

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 250-T01

Agency Name: Mid-Atlantic Youth Services

Program Name: Western PA Childcare Facility

Service Name: Educational Services

Cohort Total: 17

Timeframe of Selected Cohort: Mar. 1 2018 - Nov. 30, 2018

Referral County(s): Allegheny, Dauphin, Erie, & Philadelphia

Date(s) of Interview(s): Apr. 6, 2018 & Jun. 1, 2018

Lead County: Allegheny

Probation Representative(s): William Shultz

EPIS Representative: Christa Park

Description of Service:

The mission of Mid-Atlantic Youth Services, Corp. (MAYS) is to provide high-quality healthcare, education, and treatment services to youth through supportive partnerships with those served (e.g., courts, families, youth, and the community). At the Western PA Childcare Facility, MAYS accomplishes its mission by providing a safe, nurturing, and structured environment that promotes positive changes in the health and well-being of youth, allowing them to return to their communities while remaining alcohol, drug, and crime free. Consistent with Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system, the treatment philosophy of MAYS is grounded in Balanced and Restorative Justice Principles. To this end, MAYS will be consistent with the public's interest to provide programs of supervision, care, and rehabilitation for youth committing delinquent acts. MAYS programs provide balanced attention to the protection of the community, teach youth accountability for offenses committed, and enable youth to become responsible and productive members of their community. MAYS believes the youth in their care are experiencing severe emotional, behavioral, psychological, educational, and social problems which must be treated in a safe, structured, and comprehensive manner. Left untreated, these youth will continue to experience significant impairment in life functioning, resulting in continued drug/alcohol use, mental impairment/illness, and delinquency. When residential care is deemed necessary, an intensive approach to treatment must occur. MAYS believes residential care should be provided in close proximity to the youth's family, significant others, and community. This allows the youth and family the ability to receive family therapy and access continuing care support services that exist within their community. The environment at MAYS provides youth with a high degree of structure, utilizing clearly defined norms & expectations and logical consequences. In addition, all members of the treatment community are expected to model appropriate behaviors and provide mutual help to other youth. Each youth is expected to actively participate in his/her own treatment and participate as a member of a supportive, nurturing, and caring peer group. MAYS integrates residential living and the delivery of treatment with other program components such as security, medical, psychiatric, social, nutrition, education, and recreation services. Mid-Atlantic Youth Services offers educational classes to grades 7-12 under the authority of a Private Academic License, which is renewed annually by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. MAYS provides regular education as well as special education for students whose primary disability is emotional disturbance or specific learning disability. Their license requires that all classes are taught by appropriately credentialed teachers. Classes are offered in each of the four core subject areas, as well as Health/PE, U.S. & World Affairs, and Title I remediation. The school runs all year and is divided into 6 marking periods, five of which consist of 45 days and a sixth one averaging about 28 days. For purposes of this SPEP™, Educational Services, we will be focusing on MAYS Educational Services which includes: Special Education, Credit Recovery, and GED. We focus on these three areas (Special Education, Credit Recovery, and GED) because the SPEP™ research states that Remedial Academic Program is a Group Two service that has a defining characteristic of identifying deficits in an individual youth's education and developing a plan to address those deficits. Special education is provided to youth entering the program with a history of special education, as well as youth identified in need of special education. All necessary paperwork is completed on each special education student. Additionally, MAYS has a child find process, which is a checklist the teachers complete on all regular education students with the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of special education services. These checklists are then evaluated by the special education team; children identified as being in need of services will also receive special education. MAYS contracts with a school psychologist and a Local Education Agency (LEA) and have weekly meetings with the LEA representative to oversee all of these processes. All youth are provided with an Educational Plan. For youth who have accumulated 15 or more credits throughout his/her academic career, a specific graduation plan is developed. These plans are tailored to the individual needs of each student, and often include some credit recovery work to remedy deficits in his/her transcript. In addition to regular classes, MAYS offers credit recovery for those students who are behind in school. This is provided in the form of extra work to be done in addition to all regular course work and is tailored to the individual needs of each student as reflected by his/her credit totals. To qualify, a student must be behind for his/her age and must agree to the terms of the program. This determination is made in conference with the student by the director of education at the end of each marking period. Each student enrolled in credit recovery receives one tutoring session per week to help track and promote his/her progress. MAYS is a licensed Pearson Vue GED Testing Center, offering both testing and tutoring services. Students are identified for the GED program when they are at least 17 years of age and their credit totals fall far short of the total needed to graduate within one year. Once a student has been identified, he/she will sit for the four predictor exams (GED Ready). Based on the scores earned, a plan is devised for preparing and testing. If a student is likely to pass, he/she is scheduled to test in the subjects where he/she achieved his/her highest scores. If their scores indicate a need for study, students are provided with materials and tutoring sessions to help them achieve their goal. The tutoring sessions may include paper and on-line materials. Remediation uses a program titled Edgenuity which alternates between math & reading. Edgenuity is used for all youth regardless of circumstances (and is totally separate from credit recovery).

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

1. SPEP™ Service Type: Remedial Academic Program

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

If so, what is the Service Type? Job Related Training

Was the supplemental service provided? No Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 15

Total Points Received: 10 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, staff supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

Total Points Received: 20 Total Points Possible: 20

3. Amount of Service: Score was derived by calculating the total number of weeks and hours received by each youth in 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 contact hours. 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 Contact Hours or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Received: 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.

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

2 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 0 points

Total Points Received: 10 **Total Points Possible:** 25

Basic SPEP™ Score: 42 total points received out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP™ therapeutic service. (e.g. 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: 53% This percentage compares the service to the same service types found in the research. (e.g. 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 juvenile probation department.

1. Quality of Service Delivery:

a. Written Protocol:

- i. The development of an overarching procedure manual is recommended to clearly describe each component of this service, and how each component is coordinated and to ensure the service is implemented as intended.
- ii. Integrate Youth Level of Service findings into the Educational Services.
- iii. Develop a review schedule to update the protocols and ensure the latest version is dated.

b. Staff Training:

- i. Clarify the On-the-Job Training process for all components of education (specifically GED) and ensure that the training is documented.
- ii. Addendum to Job Description that includes responsibilities regarding GED, specifically identifying the GED Tutor, identify the training needs to include webinars from the database/file maker pro, attendance sheet will be crosschecked to verify, include Act 48 Hours submitted to the state, and emails from Pearson Vue.
- iii. Additionally, develop special refresher specific to the Special Ed materials.

c. Staff Supervision:

- i. For each employee delivering a service, create a drop-down box, in File Maker Pro, on the performance evaluations that are specific to interventions/services delivered by each staff.

d. Response to Drift:

- i. Develop/Coordinate existing procedures (i.e., "Administration Rules") into an overarching policy/procedure that describes how the service should be delivered from one step to another.
- ii. Confirm the policy/procedure contains corrective action steps to ensure an "if-then" approach, such as what to do if service delivery departs from what is intended.
- iii. Include youth feedback regarding the services directly after they complete the service activity rather than waiting until they exit the program.

2. Amount of Service

- a. 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

- a. Increase collaboration between juvenile probation and MAYS to consider the appropriate risk level for each youth.
- b. Increase collaboration between juvenile probation and MAYS to consider each youth's responsibility factors during treatment.