

**OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM**

Entrants must complete all sections for the entry to be considered complete. A copy of this official entry is available at [www.pacounties.org](http://www.pacounties.org)

-Applicant must select the type of facility or program Alternative Programs

Agency/Contracting County JusticeWorks YouthCare – Berks County  
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**PROJECT INFORMATION**

Project Title JWYC – Berks County Reintegration Services

Start Date 6/1/2017

**PROGRAM NARRATIVE**

**Enter program narrative that addresses each of the following subject areas, and does so in the order presented below. Entries must be submitting using this form. All sections must be complete. Entries submitted without the required information may be disqualified.**

**Problem Discussion** - Enter comments on the identified need and the background including what programs were in place before the current project, if any, and how it led to this effort. This section is worth 10 points.

Across the country there have been challenges on reintegrating youth into the community after placement. Best practice suggests that discharge planning begins at the start of services, however, historically discharge planning is often a rushed process that occurs right before a discharge from services. Historically families have had struggles to maintain engagement with their child’s treatment while in placement. Issues that families may have include but are not limited to, transportation issues, limited communication, time constraints, distance, and guilt of the respite a youth’s placement provides them. Services often either provide support during a youth’s placement, or when they return home, eliminating a crucial opportunity for a continuum of support. Many times services fall short by minimizing the family’s involvement and don’t focus on the family role in the youth’s behavior and recidivism.

Typical aftercare services include basic visits and phone calls to ensure that a youth is following their

aftercare plan from a residential facility, while complying with any court requirements. While compliance is an important part of the monitoring process, skill building and resource coordination are also critical components to assure that youth and families have the skills needed to maintain in their community. Berk's reintegration program was created based on success with the Violation Initiative Program (VIP), which focused on community-based services to avoid placement.

**Background** – Enter history of the project, including any evidenced-based approaches to address criminogenic risk factors (risks, needs or responsivity) of the youth population served, community involvement strategies, formation of stakeholder groups, county- wide planning strategies, etc. This section is worth 10 points.

JusticeWorks responded to a request for proposals from Berks County Juvenile Probation. Berks County Probation was awarded funds through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Act. These funds were managed and supported by PCCD.

The JusticeWorks Reintegration program was developed to provide the “missing link” in intensive long-term treatment and residential programs. JusticeWorks recognized the weakness of long-term residential programs that, while resource-rich, were disconnected from the reality of family and community in which the child came from and would eventually return to. Although enormous sums were spent on residential programming, limited resources were devoted to the critical challenges confronting youth when they returned to their homes and communities.

Our fundamental premise has been that aftercare should not be an afterthought. A comprehensive aftercare process should begin at the time of being court-ordered to residential placement and continue throughout the juvenile's time in placement and into the period of release back to the home and community. “Aftercare requires the creation of a seamless set of systems across formal and informal social control networks as well as the creation of a continuum of community services to prevent the recurrence of antisocial behavior” (OJJDP 2010).

The JusticeWorks Reintegration program sought to improve outcomes in the juvenile justice system by providing a comprehensive aftercare service for successful reintegration/reunification. This service not only supported the youth while at a facility, but also worked with the family simultaneously. Families are provided the curriculum “Nurturing Parenting”. This curriculum can be found on the California Evidence Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare with a scientific rating of 3. The focus of Berks County

Reintegration Service is to address family dysfunction. Family related issues is considered one of the top four criminogenic needs that need to be addressed for a youth's success.

**Project/Program Description** – Enter a description of expectations and measurable goals, including supporting data. This section is worth 20 points

The Reintegration program is a case management continuing care service which encompasses the residential facilities, probation, the youth and their families, and community partners in order to maximize the relevance and sustainability of their services. JusticeWorks goals are to focus residential program services to be relevant to the youth's family and community; to have close collaboration with probation, facility staff, youth, and family to ensure everyone is on the same page regarding the youth's treatment and post-discharge into the community; to create reintegration goals and follow through with the single probation plan at the start of services, and with more specificity to community resources; and to reduce recidivism by providing support and supervision upon return to the youth's community. Reintegration services begin upon admission to residential placement and terminate three (3) months post-discharge. The average length of service is six (6) to nine (9) months, but can vary depending on the length of residential placement and/or needs while reintegrating back to the home and community. Working with the youth's family during the placement episode allows us to build a trusting relationship which reaps benefits when the youth returns to the community. It also allows us to gain an understanding of the family dynamic, address issues within the family that are conducive to recidivism, and work to prepare families for their child's return.

Youth are selected to be in this program that score moderate to high on the Family Circumstances Domain on the YLS. The Family Circumstances domain is one of the top four criminogenic factors that is an integral part of driving delinquent behavior. Addressing this domain and providing a parent focused service was paramount in the creation of this program.

