PROBLEM-SOLVING PARTNERSHIP
PROGRESS REPORT, QUARTER 7
JANUARY 1, 2010- MARCH 31, 2010
GRANT NUMBER 2009-PSP-00029

1. Project Implementation:
Our specific program objectives include:
A) Reducing recidivism by improving strengths and reducing risk/needs of juvenile offenders transitioning to their home communities by incorporating a three phase design to ensure continuity in services from placement to the community.
B) Strengthening families of youthful offenders to facilitate youth adjustment and transition to the community.
C) Improving collaboration, coordination, and access to community resources for high risk youth and their families.
*Please see attached report from the Department of Criminal Justice and Political Science, North Dakota State University describing this quarter's activities.

2. Staffing:
No new staff was hired during this quarter and there are no current vacancies.

3. Project Outcomes:
The attached evaluation report addresses the specific identified program outcomes including intermediate outcomes and in-program recidivism. During this quarter we continue to increase collaboration between systems in Clay County by implementing a family strengthening component to the Reentry Services Project. We are collaborating with Clay County Social Services and local mental health agencies to complete a strength-based family assessment on the youth of families referred to the program, if appropriate. Implementing a family strengthening component to the program has generated positive changes in both clients and their families, both as individuals and a family unit. The family assessment component has been utilized by approximately 30% of families. Family participation in RSP activities in the community continues to be emphasized and supported by providing mentoring, transportation and financial support for these activities. During this quarter we have partnered with the local Dome authority and have received free tickets for family activities, such as the Shrine Circus and the Walking with the Dinosaur show.

The two family therapists that are assigned to the Reentry Services Project were invited and are participating in the Reentry Services work group that meets bi-monthly to review program objectives and share information on youth opportunities and programs in the area. The workgroup consists of numerous community partners who are involved in youth issues, thereby increasing collaboration across systems. The family therapists also meet monthly with the

juvenile probation agents, the Reentry staff and the program administrator to review cases and provide updates.

The joint Restorative Justice/Reentry Services Project Advisory Board met on February 4, 2010 and is scheduled to meet again on May 6, 2010. The Advisory Board consists of 30-35 community partners. These partners represent the county commission, law enforcement, schools, Mental Health agencies, Social Services, MN CEP, corrections, County Attorney's office, parents, youth agencies and the Clay County Collaborative. The committee meets quarterly in an effort to increase the community's awareness of youth issues and increase the community's role in affecting positive change for youth and their families. In 2009, a PATH foster parent and a staff member of a local faith-based organization joined this group and have provided valuable parental and faith-based input. A result of the formation of these strong partnerships has been solid community support for the RSP, a construction of open, routine communication among agencies and the willingness of the Clay County Collaborative to continue to provide financial support for the RSP in the upcoming fiscal year.

The two staff employed by the program work on a daily basis with community agencies to increase community awareness of the issues facing youth who are returning to the community from out of home placement. Examples include being a part of wraparound teams, working with a homeless youth steering committee to address the needs of homeless youth in the community, working with cultural groups to increase opportunities for youth in the community, working with community members to increase job opportunities for youth, presenting and having group discussions on youth issues at the local alternative school, etc.

Through the program youth are provided the opportunity to restore the harm they have caused to the community and victims of their crimes by completing community work service, writing letters of apology, etc. under the direction of the Reentry staff and/or a local law enforcement officer. Youth are also given the opportunity to participate in a Restorative Justice process, coordinated by the Clay County Restorative Justice coordinator.

4. Feedback:
The following feedback was received from youth and parents surveys this quarter. The feedback will be used to make improvements to the program, or build on strengths, as indicated.

Youth (n=3)

In what ways was the Reentry Services Project helpful to you?

- Hanging out
- That I could talk about my problems to *TC NAME REMOVED*, going out to eat, playing sports with *TC NAME REMOVED*.

- Being able to get out and do things like going to the YMCA and going out to eat and going sand bagging.

In what ways was the program disappointing?
- N/A
- Having to take piss test because I was always clean but doing that made me stay on track.
- N/A

Parent/Guardian (n=2)

In what ways was the Reentry Services Project helpful to you?

- Helped talk to him when we were butting heads.
- The help *TC NAME REMOVED* gave my son, very accessible if a problem arose and I needed advice.

In what ways was the Reentry Services Project helpful to your child?
- Gave him a bigger support group.
- Gave someone for my child to talk to, got him out in community, and helped me make sure he was doing community service.

Could the RSP do anything that would have been more helpful for you?
- No
- No

Could the RSP do anything that would have been more helpful for your child?
- No
- No

5. Illustration: (submitted by Sally Dandurand, Transitional Coordinator)
During this quarter Reentry Services Transitional Worker formed a Girl's Group with the Red River Alternative School's Social Worker. We are using the book and curriculum called, "Unmasking Sexual Con Games, Helping Teens Avoid Emotional Grooming and Dating Violence." We teach them about the '9 Grooming Tactics' and ways they can avoid being a target of sexual groomers. The group meets weekly and has six-eight girls who regularly participate. The feedback we received from the girls has been very good. In fact, a few girls have actually broken up with 'boyfriends' after learning about healthy boundaries. We discussed how the media, music, computers, and texting kids participate in today can influence one's behavior and thinking. They have learned there are two key elements, *secrecy and a false sense of trust,* which the emotional groomer must have to reach their ultimate goal*: to control*.
The '9 Grooming Tactic's' include:

1. Jealousy and possessiveness
2. Insecurity
3. Anger
4. Intimidation

5. Accusations
6. Flattery
7. Status
8. Bribery
9. Control

Two former Reentry Clients, who are now in college, spoke to the group about relationships they've had before that left them feeling used and abused. They will also share what they have learned about healthy relationships and how to avoid being a victim. Throughout the remainder of our weekly groups we will learn about healthy boundaries and dating, distorted thinking, and how one's actions *over time* through their behavior, creates a healthy relationship.

