

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

Name of Program and Service: Abraxas-Harrisburg Abraxas Student Academy (HASA)

Cohort Total: 40

SPEP ID: 143-T01

Selected Timeframe: Jan. 1, 2016-Jul. 1, 2016

Date(s) of Interview(s): Apr. 18, 2016

Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: Matthew Foster, Dauphin County and Shawn Peck, EPISCenter

Person Preparing Report: Shawn Peck and Matthew Foster

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)*

The Harrisburg Abraxas School Academy (HASA) is one of several services offered by Abraxas Youth and Family Services in Dauphin County. Located in Harrisburg School District, HASA is a licensed private alternative school for regular and special education students, grades 7-12. Students are referred by County Juvenile Probation and/or Children and Youth agencies due to school academic, behavioral or attendance concerns and come from various local school districts in Dauphin County. HASA delivers a multi-faceted approach of education, counseling, and supportive services to help motivate and re-engage students in the educational process. They also collaborate with referring agencies, principals, school district representatives, service providers in the community, students' parents or guardians, and each student to ensure that services are individualized, appropriate, effective, and complete. Programming will guide them toward having increased initiative and internal motivation, as well as fostering their emotional growth, with the targeted outcome of helping students become conscientious, contributive members of society. A major goal of the program is to prepare students academically and socially for a return to mainstream classes.

HASA's holistic approach to students' needs (socially, emotionally, academically) requires that a variety of services be offered. The academic curriculum is consistent with Pennsylvania Department of Education state standards. However, additional features integrated into the Abraxas curriculum include social and emotional learning and workforce development. Pedagogical methods ensure students are given numerous opportunities to learn, practice, and model appropriate social skills throughout the academic day. Experiential learning is the cornerstone of the instructional delivery. Civic responsibility through community service projects is another area addressed within the curriculum.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Remedial Academic Program

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? Yes

If so, what is the Service type? Job related training

Was the supplemental service provided? Yes 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: 0

Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours: 8

Total Points Earned: 8 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.

29 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 10 points

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

Total Points Earned: 10 Total Points Possible: 25

Basic SPEP™ Score: 53 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: 67% 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)

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:

Harrisburg Abraxas Student Academy (HASA) scored a 55 for the Basic Score and a 67% Program Optimization Percentage. It is classified as a Group 2 service type. The program could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction through:

1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:

- Written Protocol: Ensure that written protocols contain clear descriptions of each service component. Develop a review schedule to update the protocols to ensure the latest version is dated.
- Staff Training: Develop a documentation process for the specialized trainings. Develop booster trainings for the non-educational components of HASA. Ensure the booster trainings occur as scheduled. Ensure that supervisors are trained to deliver the non-educational components of HASA.
- Staff Supervision: Develop a documented supervision process for HASA.
- Response to Drift: Coordinate and combine the existing procedures/policies into an overarching policy/procedure. Ensure that the policies and procedures in response to drift include action steps, an if-then approach to ensure drift does not occur.

2. Regarding Amount of Service:

- Increasing the amount of time that youth are permitted to remain within the program to match the 26 weeks of service found in research to best reduce recidivism with this service type. This can be accomplished through continued collaboration with probation services on increasing the expectation for the number of weeks in the program.

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Reassessment 1

SPEP™ ID and Time: 143-T02

Agency Name: Abraxas Youth and Family Services
Program Name: Harrisburg Abraxas Student Academy (HASA)
Service Name: Remedial Academic
Cohort Total: 40 for Amount of Service/32 for Risk Level
Timeframe of Selected Cohort: August 1, 2018 - December 31, 2019
Referral County(s): Dauphin County
Date(s) of Interview(s): December 3, 2019 and March 10, 2019
Lead County: Dauphin
Probation Representative(s): Joe Gifford
EPIS Representative: Lisa Freese

Description of Service:

HASA is a clinical program with an educational component. It is ideal for youth struggling in the traditional school setting. The average length of stay is 6 months (based off of 2 marking periods) -the maximum capacity is 36 (although 18 is typically average). The program runs Monday through Friday year round. It is used pre-disposition and post-disposition (pre YLS and post YLS) and has a private academic license for grades 7-12 to include special education. Pre-dispositional youth participate in pre-contemplative activities (individual and group counseling) that help students build a commitment to change using motivational and CBT strategies. Post-dispositional youth attend group and individual counseling sessions focused on prosocial skill development, using the Skillstreaming component of ART, which is facilitated in the Skillstreaming Group (T-Th).

