

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 169-T01

Agency Name: Pathways Adolescent Center

Program Name: New Beginnings Female Unit

Service Name: Guided Group Time

Cohort Total: 11

Timeframe of Selected Cohort: Sep. 5, 2016 – Apr. 28, 2018

Referral County(s): Butler (1), Blair (1), Clearfield (3), Jefferson (2), Lawrence (1), Washington (2), and Warren(1)

Date(s) of Interview(s): Feb. 26, 2018

Lead County: Venango and Mercer

Probation Representative(s): Julie Bullard, Venango Co. and Pam Farkas, Mercer Co.

EPIS Representative: Heather Perry

Description of Service:

Located in Oil City Pennsylvania, Pathways Adolescent Center (PAC) is a privately owned residential facility provider that serves PA youth referred by CYS and JPO. Their campus consists of a 28 bed male residential unit, a 28 bed female residential/transitional living unit named New Beginnings, two 12 bed male transitional living units, an 8 bed female transitional living home, a counseling center, a recreation facility, and a private academic school. Also on the grounds is an Emergency Shelter Program that is designed specifically to provide a facility for the shelter, care, assessment, and counseling of dependent and delinquent youths. Craig Psychological Services provides treatment and counseling on site that includes family, individual and group counseling, as well as Seeking Safety. Specialized treatment, such as Grief Counseling, D&A, or Sexual Abuse Curriculum must be approved by the referring agency. Each youth has the opportunity to complete Community Service Projects, Court Ordered Community Service, Restitution/Payment Plans/Personal Banking, Employment, and Money Management Skills. PAC offers Behavioral Modification Programming while incorporating CBT techniques with counseling services. Staff also provide youth with Cross Roads training, and group counseling. The Ansell Casey Testing, which identify strengths, weaknesses, and deficient areas that need to be addressed, is completed to aid in making an individualized transitional living plan. The Transitional Living component offers the resident the ability to obtain employment, attend public school and activities, and have additional counseling services that entail basic life skills with an adaptation to the ISP to meet his/her discharge needs. The focus of this report is the Guided Group Time service, specifically for the female residents in New Beginnings Program. Guided Group Time is an open group offered to all residents during their entire length of stay. Youth typically participate in Guided Group Time at least one hour every week. Most sessions are designed to be informal and focus on ways to learn or enhance coping skills through cognitive behavior therapy methods. Occasionally the group focuses on goals. The staff assigned to lead the group draws from a variety of topics and the discussion typically correlates with the issues occurring within the unit.

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

Total Points Received: 5 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: 0

Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Received: 0 **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, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 12 points

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

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

Basic SPEP™ Score: 60 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: 64% 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. Amount of Service:

- a. Continuing to collaborate with the probation departments to ensure that each juvenile reaches a minimum of 24 weeks of service and 40 contact hours.
- b. Consider lengthening the sessions to 2 hours per week.
- c. Consider streamlining the service to ensure youth that transition between units do not experience service interruption or duplicative topics.

2. Quality of Service Delivery:

- a. Written Protocol:
 - i. Enhance current process by creating a formal manual that describes.
 1. The service to be delivered.
 2. The service by process/topic/lesson/session.
 3. The target population.
 4. 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 group counseling.
- c. Staff Supervision:
 - i. Develop a document that will enable the supervisor to easily monitor delivery staff at regular time-frames (e.g. monthly, quarterly), and
 - ii. implement the process upon the completion of the manual. Ensure delivery staff are provided with a copy of the document.
 - iii. Begin to utilize staff performance evaluations on a regular basis during the year.
- d. Response to Drift:
 - i. Develop a policy related to drift and include this in the manual/protocol.
 - ii. Enhance Data Collection by identifying process data to collect.
 - iii. Consider developing an exit survey to assist with evaluating the effectiveness of the service.

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Attempt (Alternative) SPEP™ ID and Contact Time: 0169-A01-T02

Agency/Program Name: Pathways Adolescent Center/New Beginnings (Female)

Service Name: Guided Group Time

Cohort Total: Cohort data unavailable *

Cohort Time Frame: N/A

Referral County(s): N/A

Feedback Report Delivery: December 12, 2023

County/Probation Officer(s) Involved: Alex Hromyak (Erie); Julie Bullard (Venango); Isaac Hastings (Venango); Pam Farkas (Mercer)

EPIS SIS(s): Shannon O'Lone

Pathways Adolescent Center (PAC) is a privately owned residential facility provider that serves Pennsylvania youth referred by Children and Youth and Juvenile Probation. Pathways Adolescent Center offers both male (PAC) and female residential units (New Beginnings) which are both twenty-eight (28) bed, privately owned, residential facilities located in Oil City, Pennsylvania. Pathways also accommodates shelter youth within these programs. The boys' and girls' programs accept youth from ages 11-20 years of age. Pathways also offers a (12) bed step down male program (PAC 2) for youth ages 13-15 that have done well in the residential program. All programs provide comprehensive care in response to the individual needs of troubled youth and their families in close cooperation with other service providers.

