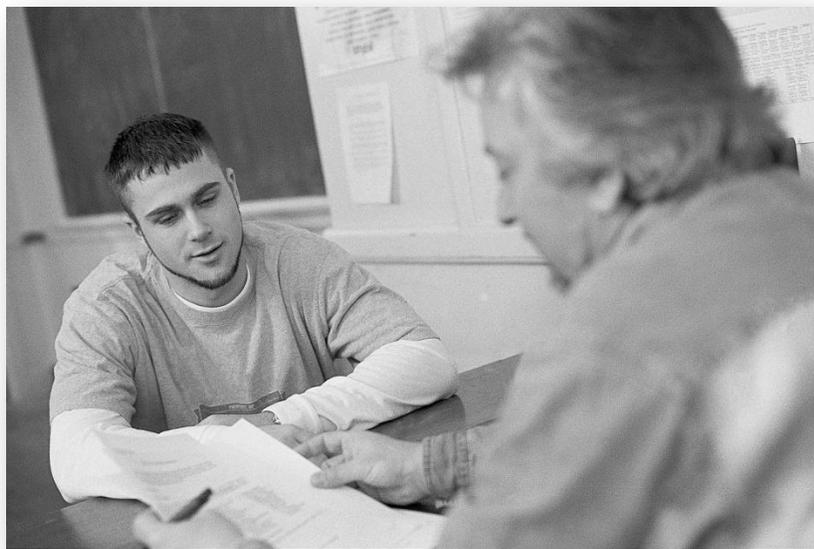


West Virginia
Department of Health and Human Resources
Bureau for Children and Families
Youth Services
Annual Report

Fiscal Year July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012



Contents

Introduction..... 3
Statutory References for Establishment of Youth Services 4
General Casework Flow 6
Youth Services Family Eligibility 7
Statistics: Youth and Families Served 8
West Virginia Rules of Juvenile Procedure..... 10
Status Offenses and Youth Services 10
Truancy Diversion..... 11
Runaway 12
Incorrigible 12
Community Resource Linkage..... 13
Family Engagement..... 16
Senate Bill 484 17
Out of Home Placement 18
Reunification..... 19
Transitioning Adults 21
Cross Functional Communication..... 22
Youth Services Caseworker Grant Program..... 23
 Appendix: Youth Services Matrix of Socially Necessary Services 25

Introduction

Youth Services is a specialized program which is part of a broader public system of services to children and families. Requirements for the provision of services to families served by this specialized program originate from various sources including but not limited to: social work standards of practice; accepted theories and principles of practice relating to services for troubled children; Chapter 49 of the Code of West Virginia; case decisions made by the West Virginia Supreme Court; and, the Adoption and Safe Families Act.

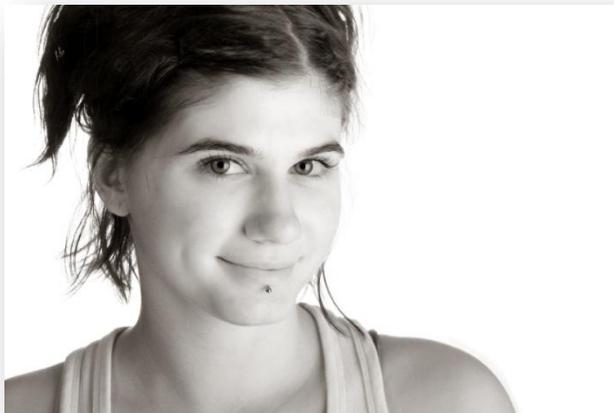
“The department of health and human resources shall from time to time, but not less often than annually, review its programs and services and submit a report to the governor, the Legislature and the supreme court of appeals, analyzing and evaluating the effectiveness of the programs and services being carried out by the department.”

West Virginia State Code 49-5B-7(a)

In accordance with West Virginia State Code, the DHHR submits the Youth Services Annual Report for Fiscal Year July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012. Through this mechanism, the DHHR continues its commitment to:

“...establish, maintain, and continuously refine and develop, a balanced and comprehensive state program for juveniles who are potentially delinquent or are status offenders or juvenile delinquents in the care or custody of the department.”

