

This section is pulled from the 2012 DHS Annual Report

OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES (OYS):

Programs, Services, Achievements, and Looking Ahead

The Legislature established the Office of Youth Services (OYS) in 1989 to provide and coordinate a continuum of services and programs for youth-at-risk in every county, to prevent delinquency and to reduce the incidence of recidivism. Although a core responsibility of the OYS is to manage and operate the State's only Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF), the agency places great emphasis on providing and supporting "front end" prevention, diversion, and intervention services.

Programs & Service Areas

The OYS focuses on programs and services that address youth needs, ranging from prevention to incarceration to after-care. The following is a brief description of the programs and services the OYS provides.

1) Positive Youth Development (PYD)

The PYD programs are funded by the OYS and offered by seven (7) private non-profit providers. The PYD program targets youth who were homeless, truant, in foster care and group homes, sexually active, pregnant and parenting youth, and youth at-risk who had involvement with the Family Court and/or contact with the police. Because these youth were at-risk for educational failure or involvement in the juvenile justice system, services and activities aim to help them develop resiliencies so they can successfully transition to young adulthood. Since its inception in (year) PYD providers have served an estimated 4,000 youth from urban and rural communities.

2) Youth Gang Prevention and Intervention

Through a grant-in-aid, the OYS funded youth gang prevention and intervention services. Targeted youth were ages 11 to 18 and engaged in either emergent or more established gang behavior. Adult Friends for Youth provided the services, which included community mobilization efforts, strategies for gang prevention and intervention, and formal mediation services for youth gang members.

3) Truancy Prevention and In-School Suspension

Working in collaboration with the Department of Education (DOE) to ensure educational success for at-risk youth and their families, the OYS offered services to enhance school engagement and performance. Targeted youth were ages 7 to 18, and at risk for truancy and chronic absences. The six funded agencies provided service and activities that promoted attendance, attachment, and achievement to ensure educational success.

4) Community-Based Outreach and Advocacy

The OYS provided intervention case advocacy services to youth whose unhealthy, risky behaviors placed them at-risk for initial or further penetration into the juvenile justice system. Four OYS-funded providers identified and engaged youth and their family members to provide attendant care services, to conduct intake and assessment, to assist in creating a youth/family-driven service plan, to support youth/family in accessing services, and to provide follow-up to ensure services were properly provided. In FY 2012, approximately 200 youth were served by the four OYS-funded providers statewide.

5) Intensive Monitoring Program

Intensive Monitoring Program services are targeted for youth who have been adjudicated by the Family Court, and have been placed on probation. The program goal is to provide intensive supervision for youth, hold them accountable for their behavior and to help them comply with the terms and conditions of their probation. The service delivery approach includes the youth's family, whose role is to support the youth's participation in activities that increase protective factors and decrease risk factors. Approximately 200 youth were served statewide in FY 2012, with 80 youth being served at any one time in all four judicial circuits.

6) Day Treatment Center

Day Treatment Center services provide a community-based, coordinated set of individualized treatment services, including educational, substance abuse, mental health, counseling, family intervention, psychosocial skills development, and community service. The target population for these services is youth who are involved with the Family Court, and whose behavior interferes with their daily functioning in a typical school, work, and/or home environment. These youth require additional structured education and treatment interventions at this level of care.

7) Community-Based Residential Services

To help them prepare for return to community living, youth who cannot or will not remain at home are served by community-based residential programs. Programs focus on improving youths' decision-making, social, and independent living skills, and enhancing their personal commitments to learning and education. Under the umbrella of 19 contracts, seven different providers have offered a range of residential programs on all major islands. Approximately 200 youth were served in FY 2012, with most remaining on their respective islands near family and other community support systems. These residential programs included:

- Emergency Shelters for youth ages 10 to 18: Recently arrested status offenders, non-violent law violators, intoxicated, troubled, abused, or neglected youth requiring short-term shelter and related services that address a present crisis;

- Intensive Residential Services for youth ages 12 through 19: Youth involved with the juvenile justice system have priority for services. The youth are assessed as high-risk in one or more areas of need and are unable to function in a pro-social manner without constant supervision and support, and can benefit from highly structured residential services;
- Independent Living Programs for youth ages 17 to 22: Troubled, abused, neglected, or adjudicated, and lack the attitudes, skills, and resources for independent living; and
- Statewide Ke Kama Pono (“Children of Promise”) Safe Houses: These are community-based residential alternatives for troubled youth who are at-risk of penetrating further into the juvenile justice system. A diversion from the institutional setting of the HYCF, the Ke Kama Pono program provides guidance and support for troubled youth in a highly structured, closely supervised rehabilitative environment, while preparing the youth to reintegrate back into their respective communities.

8) Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF)

The HYCF is a 56-bed facility where the primary purpose is to provide care and custody of at-risk youth committed to the State by the Family Courts. A safe and secure setting, the HYCF provides a variety of counseling, treatment, and educational services within the facility to aid in the redirection and rehabilitation of each youth ward. Programs conducted within the facility are intended to provide guidance and opportunities for positive behavioral changes.

9) Federal Grant Programs

In addition to the service areas, the OYS also oversees and manages a variety of federal grant programs that enable the State to improve the juvenile justice and education systems and/or implement local youth programs and services.

These federal grant programs come from the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

- Congress enacted the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act in 1974 to improve the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system. Statutorily, the administration of the provisions of the JJDP Act rests with the Office of Youth Services [HRS §571-32(k) and HRS §352F-5(b)].
- The State of Hawaii’s compliance with the JJDP Act results in funding for juvenile justice programs from the United States Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). More importantly, the courts have found that jailing juveniles violates the 8th Amendment (Cruel and Unusual Punishment) and the 14th Amendment (Due Process). Compliance with the JJDP Act protects the State from civil suits related to conditions of confinement litigation. The following is a summary of the different grant programs:

- **JJDP Act, Title II, Formula Grants Program** enables states to meet and maintain compliance with the four core requirements of the JJDP Act, support delinquency prevention efforts, and improve the juvenile justice system. The core requirements mandate the deinstitutionalization of status offenders, removal of law violators from jails and lockups, elimination of sight and sound contact between juveniles and adult offenders, and reduction of the disproportionate numbers ethnic minority youth who come into contact with the law;
- **JJDP Act, Title V, Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Program** is aimed at reducing delinquency and youth violence by supporting local communities in implementing delinquency prevention programs. Counties that are in compliance with core requirements of the JJDP Act received grants; and
- **Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG)** provided funds to states and units of local government to promote greater accountability in the juvenile justice system. Through this program juvenile offenders were held accountable for their wrongdoing by individualizing their consequences, and by being made aware of and answerable for the loss, damage, or injury perpetuated upon victims.

U.S. Department of Education, Title IV, Part A, Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) State Formula Grants, Governor's Program

The OYS administered the Governor's program for the purpose of fostering safe and drug-free learning environments and supporting academic achievement. The Governor's portion of the grant is 20% and is primarily awarded to community-based agencies that provide drug-use prevention and violence prevention activities for populations needing special services, like drop-outs, suspended and expelled students. The services also targeted youth between the ages of 10 to 19 who had contact with the police, or were experiencing social, emotional, psychological, educational, moral, physical or similar problems, or who were of ethnicities over-represented within the juvenile justice system.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services--Title XX Block Grant

The OYS utilizes funding from the Title XX Block Grant Program to provide services to at-risk youth and youth in need of foster care. Primary goals of this grant are to increase the level of self-sufficiency for youth and prevent institutionalization within the social welfare or juvenile justice systems.

OYS Achievements in FY 2012

In-Community Programs

OYS continued funding more than 90 community-based agency contracts to enhance the continuum of services offered within geographic regions, and to address the statewide needs of at-risk youth and their families. Over 5,200 children and youth were served under the umbrella of these contracts.

The OYS partnered with the Judiciary, the Family Court, and the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council to continue implementation of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) under the guidance of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Implementation of core JDAI strategies helps eliminate inappropriate or unnecessary use of secure detentions, minimizes failures to appear and incidences of delinquent behavior, redirects public finances to successful reform strategies, improves conditions in secure detention facilities, and reduces minority over-representation in the juvenile justice system.

The OYS targeted at-risk youth who did not require out-of-home placement, but who still needed comprehensive, structured and intensive day/evening educational services. The educational/vocational services are designed to help youth reintegrate back into appropriate, less restrictive educational settings.

In partnership with the Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN) and the Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawaii, the OYS sponsored a training conference: *Shaping the Future for Youth: Knowledge, Strategies, Connections*. Approximately 200 participants representing private community-based organizations and public youth serving agencies learned about accessing available youth services, increasing skill development to enhance ohana and mentoring relationships, and using strategies for bullying prevention and intervention.

Following a “collective impact” model, the OYS collaborated with non-profits and other state agencies to address the issue of truancy on Oahu.

As alternatives to confinement at the youth correctional facility, the OYS also continues to work closely with the courts in all four judicial circuits to expand community-based treatment and monitoring. The FY 2012 Requests for Proposals concentrated on meeting the needs of adjudicated youth on probation as a means of decreasing the number of commitments to HYCF.

Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility

Admissions to the facility rose slightly over FY 2011 (from 130 to 135), but the average daily population increased to 60 youth – an increase of 18% over the previous year.

