

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

*Service Score Results:* Baseline

Name of Program and Service: Auberle-Therapeutic Challenge Course

Cohort Total: 22

SPEP ID: 106-T01

Selected Timeframe: Nov. 19, 2014-Jan. 4, 2016

Date(s) of Interview(s): Dec. 16, 2015, Apr. 22, 2016

Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: Doug Braden, Allegheny Co. & Shawn Peck, EPISCenter

Person Preparing Report: Shawn Peck & Doug Braden

**Description of Service:** *This should include a **brief** overview of the service within the context of the program, the location and if community based or residential. Indicate the type of youth referred, how the service is delivered, the purpose of service and any other **relevant** information to help the reader understand the SPEP service type classification. (350 character limit)*

Auberle, located in McKeesport, Pennsylvania (community on the eastern outskirts of Pittsburgh) is a faith based agency that provides services for dependent, delinquent, and needy youth and families across six sites. The agency serves youth and families in 16 program areas, primarily in eight Southwestern Pennsylvania counties. Programs include: workforce development programs, foster care, emergency shelter, in-home intervention, education, residential care, drug and alcohol and mental health programs. Programs include preventative and community-based services, with the majority of clients served in their home, school or in their community.

The residential makeup of Auberle that provides services to delinquent youth is comprised of: GOAL program: a 24 bed, stand alone facility, located on the grounds of Auberle's campus. This program serves both delinquent and dependent males.

Gate/Bloom program: a 22 bed, group home located within a Mckeesport residential neighborhood, near the Auberle campus. This program serves both delinquent and dependent females.

Male Residential Program: This on-campus, facility based component is comprised of two housing units (Program B and C), serves 70 + both delinquent and dependent males, with Program B working with a younger population.

Only delinquent youth that had resided within Auberle's GOAL program comprised the cohort within the SPEP assessment of Auberle's Therapeutic Challenge Course.

Auberle offers an on-grounds Therapeutic Challenge Course that is utilized in order to supplement the counseling services provided. This co-ed program is a trauma based therapeutic tool and master level therapists utilize the course during their group counseling sessions in order to incorporate clinical concepts such as trust. The curriculum occurs once a week for a ten-week cycle with each group running 1 ½ hours. The curriculum is specific to the activities and the content can be modified to address the needs of the group. The objective of the challenge course is to help the youth apply the clinical sessions to real life situations through experiential learning.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Challenge Program

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

If so, what is the Service type? Group Counseling

Was the supplemental service provided? Yes      Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 20

Total Points Earned: 20      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 and supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

Total Points Earned: 10      Total Points Possible: 20

3. **Amount of Service:** Score was derived from examination of weeks and hours each youth in the cohort received 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.

Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks: 4

Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Earned: 4 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.

15/21 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 5 points

5/21 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 5 points

Total Points Earned: 10 Total Points Possible: 25

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**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 44 total points awarded out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP therapeutic service. (eg: 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. (eg: individual counseling compared to all other individual counseling services included in the research)

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## 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 local juvenile court. The recommendations for this service included in the feedback report are:

The Therapeutic Challenge Course scored a 52% Program Optimization Percentage. It is classified as a Group 3 Service with a qualifying supplemental service of Group Counseling. The quality of the service was found to be at a Medium level. The amount of service provided to the clients was 55% of the recommended targeted weeks of duration and 0% of the recommended target contact hours for this service type. The risk levels of youth admitted to the program were 28% as low risk, 48% as moderate risk and 24% as high risk.

The Therapeutic Challenge Course could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction through:

1. Regarding Quality of Service:
  - a. Develop a resource that will monitor the delivery of this service
  - b. Ensure that the supervisor is trained to deliver this service
  - c. Ensure the supervisor provides written feedback for those who deliver this service
  - d. Ensure the performance of staff facilitating this service is directly referenced into their yearly performance evaluations
  - e. Develop an agency policy that outlines how to prevent drift from occurring while delivering this service
    - i. Ensure that the organizational response to drift includes specific action steps for the agency to take to avoid drift, an “if-then” approach
    - ii. A progressive supervision process and response plan
2. Regarding Amount of Service:
  - a. Make modifications to this program that will provide for longer service participation, allowing for alignment with research supported amounts
  - b. Improve communication with JPO from referring counties to better match research recommendations for targeted amount of service