6. Barriers: (submitted by Michael McMullen, Transitional Coordinator)
Environmental Barriers to success
Mike McMullen

Many of the clients we work with have several barriers in their lives. Many times we are able to help them see the barrier and do something to move that problem. Many times the environment the client resides in is the problem.

While working with our clients it is important that they know their parents are in charge of the house and we are not going to undermine them. However, many times the parents undermine themselves by giving their children to much freedom, a lack of responsibilities, treating them as equals or friends, or showing a lack of interest in their lives.

When a child is able to determine what, where and when they are going to be doing things they do not learn the value of "no." Trying to teach clients that they need to listen to authority figures when their whole life they have learned from their parents they don't have to listen is something many clients simply refuse to learn.

Many times the clients will learn to say the right thing, but not follow through with their statements. Trying to teach a client to follow through with statements made is an abstract concept, as they have not seen their parents. Until the client sees there are real consequences for not following through with their claims they do not see the value in working towards a change.

Getting a client to follow through with things is a difficult task. Only by doing following through ourselves and holding the client to a higher standard can we help them make positive changes.

7. Evaluation:
See attached evaluation report from the Department of Criminal Justice and Political Science, North Dakota State University.

8. Revisions Necessary:
None

Reentry Services Project:

Report to the

Minnesota Department of Public Safety
and the
Joint Advisory Committee for the Restorative Justice Program & Re-entry Services Project

April 2010

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Thomas D. McDonald

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Reentry Services Project:
Report to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and the Joint Advisory Committee for the Restorative Justice Program & Reentry Services Project, April 2010

The Reentry Services Project (RSP) in Clay County, MN began in July 2003 and continues today with funding from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and the Clay County Joint Powers Collaborative. The program aims to improve public safety by assisting youthful offenders in successful community reentry following out-of-home placement. Two Transitional Coordinators (TCs) work with juvenile Probation Officers (POs) and community-based service providers to identify client specific needs and employ comprehensive case management services. The program seeks to improve public safety by preparing incarcerated juvenile offenders for successful reentry from criminal justice placements to communities. Specific program objectives include:

1) reducing recidivism by improving strengths and reducing risk/needs of juvenile offenders transitioning to their home communities by incorporating a three phase design to ensure continuity in services from placement to the community,
2) strengthening families of youthful offenders in order to facilitate youth adjustment and transition to the community, and
3) improving collaboration, coordination, and access to community resources for high risk youth and their families.

The RSP is designed to begin at upon entry to the placement facility and to continue for approximately six months following release to the community. As of March 31, 2010 the Reentry Services Project had 161 closed and coded case files. An additional 15 cases are currently active and 27 youth have been served more than once by the program.

During the most recent quarter (January 1 to March 31, 2010) a total of 20 youth were served by the program. Five cases were closed during this period, while 15 remain open. This report includes detailed information on the five cases closed during between January 1, 2010 and March 31, 2010.

I. Sociodemographic Profile

Upon release back to the community, the average age of the five clients was 16.6 years. Four of these clients (80%) were male; one (20%) was female. Sixty percent (3) were White (non-Hispanic) and two (40%) were Hispanic.

On average, these clients had 4.8 prior official contacts including an average of 5.6 charges prior to their most recent out of home placement. Two clients (40%) had a prior felony charge; two (40%) had prior persons charges (e.g. misdemeanor or felony assault). On average the clients spent 14 months on probation prior to returning to the community after their most recent

placement (range 2-25 months). Four of the clients (80%) were on indefinite probation. Four (80%) were on moderate supervision and one (20%) was on maximum supervision.
The clients experienced an average of 2 out-of-home placements (0.6 prior long-term – 30 days or more) and had spent on average 73 days in out-of-home placement (all in restrictive placement) upon entering the Reentry Services Project.

One client's most recent charge was a felony offense; eighty percent (4) of these clients' most recent charge was a misdemeanor. One client's (20%) most recent charge was a persons offense; four clients' (80%) most recent charge was a public order offense (e.g. disorderly conduct). The clients' most recent placement averaged 70 days (all in restrictive placement) and was most commonly a detention center (60%); one client spent time in a residential treatment facility (e.g., Valley Lake Boys Home, 20%). One client (20%) was not placed (i.e., was a pre-placement referral).

All of these clients (5) had a history of substance abuse problems. Eighty percent (4) had a history of school problems and 80 percent (4) had a history of mental health problems. Two clients (40%) had a history of violence (e.g., persons charge, fighting). All of the clients (5) had a history of multiple risk factors (two or more of violence, substance abuse, school, or mental health problems).

Initial YLS/CMI Scores
RSP clients are assessed regularly using the YLS/CMI diagnostic instrument. Table 1 provides the average YLS/CMI score for youth upon return to the community (N=5).

Table 1. YLS/CMI Scores upon Return to the Community

Domain	Average Score	Risk Level (associated with Average Score)	Percent of clients with strength identified
Prior / Current Offenses	1.60	Moderate	N/A
Family / Parenting	3.00	Moderate	20%
Education / Employment	2.40	Moderate	20%
Peer Relations	3.20	Moderate*	20%
Substance Abuse	3.00	High*	40%
Leisure / Recreation	1.80	Moderate*	40%
Personality / Behavior	2.60	Moderate	20%
Attitudes / Orientation	2.00	Moderate	40%
Overall	19.60	Moderate	Average 2 per client

*Substance Abuse scores reflected "high" risk/need. The other domains closest to scoring in the "high" range were leisure / recreation and peer relations.

