

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results:

Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Contact Time: 0370-T01

Agency/Program Name: JusticeWorks YouthCare Family of Services /Luzerne County

Service Name: Violation Initiative Program (VIP®)

Cohort Total: 12

Cohort Time Frame: Youth that began the service on/after January 1, 2022 and ended on/before December 1, 2023

Referral County(s): Luzerne

Feedback Report Delivery: June 5, 2024

County/Probation Officer(s) Involved: Esperanza Gonzalez & Kevin Perluke

EPIS SIS(s): Lisa Fetzer & Dawn Karoscik

JusticeWorks YouthCare Family of Services provide services in 57 counties throughout Pennsylvania. They also have locations in Florida, Maryland, Ohio, Colorado and South Carolina. The Luzerne County office located in Hazleton, PA serves Columbia, Lackawanna and Luzerne counties. The following services are offered at the Luzerne County office: Violation Initiative Program (VIP®), Positive Parenting Program (Triple P), Family Group Decision Making (FGDM), Family Finding, Healthy Family America (HFA), Short Term Therapeutic Outreach to Prevent Placement (STOPP), Community Based Family Intervention, Truancy Program Check and Connect, Batters Intervention, Youth Mentoring, Visit Coaching, Supervised Visitation, Drug & Alcohol Testing, High Risk Reentry VIP, Healthy Families America (HFA), Youth Development Activities T4C, Why Try, IL Group and Transportation. Justice Works is also currently leading the Youth Justice Advisory Board through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. This advisory board consists of juveniles and young adults ages 14-28 with a mission to educate, advocate, and form partnerships to create positive change in the juvenile justice system.

Violation Initiative Program (VIP®), operated by JusticeWorks YouthCare Family of Services. is a community-based program for youth in Luzerne County Juvenile Probation who are at high risk of re-offending. VIP® is one of many services offered by JusticeWorks YouthCare Family of Services, Inc. in Luzerne County. Currently staff includes a Program Director, 4 Supervisors and 26 Family Resource Specialists (FRS). VIP was created to reduce out-of-home placements for youth who are not fulfilling requirements of probation and are at high risk for court committed placement. VIP® uses a family centered approach and works to strengthen the family's ability to provide appropriate boundaries, direction and support. Youth referred to VIP® are typically "one phone call away" from placement in the juvenile justice system. VIP® works in partnership with probation officers to achieve positive outcomes for youth. Family Resource Specialist (FRS) provides supervision at varying levels of service. Standard VIP® is 2 hours per week of face-to-face youth monitoring, Intensive VIP® is 4 hours per week, and Full VIP® is a minimum of 6 hours over a minimum of 5 days per week. The FRS has a caseload of approximately 8-10 clients and with face-to-face contact between 10-20 hours each week. The caseload is mixed with Standard, Intensive and Full VIP clients. Most of the youth in this service are between 14-17 years of age, but there is no specific targeted age. Both male and female clients are accepted and there typically is no wait list for referrals and VIP® services are provided for 3 - 6 months

Once the referral is received the referral source as well as the referred family will be contacted within 24 hours. Behavioral contracting is utilized for most clients. The FRS is responsible for monitoring each youth at home, school, community, work (when applicable), and leisure time activities. The FRS provides assistance with: transportation of clients to and from probation required activities, job searches as well as some soft skills in completing an application and preparing for an interview, coordination and attendance at meetings with probation, school, community-based services for D&A and MH, finding community service opportunities, discussion of client's interest and finding prosocial activities for engagement, and more. Overall, the FRS offers guidance and assistance to the juvenile in a supportive manner in completing their conditions of probation while remaining in the community. The FRS is trained in motivational interviewing skills as well as the interpretation of the YLS.

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? Yes

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:

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>4</u>	youth in the cohort of <u>12</u>	received the targeted Duration or Number of Weeks for a total	<u>2</u>	points
<u>1</u>	youth in the cohort of <u>12</u>	of received the targeted Dosage or Number of Hours for a total of	<u>0</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: 6 low risk, 5 moderate risk, 1 , high risk, and 0 very high risk.

<u>6</u>	youth in the cohort of <u>12</u>	are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of	<u>5</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: 5 **Total Points Possible:** 25

Basic SPEP™ Score: 57 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: 60% 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. Organizational Response to Drift:
 - i. Enhance the drift policy to include a more specific policy to service delivery of VIP®
2. Regarding Amount of Service:
 - a. Collaborate with Luzerne County Juvenile Probation Department to consider ways to increase dosage and duration for youth in the VIP® service.
3. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served:
 - a. Continue to communicate with Luzerne County Juvenile Probation regarding the research supported targeted risk population recommended for this service type; there are larger positive effects on recidivism with high risk juveniles