

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline SPEP™ ID and Contact Time: 0357-T01

Agency/Program Name: Pathways Adolescent Center/Transitional Cohort

Service Name: Guided Group Time

Cohort Total: 11

Cohort Time Frame: Youth that began the service on/after May 1, 2021 and ended on/before December 31, 2022

Referral County(s): Butler (1); Cambria (1); Dauphin (1); Lawrence (1); Mercer (3); Venango (2); Washington (1); Westmoreland (1)

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, which is offered to all youth at Pathways. This particular report reflects youth who may have started the Guided Group Time service within one program/unit and moved to a different level of care during their stay. Due to improvements made in the Performance Improvement phase of the Baseline assessment of this service, a transitional cohort was able to be identified for the opportunity to track outcomes for youth who transition from varying levels of care. There is confidence that the Guided Group Time service is delivered the same across all programs/units due to streamlined training and supervision, and all programs/units follow the same service schedule by topic, giving further evidence of continuity and fidelity of quality of service delivery.

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.

<u>6</u>	youth in the cohort of	<u>11</u>	received the targeted Duration or Number of Weeks for a total	<u>4</u>	points
<u>11</u>	youth in the cohort of	<u>11</u>	of received the targeted Dosage or Number of Hours for a total of	<u>10</u>	points

Total Points Received: 14 **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: 2 low risk, 6 moderate risk, 2 , high risk, and 1 very high risk.

<u>9</u>	youth in the cohort of	<u>11</u>	are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of	<u>7</u>	points
<u>3</u>	youth in the cohort of	<u>11</u>	are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of	<u>8</u>	points

Total Points Received: 15 **Total Points Possible:** 25

Basic SPEP™ Score: 69 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: 73% 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 Quality of Service Delivery:

a. Written Protocol:

- 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:

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

c. Staff Supervision:

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

d. Organizational Response to Drift:

- 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:

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