

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

## Service Score Results:

Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Contact Time: 0354-T01

Agency/Program Name: Abraxas Youth & Family Services/Abraxas PATH (Preparation for Adolescent Transition to Home)

Service Name: Community PATH Program

Cohort Total: 13

Cohort Time Frame: Youth that began the service on/after December 1, 2021 and ended on/before May 1, 2023

Referral County(s): Delaware (12); Montgomery (1)

Feedback Report Delivery: December 18, 2023

County/Probation Officer(s) Involved: Kiersten Keenan - Delaware County Juvenile Probation

Anthony Anderson and Jennifer Ungarino - Montgomery County Juvenile Probation

EPIS SIS(s): Dawn Karoscik and Lisa Fetzer

Abraxas Youth & Family Services (Abraxas Y&FS) functions as a nonprofit organization, delivering a diverse range of services to over 5,000 individuals and families annually. The organization originated in Marienville, Pennsylvania, in 1973, starting with a single site and serving 30 clients. Presently, after 50 years, Abraxas operates programs in five states, offering treatment, behavioral health services, educational and vocational support, life skills, family counseling, recreation, and community engagement. Abraxas adopts a strength-based, client-centered, family-oriented, and trauma-focused approach. The organization provides alternative education, outpatient counseling, in-home services, shelter, detention, residential treatment, and re-entry/transition assistance.

Abraxas PATH (Preparation for Adolescent Transition to Home) is a service offered in 2 different settings; residential (Residential PATH) and community (Community PATH). The services are designed to help youth be successful in either setting by providing supports where needed.

The Community PATH Program works with youth in their community by providing intensive in-home and community based services. Community PATH works with youth in need of additional support in their home environment. The PATH Case Manager serves as a mentor, family support specialist and advocate for supportive services such as education, mental health, substance abuse, and employment. The program works to develop and improve prosocial attitudes and behaviors while enhancing protective factors within the home and community in effort to reduce recidivism. The three main components of Community PATH are as follows:

- Interactive Journaling Forward Thinking Series uses cognitive-behavioral strategies to assist youth involved in the criminal justice system in making positive changes to their thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
- Strengthening Families: PATH strengthens the family by supporting and empowering parents/guardians in their role; identifying family strengths and concerns and assessing overall family structure and routine. Additionally, the PATH program will help the parents obtain any necessary documents.
- Community Connections: PATH connects juveniles and their families to community resources and develops systems for sustainability. It is crucial that there are opportunities for juveniles to practice and refine prosocial skills in supportive environments that promote positive growth and self-sufficiency. Therefore juveniles will be encouraged to participate in a positive community activities such as sports, employment, membership in a local community group or gym.

The Community PATH Program is available in both Delaware and Montgomery Counties, with caseloads managed by two case managers. The program lasts for 5 months (20 weeks), extendable as required. There are 5 contacts per week: 4 with youth and 1 with the family. In cases where the family is not involved, extra youth contacts will be made instead of family contacts. Additional youth or family contacts may be initiated based on the situation's demands. Upon intake, an Individual Service Plan (ISP) is created for each youth to identify needs and goals utilizing the YLS, JIFF (Juvenile Inventory for Functioning), and information from the JPO, youth and family.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Mentoring

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

If so, what is the Service Type? Behavioral Management

Was the supplemental service provided? No **Total Points Possible for this Service Type:** 30

**Total Points Received:** 25 **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 dosage. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction. Targeted duration and dosage for this service is 26 weeks, 78 hours.

<u>2</u>	youth in the cohort of	<u>13</u>	received the targeted Duration or Number of Weeks for a total	<u>0</u>	points
<u>5</u>	youth in the cohort of	<u>13</u>	of received the targeted Dosage or Number of Hours for a total of	<u>2</u>	points

**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. The Risk Levels of Youth admitted to the service were: 7 low risk, 4 moderate risk, 1 , high risk, and 0 very high risk.

<u>5</u>	youth in the cohort of	<u>12</u>	are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of	<u>2</u>	points
<u>1</u>	youth in the cohort of	<u>12</u>	are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of	<u>0</u>	points

**Total Points Received:** 2 **Total Points Possible:** 25

**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 49 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:** 52% 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. The service could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction by addressing the following recommendations:

1. Regarding Primary & Supplemental Service Types:
  - a. Consider utilizing Behavior Contracting/Management to supplement the service.
2. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:
  - a. Written Protocol:
    - i. Ensure that the youth/parent handbook captures all aspects of the program.
    - ii. Identify in writing the youth that are most appropriate for this service as it relates to the YLS/criminogenic needs.
    - iii. Ensure that when case managers are documenting case notes to identify when Forward Thinking Journals have been delivered and which journal was utilized.
  - b. Staff Training:
    - i. Provide booster trainings at pre-determined timeframes relevant to the service.
- c. Organizational Response to Drift:
  - i. Develop a policy and procedure to identify departure from the fidelity and quality of service delivery.
  - ii. Ensure documentation is developed and utilized to verify implementation of policies and procedures.
  - iii. Develop an if/then approach to specific corrective action steps to address departure from fidelity and quality of service.
3. Regarding Amount of Service:
  - a. Collaborate with Delaware and Montgomery County Juvenile Probation to ensure youth are receiving research recommendations for the targeted amount of service of 26 weeks and 78 hours.
  - b. As it relates to Forward Thinking Journals, ensure that dosage and duration is being captured and what journals are completed are shared with JPO in the monthly reports.
4. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served:
  - a. Continue collaboration with Delaware and Montgomery County Juvenile Probation to ensure the most appropriate referrals are being received.