On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays an applied Skillstreaming Group occurs that builds upon the steps in the Tuesday-Thursday group. This group is facilitated by the Health PE/Life Skills Teacher. Students receive 30 minutes (minimum) of individual counseling to relate the Skillstreaming Group piece to specific domains of the YLS. Behavior is managed through a level system based on Positive Behavioral Support. A family brunch is held once each marking period to engage families and recognize student achievement. Monthly team meetings are held to review each student's progress. When a youth is admitted to HASA, they are assessed using the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) and Skillstreaming Group Checklist. Youth are then assigned to a group based on grade level and clinical track. Students get core academic instruction by certified teachers in the morning. Remediation work occurs in the afternoon for math and literacy, as well as the Skillstreaming Group depending on the day. Youth are transported from their home to and from HASA. A truancy van picks up youth who are late. Afterschool detention (used for truancy or misbehavior) and study hall are held after school Monday-Thursday.

There are 3 tracks to the educational component at HASA. The first is Credit Recovery. This occurs during the summer months for those who need it. Youth who don't need credit recovery work ahead in preparation for the upcoming school year. Credit recovery occurs over two 6-week summer sessions. Second is the GED Educational Track available to youth ages 16 and older with limited credits. An application has been submitted to be a testing site, however currently youth are transported to Abraxas LDP to take the test. Third is the Traditional Educational Track which is appropriate for students in grades 7-12 who require additional behavioral and academic support in a traditional school setting. Students earn credit toward high school graduation.

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

1. SPEP™ Service Type: Remedial Academic Program

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? Yes

If so, what is the Service Type? Job Related Training

Was the supplemental service provided? No Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 15

Total Points Received: 10 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: 10 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: 8

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.

30/32 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 10 points

6/32 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 3 points

Total Points Received: 13 **Total Points Possible:** 25

Basic SPEP™ Score: 43 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: 54% 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.

HASA received a 43 for the Basic Score and a 54% Program Optimization Percentage. These Basic Scores represent a decrease of 10 percentage point(s) from the initial SPEP™ Assessment. These POP Scores represent a decrease of 13 percentage point(s) from the initial SPEP™ Assessment. The service was classified as a Group 2 service; Remedial Academic Training Service Type. There is a qualifying supplemental service of Job-related interventions found in the research, which was not used to enhance this service. The Quality of Service Delivery was found to be at a medium Level. For Amount of Service, 30% of the youth received the recommended targeted weeks of duration and 83% of the youth received the recommended targeted contact hours for this service type. The Risk Levels of Youth admitted to the service were: 6% low risk, 75% moderate risk, 16% high risk, and 3% very high risk.

The service could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction by addressing the following recommendations:

1. Regarding Primary & Supplemental Service Types:
 - a. HASA's delivery of the remedial academic service was changed since the initial assessment, at the request of Dauphin County Juvenile Probation. Thus the supplemental service of Job-related Training is no longer part of HASA. The re-introduction of the supplemental service would enhance the delivery of HASA to Dauphin County youth.
2. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery
 - a. Written Protocol:
 - i. Develop or create a document that addresses time frames for the internal Abraxas review and updates of the curriculum and materials.
 - b. Staff Training:
 - i. Develop a written policy that includes the certification requirements for teachers. Include specialized training as applicable.
 - ii. Ensure that documentation of booster trainings is occurring. The development a training checklist specifically for teachers might be helpful.
 - c. Staff Supervision:
 - i. Ensure that annual performance reviews include documentation specific to the delivery of HASA.
 - d. Organizational Response to Drift:
 - i. Develop a written policy specifically for HASA that addresses procedures that are specifically related to identifying and addressing drift.
 - ii. Document the use of the policy or when it is reviewed with staff.
 - iii. Include specific steps to correct service delivery when drift occurs.
 - iv. Create an annual review with staff to assess the delivery of curriculum and how they can be enhanced.
3. Regarding Amount of Service:
 - a. Increasing the amount of time that youth are permitted to remain within the program to match the 26 weeks of service found in research to best reduce recidivism with this service type. This can be accomplished through continued collaboration with probation services on increasing the expectation for the number of weeks in the program.