New programs continued to be developed and implemented to expand the rehabilitative opportunities available to our youth, including much needed transitional services for youth exiting the facility. These programs not only assisted with population control, but also helped reduce recidivism by better preparing our youth for adult life in the community.

Project Kealahou is designed to enhance gender specific programming for incarcerated girls. HYCF’s collaboration with the Project continues to positively impact the girls at the facility. Funded through a federal SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) grant awarded to the Hawaii Department of Health, the focus of Project Kealahou is two-fold. Advocates/counselors from the program work directly with the girls who have been the victims of trauma. Additionally, it provides trauma-informed training for the Youth Correctional Officers who work with the female population. The goal of staff training is to enhance staff sensitivity to trauma-related issues, and to broaden their knowledge and skill base.

The Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF) continues to evaluate State operations against national standards, remedy deficiencies, and to upgrade the quality of correctional programs and services. The recognized benefits of this process include improved management, a defense against lawsuits through documentation and the demonstration of a “good faith” effort to improve conditions of confinement, increased accountability, enhanced public credibility for administrative and line staff, a safer and more humane environment for personnel and offenders, and on a continuing basis, the establishment of measurable criteria for upgrading programs and personnel.

The identification of community-based programs as alternatives to incarceration is on-going. With support from the Office of Youth Services, HYCF is working closely with the Courts to ensure that any commitment to the facility is a “last resort” and is further, based on ensuring public safety. Furthermore, the expanded use of parole has shown to enhance youths’ transition back to their home communities, and to make a positive impact on maintaining the facility’s average daily population near its maximum capacity.

Major initiatives the HYCF administration supports and encourages include:

- Continued development of facility policies, procedures and practices that are juvenile justice appropriate.
- Provide on-going staff training on juvenile justice/juvenile corrections best practices for HYCF direct care staff, social workers, and other staff. The goal is to better equip staff with necessary skills and knowledge needed to provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment for the youth in the state’s care and custody.
- Continue to strengthen communication between the Judiciary and State Agencies including the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Education (DOE), Department of Human Services (DHS) and OYS/HYCF to ensure the delivery of appropriate services for youth in a seamless and collaborative manner.
- Continued enhancement and expansion of in-facility programs and services to better prepare youth for reintegration back into community. For quality assurance, HYCF continues to monitor, assess and facilitate progress through a performance-based standards program. HYCF also continues to evaluate facility progress and conditions of confinement.

To better coordinate the State’s efforts in providing services to youth, the OYS is building partnerships with public agencies including DHS, DOE, DOH, Family Court, and various county agencies, including law enforcement agencies, and non-profit agencies. A multi-disciplinary team approach comprised of DOE, DOH, HYCF, contract Service providers, youth and parents is involved in the development of the youth’s Individual Service Plan and reintegration back into the community. Through the Parole Section, HYCF continues to provide an intensive Aftercare/Reentry Program for youth transitioning out of the HYCF and returning to their families/communities.

OYS Focus in FY 2013

- Enhance services and programs to best meet the needs of adjudicated youth on probation, to prevent further penetration into the juvenile justice system, to reduce recidivism, and to maximize opportunities for youth to become productive, responsible citizens.
- Ensure adjudicated youth are placed in the least restrictive environment possible – without jeopardizing public safety, consistent with nationwide best practices.
- Ensure fair and equal treatment for all youth, regardless of race/ethnicity, and reduce disproportionate minority contact at the decision-making points in the juvenile justice system.
- Establish a pilot Youth Community Service Center to provide an array of services for juveniles who have been arrested or, who are at-risk for involvement with the juvenile justice system. Services would include performing in-depth assessments, facilitating access to services, and developing connections with other community resources in a culturally appropriate manner.
- Plan and implement a civil citations system diversion project to address status offenders and first time misdemeanants who may require more comprehensive services that are tailored to identified needs.
- Increase community-based, family-focused treatment interventions, with emphasis on culturally appropriate service delivery.
- Actively participate with DHS, DOE, DOH and the Judiciary to implement “Wrap Hawaii” – a collaborative pilot program that effectively addresses the complex needs of at-risk youth through integrated case planning between agencies.
- Participate in the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) Program, which promotes detention reform efforts and alternatives to incarceration.
- Improve provider accountability to ensure that youth programs meet the needs of children and communities.
- Collect outcome data to improve program performance and youth success.
- Prioritize youth needs and enhance fiscal responsibility to ensure that moneys are being directed to meet the most serious needs of youth.
- Continue to improve conditions and programs at the HYCF.

Provider Focus in FY 2013

- Improve reporting systems and reduce paperwork for both contractors and the OYS.
- Provide technical assistance and training opportunities for contractors, HYCF staff, and the community.
- Maintain continuity in programs and services for youth and their families.
- Explore partnerships with public and private funding resources to maintain and enhance service capacity for the community.