West Virginia State Code 49-5B-2



Statutory References for Establishment of Youth Services

West Virginia's Bureau for Children and Families Youth Services has been dedicated to helping families thrive. Our mission is to provide programs and services that promote the healthy development of youth and families and help them gain the skills necessary to lead constructive lives within the community.

Assisting individuals living in West Virginia, Youth Services may help with problems ranging from the challenges associated with adolescent behaviors to homelessness, to substance abuse or trouble with the law. The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) works with Community Partners to implement prevention programs, truancy diversion efforts, and in-home services to families so that youth do not become involved with the Courts. However, when court involvement occurs, the DHHR may provide services or out-of-home placement. When the youth and family have worked through problems, reunification and permanency planning services are available to support everyone in the family.

Youth Services operates under the authority of West Virginia State Statute and consists of a number of basic steps. The steps can vary depending on whether or not there is involvement of the court. In general, the process is as follows: Intake; a Youth Behavior Evaluation; the Comprehensive Assessment and Planning System process for court involved youth; a Family Service Plan; Service Provisioning; and Case Plan Evaluation/Case Closure. Each step is described in the next section.

Rehabilitation, not punishment, remains the overarching aim of the Juvenile Justice System. The most notable difference between the original model and current Juvenile law is that Juveniles now have more procedural rights in court. These rights include the right to an attorney and the right to be free from self-incrimination. (West, 1997)

Within the State of West Virginia, significant changes in roles and responsibilities regarding the Juvenile Justice System occurred in 1997 with the passage of two pieces of legislation. House Bill 2680 created the Division of Juvenile Services (DJS) within the Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety. The new division was to assume responsibility for operating and maintaining the pre-dispositional detention centers as well as the Juvenile correctional facilities. It was also to work cooperatively with the DHHR in the planning and development of programs and services to prevent and/or reduce Juvenile offenses.

The second piece of legislation, House Bill 2873, provided for the transfer of custody to the DHHR of an alleged status offender who was to be detained. Adjudicated status offenders were to be referred to DHHR for services. The bill redefined status offenses, clearly distinguished the treatment of status offenses from the treatment of delinquency, and changed the adjudication and disposition for status offenses. There were also some revisions of definitions pertaining to the Juvenile proceedings section of the state statute.

The 1998 Legislative Session in West Virginia resulted in the addition of a new section of Chapter 49, i.e. 49-5-21. This new statute requires quarterly judicial reviews of certain status offense and delinquency cases. Reviews may be conducted by the

court more frequently but are required at least every three months until a case is resolved and dismissed from the court docket. Other legislation which passed during the 1998 session amended various sections of the Juvenile proceedings section of the statute. The most significant amendments clarified how Juveniles are to be brought before the court. These provisions continued to distinguish the handling of Status Offenses and Delinquent Offenses.

In March 2003, Senate Bill No. 364 was passed to make amendment to Chapter 49. In general terms, the amendment addresses notice of certain proceedings to the DHHR and the DJS for the purpose of multidisciplinary hearings and providing for greater involvement of multidisciplinary teams in Juvenile and Abuse and Neglect proceedings.

On October 7, 2008 the President signed into law the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act. This legislation addresses some of the most important needs affecting foster children, including extending federal foster care payments up to 21 years old, providing federal support for relatives caring for foster children, increasing access to foster care and adoption services to Native American tribes, and improving the oversight of the health and education needs of children in foster care.

The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (Public Law 112-34) was signed into law on September 30, 2011. Throughout this policy, based upon this law and the work of the Bureau's Department of Quality Improvement, specific directives are provided for family engagement in the process of solving family problems.

The West Virginia Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law Senate Bill 484 which became effective June 7, 2012. The two most important changes to this policy as a result of Senate Bill 484 is the right of the Youth to speak freely during multidisciplinary team meetings without risk of self-incrimination, and the right of all parties to be heard at the disposition. Effective June 7, 2012, young people who are court involved are able to fully participate, and thus personally impact, the discussions and recommendations of multidisciplinary teams. The right to be heard at disposition is especially important for those adults who can positively affect the outcomes for the Youth, and could mean the difference between success and failure. These two areas of the legislation are addressed several times in the Youth Services policy.

