

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 293-T01

Agency Name: Youth Advocate Programs
Program Name: Traditional Advocate Services
Service Name: Community Service
Cohort Total: 28 Amount of Service/24 Risk Level
Timeframe of Selected Cohort: All delinquent youth who began this service on/after January 1, 2019 and ended this service on/before December 31, 2019
Referral County(s): Lebanon
Date(s) of Interview(s): July 31, 2019 and September 30, 2019
Lead County: Lebanon
Probation Representative(s): Sue Christner
EPIS Representative: Dawn Hooton

Description of Service:

Youth Advocate Programs (YAP) was founded in Pennsylvania in 1975 to help reintegrate youth returning from an adult prison in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. Since then, YAP has grown to work with approximately 3,000 youth and families per year in 24 counties in Pennsylvania. YAP works with youth and adults in the child welfare, juvenile justice, education, intellectual and developmental disabilities systems.

Traditional Advocate Services focuses on providing youth with one on one mentoring in small group interaction. Service intensity ranges from 5-15 hours per week over 2-3 face-to-face contacts with the Advocate each week. The primary intervention of Traditional Advocate Services is the connection to an Advocate who develops a trusting caring relationship with the youth and their family and serves as a natural helper. This relationship then serves as a pathway to community linkage development and assisting youth and families in building long-term support systems through both formal community linkages (employment, therapeutic services, etc.) and informal community linkages (hobbies, interests, places of interest). This emphasis allows YAP to support youth and their families in addressing the unmet needs that resulted in their system involvement, reducing the likelihood of future system involvement. An emphasis is placed on youth giving back to their communities throughout their YAP involvement where youth and their families can shift from service recipients or clients, to contributors to their neighborhoods and communities instead. Most youth who participate in YAP, complete services successfully and are free from juvenile justice or child welfare system involvement by the end of services.

One on-one mentoring focus by the Advocate, serves as a connector to community linkages, catalyst for change, role modeling, tending to ultimate transition from services. Individual Service Plans (ISP) are created by utilizing the YLS and meeting with the youth and family to drive the service and determine needs. Engagement of the child/family team and developing trusting relationships is delivered across home, community, and school setting. Advocates spend time with informal and formal supports, i.e. family and outside treatment provider. They provide 24/7 crisis support, transportation, tutoring, career exploration, and work force logistics. Emphasis is placed on supporting purposeful transition beyond formal services to ensure child/family can sustain gains/improvements independently after services have ended. Forward Thinking, Girls Circle, Community Service, YAPWorx, and Community Reintegration Program (CRP) are services that can be utilized in conjunction during the mentoring piece.

Community Service helps instill in youth the importance of being an active member in the community by giving back. This also allows the community and different stakeholders to view youth as productive members of society. Youth are able to complete court ordered obligations as well as satisfy court costs, fines, and fees. Supervision is provided by an Advocate at all times while working side by side with the youth. BARJ principles are emphasized, as well as knowledge of community linkages. The youth are afforded an opportunity to gain work and life experience and build upon pro-social skills, which helps provide a positive shift in attitude towards the community. It also helps instill ownership, increase protective factors and bolster community pride. Community Service activities can take place in an individual or group setting. These sustainable Community Service opportunities can be completed independent of YAP. Some examples of Community Service opportunities are: Prom fashion show, creek clean-ups, Healthy Kids' Day, Youth Only Fishing, park clean-ups, assisting elderly community members in maintaining lawn care and snow removal, providing baked goods to elderly and to local Police Departments, Day of Caring, and Stuff the Bus.

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: 8

Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Received: 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.

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

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

Total Points Received: 7 **Total Points Possible:** 25

Basic SPEP™ Score: 35 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: 44% 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.

1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:

a. Written Protocol:

- i. Develop and implement a written protocol specifically for Community Service.
- ii. Develop a service description that outlines in specific detail what should be addressed during service delivery.
- iii. Identify in writing which youth are most appropriate for the service according to the YLS.
- iv. Ensure there is documentation that the manual or written protocol describing the service is implemented and referenced during service delivery.
- v. Include revision date on written manual.

b. Staff Training:

- i. Document the minimum education requirement to deliver the service.
- ii. Identify specialized trainings that are relevant to the service.
- iii. Identify booster trainings that are relevant to the service.
- iv. Ensure through documentation that delivery staff receive booster trainings.
- v. Require and document that the supervisor has been trained to deliver the service.

c. Staff Supervision:

- i. Develop a process for supervisors to monitor service delivery.
- ii. Document when supervisors monitor staff.
- iii. Document supervision of staff at predetermined time frames.
- iv. Ensure that all supervisors provide written feedback to staff delivering the service.
- v. Develop written performance evaluations that directly reference the delivery of this service.

d. Organizational Response to Drift:

- i. Develop a policy and procedure to identify departure from the fidelity and quality of service delivery.
- ii. Ensure documentation is developed and utilized to verify implementation of policies and procedures.
- iii. Develop an if/then approach to specific corrective action steps to address departure from fidelity and quality of service.
- iv. Develop a procedure to collect data on the fidelity and quality of service delivery.
- v. Develop a process to evaluate and adapt to improve service delivery.

2. Regarding Amount of Service:

- a. Improve communication with Juvenile Probation to better match research recommendations for the targeted amount of service.
- b. Redistribute time allotted to ensure youth receive the necessary aspects of Community Service.

3. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served:

- a. All youth referred to Community Service should continue to receive the service despite their risk level according to the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory.