



Oregon Youth Authority

Issue Brief

December 2011

Improving the odds of successful re-entry

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

The case for re-entry services

The three-year Oregon Youth Offender Re-entry Project offers an unusual opportunity to remove barriers paroled youth face in obtaining services after they return to the community. For example, a 2008 state-commissioned study found that publicly financed alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment reached only 25 percent of young adults needing it, and recommended making post-incarceration re-entry services a high priority.

The project is financed by a federal grant to the Oregon Youth Authority and the Oregon Juvenile Department Directors Association. It focuses on improving outcomes for paroled youth with treatment needs for drug and alcohol abuse or dependence, and for co-occurring mental health issues. Grant activities will identify how to reduce barriers transitioning youth face in obtaining not only AOD treatment and mental health services, but also other assistance such as help applying for eligibility for the Oregon Health Plan, education, housing, developmental disability services, and employment and vocational supports.

Oregon was one of only five applicants awarded a federal grant in late 2009 to support this work. Oregon is the only state focusing on producing positive outcomes statewide. Reducing juvenile parole revocations and new offenses supports the agency's mission to protect the public and reduce crime, and the agency vision that youth who leave OYA will go on to lead productive, crime-free lives.

Protecting public safety

Youth offenders and their families often lack knowledge about available services and how to access them. The work funded by this grant is designed to bring more consistency to state and county efforts to identify and enroll paroled youth in needed services for which they are eligible.

Individually, juvenile parole and probation officers (JPPOs) already do an extraordinarily good job of identifying resources. However, access to available community services for youth can vary from one county to another and even from one juvenile parole officer to another.

This project seeks to produce greater efficiencies in a time of declining public resources and improve successful re-entry for youth offenders by:

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

- Identifying resources that exist in communities;
- Identifying barriers youth confront in obtaining resources for which they are eligible;
- Identifying services needed but unavailable;
- Bringing more youth- and family-serving agencies to the table;
- Involving partner agencies earlier in preparing youth for community transition; and
- Improving the interagency flow of information about youth needs and services.

Focusing on specific regions and youth

The project's focus is on youth who need treatment for AOD and for AOD and co-occurring mental health disorders. This project is expected to improve public safety and reduce crime in three participating regions:

- The tri-county area of Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington counties;
- Lane County; and
- The 17-county Central and Eastern Oregon Juvenile Justice Consortium, which covers 61,000 square miles east of the Cascades.

Youth with identified AOD and mental health issues not only experience high unmet treatment needs, but also high rates of parole revocations. Improving access to services is intended to reduce high rates of youth parole revocations not involving a new crime.

Project organization

The project is managed by a seasoned OYA juvenile probation and parole supervisor working with three regional councils comprised of representatives from OYA, county juvenile departments, and other youth- and family-serving agencies. The grant pays for specific staff support and formal evaluation, and the regional councils have access to statewide support from the Governor's Re-entry Council.

OYA parole and probation supervisors, county juvenile department directors, and the project supervisor are working to ensure the project does not unduly disrupt the good work already being done by OYA community and facility staff to help paroled youth successfully transition.

Next steps

The project has a two-part goal — to reduce revocations in the target populations by 50 percent after five years, and to ensure 100 percent of participating youth transitioning to the community receive the services identified in their case plans.

Ultimately, the project should benefit not only paroled youth, but also youth on probation; youth who transition back to the community from residential, state and county juvenile corrections facilities; and the communities who receive the youth.

A Portland State University team will evaluate the project's outcomes, and add to the research data available on use of re-entry services to minimize revocations.