General Casework Flow

Intake: Intake is a distinct step in the Youth Services decision making process. Intake involves all of the activities and functions which lead to a decision to either complete the Youth Behavior Evaluation or make a referral to appropriate Community Resources which are better suited to meet the families' identified needs.

YBE: A Youth Behavior Evaluation is used to assess the presence or the absence of risk and behavioral control influences. Behavioral control influences are those conditions which are currently present in the home and pose a threat to the safety of the young person or the young person's family or the community.

BCP: A Behavioral Control Plan is a Protection Plan developed whenever Behavioral Control Influences are identified and immediate action is needed to ensure the safety of the child and/or the family. The Plan can involve informal, non-paid services such as temporary living arrangement with friends or relatives. The Plan can also involve other services such as Behavioral Health intervention. The Plan should take into account each identified Influence and specifically address how these Influences will be controlled. The family should be engaged in the casework process to understand how the Influences pose a threat so that they can gain acceptance and ownership of the Plan. In some cases, the worker will identify Behavioral Control influences, and the conditions in the home are such that an In-Home Behavioral Control Plan is not feasible, and out-of-home placement must be provided.

CAPS: WV Code requires that individualized assessments be completed for every adjudicated Status Offender and Juvenile Delinquent who receives services through the DHHR. The Comprehensive Assessment and Planning System (CAPS) was created and adopted by the DHHR to meet the requirements of the statute. The assessments are compiled into a summary titled the Comprehensive Assessment Report (CAR). The CAR is used as a guide for **Multidisciplinary Treatment Teams (MDTs)** in making better, more objective decisions about the treatment needs of youthful offenders.

MDT: Both state statute and federal regulations require the regular review of cases for youth who are the subject of an MDT and may or may not be in an out-of-home placement. For youth involved with the court, State Statute requires that an MDT report is made to the court prior to the hearing. The court must also review the Individualized Service Plan for the child and family, developed by the MDT, to determine if implementation of the Plan is in the child's best interest. MDT meetings must be held at least once every 90 days to review and revise, if needed, service and treatment plans until permanency has been achieved for the child.

YS Family Service Plan/Case Closure: The YBE process involves interviews of all the family members and assesses either the presence or absence of risk and behavioral control influences. Working with the family assures that the parent/caregiver understands the DHHR's role in providing services to address issues relating to troubled youth. In facilitating the discussion of the Plan, the worker assists the family to address their strengths, needs and prioritized goals related to the conditions which are the basis for Youth Services involvement. Services are provisioned to assist the family and youth achieve the goals which will lead to disengagement of Youth Services from family involvement.

Youth Services Family Eligibility

A collaborative effort of public, private and community based treatment partners serve an average of 3,000 families daily. The target population for Youth Services includes Juveniles under the age of 18 years of age or between the ages of 18 and 21 if under the jurisdiction of the court beyond age of 18 (as defined in WV Statute Chapter 49-1-2). These youth are either at risk of court involvement, awaiting adjudication for Status or Delinquency Offences, or are an adjudicated Status or Delinquency Offenders.

