



Oregon Youth Authority

Issue Brief

January 2015

Creating a culture of positive human development

10

Number of OYA close-custody facilities

650

Approximate number of youth offenders OYA supervises in close custody

550

Approximate number of youth offenders OYA supervises in community residential treatment and foster care settings

550

Approximate number of youth offenders OYA supervises who live independently or at home in communities

330

Total Funds, in millions of dollars, allocated to OYA in 2013-2015

90

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

What is positive human development?

Positive Human Development (PHD) unites positive youth development with positive staff development. PHD occurs when everyone -- staff, community partners, youth, and OYA's organizational structure -- works collaboratively to:

- Foster supporting relationships;
- Offer meaningful participation; and
- Set high expectations where engagement, learning and growth can occur.

Emerging from juvenile justice research, PHD is unique to OYA. It is based on using data combined with caring to bring out the best in everyone.

PHD inspires holistic growth by striving for well-rounded, productive, crime-free lives for individuals. First and foremost, as illustrated at the base of the PHD "Culture of Success" pyramid to the right, is the foundation of safety and security for youth and staff.

Once safety and security are in place, OYA builds on that foundation by nurturing caring and supportive relationships, and by setting high expectations and accountability.

High expectations and accountability are essential to PHD, as are opportunities for meaningful participation in decision making and being accepted as a welcome member of the community. The skills cultivated with PHD help create successful individuals.

Why has OYA adopted PHD as its culture?

PHD is an effective strengths-based approach that promotes self-esteem and other positive outcomes. It emerged in 2012 when OYA work groups delved into research findings illustrating that strictly punitive measures ineffective and potentially harmful.

Before PHD was implemented across OYA, staff members typically focused on estab-



Oregon

Youth Authority

530 Center Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-3765
Reception: 503-373-7205
En Espanol: 503-373-7205
Web: 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 will go on to lead productive, crime-free lives.



Core Values

Integrity
Professionalism
Accountability
Respect



Director

Fariborz Pakseresht



Deputy Director

Joe O'Leary



Key Service Areas

Business Services
Community Services
Facility Services
Health Services
Information Services
Treatment Services

lishing consequences for youth misbehavior, rather than promoting the strengths that support pro-social behaviors. With PHD in action, staff members now work with youth to identify and develop individualized plans that increase problem-solving and interpersonal skills. Youth continue to be held accountable, but more resources are made available to proactively work with youth to prevent misbehavior. Depending on the situation and the youth, staff can use the PHD approach to accountability, the traditional approach to accountability, or a combination thereof.

What are the benefits of PHD to you, staff, and communities?

As a strengths-based approach, PHD helps address the underlying drivers of misbehavior rather than just responding to the behavior itself. It is culture shift that represents a more positive, proactive focus. The approaches and tools used within PHD address adolescent needs for status, belonging, and power. This holistic approach looks at issues systemically, rather than treating youth as villains or victims with punishment as the only option. PHD requires the belief that youth can be held accountable and strengthened at the same time, and that youth are resources to develop, not problems to be fixed.

PHD encourages youth to develop themselves by writing, reading, engaging in art projects, learning trades, and participating in team sports. The culture of PHD also encourages youth and staff to give back to the community and donate time and energy to local nonprofits. Learning empathy and responsibility by working with animals also is part of PHD, and many youth participate in Project POOCH and the Pixie Project. PHD also encourages youth to keep family connections strong, and for staff to help support family connections.

The benefits of PHD are many. Youth who actively participate in their treatment, education, and job training become more employable and are less likely to re-commit crimes. As recidivism drops, communities are safer. Youth, their families, OYA staff, and Oregon's communities, all benefit from OYA's adoption of PHD.

What are some examples of PHD at work?

OYA provides many ways for youth to grow into productive, contributing community members:

- Camp Florence youth assemble and distribute baskets of food and gifts to low-income residents in the community.
- Camp Riverbend youth make wooden toys for distribution by the Salvation Army to children in need and hold toy and clothing drives to benefit families in the community.
- Camp Tillamook and Tillamook youth adopt needy families during the holidays and provide clothing, food, and gifts.
- Eastern Oregon youth make visitor signs for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and help socialize rescue dogs.
- Hillcrest youth repair donated bikes and give them to needy families.
- MacLaren youth build doghouses and fences to help unchain dogs, train and find homes for shelter dogs, and knit hats and scarves for the homeless.
- North Coast youth hold bottle and can recycling drives to raise funds for the Governor's Food Drive, and help make blankets for senior citizens.
- Oak Creek youth help restore native plants in nature areas.
- Rogue Valley youth raise funds for children with special medical needs.