II. Program Activities

Case Planning
Transitional case plans were created for each of these clients. These plans included goals and tasks in three general categories (competency development, restorative accountability, and community safety). Case plans were examined to determine the average number of goals and tasks assigned in each of these categories and the distribution of tasks in each of the domains

identified in YLS/CMI assessments. Table 2 provides the average number of goals and tasks assigned to clients in the domains of competency development, restorative accountability, and community safety.

Table 2. Transitional Case Plan Goals and Tasks by Category		
Case Plan Area	Average Number of Goals Assigned (range)	Average Number of Tasks Assigned (range)
Competency Development	7.6 (7 – 9)	50.8 (37 – 64)
Restorative Accountability	.60 (0 – 1)	3.6 (0 – 6)
Community Safety	1.6 (0 – 2)	4.8 (0 – 6)
All	9.8 per client	59.2 per client

The following figures indicate the proportion of clients who were assigned at least one task by YLS/CMI domain (Figure 1) and the breakdown of all assigned tasks by domain (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Percent of Clients Assigned Tasks by Domain

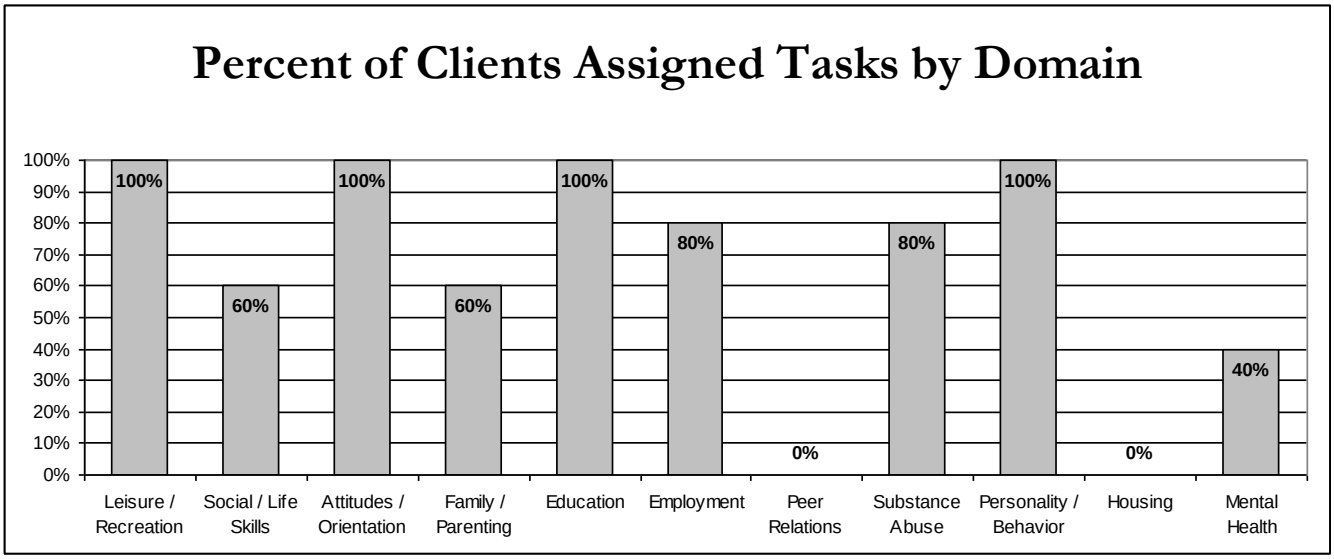
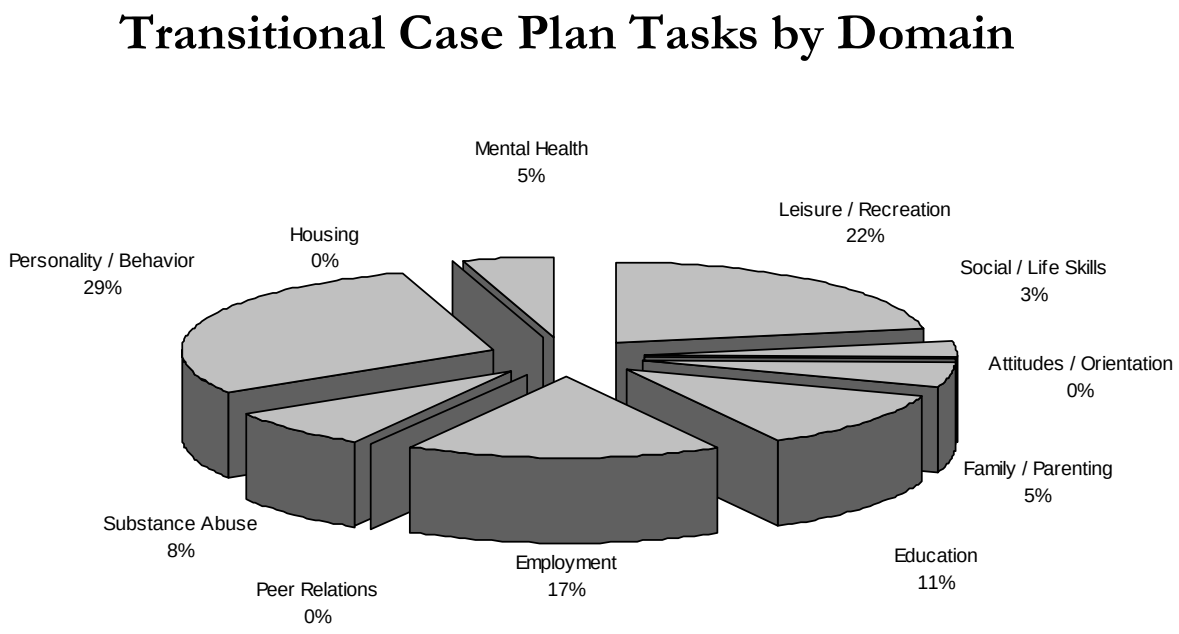
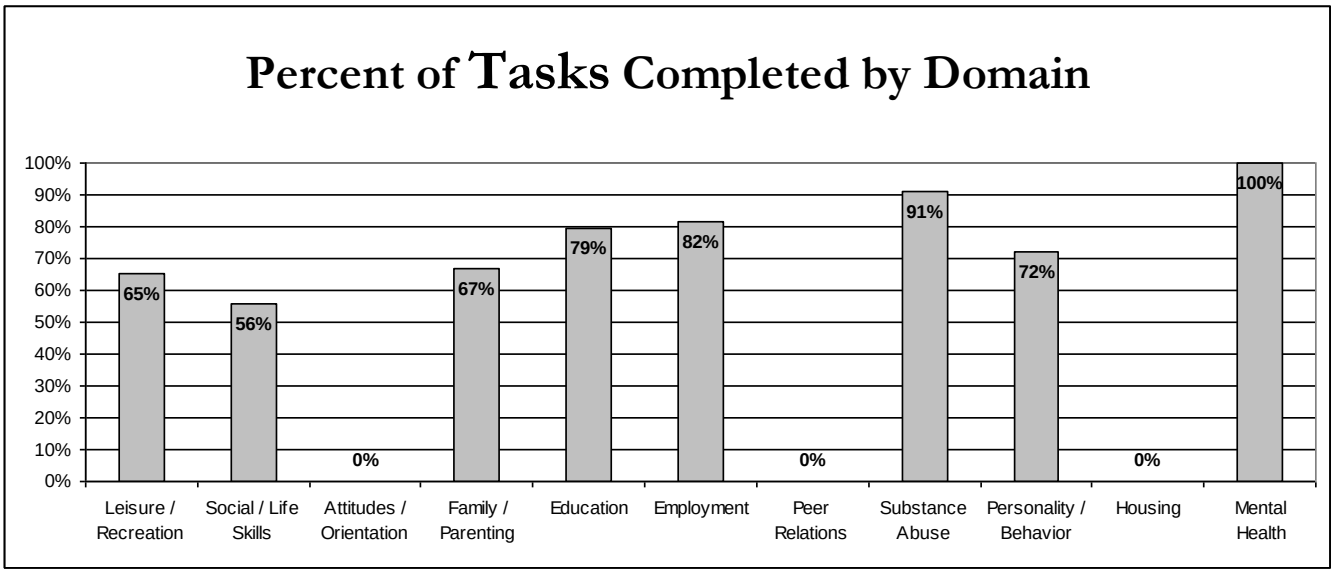