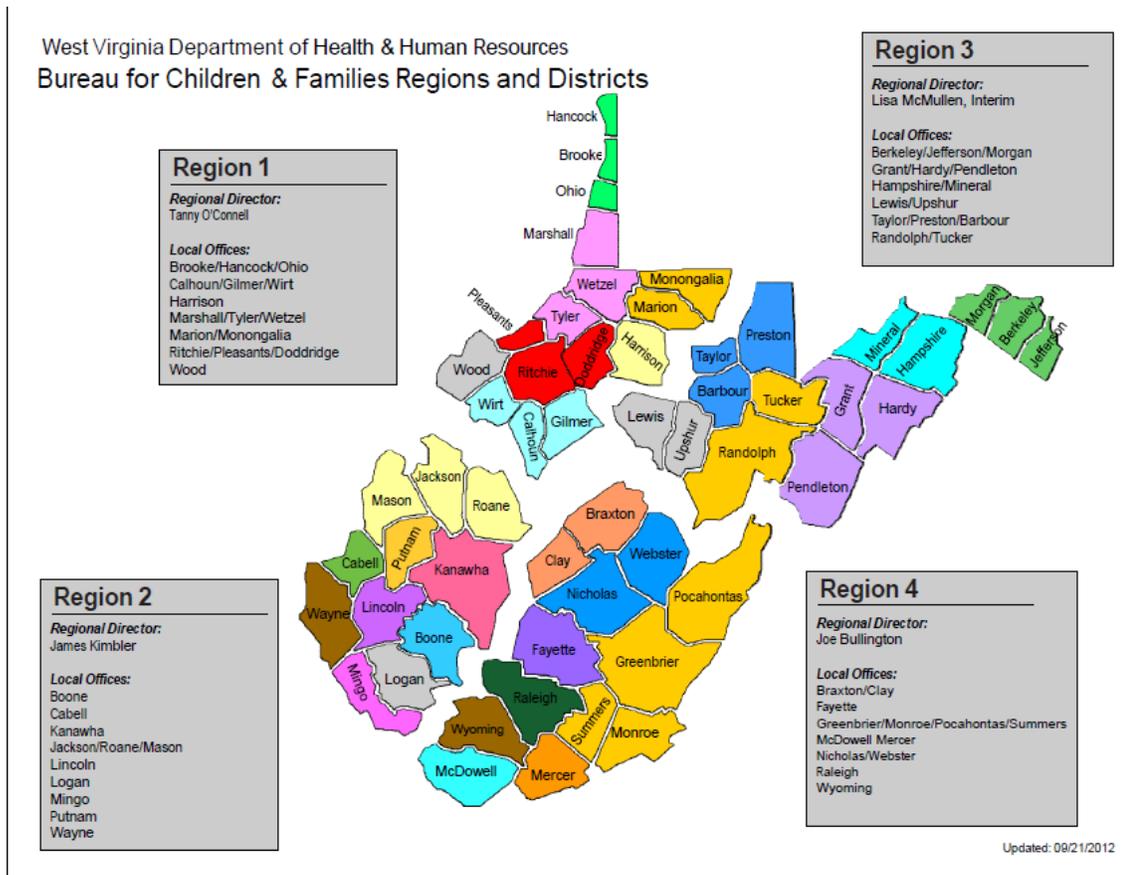


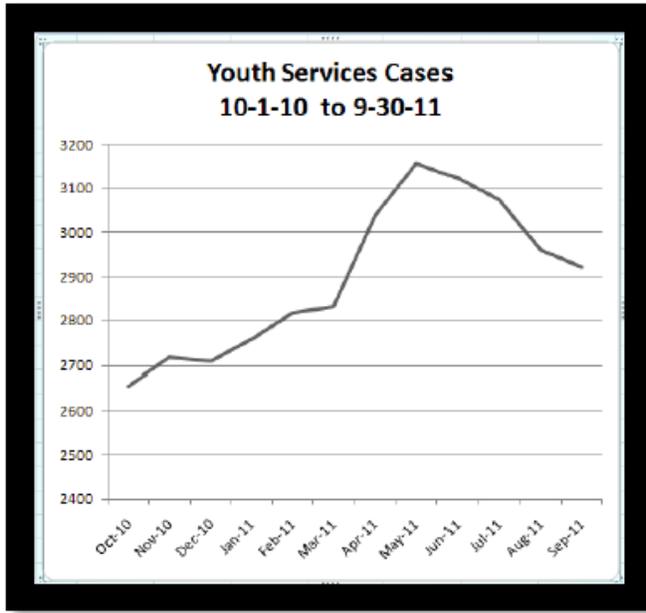
One of the following circumstances describes how young people come into contact with Youth Services:

