

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 0315-T01

Agency Name: Abraxas Youth and Family Services

Program Name: Abraxas Academy

Service Name: Education

Cohort Total: 14

Timeframe of Selected Cohort: March 1, 2020 - February 28, 2021

Referral County(s): Bedford (1), Berks (2), Bucks (1), Delaware (2), Erie (4), Lackawanna (1), Lehigh (1), Luzerne (1), Westmoreland (1).

Date(s) of Interview(s): Dec 3, 2020 & May 18, 2021

Lead County: Berks

Probation Representative(s): Jeffrey Gregro, Deputy Chief, Berks County Juvenile Probation

EPIS Representative: Lisa Freese

Description of Service:

Abraxas Academy provides intensive treatment to adolescents and their families who are experiencing severe emotional, behavioral, psychological, educational and social problems. Clients must be court adjudicated males between the age of 14-18. Youth must be in 9th grade, level of violence as a factor, dramatically high risk for suicidal behavior, especially recent attempts. Psychotic features will also be reviewed. IQ of 70 or higher. The Abraxas Academy has two secure residential programs, the Habitual Offenders Program and the Sexual Offenders Program.

The Habitual Offenders Program uses a comprehensive approach in providing treatment services to the residents. This is achieved through trauma informed cognitive behavioral therapy with a strong emphasis on functional behavior assessment and behavioral modification. The program milieu and curriculum utilize the principles of BARJ, an anger and emotional curriculum intertwined, Applied Behavioral Analysis and a cognitive distortions component. Treatment emphasis is placed on identifying and correcting potentially harmful patterns of thought, improving social skills, teaching problem solving skills and developing an awareness of the community and victim, while altering target pro-social and maladaptive behaviors.

There are 3 treatment tracks that are provided for youth; 3-months, 6-months, 10-months. The track is a collaborative decision made by Abraxas Academy, referring Juvenile Probation Department, and the Courts. Youth are afforded all treatment modalities but depending on the track, delivery and dosage amounts of the service will vary.

Education provided by Abraxas Academy was identified as a Remedial Academic service. This service consists of Tutoring, GED, Credit Recovery and Special Education. In Tutoring, Intervention Specialists work one on one or in a group setting with the youth to improve their deficiencies in certain subjects. Tutoring is also offered as part of GED prep or part of Credit Recovery. With a court order, juveniles can prepare for the GED via tutoring and a GED pre-test and when deemed ready can take the GED test. The Credit Recovery program uses Plato and credit recovery packets to enable them to catch up on education credits they need to advance to the next grade or graduate. Finally, if a youth is identified as needing special education services an IEP is developed with specific educational goals to be achieved. All students are in school on a full-time basis.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Remedial Academic Program

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

If so, what is the Service Type? Job Related Training

Was the supplemental service provided? Yes **Total Points Possible for this Service Type:** 15

Total Points Received: 15 **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 contact hours. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction.

Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks: 2
Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours: 6

Total Points Received: 8 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.

14 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of youth 12 points
5 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: 68 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: 85% 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.

The service could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction by addressing the following recommendations:

1. Regarding Amount of Service:

- a. Collaborate with, and continue to educate juvenile probation and the juvenile courts on the targeted number of weeks and hours recommended for this service to enhance its capacity to reduce recidivism.