A key element of the program is to strengthen a family's ability to support their child while that child is in placement and to assist all parties in the youth's transition back home. We assist families in identifying community supports and resources, developing a family plan, and help the youth positively adapt to community life and the home environment once discharged.

JusticeWorks work in collaboration with the placement probation officers, residential facility staff, families, CYS (for FGDM collaboration), and any other child-serving agency involved with the youth and family. JusticeWorks supports and adheres to the System of Care philosophy, a strengths-based collaboration of all agencies working together with a family. This team approach supports the pursuit of

positive outcomes by developing a strong network of support that can be sustainable over the lifetime of the family.

For family and youth engagement, it is imperative to gain an understanding of a youth's home life, community environment, and educational history. Our program is optimized through developing partnerships with the parents, probation officers, placement staff, etc. Our staff work closely with the placement probation officers and assist in the coordination of family meetings/visitation. We provide assistance with transportation, and we will coordinate with the designated probation officer and placement counselor to provide video conferences so that families can participate in the planning for the youth's transition back to the home and community. When youth are granted home passes, we meet with the youth and families within the home environment, including attending probation appointments while youth are on home passes. We reinforce the skills that the juvenile has learned during his/her placement episode, and put those skills into practice during the juvenile's transition back to the home, by integrating the family. We provide parenting education and teach parenting skills to ensure a smooth transition.

#### **Research-based Program: Nurturing Parenting**

The JusticeWorks Nurturing Parenting program for families has a scientific rating of 3 on the California Evidence Based Clearinghouse. Nurturing Parenting provides families with case management services and a structured curriculum to address:

- Alternatives to corporal punishment.
- Understand the impact of substance use/abuse.
- Age-appropriate expectations for their children.
- Problem-solving skills.
- Display of greater parent/child affection and trust.
- Consistent household rules, consequences, and boundaries.
- Natural and logical consequences.
- Communication skills.
- Coping Skills.
- Ability to provide a nurturing environment.
- Links to community resources and supports.
- Aftercare plans.

Nurturing Parenting programs are utilized nationwide to improve the lives of families ravaged by dysfunction. Built-in assessment strategies allow facilitators and parents to chart the course of their successes. The flexibility within the structure of the programs allows facilitators to ensure the specific needs of families are being met. The nurturing philosophy of non-violent parenting focuses on the

development of empathy, self-worth, self-awareness, empowerment, and discipline with dignity, appropriate family roles, and age-appropriate expectations of children's development. While the Reintegration program utilizes the Nurturing Parenting Adolescent Curriculum, it is rooted in the foundations of the traditional NP model.

Lesson guides, DVDs, parent handbooks, and assessment inventories provide facilitators with individual lessons designed to promote individual and family growth.

Upon completion of the curriculum, we administer the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI-2). The benefits of using this tool will measure the post effectiveness of the program. Coupled with the post-discharge YLS, these tools provide valuable information for overall program effectiveness and outcome reporting.

In addition, JusticeWorks provides a parenting support group that meet on a monthly basis either at our Berks County office or a local community center. These support groups allow for parents or caregivers to share ideas, offer peer support, and provide networking opportunities.

**Program Evaluation** – Enter a description of how the project was evaluated and any lessons learned. This section is worth 20 points.

This program is being evaluated in partnership with the University of Pittsburgh's Dr. Edward Mulvey, and Carol Schubert. They are collecting data based on the below information. A data report will be created for this program at the end of April 2019.

JusticeWorks Reintegration goals are to focus residential program services to be relevant to the youth's family and community; to create transition plans earlier and with more specificity to community resources, and to reduce recidivism by providing support and supervision when youth return to the community. The program is designed to increase family involvement and assist in the development of effective parenting skills. We seek to increase protective factors while simultaneously decreasing risk factors. The goals, objectives, and anticipated outcomes for our youth and families are:

- (1) To reduce recidivism;
- (2) To seamlessly reintegrate youth back into the community by ensuring living arrangements, education, community linkages, and vocational plans (if appropriate) are in place prior to discharge;
- (3) To identify and help ameliorate conditions in the family that may undermine successful reintegration;
- (4) To connect youth and families to effective and appropriate resources;
- (5) To help build and promote healthy and respectful relationships between our youth and families and increase family involvement in services;

- (6) To teach and promote self-sufficiency to our youth and families by building upon strengths (protective factors) while reducing risk;
- (7) To comply with the Berks County Juvenile court system

**Outcome Measures:**

Service objective outputs and outcomes may reflect, but not be limited to:

**Output and outcome measure variables:**

- Number of cases: active, served during the time frame, closed;
- Case referral reasons: abuse, delinquency, drug use, environmental etc.;
- Dosage: average length of particular service duration: hours, days;
- Demographic information (language, culture, etc.);
- Placement Information: percent of specific categories of placements;
- Length of stay measures: average days of placement/average days of service upon referral to close;
- Percent and number of youth involving events of subsequent placement (recidivism);
- Key event factors: event variables that occurred during a service such as results of drug tests, enrollment in school, hospitalization etc.;
- Percent of identified goal categories per closed cases; and,
- Accounts: quantified amounts of restitution, fines or community service hours completed.
- AAPI-2 Post Test.
- Post YLS results (3 months after Reintegration program discharge; coordinate with Berks P.O.).

