



# Oregon Youth Authority

*Issue Brief*

*December 2011*

## Matching youth offenders with needed services

**10**

Number of OYA close-custody correctional and transition facilities

**750**

Approximate number of youth offenders supervised in OYA close-custody facilities

**1,075**

Approximate number of youth offenders supervised by OYA in communities

**302**

Total Funds, in millions of dollars, allocated to OYA in 2011-2013

**258**

General Fund, in millions of dollars, allocated to OYA in 2011-2013

**87**

Approximate percent of OYA's budget spent locally in facilities and communities

### Overview

Research shows that the most effective method of reforming youth offenders is to provide the appropriate combination of treatment and education based on each youth's individual risks and needs. To that end, the Oregon Youth Authority began a "mapping initiative" in late November 2009 to improve the agency's ability to match and place youth offenders with the services they need at the right times and in the right settings.

The first step in the process was to identify service gaps throughout OYA and the juvenile justice continuum, and to provide and prioritize recommendations for filling those gaps and achieving cost-efficiencies for the agency and the juvenile justice system as a whole. From that initial review came 17 recommendations, of which four were selected as priorities:

- Assessments and short-term intensive interventions;
- Community residential bed allocations and evidence-informed contracting decisions;
- Sex offender assessment, treatment and supervision; and
- Specialized programming for older youth.

### Mapping initiative priorities

#### Assessments and short-term intensive interventions

**Issue:** Gaps exist in the process of consistently assessing youth offenders' risks and needs prior to commitment to OYA and placement in a continuum of care. A lack of resources also exists to further assess and address behavioral issues exhibited by youth once in community placements.

**Recommendation:** Create regional assessment centers and short-term intensive interventions.

#### Community residential bed allocations and performance-based contracting

**Issue:** Population data show a lack of sufficient community residential resources for youth with high responsivity needs, youth committed for sex offenses, youth with

## Oregon Youth Authority

530 Center Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301-3765  
Reception: 503-373-7205  
En Espanol: 503-373-7434  
Fax: 503-373-7622  
Web: [www.oregon.gov/OYA](http://www.oregon.gov/OYA)



### Mission

The Oregon Youth Authority protects the public and reduces crime by holding youth offenders accountable and providing opportunities for reformation in safe environments.



### Vision

Youth who leave OYA go on to lead productive, crime-free lives.



### Core Values

Integrity  
Professionalism  
Accountability  
Respect



### Director

**Colette S. Peters**



### Deputy Director

**Fariborz Pakseresht**



Assistant Director  
for Business Services

**Jean Straight**



Assistant Director  
for Community Services

**Philip Cox**



Assistant Director  
for Facility Services

**Karen Daniels**

substance abuse diagnoses, and youth first committed to OYA at 17 and 18 years of age.

**Recommendation:** Develop performance-based contracting and restructure the community residential bed allocations.

## Sex offender assessment, treatment and supervision

**Issue:** The incarceration rate and length of stay for juvenile sex offenders in close-custody programming is significantly greater than for the general population of offenders. There also are identified gaps in the continuum of care for juvenile sex offenders, with significant gaps in the assessment and transition phases of treatment.

**Recommendation:** Establish standardized assessment and screening processes for juvenile sex offenders committed to OYA close custody; establish reasonable risk criteria to guide appropriate placements; establish objective review processes for youth incarcerated longer than one year; and expand community resources and modify contract practices.

## Specialized programming for older youth

**Issue:** OYA correctional facilities lack a consistent method for addressing the varying vocational and treatment programming requirements and needs of older youth. Research indicates these youth have completed extensive treatment programming, but remain in the close-custody system longer than other youth as a result of mandatory sentencing, and they would benefit from vocational programming opportunities.

**Recommendation:** Create specialized facility programming for older youth including redesigned living units at larger facilities to focus specifically on providing programming for these youth, with an emphasis on vocational training and higher education courses.

## The next steps

OYA will be taking steps to implement these recommendations during the 2011-2013 biennium. The agency's goal is to achieve a more efficient, effective and cost-effective system for addressing the reformation needs of Oregon's youth offenders and preserving public safety.