

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

Name of Program and Service: Youth Advocate Program-Thinking for a Change (T4C)

Cohort Total: 24

SPEP ID: 127-T01

Selected Timeframe: Sep.1, 2015-Sep. 30, 2016

Date(s) of Interview(s): Jul. 29, 2016, Sept. 22, 2016

Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: Nicole Mattern, Dauphin Co. & Shawn Peck, EPISCenter

Person Preparing Report: Shawn Peck, Nicole Mattern, and Sue Christner

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)*

Youth Advocate Programs, Inc., (YAP) provides various types of services for male and female youth across the United States. YAP's Mission is to provide safe, proven effective and economical alternatives to institutional placement. Types of treatment include Juvenile Justice programs, Child Welfare programs, developmental disability programs and Behavioral Health programs. YAP's community-based programs emphasize the treatment needs of the individual youth, family and community. The YAP philosophy to prepare youth and their families for engagement after treatment ends is emphasized throughout treatment to create independent communication with the youth and their family and the development of community linkages the youth and family can access independently. Mentoring is a theme of YAP's treatment milieu and paid mentors are selected from the same communities as the youth.

Thinking for a Change 4.0 (T4C) is an integrated cognitive behavioral change program authored by Jack Bush, Ph.D., Barry Glick, Ph.D., and Juliana Taymans, Ph.D., under a cooperative agreement with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). T4C incorporates research from cognitive restructuring theory, social skills development, and the learning and use of problem solving skills. T4C is comprised of 25 lessons that build upon each other, and contains appendices that can be used to craft an aftercare program to meet ongoing cognitive behavioral needs of your group. Not all lessons can be completed in one session, so a typical delivery cycle may take 30 sessions. Sessions should last between one and two hours. Ideally, the curriculum is delivered two times per week, with a minimum recommended dosage of once per week and a maximum of three times per week. Participants must be granted time to complete mandatory homework between each lesson. The program is designed to be provided to justice-involved adults and youth, males and females. It is intended for groups of eight to twelve and should be delivered only by trained facilitators. Due to its integrated structure, T4C is a closed group, meaning members need to start at the beginning of a cycle, and may not join the group mid-stream (lesson five is a logical cut-off point for new group members). Thinking for a Change is divided into three components: cognitive self change, social skills, and problem-solving skills. These skills help to process negative and harmful thoughts, engagement in positive social learning, open communication, and addressing stressful life situations.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Cognitive-behavior 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 Earned: 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 and supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

Total Points Earned: 10 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: 2

Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Earned: 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.

24/24 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 12 points

4/24 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 3 points

Total Points Earned: 15 Total Points Possible: 25

Basic SPEP™ Score: 62 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: 62% 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:

Thinking for a Change (T4C) could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction through:

1. Regarding Quality of Service:

a. Written Protocol:

- i. Develop a document to ensure that the service delivered according to protocol.

b. Staff Training:

- i. Ensure that a booster training be developed for this service.

c. Staff Supervision:

- i. Develop a document for the monitoring of service delivery by a supervisor.
- ii. Develop a schedule for the supervisor to monitor this service.
- iii. Supervisor will provide written feedback to staff that deliver this service.
- iv. Ensure that delivery of this service is incorporated in the yearly performance evaluation.

d. Organizational Response to Drift:

- i. Develop an agency policy that outlines how to prevent drift from occurring while delivering this service.
- ii. Provide documentation that this policy was implemented.
- iii. Ensure that the organizational response to drift includes specific action steps for the agency to take to avoid drift, an "if-then" approach.
- iv. Utilize data to improve the quality of service delivery.
- v. Utilize pre and post testing to measure the effectiveness of service delivery.

2. Regarding Amount of Service:

- a. Make modifications to provide longer service participation, allowing for alignment with research supported amounts.

- b. Improve communication with JPO from referring counties to better match research recommendations for targeted amount of service.