

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 214-T01

Agency Name: Community Specialists Corporation  
Program Name: The Academy Day & Evening Program  
Service Name: Restorative Services Program  
Cohort Total: 28  
Timeframe of Selected Cohort: Jan. 23, 2017 - Nov. 18, 2017  
Referral County(s): Allegheny  
Date(s) of Interview(s): Dec. 6, 2017 & Dec. 6, 2017  
Lead County: Allegheny  
Probation Representative(s): William Holt & William Shultz  
EPIS Representative: Shawn Peck

## Description of Service:

The Academy 's community-based programming, operational since 1982, at one time provided day/evening services to over 300 Allegheny county JPO youth. That larger and more traditional Day/Evening program is now comprised of two components: 1) The Academy Integrated Program provides supervision & programming to male & female JPO youth committed to The Academy and also enrolled in their charter school, and; 2) The Academy Treatment & Aftercare Program provides supervision & programming to male & female JPO youth who have been committed to this program by the Court per a new charge or technical violation. This program is also used for JPO youth that are transitioning back to their home and community as a step down/transition from a residential placement. The Academy's charter school, along with both of their Day/Evening components, is housed in the same facility located within one of Pittsburgh's southern neighborhoods. Youth committed to the Integrated Program attend the charter school & after-school programming each weekday & 1 weekend day. Youth in the Treatment & Aftercare Program attend programming (staggered per services) 3 times per week & 1 weekend day. Youth are transported to & from the program by The Academy staff. Commitment periods for these youths are generally from 3 to 5 months. The Treatment & Aftercare Program provides supervision and competency-development programming to JPO committed youth in their homes & in the community. All services offered through the Treatment & Aftercare program are designed to focus on competency-skill development based on the Balanced Approach to Restorative Justice. Through participation in work programs & community service projects, students may also have opportunity to fulfill court-ordered community service & restitution obligations, as well as court-mandated fees. The Restorative Services Program functions on 2 overarching principles: developing empathy & creating a sense of identity in prosocial activities. The victim impact group will help a young person recognize the harm they have caused to their fellow community members. Participating in community service will help students feel good about helping others. This program is specifically designed for females and males 14-18 years of age. Young people in this program are receiving community-based treatment and are actively on probation. The Restorative Services program focuses on addressing student's needs through the BARJ principles: community protection, accountability, & competency development. The program will run 5 hours a week for 12 weeks. Each week a student will participate in two 1-hour groups and 3 hours of community service/restitution. Each student that participates will take the victim impact pre and post-test.

## 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 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:** 2

**Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours:** 0

**Total Points Received:** 2 **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.

21 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 7 points

6 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 5 points

**Total Points Received:** 12 **Total Points Possible:** 25

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**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 34 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:** 43 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.)

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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 juvenile probation department.

#### **1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:**

##### **a. Written Protocol:**

- i. Develop a manual to describe each component of the service.
- ii. Ensure manual includes a detailed description of how the components are related.
- iii. Ensure that each lesson or session is described in detail.
- iv. Develop a documentation process to verify that the manual is delivered as intended.
- v. Develop a schedule to update the manual to include date of revision.

##### **b. Staff Training:**

- i. Develop a specialized training that includes each component of the service.
- ii. Develop a booster training that includes each component of the services.
- iii. Develop documentation to verify that staff are trained to deliver this service.
- iv. Ensure that the supervisor of this service is trained to deliver the service.

##### **c. Staff Supervision**

- i. Develop a supervision process to include formal and informal monitoring of service delivery according to the written protocol/manual.
- ii. Develop a documentation process to supervise the delivery of this service.
- iii. Ensure the documentation process includes a supervision schedule.
- iv. Ensure that the supervisor of this service delivers written performance feedback to staff that deliver this service.

##### **d. Organizational Response to Drift**

- i. Develop a procedure/policy to prevent drift in service delivery to describe:
  1. All components of the service and how they are operationalized.

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Reassessment 2

SPEP™ ID and Time: 214-T02

Agency Name: Community Specialists Corporation  
Program Name: The Academy Day & Evening Program  
Service Name: Restorative Services Program  
Cohort Total: 22  
Timeframe of Selected Cohort: Jan. 22, 2019 - Dec. 19, 2019  
Referral County(s): Allegheny  
Date(s) of Interview(s): Feb. 24, 2020 & Feb. 24, 2020  
Lead County: Allegheny County Juvenile Probation  
Probation Representative(s): William Shultz, Placement Liaison  
EPIS Representative: Christa Park, SPEP™ Implementation Specialist

## Description of Service:

Community Specialists Corporation is a service provider that offers community-based programs for youth involved with Allegheny County Juvenile Probation (JPO), as well as offers residential programming to youth from across Pennsylvania and several surrounding states. A charter school is also provided for Allegheny County youth. The Academy's community-based programming, operational since 1982, at one time provided day/evening services to over 300 Allegheny County JPO youth. That larger and more traditional Day/Evening program is now comprised of two components: The Academy Integrated Program provides supervision and programming to male and female JPO youth committed to The Academy and also enrolled in the charter school, and; The Academy Treatment & Aftercare Program provides supervision and competency-development programming to male and female JPO youth who have been committed to this program by the Court per a new charge or technical violation. This program is also used for JPO youth that are transitioning back to their home and community as a step down/transition from a residential placement. The Academy is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF); it is located within one of Pittsburgh's southern neighborhoods. Youth are transported to and from the facility by The Academy staff. Youth committed to The Academy attend services Monday through Friday and on Saturday. Programming is based on individual strengths, needs, abilities and preferences. Services included but are not limited to: Individual Drug & Alcohol Counseling, Aggression Replacement Training® (ART®), Victim Awareness, Employability Skills Development, Life Skills, Community Service Projects, School Visits & Academic Support, Family Support Services, Post-secondary Education Planning & Assistance, Mental Health Counseling, Psychiatric Services. The Restorative Services Program functions on two overarching principles: developing empathy and creating a sense of identity in pro-social activities. It focuses on addressing youths' needs through the BARJ principles: community protection, accountability, and competency development. The Restorative Services Program consists of two components – participation in Academy-sponsored work programs & community service projects and group counseling. The Restorative Services Program runs 5 hours a week, for 12 weeks. Each week youth participate in two, 1-hour groups (i.e., The Victim Impact Group; The Community Group) and participate in 3 hours of community service/restitution. Each youth that participates in the program will take the Victim Impact Pre-Test & Post-Test. In addition, a spreadsheet tracks youth participation, behavior, and attendance in the service. The Victim Impact and Community Groups help youth recognize the harm they have caused to their fellow community members. The Victim Impact Group is based on the "Listen and Learn" Curriculum. It consists of 13 units, built around 10 core crime topics: property crime, assault, robbery, hate and bias, gang violence, sexual assault, child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, drunk and impaired driving, and homicide. The basic precepts of the Victim Impact Curriculum are: Victims and the impact of crime on them are the focus; Victims' personal experiences are the centerpiece; Victims deserve to have their rights enforced and their voices heard.; Anyone can become a victim of crime; Victimization creates a "ripple effect" throughout the community; Offenders have the opportunity to change their thinking and their behavior; Offenders have an obligation to make amends to their victims, directly and indirectly. The Community Group is facilitated as a secondary component to the Victim Impact Group. This group acts as a hands-on and process group that educates group members on how the crimes that they learn about weekly in the Victim Impact Group can affect their own community. Youth create their own community including the roles that each of them will play in that dynamic. Each week, the crime that is introduced in the Victim Impact Group will also occur in the group's community that directly affects one or more of the group members. By using this model, the group members will be able to process the effects of crimes on a more personal level as well as take ownership over their community. Through participation in The Academy-sponsored work programs and community service projects, youth may also have opportunity to fulfill court-ordered community service and restitution obligations, as well as court-mandated fees. Commitment periods for youth are generally from 3 to 5 months.

## 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 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: 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.

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

11 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

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**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 72 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:** 90 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.)

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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 juvenile probation department.

The Restorative Services Program received a 72 for the Basic Score and a 90% Program Optimization Percentage. These Basic Scores represent an increase of 38 percentage point(s) from the initial SPEP™ Assessment. These POP Scores represent an increase of 47 percentage point(s) from the initial SPEP™ Assessment. Improvements were made throughout the performance improvement process to address the quality of service delivery, as well as the amount of service and risk level of youth served, which contributed significantly to the score increases. The Academy developed materials to guide service delivery, developed/implemented a training & supervision process to monitor service delivery, and developed/implemented an organizational response to drift. Enhanced data collection enabled better monitoring of the amount of service delivered. Communicating with referral agents regarding the research-based targets for this service type and emphasis on higher-risk youth also enhanced scores regarding amount of service and risk level of youth served. The service could continue to improve its capacity for recidivism reduction by addressing the following recommendations:

1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:

a. Written Protocol:

- i. Develop a schedule to review the Written Protocol/Manual to ensure the most current materials are in use.
- ii. Consider including a Table of Contents within the Written Protocol/Manual that identifies when the materials were last reviewed/revised.

b. Organizational Response to Drift:

- i. Enhance the current “response to drift” policy with an if/then approach for service-specific drift, similar to that used for employee performance drift.
- ii. Enhance existing data processes to assess the fidelity and quality of service delivery in order to adapt/improve service delivery.

2. Regarding Amount of Service:

- a. Maintain communication with JPO from referring counties to match research recommendations for the targeted amount of service and appropriate length of stay for each youth.