**Outcomes goals:**

- Reduction in overall YLS score; reduction in 'Family Circumstances' domain.
- 90% of participants will complete the Client Satisfaction Survey and rate JWYC services satisfactory or better.
- 90% of participants will not re-offend (new arrests or violations resulting in charges) 90 days post-discharge from our services.
- 90% of participants will not score high in critical domains on the AAPI-2 post-test.
- 90% of participants will have a minimum of 20 weeks of service (min. of 30 hours).
- 90% of participants will have a minimum of three (3) parent-youth observations.
- 90% of participants will be referred to Berks County CYF for appropriateness for FGDM.
- 90% of participants will have a minimum of 2 community supports/resources upon discharge.

Data collection is still in process and will be through the end of March. However, up to August 2018 we are proud to state that we have been successful in reducing overall YLS Family Circumstance scores, lowered overall YLS scores, and to date, this program has only one youth that has committed a new offense after release.

**Community Involvement** – Enter a description of the community, including a description of key stakeholders, organizations, and/or county departments that were involved in the project. This section is worth 10 points.

This program could not have been a success without the solid collaboration between Berks County Juvenile Probation, JusticeWorks YouthCare, and the data reporting done by Dr. Edward Mulvey and his team. The communication by the agencies helped ensure that the program was going in the right direction, quickly addressed challenges, and shared case coordination with the highest level of execution. The System of Care philosophy has been effective between these organizations and reflects in the community outcomes for Berks County.

It is my opinion that this collaboration between public and private agencies creates the best outcomes for the youth we serve. Berks County Juvenile Probation's commitment to being a responsible and active partner in this program has helped in the success in re-entry care. In replicating this project in other municipalities, it is critical to pay close attention to Berks County Juvenile Probation's commitment to communication and partnership.

JusticeWorks values the importance of building relationships with various providers and community supports/resources to assist youth and families in long-term success. We have established linkages with various behavioral/ mental health providers, vocational and educational facilities, and Job-readiness and placement programs (i.e. Pennsylvania Academic and Career & Technical Training Alliance - PACTT), as well as various child-serving agencies. Our PACTT affiliation is an important relationship to note, as it provides us an opportunity for structured skill building with a focus on education and employment to youth involved in the reintegration program upon their release.

**Future of the Project** – Enter details describing how the activities included in the project started in the past were altered or will be continued based on experience, including plans for leveraging additional resources. This section is worth 5 points.

This project had one adjustment at the start of the program. Rather than having the parenting curriculum be the primary driver of re-entry, we shortened the length of time to include a balance to include vocational and case management support. This adjustment seems to be an effective modification.

**Funding** – Enter a description of any costs associated with the project and how it was funded; cost savings, if any, and any change in community acceptance, reductions in insurance costs, or inspection improvements that resulted from the program. This section is worth 10 points.

This project is funded through Berks County Juvenile Probation by way of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance grant managed by PCCD. Addressing youth and engaging families, we believe that the results will include a positive impact on recidivism rates and break the cycle of criminality as youth age. Hence, reducing the financial impact on the Adult Criminal Justice Systems, and Corrections. We believe over time, the success of this program will also positively impact the community economically. We will be able to guide youth towards family stability and vocational resources rather than seeing a rise in prison population. To date, data is indicating that this service is effective.

Future consideration should be taken to expand the target population to include any youth that scores moderate to high on the Family Circumstances Domain on the YLS.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Please include any supporting documentation to demonstrate the impact of the project in cost or population outcomes, or other data to demonstrate the considerations utilized in determining the scope or design of the project. Scoring will be based on factors including the entrant's description of the problem, the soundness of the approach, and success in meeting goals and objectives. Award submissions will receive consideration for outcomes or best practices supported by data.

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION SHOULD BE COPIED AND PASTED DIRECTLY INTO THE FORM USING THE BOX BELOW.**

Click here to enter text.

**Each application must be submitted with at least one signatures.** Signatures can be entered electronically, or submitted via fax using a separate form. To sign, right-click on the signature line, select "Signature Setup" from the drop down, and follow the prompts. If submitting signatures on a separate form, enter "FAXING" on the signature line.

X

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Dipesh Chauhan  
Director of Program Development

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**SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY – To submit the entry, save a copy of this completed form after all information, including signatures and supporting materials have been added. When saving the form, please assure that the document name includes the county name, the type of project and the year – (i.e. FranklinAlternativeAward2019). Address an email to [bpenyak@pacounties.org](mailto:bpenyak@pacounties.org) and attach the award submission.**