Figure 2. Transitional Case Plan Tasks by Domain



Seventy-five percent of clients' case plan tasks were completed upon exit from the Reentry Services Project (222 of 296 tasks assigned). The remaining tasks (25%) were not completed during program participation. Figure 3 provides a breakdown of task completion rates by domain.

Figure 3. Percent of Tasks Complete by Domain



The majority of tasks assigned were in the areas of personality / behavior, leisure / recreation, employment, and education (see Figure 2.). Task completion rates in these domains were 72 percent, 65 percent, 82 percent, and 79 percent respectively.

Referrals / Services

All of these clients (5 of 5) received at least one service-related referral. A total of 35 referrals were made for these clients (an average of 7 per client). Figure 4 depicts the proportion of clients referred to various types of services and Figure 5 examines referrals to services by type.

Figure 4. Percent of All Clients Referred to Services

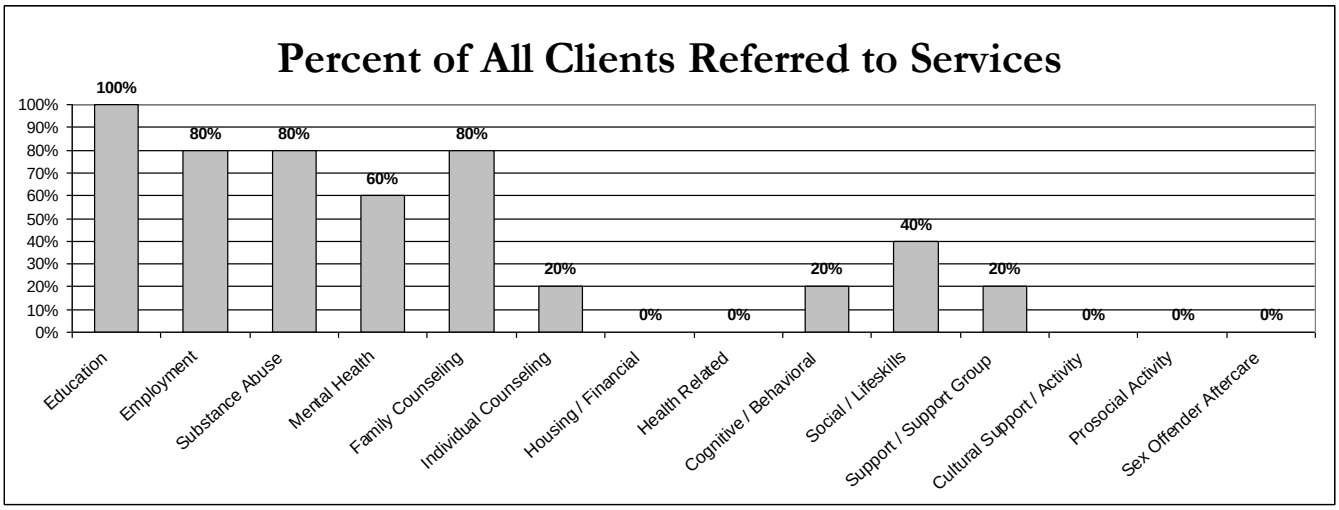
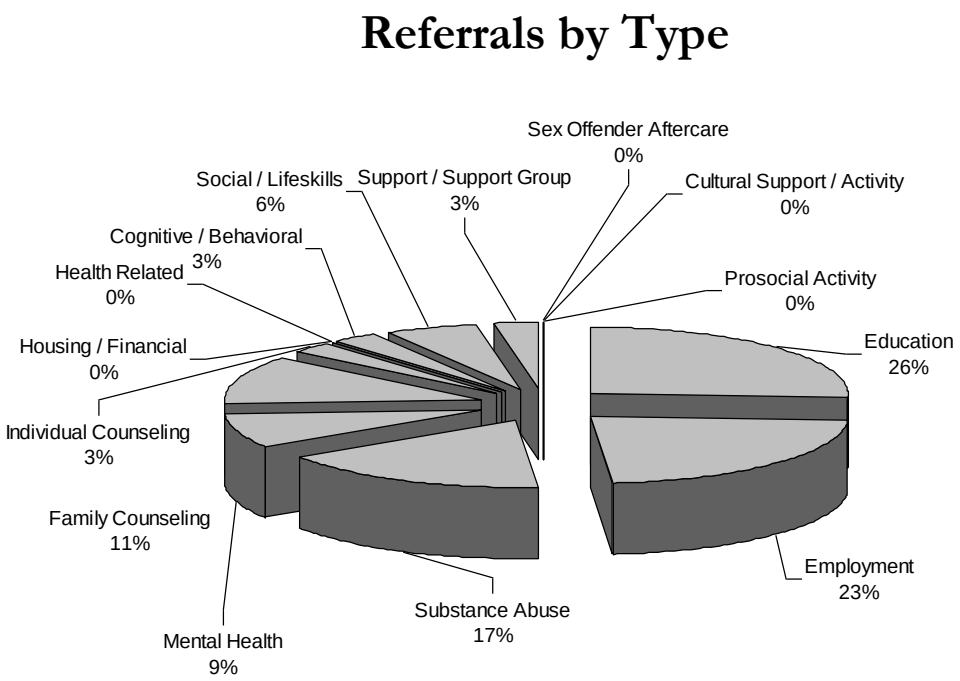
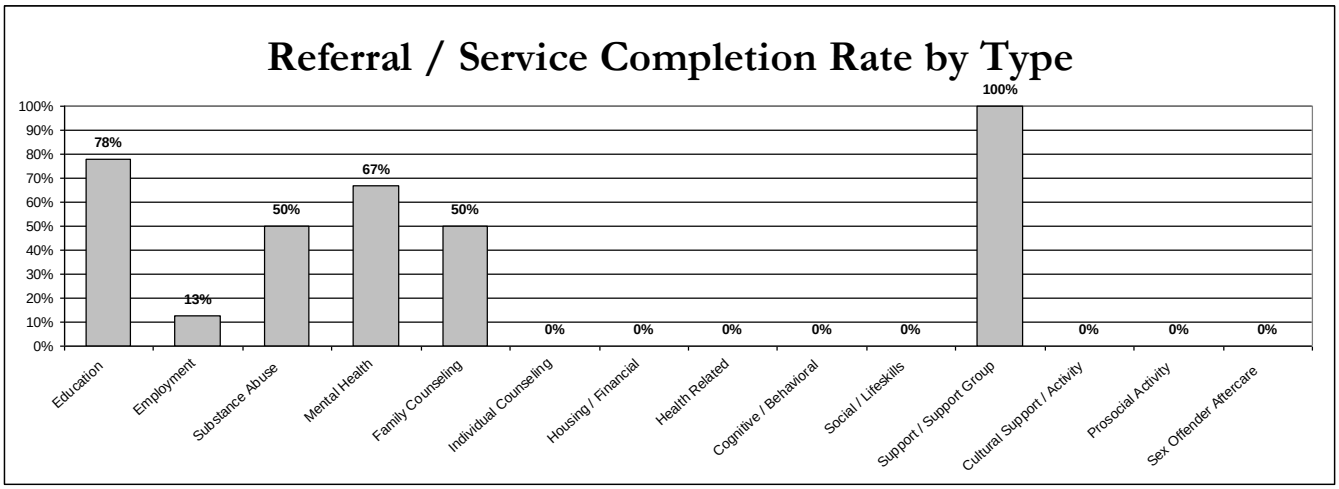


Figure 5. Referrals by Type of Service



Seventy-one percent of referrals (25 of 35) resulted in at least some service to the client (i.e., at least one counseling session or assessment). Forty-six percent of referrals (16) were considered "complete" or "ongoing" at the end of the clients' participation in the program (average 3.2 per client). A breakdown of completion rate (proportion of referrals complete or ongoing at the end of RSP participation) by referral type is provided in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Referral / Service Completion Rate by Type of Service



