



Oregon Youth Authority

Issue Brief

December 2011

Multicultural services for youth offenders

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

The youth in the Oregon Youth Authority's care and custody reflect the diversity of the state's population. Approximately 58 percent of youth offenders are Caucasian, 25 percent are Hispanic, 11 percent are African American, 4 percent are Native American, and 1 percent are Asian American, with the remaining 1 percent not self-identified.

Research shows that the most effective means of reducing the risk of a youth reoffending is to provide the appropriate combination of treatment and education. Research also shows that both treatment and education are more effective if they are provided in a manner that respects and meets the specific cultural needs of each youth.

Recognizing and supporting diversity

The Oregon Youth Authority's Office of Minority Services helps guide and coordinate culturally competent services for all youth in the agency's care and custody.

These services include providing translation and interpretation assistance; ensuring culturally specific treatment groups, multicultural support groups, and gang intervention and youth empowerment programs; and coordinating special events at OYA's 10 close-custody facilities to celebrate diversity and raise cross-cultural awareness.

Multicultural events and activities include Black History Month assemblies, Cinco de Mayo celebrations, pow-wows and sweatlodge ceremonies, Celtic celebrations, ethnic and cultural food events, and speeches and presentations by people representing a range of ethnic groups and cultures.

Anti-gang initiatives

The Office of Minority Services leads OYA's efforts to reduce the impact of gangs on youth offenders. The Office of Minority Services ensures youth coming into OYA's custody are appropriately placed and managed to minimize the influence of gangs, promote youth safety, and encourage pro-social choices that lead to a gang-free lifestyle.

Services include gang intervention treatment and counseling, gang tattoo removals, conflict resolution counseling, and a range of treatment programs that focus on developing pro-social attitudes and behaviors.

Oregon Youth Authority

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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

Transition programs and services

Once a youth has completed treatment and is ready for release, the Office of Minority Services assists minority youth who are transitioning out of close-custody facilities. These services are designed to help minority youth successfully reintegrate back into their communities and lead productive, crime-free lives.

Services include mentorship, drug and alcohol treatment, mental health treatment, family support, and continuation of conflict resolution and gang intervention counseling. A 24-hour crisis line also is available for minority youth who need immediate assistance with problems.

Partnerships

OYA maintains partnerships with a range of groups and organizations to ensure minority youth receive the culturally specific supports they need during and after being in OYA's care and custody. Partners include the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon, the African American Advisory Committee, Hispanic Advisory Committee, and Native American Advisory Committee.

With the input and assistance of these groups, OYA continually seeks to improve the delivery of culturally appropriate programs and services. This includes overseeing delivery of OYA's treatment programs and developing cultural competency guidelines for residential programs and other contracted service providers.

The Office of Minority Services also represents OYA in planning and developing Oregon's annual summits on the over-representation of minorities in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. These conferences bring together representatives of state and local governments, nonprofit groups, educators, law enforcement officers, the court system, treatment programs, social service organizations, victims' rights advocates, and others who are working together to reduce the disproportionate minority contact with these systems.

A national leader

OYA is the only juvenile justice agency in the nation with an Office of Minority Services. By creating and maintaining an organizational structure that focuses on the needs of minority youth, OYA is able to ensure each youth in the agency's care and custody receives the appropriate cultural focus in all treatment and education programs.