The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

**Name of Program and Service:** Outside In-Voyagers-Competency Development Group

**Cohort Total:** 50  
**Selected Timeframe:** Jul. 21, 2014-Dec. 24, 2015

**Date(s) of Interview(s):** Jun. 3, 2015 & Sep. 11, 2015

**Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives:** Doug Braden, Allegheny Co. & Shawn Peck, EPISCenter

**Person Preparing Report:** Shawn Peck & Doug Braden

**SPEP ID:** 87-T01

**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)

The Voyagers Program is an activity-intensive 24-bed, male only, residential program focusing primarily on pro-social adolescent development and skill building. The Voyagers Program utilizes a cognitive behavioral approach which challenges each student’s thinking and behavior patterns in three specific adolescent developmental areas: pro social skills, moral reasoning and education. The Voyagers Program incorporates a group approach with experience-based learning. The group approach emphasizes pro-social skill building and the experience-based learning provides real-world engagement. Specific activities foster interaction and interdependence between group members while simultaneously developing problem solving ability and personal responsibility. The dynamics of trust, teamwork, stewardship, integrity, communication, service and respect are emphasized. The average length of stay is 4 to 6 months, but can vary from a month to a year or longer. Each student has the opportunity to participate in community service and venturing activities. The Voyagers Program consists of a highly structured and activity-intensive milieu that is developmentally appropriate and intrinsically motivating, challenging each student to evaluate his past behaviors and decisions and to begin imagining new ways of being. While in the Voyagers Program, students have the opportunity to participate in the Wilderness Intensive Leadership Development (W.I.L.D.) Program. W.I.L.D. is a closed group of no more than eight students that participate in outdoor intensive programming and venturing activities. Each student participates in the status and level system which measures behavioral progress and also is used to determine activities that the youth can participate in while in the program.

As part of the focus on pro-social adolescent development and skill building, all youth committed to Outside In receive weekly group counseling sessions, three times a week, for one hour each session. This component is known as the Competency Development Group. Topics include: Self Development, Value Clarification, Anger Management, Group Dynamics, Peer Pressure, Communication, Conflict Resolution, Personal Health, and Education. Students are evaluated weekly through ten behavioral categories: Class Session Participation, Cooperation, Responsibility, Attitude Toward Authority, Socialization with Peers, Positive Mental Attitude, Initiative, Courtesy and Manners, Personal Moral Integrity, and Behavioral Contract. These categories form the backbone of Outside In interventions providing the students with immediate feedback on appropriate decision making, behavior expectations and education.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Group Counseling
   - 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: 30
   - Total Points Earned: 30

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:** 0
   - **Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours:** 4

   Total Points Earned: 4 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.

   - 49/50 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 12 points
   - 11/50 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 5 points

   Total Points Earned: 17 Total Points Possible: 25

**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 61 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:** 65% 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)

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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 local juvenile court. The recommendations for this service included in the feedback report are:

Outside In’s service of Competency Development Group scored a 65% Program Optimization Percentage. It is classified as a Group 4 service; Group Counseling with no qualifying supplemental service. The quality of the service was found to be at a Medium level. The risk levels of youth admitted to the program were 1% as low risk, 76% as moderate risk and 22% as high risk. The amount of service provided to the clients was 42% of the recommended targeted weeks of duration and 42% of the recommended target contact hours for this service type.

Outside In’s service of Competency Development Group could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction through:

1. Regarding Quality of Service:
   a. Develop a training that is specific to the delivery this service
   b. Develop a booster training that is specific to the delivery this service
   c. Ensure that the supervisor of this service is trained to deliver the service
   d. Develop an agency policy that outlines how to prevent drift from delivering the service according to the protocol
      i. Ensure that the organizational response to drift included specific action steps for the agency to take, an “if-then” approach, should drift occur
      ii. A progressive supervision process and response plan
      iii. Reference the use of data outcomes to improve service delivery
2. Regarding Service Amount:
   a. Improve communication with JPO from referring counties to better match research recommendations for targeted amount of service

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