Other Program Activities

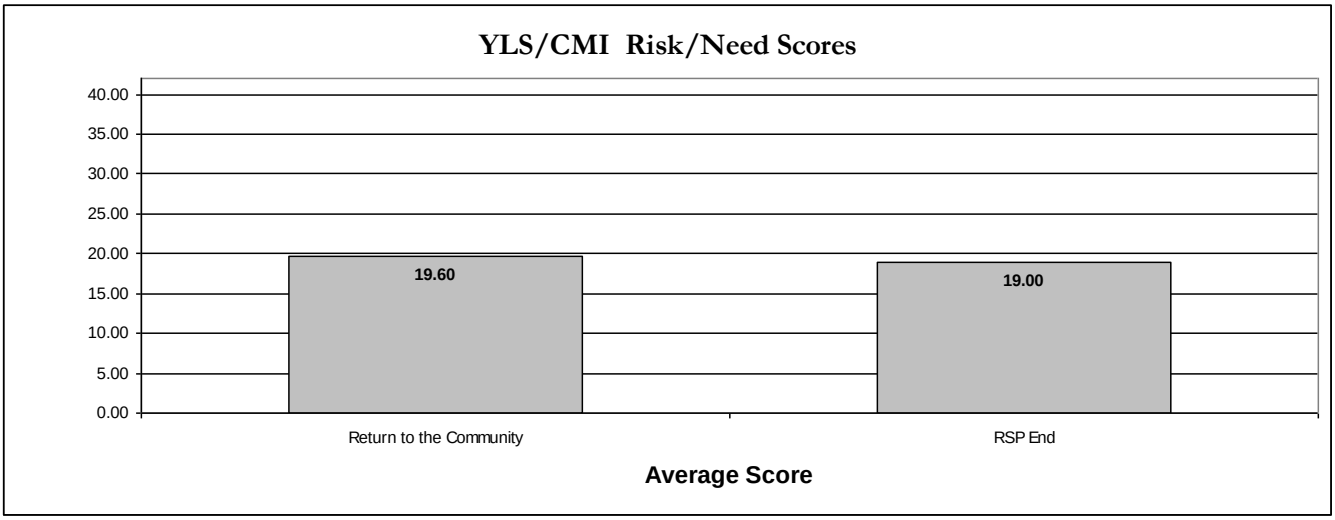
The five clients spent an average of 7.8 months in the Reentry Services Program (range 3 to 16 months). During this time Transitional Coordinators averaged 37 contacts with clients, 7 parent contacts, and 7 agency partner contacts. Probation Officers averaged 12 contacts with clients, 6 parent contacts, and 15 agency partner contacts. On average, Transitional Coordinators spent 46 hours with each client during program participation.

III. Intermediate Outcomes

Four clients (80%) were subjected to urinalysis testing during program participation; all four of those clients were tested two or more times. Twenty-five percent of tested clients had no positive drug tests (1); three clients (60%) had a single positive test.

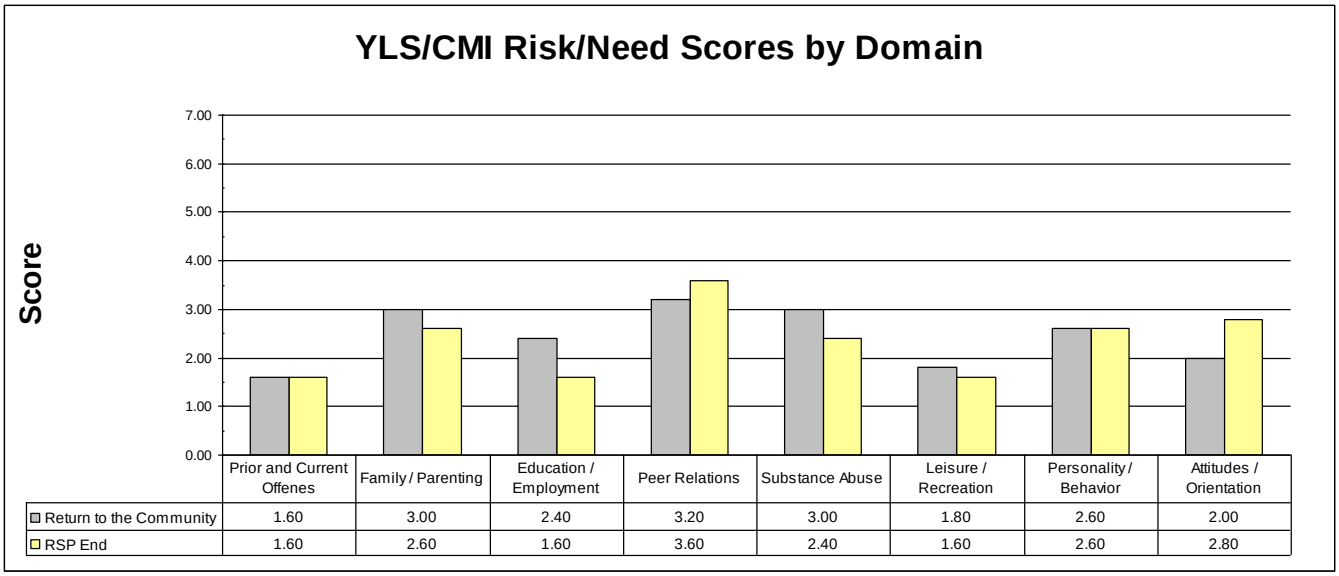
In order to examine changes in YLS/CMI risk/need and strengths scores during the period of program participation, the researchers isolated assessments occurring at two points: a) upon return to the community, and; b) upon program completion. Changes in risk/need score over time are depicted in Figure 7 (see below).

Figure 7. YLS/CMI Risk/Need Scores



Overall risk/needs scores declined 3 percent from return to the community (19.6) to the end of RSP participation (19.0). Changes in risk/need score by domain are presented in Figure 8 and Table 3 (see below).

