

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 276-T01

Agency Name: Abraxas Youth & Family Services

Program Name: Harrisburg Abraxas Student Academy (HASA)

Service Name: Skillstreaming Group

Cohort Total: 31

Timeframe of Selected Cohort: August 1, 2018 and - December 31, 2019

Referral County(s): Dauphin

Date(s) of Interview(s): December 3, 2019 & February 5, 2020

Lead County: Dauphin

Probation Representative(s): Joe Gifford

EPIS Representative: Lisa Freese

Description of Service:

HASA is a clinical program with an educational component, 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 youth (although 18 is typically average). The program runs Monday through Friday year round. It is used both pre-disposition and post-disposition (pre YLS and post YLS) and has a private academic license for grades 7-12 that includes 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 Cognitive Behavioral Therapy strategies.

Post-dispositional youth attend group and individual counseling sessions focused on prosocial skill development, using the Skillstreaming Group component of Aggression Replacement Training® (ART®), which is facilitated in the Skillstreaming Group that occurs on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

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 pre-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.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Social Skills Training

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: 20

Total Points Received: 20 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: 4

Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours: 6

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.

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

6 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: 53 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: 62% 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.

Skillstreaming Group received a 53 for the Basic Score and a 62% Program Optimization Percentage. It was classified as a Group 3 service; Social Skills Training Service Type. There is no qualifying supplemental service found in the research. The Quality of Service Delivery was found to be at a Medium Level. For Amount of Service, 45% of the youth received the recommended targeted weeks of duration and 68% 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, 74% 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 Quality of Service Delivery:

a. Written Protocol:

- i. Routine review of curriculums utilized for the service should be documented in writing and dated.

b. Staff Training:

- i. Develop a written policy that training specific to Skillstreaming Group is required by staff to deliver the service.
ii. Provide booster trainings at pre-determined timeframes and ensure that documentation occurs for all booster trainings specific to the service.

c. Staff Supervision:

- i. Include in performance evaluations, written feedback specific to the delivery of Skillstreaming Group.

d. Organizational Response to Drift:

- i. Create a response to drift policy and include documentation when utilized.
ii. The policy should include specific language regarding progression of steps taken, should drift continue to occur.
iii. Create a formalized review of the monthly data collected to ensure that evaluation of the data is used to adapt or improve service delivery.

2. Regarding Amount of Service:

- a. Continue to monitor duration and dosage to increase current amount of service.
b. Partner with referral sources to increase the number of weeks of service that youth receive.

3. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served:

- a. Monitor level of risk as referrals are received to increase the number of high or very high risk youth.
b. Communicate with referral sources that higher risk youth would benefit most from the service.