

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

Name of Program and Service: Abraxas Youth and Family Services-LDP-Community Service & Restitution Program
Cohort Total: 22/20 SPEP ID: 218-T01
Selected Timeframe: Dec. 1, 2016 – Nov. 30, 2017
Date(s) of Interview(s): Feb. 6, 2018
Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: Sue Christner, Lebanon Co., Tracie Davies, Lehigh Co., Lisa Freese & Heather Perry, EPISCenter
Person Preparing Report: Sue Christner, Lebanon Co. & Heather Perry, EPISCenter

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 Abraxas Leadership Development Program (LDP) is an 88 bed open residential program for male (64) and female (24) youth between the ages of 13 and 18 who have been court committed to the program, following an adjudication of delinquency. Referrals are accepted from all 67 counties throughout PA and referrals are also accepted from WV, MD and DC. The program is designed to last approximately 6 months; however, most youth average a 4 month stay. Similarly, some youth may stay as long as 8 months, to address a specific request by the court. The program was established in 1994, and through the Leadership Curriculum, staff work with youth to instill leadership skills, training and other activities as well as the opportunity to earn leadership positions and responsibilities. The LDP is based on BARJ by providing victim awareness through the development of an Individual Service Plan (ISP) which includes goals, services, daily groups and family conferences; competency development through pro-social skills and vocational training and restorative justice through restitution and community service. The LDP also operates on the philosophy of trauma informed care through the Sanctuary Model. Part of the curriculum includes the Leadership Experiential Adventure Program (L.E.A.P.). L.E.A.P. provides experiential learning opportunities, adventure-based programming, community service, restitution, vocational programming, and workforce development opportunities for youth (taken from brochure). It is accredited by the Association for Experiential Education. During the SPEP interviews which occurred on October 20, 2017 and November 28, 2017, as many as 14 services were identified, of which were eligible to go through the SPEP process. This report focuses on the Community Service and Restitution Program. Various on-ground opportunities are available for youth to complete community service during their stay at the Leadership Development Program. Youth do have an opportunity to convert their community service hours into money that will be paid toward restitution, at the rate of \$9.00 per hour. All females are required to complete community service a requirement of Balanced and Restorative Justice, which is also connected to the phase or points system (behavioral management program). Youth identified as owing restitution are chosen to work before youth who owe community service, however all females have plenty of opportunities to complete hours. For example, the females assist with bingo, playing cards or other games while interacting with the residents at the South Mountain Restoration Center (SMRC). Youth that are not at a level in which they have permission to leave the LDP grounds have opportunities to earn community service hours through cleaning, mopping, and emptying trash within the building.

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 Earned: 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 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: 8

Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Earned: 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.

18/20 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 10 points

8/20 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 13 points

Total Points Earned: 23 Total Points Possible: 25

Basic SPEP™ Score: 56 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: 70% 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:

Community Service and Restitution scored a 56 for the Basic Score and a 70% Program Optimization Percentage. It is classified as a Group 2 Restorative – Restitution/Community Service service type. The program could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction through:

1. Quality of Service Delivery:

- a. Written Protocol: i. Enhance current process by identifying the target population, risk factors, and criminogenic needs served by this service; ii. Develop a policy to ensure the manual is being referenced during service delivery. For example, create a "spot check checklist" that can be completed by the supervisor; iii. Develop a policy to ensure the manual is being reviewed annually at minimum;
- b. Staff Training: i. Develop a formal training process (for example, a shadowing checklist) and ensure that all staff and supervisors have been formally trained; ii. Document training topics that are offered to staff.; iii. Consider educating staff on the YLS, Case Plan and other JJSES topics as well as topics specific to community service/restitution;
- c. Response to Drift : i. Develop a policy related to drift and include this in the manual/protocol; ii. Consider developing and exit survey to assist with evaluating the effectiveness of the service.

2. Amount of Service: a. Continuing to collaborate with the probation departments to ensure that each juvenile reaches of minimum of 12 weeks of service and 60 contact hours.; b. Consider lengthening the sessions to 5 hours per week.

3. Risk Level: a. Continuing to collaborate with the probation department to ensure that moderate and high risk juveniles are being referred to the program and that low risk referrals are being diverted from treatment.; b. Ensure YLS data and the youth's case plan is included in the referral packet from the probation department.