Figure 8. YLS/CMI Risk/Need Scores by Domain



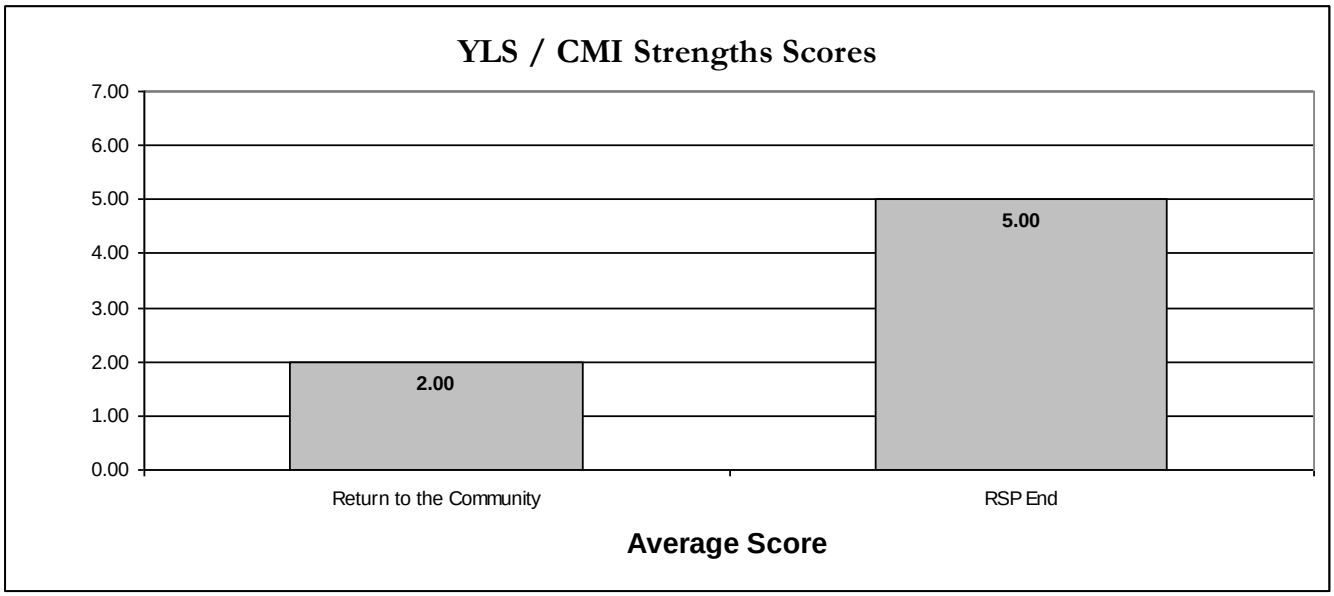
	Prior and Current Offenes	Family / Parenting	Education / Employment	Peer Relations	Substance Abuse	Leisure / Recreation	Personality / Behavior	Attitudes / Orientation
Return to the Community	1.60	3.00	2.40	3.20	3.00	1.80	2.60	2.00
RSP End	1.60	2.60	1.60	3.60	2.40	1.60	2.60	2.80

Table 3. Change in YLS/CMI Risk/Needs by Domain	
Domain	% change from Return to Program End
Prior / Current Offenses	0%
Family / Parenting	-13%
Education / Employment	-33%
Peer Relations*	13%
Substance Abuse*	-20%
Leisure / Recreation*	-11%
Personality / Behavior	0%
Attitudes / Orientation	40%
Overall	-3%
* Substance abuse ranked "high" on the initial / intake YLS/CMI; leisure / recreation and peer relations were domains closest to ranking "high" on the initial / intake YLS/CMI.	

Clients experienced reductions in risk/need in four of eight domains. Risk/need reductions were greatest in the domains of education / employment (a 33% reduction in risk/need), substance abuse (20%), and family / parenting (13%). Risk/need scores increased in the domains of attitudes / orientation (a 40% increase in risk/need) and peer relations (a 13% increase); scores in the domains of personality / behavior and prior / current offenses were unchanged.

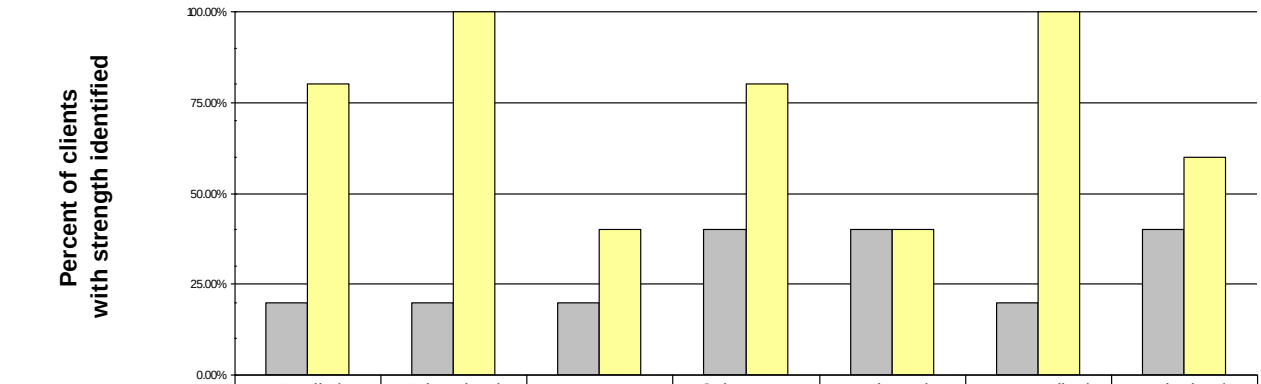
Changes in strengths score over time are depicted in Figure 9.

Figure 9. YLS/CMI Strengths Scores



Average strengths scores increased 150 percent from the return to the community (average 2 strengths identified) to the end of program participation (average 5 strengths identified). Figure 10 depicts changes in the proportion of clients with a strength identified in each domain over time.

