



Oregon Youth Authority

Issue Brief

January 2015

Foster care services for OYA youth

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

450

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

323

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

88

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

Overview

- ▲ Youth in the custody of the Oregon Youth Authority may be placed in secure close-custody facilities, transition facilities, residential treatment programs, foster care homes, or under parental supervision.
- ▲ Placement is determined by court order, treatment progress, risk to the public, and other factors.
- ▲ There are approximately 40 OYA foster homes in Oregon serving 50-60 youth. Homes are located in 14 counties throughout Oregon.
- ▲ Throughout the state, the need for foster homes exceeds the available number of such homes. The need is particularly great for homes that can serve youth who are Hispanic, African American, Native American, and Asian.

Foster care offers a community setting

Foster care offers an effective placement option for youth who need an out-of-home placement, are doing well in treatment, can attend public school, and will benefit from a structured home life. OYA has a network of effective foster parents serving youth offenders on parole and probation.

OYA has two types of foster homes: The traditional foster home for school-age youth, and the transitional foster home for those ages 18 to 24.

School-age youth benefit from homes that offer stable and supportive family environments with clear and consistent expectations, positive adult role models, support for after-school programs and activities, and foster parents who can advocate for youths' educational and treatment needs.

Older youth also benefit from stable and supportive family environments with clear and consistent expectations, and positive role models. In addition, they benefit from learning life skills such as establishing a bank account, preparing a household budget, shopping for and preparing food, and managing other responsibilities of independent living.

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 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

Foster parents help youth grow and mature

Foster care provides a stable, secure living environment for youth, which allows them to observe positive behavior and choices, eat meals as a family, attend school, and hold jobs. Foster parents assume the parenting roles of discipline, accountability, and knowing the youth's friends and whereabouts. Foster parents help youth learn to be mindful of and accountable for their behavior.

Youth in foster care have the opportunity to do well in school, play sports, succeed in after-school and summer jobs, attend religious institutions, volunteer in the community, and build productive, crime-free lives. Some OYA foster youth go on to two- and four-year colleges or enroll in Job Corps training.

Foster parent qualifications and expectations

OYA foster parents are required to be emotionally mature and able to help youth build positive relationships and live independently. They must be at least age 21 (or 25 for transitional foster parents), a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, financially stable without foster-care reimbursements, and able to pass a criminal history check.

Foster parents provide basic housing and food for youth offenders, as well as clothing, transportation, recreational opportunities, spending money, and reasonable incidentals. A monthly maintenance payment reimburses foster parents for the services they provide to youth. The youth are provided with state medical cards that pay for medical, mental health, and other necessary treatments.

OYA support for foster parents

Foster parents receive training ranging from first aid, CPR, and mandatory reporting of child abuse, as well as skills specific to working with youth offenders. If foster parents are caring for a youth with mental health or drug and alcohol issues, for example, they will receive the specialized training they need. This training also helps foster parents understand and support the youth's formal treatment.

An OYA foster care certifier calls foster parents at least weekly, visits the home at least monthly, and is available by phone or e-mail at all other times. An OYA probation and parole officer works with foster parents on each youth's case plan and meets regularly with the youth, checking on his or her activities and setting goals.

Foster parents play a key role in helping OYA meet its mission to protect the public and reduce crime by holding youth offenders accountable and providing opportunities for reformation in safe environments.