

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

*Service Score Results:* Baseline

**Name of Program and Service:** Harborcreek Youth Services - Psychoeducational Curriculum Based Group Counseling

Cohort Total: 12 SPEP ID: 256-T01

Timeframe of Selected Cohort: Oct. 1, 2017 - Jun. 5, 2019

Date(s) of Interview(s): Dec. 13, 2018 & Dec. 13, 2018

Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: William Shultz, Allegheny County; Christa Park, EPISCenter

Person Preparing Report: William Shultz, Allegheny County; Christa Park, 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. (500 word limit)*

Located just outside of Erie in Harborcreek, Pennsylvania, Harborcreek Youth Services (HYS) has been serving families since 1911. Originally founded as the "Catholic Boys Protectory," the agency has changed with the needs of the community over the years serving for a time as an orphanage, a juvenile probation facility, and finally today as a trauma-informed Behavioral Health provider for Harborcreek Youth Services uses a blended model of facilitating group sessions in the education and milieu settings. Sessions are facilitated for one hour by a teacher or youth care counselor. Group topics are determined by the daily/weekly schedule and are drawn from three core resources: a New Freedom Mental Health curriculum; a New Freedom-Phoenix curriculum; and the ARISE curriculum. A New Freedom resources address critical personal, environmental, & community risk factors and build on key protective factors & assets. These resources are based on evidence-based strategies: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT); Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT); skill-building for conflict resolution and violence prevention; the Social Learning Model: behavior rehearsal, role-playing; the stages of change model (Prochaska, DiClemente, Freeman, Nolan); and Motivational Interviewing (MI). HYS uses A New Freedom as a module-based curriculum specifically designed to address issues facing youth with mental health issues. It is a psycho-educational group designed to help youth better understand the various mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, conduct disorder, or bipolar disorder. Additional topics can be drawn from over 100 hours of resources and included in other group sessions. Needs of the youth are the primary driver in determining what topics will be addressed in the group. One-hour sessions are facilitated weekly within the milieu setting. HYS uses A New Freedom-Phoenix as a custom-designed module-based curriculum intended to address issues facing the delinquent population. HYS' specific curriculum is a prevention model which addresses social skill development & interpersonal relationships (including gang exposure/involvement). Lessons are a mix of lecture and small-group activities. This group is facilitated twice weekly for one hour. One session occurs in school; the other occurs in the milieu. All youth participate in the groups but may not all be instructed in the same lessons. The curriculum offers 50 hours of material. The ARISE life-skills programs are a comprehensive series for high school teens and young adults. Youth are given essential tools such as anger management; gun awareness; how to manage money; and self-health & hygiene. The lessons are short and thought-provoking. At HYS, one-hour ARISE groups occur both in the school and milieu settings. The school utilizes the opportunity to bolster ARISE lessons by encouraging youth to practice skills in other therapeutic activities (such as during community service activities, work

## 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  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: 4

Total Points Earned: 12 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.

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

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

Total Points Earned: 10 Total Points Possible: 25

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**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:** 66% 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:

Psychoeducational Curriculum-Based Group Counseling could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction by addressing the following recommendations:

1. Quality of Service Delivery-Written Protocol: i. Develop an overarching Written Protocol to clearly describe the fidelity & quality of how each component/resource is coordinated and intended to be utilized in group sessions (e.g., A New Freedom, Phoenix, ARISE); ii. Within the Written Protocol, clearly describe how service delivery is to be documented, including use of all resources (e.g., A New Freedom, Phoenix, ARISE); iii. Within the Written Protocol, clearly describe how the written protocol is to be reviewed/updated at pre-determined timeframes; iv. Better integrate Youth Level of Service findings into the therapeutic process; Staff Training: i. Develop specific training on A New Freedom; ii. Develop booster training to further develop employees' skills and/or provide updates on all resources (e.g., A New Freedom, Phoenix, ARISE); Staff Supervision: i. Within the Written Protocol, include mechanisms for supervisors to monitor employees delivering the service to assess fidelity and quality as defined within the Written Protocol; Organizational Response to Drift: i. Develop an overarching policy/procedure that describes how drift will be identified; ii. Ensure the policy/procedure contains an "if-then" approach for corrective action steps if service delivery departs from what is intended; iii. Enhance existing data monitoring processes by using developer-recommended resources to monitor service delivery (e.g., "Pre-/Post-Tests" or "Possible Outcomes");
2. Amount of Service: i. Improve communication with JPO from referring counties to better match research recommendations for the targeted amount of service and appropriate length of stay for each youth.
3. Risk Level of Youth Served: i. Increase collaboration between juvenile probation and Harborcreek Youth Services to consider the appropriate risk level for each youth; ii. Increase collaboration between juvenile probation and Harborcreek Youth Services to consider each youth's responsibility factors during treatment.