- He or she is experiencing problems in the home, school, and/or the community to such an extent that the resulting behavior has the potential to become the basis for status offense or delinquency proceedings, and intervention has been requested by the parent(s), guardian(s), custodian(s), school personnel, community member(s) or by the court to resolve the problem(s) without formal involvement in the Juvenile Justice System.
- He or she is under the auspices of the Juvenile Justice System (i.e. awaiting adjudication as a Status Offender or Delinquent, adjudicated as a Status Offender, awaiting disposition as a Delinquent, on probation, etc.) and has been referred to the DHHR for services.
- He or she is an alleged Status Offender and has been detained because there is a risk of immediate serious harm to the youth/Juvenile and/or a responsible caretaker cannot be found, in which case it is required that the youth/Juvenile be placed in the DHHR's custody and the DHHR be notified immediately.
- He or she is an alleged Status Offender or Delinquent who has been placed in the temporary legal and/or physical custody of the DHHR as an alternative to detention.
- He or she has been adjudicated as a Status Offender, which requires that the youth/Juvenile be referred to the DHHR for services, and the court case has not been resolved and dismissed from the court's docket.
- He or she has been adjudicated as a Delinquent and has been referred by the court to the DHHR for services, and the court case has not been resolved and dismissed from the court's docket.
- He or she is over the age of 18 and under the age of 21, and has signed a contract to receive continued Foster Care Services (SS-FC-18). The child must be in custody of the state and in foster care six months prior to his or her eighteenth (18) birthdays.
- He or she is under eighteen (18) years of age and a ward of the State of West Virginia; furthermore, the Permanency Plan does not include adoption and is in need of treatment.

Statistics: Youth and Families Served

The Bureau for Children and Families (BCF) delivers child welfare services to families and children directly by employees of BCF. Those employees are located in 55 counties of the state. BCF is a state administered agency. Families and children enter the child welfare system either through Child Protective (CPS) or Youth Services. CPS serves those families whose children are unsafe due to abuse or neglect from their parent, guardians or custodian. Youth Services serves youth who are referred by the courts for placement and services for Status Offenders or Juvenile Delinquents or are referred by families or schools for services to prevent delinquency.





BCF reports caseloads and other statistics based upon the Federal Fiscal Year (October 1 to September 30), as well as the State Fiscal Year (July 1 to June 30). Looking at caseload data in both Fiscal views, a trend is evident of increasing caseloads. This upward trend may, in large part, be the result of the 2010 Law reducing the number of school unexcused absences from ten to five in a single school year. Some Court Circuits referred truant Middle and High School students and their families to Youth Services.

Youth and Families Served July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012
 WVDHHR Bureau for Children and Families

	Total of Families Served July 1, 2011 thru June 30, 2012	Average Active Cases July 1, 2011 thru June 30, 2012
Region I	1,502	802
Region II	2,475	1,122
Region III	1,521	684
Region IV	1,178	556
Statewide Total	6,676	3,163

West Virginia Rules of Juvenile Procedure

In February 2005, members of the Court Improvement Project (CIP), DJS and the DHHR began writing new Rules for Juvenile Court. Those Rules were completed in late 2009 and approved in early 2010, after approval by the West Virginia State Supreme Court. An extended comment period was given to all judges in the state to have ample opportunity to review and make comments and suggestions. Participants included the DHHR, Probation, DJS, defense attorneys, prosecutors, and the Attorney General's Office. The DHHR's involvement brought knowledge of service needs, advocacy, ethics and best practice to the process. The new Rules went into effect on June 1, 2010. When a question arises regarding how a case should be disposed, the court refers to these Rules. The Rules for Juvenile Court are a standardized, fair, and consistent way of disposing of Juvenile Delinquency and Status Offense cases statewide. Judges will have a better understanding of the services available to youthful offenders and the role of the DHHR in the treatment process. It is believed that an increased cooperation between the court and the DHHR will benefit youth and their families statewide.

The subcommittee which worked on the Rules of Juvenile Procedure has been reconstituted as the Youth Services Subcommittee with a focus on training lawyers, guardian ad litem, judges, child welfare professionals and other community partners on the Rules, as well as topics of interest to these stakeholders. A conference is being planned for Fall 2013 which will incorporate training on the Rules, training on trauma informed casework, and advocacy skill building both for those representing youth and for youth and families.

