



Oregon Youth Authority

Issue Brief

January 2015

Mental health services for youth in OYA close custody

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 offenders come to the Oregon Youth Authority from many backgrounds. They bring with them a range of experiences and challenges, some of which help explain their criminal behavior. OYA's role is to develop individualized treatment plans for each youth based on the youth's risks, needs, and strengths.

OYA delivers evidence-based cognitive behavioral treatment to help youth overcome their criminogenic thinking and behavior, and provides separate treatment to address mental health and trauma needs, and substance use and addiction issues.

In order to ensure OYA appropriately identifies and meets youths' needs, the agency has taken biennial demographic snapshots of youth offenders since 2000. Data are collected on all youth in close custody, as well as those on probation and parole in the community. OYA uses the data to track trends, identify unmet needs for services, and adjust treatment programs accordingly.

2012 demographic snapshot

The 2012 survey, the most recent one conducted, found that 43 percent of all youth offenders (males and females, and those in close custody and under OYA's supervision in community settings) had a diagnosed mental health condition. Seventy percent had a diagnosed history of drug or alcohol use within the past 12 months. Seventeen percent had a documented history of sexual abuse. And 27 percent had a documented IQ below 81.

Females in close-custody facilities appeared to be an especially troubled population:

- ▲ 91 percent were diagnosed with abuse of or dependence on alcohol or other drugs,
- ▲ 75 percent had a documented IQ below 81,
- ▲ 68 percent were taking psychotropic medications,

**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

- ▲ 51 percent had documented histories of sexual abuse, and
- ▲ 38 percent had attempted suicide at least once.

Nearly one in four youth offenders had a biological parent with a psychiatric history. Nearly 60 percent of youth had a biological parent with a history of alcohol or other drug abuse. And 14 percent of youth offenders already were parents. The highest rates of parenthood were among males, where 17 percent of males in OYA facilities and 13 percent of males in community settings were parents. By contrast, female rates were 11 percent in facilities and 10 percent in community settings.

Work and school

In the community, 18 percent of youth were employed either part- or full-time, while 22 percent were seeking employment. Sixty-six percent of youth in the community were in school full- or part-time, while 27 percent already had earned high school diplomas or GEDs. The rates of high school completion were highest for youth in facilities, and rates of GED completion were highest for youth in the community.

Treating youth

Youth offenders receive evidence-based cognitive behavioral treatment aimed at helping them develop the skills they need to become productive, crime-free citizens. Treatments include offense-specific programs such as those for youth who have set fires, youth who have sexually offended, and diagnosis-specific programs for youth with alcohol or other drug addictions or mental health needs. Other treatments target such elements as trauma, inappropriate social behaviors, gang affiliation, and developing skills to effectively manage emotions and beliefs that drive high-risk behaviors.

Positive youth development

Staff members use a variety of effective, evidence-based treatments and programs to meet the needs of all youth within OYA close custody, including those with mental health needs. These treatments and programs are provided within OYA's culture of "positive youth development," which means staff, youth and the agency work together to enhance safety and security, provide caring and supportive relationships, establish high expectations and accountability, provide meaningful participation, and seek effective connections to the community.

Positive youth development is a nationally-recognized, evidence-based approach used within a growing number of juvenile justice systems in the United States. This approach supports youth in making progress toward leading productive, crime-free lives by helping them learn to take accountability for their actions and make better decisions.