

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 155-T01

Agency Name: JusticeWorks YouthCare, Inc.
Program Name: JusticeWorks YouthCare, Inc.
Service Name: Thinking for a Change (T4C)
Cohort Total: 18
Timeframe of Selected Cohort: Aug. 22, 2016 - Dec. 8, 2016
Referral County(s): Berks
Date(s) of Interview(s): Jul. 27, 2017
Lead County: Berks
Probation Representative(s): Jeff Gregro, Bill Keim, & Ryan Alena
EPIS Representative: Lisa Freese

Description of Service:

Thinking for a Change (T4C), operated by Justice Works YouthCare, Inc. is a community-based program for youth in Berks County who are at moderate to high risk for re-offending and have scored High in either the Attitudes/Orientation or Personality/Behavior domains of the YLS. Thinking for a Change was developed by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) and it concentrates on changing the thinking of offenders. T4C is a cognitive – behavioral therapy (CBT) service that includes cognitive restructuring, social skills development, and the development of problem-solving skills. T4C stresses interpersonal communication skill development and confronts thought patterns that can lead to problematic behaviors. The program has three components: cognitive self-change, social skills, and problem-solving skills. Lessons on cognitive self-change provide participants with a thorough process for self-reflection concentrated on uncovering antisocial thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and beliefs. Social skills lessons prepare participants to engage in prosocial interactions based on self-understanding and awareness of the impact that their actions may have on others.

Justice Works T4C is only for Berks County youth who are under juvenile probation supervision. They accept male or female offenders who are typically 12-18 years of age, with an average age of 16. Male and female groups run separately. Each client is given a workbook to follow the curriculum, which also includes a Pre and Post-test "How I Think" that measures thinking patterns. The overall purpose of T4C is to learn how thinking controls their behavior, learn about their beliefs, and how their thought process got them into trouble and overall how to make better decisions.

Staff includes a Program Director and 2 Family Resource Specialists (FRS). According to NIC, T4C 4.0, the most recent version, and the one currently being used in Berks County, is a 16 week service consisting of 31 lessons (90 minutes each) twice per week. JusticeWorks also offers makeup sessions which are scheduled on an as needed basis at a location to be determined, usually prior to the next scheduled session. The groups are held at the JusticeWorks offices located in Reading, PA. Transportation is provided to ensure better attendance.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

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:** 35

Total Points Received: 35 **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: 6

Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours: 6

Total Points Received: 12 **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.

18 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 12 points

7 youth 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: 92 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: 92% 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.

The JusticeWorks YouthCare Inc. Thinking for a Change (T4C) program scored a 92 for the Basic Score and a 92% Program Optimization Percentage. It is classified as a Group 5 Service - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. The program could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction through:

1. Exploring ways to increase both duration and dosage for juveniles receiving the program.
2. Augmenting staff training by holding booster/refresher trainings for T4C facilitators.