

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

Name of Program and Service: Community Commitment, Inc. (CCI), Youthwork

Cohort Total: 33

SPEP ID: 72

Selected Timeframe: Aug. 1, 2012 – Dec. 31, 2013

Date(s) of Interview(s): May 16, 2014

Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: Tracie Davies, Lehigh Co. & Lisa Freese, EPISCenter

Person Preparing Report: Lisa Freese

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)*

Community Commitment Incorporated (CCI) operates in Lehigh, Northampton and Bucks Counties. There are three components to CCI: "Youthwork," Family Mediation and Peer Integration Therapy. This summary focuses on Youthwork services provided by the Youthworkers in Lehigh County. CCI began in 1972, with the goal of bringing "social therapeutic services to the homes of at risk youth." Several of the staff members speak fluent Spanish; they work 40-50 hours per week, and their caseload size at the time of the interview ranged from four to eight juveniles. They work with male and female clients ages 12-18. The program description summarizes that Youthwork includes "intensive home and community monitoring and supervision." It emphasizes the "youth's development of personal responsibility, improved relations with peer and authority figures and the cultivation of independent living skills." Youthworkers are required to meet with the juveniles at a minimum of 2 times per week. Time spent with the juveniles will vary, ranging from 45 minutes to several hours per visit. Time spent is dependent on identified issues at the time of the contact. The agency expectation is that the youth workers meet with the identified youth as often as necessary, and be available 24 hours 7 days per week.

Once a problem is identified, youth workers formulate an intervention plan and the response is often considered to be nontraditional and can be subject to constant scrutiny. The manual identified Youthwork as being multidimensional and included the following: counseling, therapy, working with family, skills training, competency development, leadership training, learning social constraints and anger management. The youth worker is responsible for monitoring the youth at home, school, community, work (when applicable) and "leisure time" activities. They provide assistance with, but not limited to: transportation to and from probation required activities, assist with job searches and in completing an application and preparing for an interview, school, community based services for D&A and MH, finding community service opportunities, discussion of client interests and finding pro-social activities for engagement. The youth worker also offers guidance and assistance to the juvenile in a supportive manner again encompassing the "Whatever it Takes" mentality.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Mentoring

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? Yes

If so, what is the Service type? Behavioral Contracting/Management

Was the supplemental service provided? No Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 30

Total Points Earned: 25 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: 4

Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours: 2

Total Points Earned: 6 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.

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

8 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 8 points

Total Points Earned: 18 Total Points Possible: 25

Basic SPEP™ Score: 59 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: 63% 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:

1. The addition of a behavioral contracting/management service to supplement the mentoring service type.
2. Strengthening the “Youthwork” in Action Manual by:
 - Specifying the service to be provided as well as the target audience (for example: age range, level of risk). A review of the completed service description and type of youth appropriate for the service, with both staff delivering the service and referral sources, would further enhance the capacity for recidivism reduction.
 - Documenting use of the manual as a training tool and mandating its review by staff.
 - Verifying that the youth worker has read the material through either a post test or worksheet completion.
 - Routine review and updates of the Youthwork in Action Manual, and documenting the review date.
 - Documenting the use of the Youthwork in Action Manual during service delivery
 - The inclusion of written policies for departure or drift from intended service delivery, or clearly written expectations for staff delivering the service with process for corrective action if necessary.
3. Consideration to extend the service to 26 weeks in length. Increasing the duration of the service will positively impact dosage as well; increasing the number of youth who meet the targeted 78 hours for mentoring. Alternatively, if duration cannot be increased, another option could be to increase the number of face-to-face contact hours during the time period the youth is receiving the service (e.g. lengthening the existing meetings or meeting more times per week).