**Name of Program and Service:** Abraxas Youth & Family Services-Abraxas WorkBridge-Community Service

Cohort Total: 45

SPEP ID: 2

Selected Timeframe: May 1, 2013-Oct. 31, 2013

Date(s) of Interview(s): Jan. 16, 2014

Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: Doug Braden, Allegheny Co. & Shawn Peck, EPISCenter

Person Preparing Report: Shawn Peck & Doug Braden

**Description of Service:** *This should include a **brief** overview of the service within the context of the program, the location and if community based or residential. Indicate the type of youth referred, how the service is delivered, the purpose of service and any other **relevant** information to help the reader understand the SPEP service type classification. (350 character limit)*

Abraxas WorkBridge is a community-based program that serves male and female juvenile offenders ages 10-21 referred by the Juvenile Court of Allegheny County. In order for a youth to receive services from WorkBridge they must be residents of Allegheny County. WorkBridge provides numerous services that are related to community service and restitution. The goals of this program align with the Balance and Restorative Justice (BARJ) principles by holding youth accountable for their actions and providing an opportunity for them to earn restitution to pay back their victims. They also complete community service, enhancing their competency development to better prepare them for employment, and partner with the community to help complete special projects that help citizens who have been a victim of a crime. The program leadership identifies four distinct services in their program description; The Community Service component, The Stipend Program, The Community Repair Crew component, and The Employment Initiative component.

These services are provided at over eight hundred non-profit neighborhood sites throughout Allegheny County, such as nursing homes, food banks, and fire halls. Sites are selected within walking distance or one bus ride from the youth's residence. There are four case managers that work with an average caseload size of fifty-sixty youth to ensure that the community service (as ordered by the Court) and restitution owed by youth in the program is satisfied. Case managers match the youth to sites and check in order to ensure that the youth meets the site requirements in a satisfactory manner.

**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? n/a      Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 15

Total Points Earned: 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 and supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

Total Points Earned: 20      Total Points Possible: 20

3. **Amount of Service:** Score was derived from examination of weeks and hours each youth in the cohort received 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 dosage. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction.

Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks: 4

Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Earned: 4 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.

28/45 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 5 points

2/45 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 0 points

Total Points Earned: 5 Total Points Possible: 25

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**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 44 total points awarded out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP therapeutic service. (eg: 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:** 55% This percentage compares the service to the same service types found in the research. (eg: individual counseling compared to all other individual counseling services included in the research)

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## 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 local juvenile court. The recommendations for this service included in the feedback report are:

The Abraxas WorkBridge program scored a 55% Program Optimization Percentage. It is classified as a Group 2 service restitution; community service program. The program could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction through:

1. Develop data systems in order to distinguish the services youth receive. The overlap of services makes the distinction of one service component from another difficult since one youth could receive several services simultaneously. The overlap makes it difficult to collect data regarding the amount of service received and to communicate clearly to the court the services that the referred youth receive. In order to SPEP Abraxas WorkBridge, Community Service and Restitution were jointly identified as the services to be evaluated due to the availability of data on these services.
2. Parts of the program manual need to be updated and reviewed.
3. Develop a written policy that describes the response to drift as related to service quality.
4. Improved communication with the Allegheny County Juvenile Court on the research supported amount of service that should be provided by this community service/restitution program for this service type is 12 weeks and 60 hours.
5. Incorporate the Victim Awareness Curriculum into the other components in the program.