Status Offenses and Youth Services

Status offenses are acts that cannot be charged to adults, according to Section 223(12) (A) of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. However, at the state level the definition is not as broad. The WV Code [§49-1-4(14)] states a status offense is any of the offenses listed below [§49-1-4(14)]:



Incorrigibility - Habitual and continual refusal to respond to the lawful supervision by a parent, guardian, or legal custodian such that the behavior substantially endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the Juvenile or any other person.

Runaway - Leaving the care of a parent, guardian, or custodian without consent or without good cause.

Tuancy - Habitual absence from school without good cause.

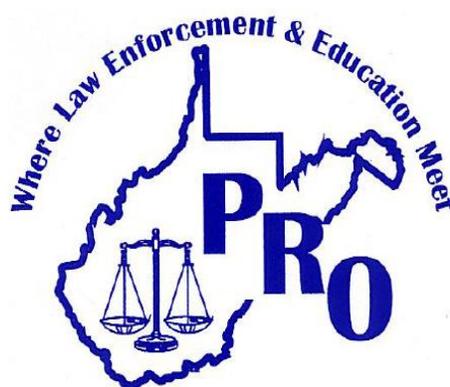
Possessing tobacco by a minor and violating curfew are not specifically listed as status offenses in the WV Code, but they are included as status offenses in

this report because they are offenses that cannot be charged to adults. This is also true for **Underage Drinking**, violation of any West Virginia municipal, county, or state law regarding use of alcoholic beverages by minors, even though it is considered a misdemeanor under WV State Code.

Truancy Diversion

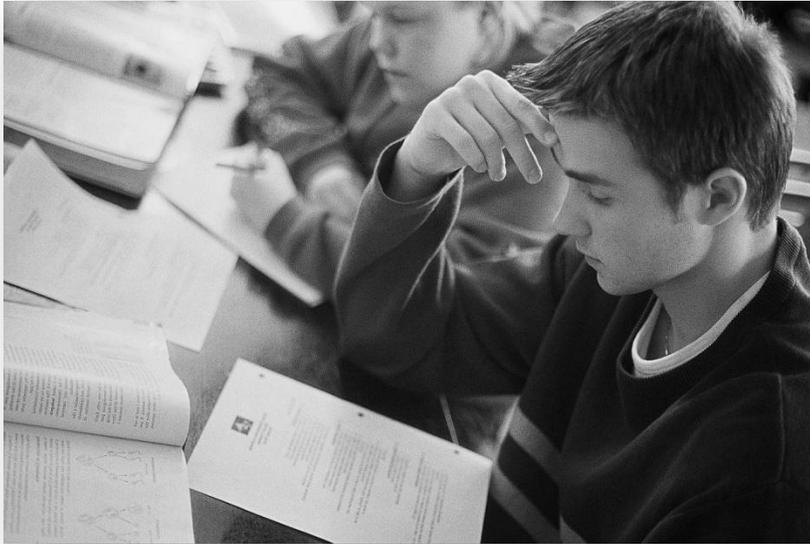
In 2010, a new state law reduced the number of absences needed to be considered truant from ten to five. Across the state, diversion programs such as Putnam County's "Truancy Triage," brings truancy cases immediately before the magistrate before they are referred to the DHHR. When tutoring, community services or school counseling can be used to solve the core issues behind the truant behavior of the youth and family, those community based services are exploited. In the diversion meetings, DHHR staff, the court, Attendance Directors and other education staff, meet with the family and youth and advise that if a Juvenile does not comply with the Diversion Program in magistrate court, a petition will be filed moving the case to circuit court.

Through a grant program administered by the Child Abuse Prevention and Community Partnership Coordinator at the DHHR, BCF, funding has been made available to Partners in Prevention. This is a statewide network of 25 community teams implementing various community projects and working together to keep children safe and provide services to families. Up to 10 new community teams are expected to be added to the network, and expansion of services will include a special parenting curriculum for parents of adolescents.