Figure 10. YLS/CMI Strengths by Domain



	Family / Parenting	Education / Employment	Peer Relations	Substance Abuse	Leisure / Recreation	Personality / Behavior	Attitudes / Orientation
Return to the Community	20.00%	20.00%	20.00%	40.00%	40.00%	20.00%	40.00%
RSP End	80.00%	100.00%	40.00%	80.00%	40.00%	100.00%	60.00%

IV. In-Program Recidivism

Sixty percent of these clients (3 of 5) experienced no probation violations while participating in the Reentry Services Project. Two clients (40%) experienced a single probation violation; no clients experienced more than one probation violation.

None of these clients experienced new charges during program participation.

Three clients (60%) experienced new out-of-home placements while participating in the program; one client experienced more than one placement during program participation. A total of 5 placements were incurred by these three clients; only one placement was long term. Clients spent a total of 38 days in short term out-of-home placements which began while the client was participating in the program and a total of 39 days in long-term placements (30 days or more) which began while the client was participating in the program. Most of this time was spent in restrictive out-of-home placement (i.e., about 1/3 of short term and all of long-term placement days were spent in restrictive placements).

Forty percent of the out-of-home placements (2 of 5) were the result of technical probation violations; the remainder was for protection of the client (1) and unknown reasons (1).

V. Other Client Achievements and Participation

While participating in the program…

- Two clients (40%) attended education services regularly while participating in the program; three clients (60%) attended education services sporadically.

- One client was homeless during program participation; that same client was homeless upon program completion. Eighty percent of the clients (4) had a stable residence while participating in the program.

- Transitional Coordinators reported that employment was appropriate for all of these clients. Four of the clients (80%) searched for a job while participating in the program; 60 percent (3) were employed at sometime during program participation. Two clients (40%) had stable employment while participating in the program. None of the clients was employed upon program completion.

- All of the clients (5 of 5) were "clean" upon program completion. Transitional Coordinators reported that one of the five clients with a history of substance abuse was in need of treatment services during program participation; that client regularly participated in treatment while participating in the program. Transitional Coordinators reported that two of the clients with a history of substance abuse were in need of AA/NA; those clients attended AA/NA sporadically.

- Transitional Coordinators indicated that three clients were in need of mental health services while participating in the program (two of these three had a history of mental health problems). Two of the three clients received mental health services and complied with mental health recommendations.

- Two clients' families (40%) participated in at least one outing or activity.

- Forty percent of clients' families were involved in services (2 of 5).

- None of the minority clients (2) participated in culturally specific services.

- The female client did not participate in gender specific services.

- None of these clients participated in Restorative Justice while involved with the RSP.

- Eighty percent (4 of 5) received one-on-one cognitive-behavioral sessions with their Transitional Coordinator.

- All clients' families (5 of 5) received an individualized packet of information about services available in the community.

- A family assessment was completed with two families (40%). Two families refused assessments. One family (20%) received in in-home services.

VI. Summary

The results of this quarterly report mirror earlier reports which have indicated that the program provides increased contact with clients, their parents, and agency partners. The data reported here indicate that the contacts provided by Transitional Coordinators represent a 300 percent increase contacts with clients, a 115 percent increase in parent contacts, and a 46 percent increase in contact with agency partners when compared to Probation Officer contacts. In addition, program staff continues to develop and implement case specific plans in collaboration with local service agencies. All clients received at least one transitional case plan task in the domains of leisure / recreation, attitudes / orientation, education, and personality / behavior. Most received at least one task in the domain of social / life skills, family / parenting, employment, and substance abuse (Figure 1). The most common domains for task assignment were personality / behavior (29% of all assigned tasks), leisure / recreation (22% of assigned tasks), and employment (17% of assigned tasks) (Figure 2). Compliance with transitional case plan tasks in the most common areas of task assignment ranged from 82 percent (employment) to 65 percent (leisure / recreation) (Figure 3).

All clients were referred to education related services; most were referred to services in the employment, substance abuse, mental health, and family counseling domains (Figure 4). The most common domains for service referral were education (26% of all referrals), employment (23%), and substance abuse (17%) (Figure 5). Completion rates for referrals in these domains ranged from 13 percent (employment) to 78 percent (education) (Figure 6).

Data regarding client achievements indicate that clients served by the program experienced a number of positive changes in social factors related to reducing the probability of reoffending, especially education and substance abuse. Average YLS/CMI risk/need scores declined 3 percent from return to the community to program end, with the greatest reductions occurring in the domains of education / employment, substance abuse, and family / parenting (Table 3).

These youth exhibited a risk profile and offending/placement history similar to youth whose cases were reviewed in previous quarters. They were assigned a similar number of case plan tasks and were referred to and participated in a similar number of services. They evidenced only a small decline in YLS/CMI risk/need scores (3% reduction) but did exhibit a 150 percent increase in strengths scores. This group of clients completed the program largely without incident, however. None of the clients experienced a new official contact during the period of program participation and only one experienced a new long term placement. As in earlier periods, this difference may be anomalies related to the small number of cases included in the current report (5) or it may signal important shifts in service delivery and youth behavior that require ongoing monitoring.

In summary, data reveal that the Clay County RSP program continues to deliver a range of program services which are beneficial to youth, their families, and the larger community. Outputs observed are consistent with earlier summative reports which indicated positive benefits

of program participation. At the same time, current analyses alert us to the possibility of developing shifts in youth behavior when compared to previous reports. This difference may reflect subtle changes over time which might be masked by cumulative analyses. On the other hand, it may simply reflect the unique characteristics and processing of the small sample included in this report (i.e., 5 youth). As always, differences warrant close attention in forthcoming quarterly and cumulative reports.