

Agency Operations, 2

I. Investing in and engaging our community to keep youth close to home.

A core DYRS goal is to place youth in the least restrictive, most homelike environment possible, so long as public safety is not compromised. Ideally, all our youth will be treated right in or near the District. DYRS has achieved great success in this through our collaboration with community-based organizations in the DC YouthLink program. However, the agency needs to expand local placement capacity by partnering with other agencies and organizations, as well as add more resources dedicated to the evaluation and support of service providers.

II. Staff development in data-driven decision making.

Staff engagement and development is at the core of our success. Staff buy-in at every level is fundamental, but especially important is the use of data to drive decision making. In FY15 and FY16, DYRS will launch a leadership academy that will provide staff, from the front-line to managers, with the resources and education to understand and appreciate the importance of data-based decision-making. The agency needs to do a significantly better job of utilizing data while also cultivating a culture of data-based decision-making.

III. Increase agency transparency and accountability.

DYRS must improve our communication and collaboration, both internally and externally, to increase accountability and transparency. There are numerous specialized reports on the agency's website, but the frequency of their release needs to be on a more regular schedule. This is a priority for FY15 and FY16 - that our partners be constantly informed of our work. This process began in FY15 with bi-weekly newsletters being created and emailed to employees, as well as to a list of external partners. This simple change alone allows a larger, but specialized, audience to constantly keep apprised of the on-goings at the agency.

IV. Ensure programs utilized are evidence-based and that agency work aligns with best-practices in the field.



The work being done at DYRS should be predicated on evidence-based programming aligned with industry wide best-practices. This is a major priority for FY15 and FY16, starting with a project to revise and update the agency's policy manual to reflect best practices in juvenile justice. This project will be completed by the end of FY15. Additionally, the agency Case Management manual and all Standard Operating Procedures are being updated throughout FY15 and FY16 and will reflect industry best-practices. We hope these comprehensive governing documents will serve as a model for juvenile justice facilities around the country.

V. Continue improving public safety and outcomes for young people.

DYRS's public safety trends have improved dramatically over the past few years, but the goal for FY15 is to reduce re-arrests across all major categories by 9% and recidivism by 6%. This will be done by being smart on crime. We utilize data-driven case management and implement a treatment plan that begins prior to a youth's commitment, based on court recommendations, prior history, and assessments. We also utilize technology to improve public safety outcomes. Currently, approximately 60% of our youth in the community have a GPS electronic monitoring. This approach utilizing innovative case management and technology in FY15 and FY16 will ensure that we are doing all we can to properly give our youth the best chance to succeed, while directly improving public safety outcomes.