The Creating Lasting Family Connections curriculum focuses on behaviors of truancy, setting rules, and appropriate disciplining techniques. The Kanawha County Pilot Project selected this curriculum because Prevention Resource Officers who work in the schools have already been trained in the curriculum. These officers will collaborate with the East End and Starting Point community teams at two middle schools. Evidence of program success will aid in the further implementation of this truancy abatement effort throughout Kanawha County, and then statewide.

In Wood County West Virginia, the Truancy Diversion Social Work Program provides services to students and their families. These students range in age from 12 to 15 and are experiencing truancy problems at Van Devender Junior High School. The School Attendance Officer or Youth Services Worker provides a referral to the Truancy Diversion Social Worker at Children's Home Society. She works with the student and family to develop an individualized plan. The social worker also assesses the student and family to determine needs, and links the student/family with appropriate programs and services. This program diverts the student from court involvement and meets the needs of the youth and family in the community. The family's community connection is strengthened creating more resilient families. The Wood County Board of Education funds the program.



Additional community partnerships with behavioral health centers are also assisting in truancy diversion. Pretera has implemented Project Intercept to work with the Kanawha County court and probation system to offer appropriate therapy, medication and counseling. The program offers family counseling and education programs for parents, in addition to a network of support and resources for youth, to identify and address the underlying factors that contribute to their behavior.

Runaway

Two programs have been awarded grants from the United States Department of Health and Human Resources to provide shelters for Runaway and Homeless Youth. The programs provide crisis shelter for runaway and homeless youth ages 11-18 in Parkersburg and Wheeling. Any youth in the community may call or come to Children's Home Society or YSS-Wheeling anytime day or night. Two counselors are always on shift to provide crisis counseling, food, clothing, shelter, security, and individual, group and family counseling.

Youth and parents are welcome to call or stop by the programs anytime for advice or referrals to other services in the community. The DHHR, BCF do not provide any funding or oversight of these Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs.

Incorrigible

A young person who habitually and continually refuses to respond to the lawful supervision of parents, guardians, or legal custodians, especially when the young person's behavior substantially endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the young person or any other person meets the definition of incorrigible. However, Youth

Services attempts to provide families with resources and educational programs to increase family communication, set expectations of behaviors and establish enforceable consequences. All of these interventions are aimed at diversion of the family from filing formal incorrigibility petitions in the courts.

Referrals to community programs are often the best resource for families. Some of these resources include:

- The Boys & Girls Clubs
- Build It Up WV
- AmeriCorps
- YMCA
- Family Resource Centers

The Boys & Girls Club mission is to inspire all young people, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, caring citizens. The Build It Up Program's vision is to inspire and educate young West Virginians about the possibilities for community development in their own state, while strengthening growing community initiatives. Through a number of community programs AmeriCorps' more than 730 members are serving to meet some of the most critical needs in West Virginia, including poverty and illiteracy. YMCA centers in West Virginia provide support and opportunities to empower children, youth and adults to learn, grow and thrive.

Family Resource Centers bring together existing services in a single location such as a school or other neighborhood building. This comprehensive approach increases the accessibility of services, brings resources together in one place, provides family support and education, and allows the Centers to meet the community's needs. Our Family Resource Centers serve families pre-natal through age eighteen. Each Center offers a variety of services to reflect the diversity of the community needs.

Community Resource Linkage

An Advisory Council has been formed in the Kanawha District and meets monthly. It is Chaired by the Community Service Manager, and the members include Community Mental Health Provider; the Director of the United Way; Youth Services Supervisor; Contracted Youth Services Supervisor; Child Welfare Consultant; the Homeless Youth Liaison for the Board of Education; Foster/Adoptive Parent; The Education Alliance; Director of Daymark / Turning Point which is a Transitional Living Provider, Attendance Director Kanawha Board of Education, Director of the East End Family Resource Center; and the Youth Services Policy person from the State DHHR Office. The purpose of the group is to identify service gaps, clarify roles and share resources to serve youth at risk of court involvement as well as the families and communities of Status Offenders/Delinquents. Responding to the courts' interventions in truancy cases, the DHHR in the Kanawha District, in partnership with Education and Probation, has initiated Diversion Programs to reverse truant behaviors and address underlying causes for school absence. Though formed in March 2012 in the Kanawha District, this Youth Service Advisory Council intends to make their lessons learned and

resources identified available throughout the state for local implementation as appropriate.



