



**Council of the District of Columbia
Committee on the Judiciary
Performance Oversight Hearing
Pre-Hearing Questions and Answers**



Agency Operations 1

1. Please describe any initiatives that the agency implemented in FY15 or FY16, to date, to improve the internal operations of the agency or the interaction of the agency with outside parties. Please describe the results, or expected results, of each initiative.

Initiatives that the agency implemented during the reporting period to improve operations or to improve interaction with outside stakeholders are listed below.

Positive Staff Development Strategic Initiative

The Leadership Academy

In July 2015, the agency partnered with the George Washington University Center for Excellence in Public Leadership to develop and conduct a Leadership Academy for DYRS staff. The program is designed to enhance the skills of employees and provide them with the tools to be more effective leaders. 20 participants were selected by a competitive process that was available to most staff.

The program, which spanned six months, offered a variety of learning activities to aid employees in developing their leadership competencies. Learning activities included classroom instruction, assessment tools, leadership readings, peer coaching, and team projects. In addition, participants received access to 6 hours of professional coaching to assist with their development of a leadership individual development plan. The program was consistent with past and current strategic initiatives with regard to positive staff development.

Below lists the curriculum for the Leadership Academy cohort:

1. *Leadership Challenge*
2. *Value-Centered Leadership*
3. *Strategic Change Leadership (Eco System Mapping)*
4. *Organization Performance Improvement*
5. *Holding Difficult Conversations*
6. *Leadership Presence*
7. *Strategic Change Leadership (Project Presentations)*

American Academy of Pediatrics, DC Chapter Adolescent Health Working Group



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DYRS participates along with a group of agencies, nonprofits, and community-based providers as think partners dedicated to improving health outcomes for kids in the District

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Planned Parenting Work Group

DYRS participates along with a group of agencies, nonprofits, and community-based providers as think partners dedicated to reducing teen pregnancy and empowering young people to make wise and informed sexual health decisions- the goal is to increase access and knowledge of resources and improve health outcomes for kids in the District

Electronic Document Management Services

In October 2015, Administrative Services partnered with the Office of Contract and Procurement to implement Electronic Document Management services for the medical units at the agency's two secured institutions. This ensures that DYRS: complies with the Paper Work Elimination Act of 1995; controls and improves document distribution; and increases document security with built-in regulatory compliance.

Medicaid and Third Party Funding Development

The DYRS Office of Administrative Services and Case Management Division partnered to develop and train internal and external stake holders on "Medicaid and other Cost Savings" protocols. This initiative ensures Medicaid and other third parties are utilized as payers of first choice, and reduces utilization of local dollars for youth placement and services, when applicable.

From February to December 2015, the team trained all DYRS business units, the two lead entity's staff from DC YouthLink and 34 out-of-state providers. The next steps include: finalizing the training phase by February 28, 2016. Since the implementation of the project in February, DYRS paid \$0.00 for Medicaid Approved Ancillary services compared to \$1,338,947 paid in 2014 for the same services

Positive Youth Development Strategic Initiatives

Advancing Youth Development

In the fall of 2015, the agency partnered with the Center for Excellence in Youth Development at the DC Trust to offer the Advancing Youth Development (AYD) 30 hour course for the agency's direct-care staff. Seventeen YDRs attended the training that was held off-site the last week of September. The training provided participants with the tools necessary to create and maintain an environment that engages youth as willing participants in their own development. The training provided a firm foundation for working with young people that focuses on their capacities, strengths, and developmental needs. The AYD course addressed topics such as Youth Outcomes and Expectations, Youth Needs, Opportunities and Supports, as well Cultural Assumptions and



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Adulthood. The training is consistent with the agency's current strategic initiatives with regard to positive youth development. It is the intention to offer this training on a quarterly basis.

LGBTQ Task Force

The DC Concerned Providers Coalition of Nonprofits and Government Agencies enhanced collaboration efforts and meet regularly to discuss the needs and resource available to the LGBTQ Youth in DC Community.

Community Based Residential Facilities (CBRF) Performance Guide

DYRS implemented an objective, outcome-based quantitative evaluation guide for assessing the performance of community-based residential facilities. These evaluations, which are intended to improve CBRF performance, will ultimately enhance DYRS' oversight, promote vendor accountability, and accurately measure program performance. The project was modeled after the procedures and tools that the Children and Family Services Agency (CFSA) uses to measure performance based outcomes for CBRF.

Human Care Agreements Placement for Youth

In 2013, DYRS utilized 103 programs for placement, 74 (72%) of the programs were paid via Direct Payment. In 2015, there are 9 (9%) programs on Direct Payment. Administrative Services developed a Corrective Action plan in FY 15 to: (1) Partner with the Office of Contract and Procurement to advertise services to ensure competitive bidding and (2) partner with the placement unit to ensure youth are placed at facilities with Human Care Agreements or pending award. This initiative is complete.

Licensing Unit Standard Operating Procedure Development

The DYRS Licensing Unit initiated meetings and developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) with external constituents and stakeholders, ensuring heightened consistency, efficiency, security and accountability. These include

- Auditing provider staffing compliance and communicating audit results to providers and DYRS Contract Monitors.*
- Meeting with each Group Home provider to review historical challenges with the licensing process. These meetings resulted in a series of formal SOPs aiming to ensure uniformity in the license application and review process.*
- Developing new forms and procedures for reviewing background check results of provider employees. This resulted in a more consistent review and determination process and a more detailed record.*
- Issuing licenses to providers of Independent Living Programs (ILP) and implemented procedures for monthly staff audits and yearly license renewals.*



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Community Engagement, Restorative Justice, and Family Empowerment Strategic Initiatives

Gang Violence Prevention and Intervention

On September 11, 2015, some 174 staff from the agency's Secure Programs, Case Management, and the Achievement center took Gang Violence Prevention and Intervention training which was co-facilitated by Antonio "King Tone" Fernandez, a former gang leader (or "Inca"). Mr. Fernandez is the founder of the Grow Up, Grow Out Mentoring Program designed to provide violence prevention and intervention services to young people.

The goal of the training was to provide front-line workers and other DYRS staff with an understanding of the history of gangs and to discuss best practices for working with young people involved in street organizations. Mr. Fernandez brought juvenile justice and criminology experts to present at the training, including (1) Professor Louis Kontos, Dept. of Sociology of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, (2) Professor David Brotherton, Dept. of Sociology of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, and (3) Luis Cardona, Youth Violence Prevention Coordinator for the Positive Youth Development Initiative at the Montgomery County, Maryland Dept. of Health and Human Services.

Statement of Works Revision

DYRS partnered with the Office of Contracting and Procurement to advertise all Residential Services to include performance measures and requirements to comply with the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003. The pending date for completing the initiative is December 2016.

Internal Residential Review Committee with CSS and DBH

The Internal Residential Review Committee with Court Social Services and the Department of Behavioral Health is a DYRS funded initiative that mirrors the commitment placement process that DYRS provides for committed youth. These partners meet as needed to determine the most appropriate placement that can provide the treatment, care, and supports necessary for particular youth that fall under the joint responsibility of all three agencies.