As part of all residential programs, Pathways provides a privately licensed academic school. Youth have the opportunity to graduate from private school, graduate based on IEP goals, obtain a GED, attend public school/local CTE, and take college courses on site. During the first 30 days of a youth's stay, Pathways creates an Individual Service Plan to drive treatment based on the YLS, case plans, and psychological evaluation. This plan is updated every 6 months. Pathways' focus is to offer Behavioral Modification Programming while incorporating Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Trauma-Informed techniques within counseling services offered.

The focus of this report is the Guided Group Time service. Guided Group Time includes staff discussions in a group counseling format with planned activities and exercises. Youth have the opportunity to be part of a group where positive interaction occurs, and encouragement of positive behavior is provided through modeling and social reinforcement. Peers are also involved in group discussion and exercise leadership roles within the peer group. Pathways Guided Groups are delivered through group counseling format and focus on thinking errors and the thought/behavior connection. Groups also focus on interpersonal problems and the dynamic risk factors of youth. All group topics and associated materials are located in the Group Outline Manual which utilizes exercises from the following resources: The Adolescent Psychotherapy Treatment Planner: Includes DSM-5 Updates, 5th Edition (Jongsma Jr., Peterson, McInnis & Bruce); The Child Psychotherapy Homework Planner, 2nd Edition (Jongsma Jr., Peterson, & McInnis); The Child Psychotherapy Treatment Planner: Includes DSM-5 Updates, 5th Edition (Jongsma Jr., Peterson, McInnis & Bruce).

Youth receive this service daily for one hour. Groups are run on a continuous 2-week cycle with sessions occurring Sunday thru Saturday. Pathways has created a structured schedule for themes that cut across all programs. Each day of the week has its own theme:

- Monday – Psychotherapy
- Tuesday – Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Wednesday – Goals Group
- Thursday – Anger Management
- Friday – Leadership Traits
- Saturday – Psychotherapy
- Sunday - Drug and Alcohol

Guided Group Time is delivered by Child Care Workers, Directors, or Transitional Living Coordinators. Group discussion led by the youth care worker and topics are chosen from a list of homegrown curricula. Example treatment topics include: Intro to Treatment, Safety, Detaching from Emotional Pain, Asking for Help, Taking Good Care of Yourself, Compassion, Honesty, Recovery Thinking, Integrating the Split Self, Commitment, Creating Meaning, Setting Boundaries in Relationships, Discovery, Getting Others to Support your Recovery, Coping with Triggers, Healthy Relationships, Self-Nurturing, Healing from Anger, and the Life Choices Game. Most frequently, the daily topic is geared toward whatever needs are identified as most relevant to youth in the program/unit currently.

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: 25

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

Total Points Received: 10 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 dosage. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction. Targeted duration and dosage for this service is 24 weeks, 40 hours.

youth in the cohort of received the targeted Duration or Number of Weeks for a total of N/A* points
 youth in the cohort of of received the targeted Dosage or Number of Hours for a total of N/A* points

Total Points Received: N/A* 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. The Risk Levels of youth admitted to the program were: low risk, moderate risk, high risk, and very high risk

youth in the cohort of are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of N/A* points
 youth in the cohort of are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of N/A* points

Total Points Received: N/A* Total Points Possible: 25

*** Due to limited availability of qualitative and/or quantitative data, a valid SPEP™ score could not be generated. Any data that has been shared is strictly for informational purposes. Technical assistance will be offered to the service provider in regard to SPEP™ Performance Improvement with the goal of reassessment in the future.**

The SPEP™ and Performance Improvement

The intended use of the SPEP™ is to optimize the effectiveness of reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. The service could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction by addressing the following recommendations:

1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:

a. Written Protocol:

- i. Within the written protocol, include a documented time stamp for review of the manual to reflect the use of the most recent materials (e.g., curricula)

b. Staff Training:

- i. Create a specialized training for the Guided Group Time service which encompasses all aspects of service delivery
- ii. Create a booster training specific to Guided Group Time to be delivered on a yearly basis

c. Staff Supervision:

- i. Include service specific feedback regarding quality of service delivery in yearly performance evaluations

d. Organizational Response to Drift:

- i. Continue to refine drift policy specific to Guided Group Time (e.g. document how missed sessions are remediated; all available ideas to correct drift/leadership meeting discussion)

2. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served:

- a. Continue to collaborate with referring counties on targeting moderate to high, and very high, risk youth for the Guided Group Time service