Youth Services strive to connect families and youth to services in their communities, with the aim to maintain permanent family connections. Community Services are the link families need in their neighborhoods to cope especially with the unique situations that come with raising teens and young adults. The aim of these local services is to ensure children's optimal development by assisting parents with support groups, enhancing the quality of relationships among family members, and helping them cope with the challenges and stresses of child rearing.

While communities through Family Resource Networks and other collaborative efforts have created or expanded programs to serve residents, gaps in services exist. Socially Necessary services are interventions necessary to improve relationships and social functioning, with the goal of preserving the individual's tenure in the community or the integrity of the family or social system. Private agencies fill gaps in services, according to the Uniform Guidelines Manual established to define and regulate service delivery.

Ultimately, Socially Necessary Services are those necessary to achieve the child welfare goals of safety, permanency and well being. The designation socially necessary is used to distinguish these services from other services that have been determined to be medically necessary and can be obtained through Medicaid.

These agencies provide four areas of expertise: Family Support, Reunification, Family Preservation, Chafee Programs, and Foster Care in Youth Services cases.

Within these four areas a spectrum of services and programs which are defined from the DHHR Uniform Guidelines Manual, which can be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.wvdhhr.org/bcf/aso/documents/Social%20Necessary%20UM%20Manual%20V2.0.pdf>. The appendix of this report provides a list of the services available for Youth Services cases through the Socially Necessary Services program.

Family Engagement

West Virginia’s families are served by 30 District Offices. The Kanawha District Office serves the largest metropolitan population in the state, and their Youth Service Staff consists of both Contracted and DHHR workers. When fully staffed, this team of 14 workers and supervisors serves a county of more than 900 square miles. The Census data from 2010 indicates 82,500 households exist in Kanawha County, and on average, 395 families have open Youth Services cases, or .478% of the households in the District.



Using the results outlined in the Youth and Family Engagement targeted review report, completed by BCF’s Department of Planning and Quality Improvement, a strategic team meets monthly to identify barriers to youth and family engagement. This team will provide technical assistance through strategies to improve youth and families’ engagement in the Kanawha District, and these strategies will be taken across the state for implementation statewide.

The chart below underscores the proportion of Youth Service cases in the Kanawha District as compared to statewide caseloads.

Month	10/10	11/10	12/10	1/11	2/11	3/11	4/11	5/11	6/11	7/11	8/11	9/11
Kanawha	359	372	365	379	370	385	413	427	454	443	397	371
Statewide	2655	2718	2709	2758	2819	2833	3040	3156	3123	3073	2960	2921

The Kanawha District has not been fully staffed, which is a barrier to family engagement activities. Efforts have been made to decrease the “cases to worker” ratios to improve workers' ability to engage youth and families, including monthly roundtables with Youth Services Supervisors, Child Welfare Consultants, Trainers, Policy Staff and Youth Services Workers to support the continued practice of engaging youth and families. The Youth Service Roundtables serve as a means for workers to staff cases, seek supervision and learn from their peers. The format and membership of the roundtables will be replicated statewide as we continue to share promising strategies with the other districts.

The Division of Training developed a training plan designed to improve worker skills for youth and family engagement. Training topics include refresher training on the Youth Behavior Evaluation; the use of solution focused interviewing in assessment and case planning; and specialized training on mental health issues and domestic violence, as well as training to strengthen workers' skills in presenting youth and DHHR input within the courts. The training is being delivered as part of the Youth Service Roundtables and will be continued and replicated statewide.

Senate Bill 484

The statute identifies those persons who are to be included in the Multidisciplinary Treatment Team. In addition to the persons named in the statute other important individuals in the lives of the family and youth should be considered as participants in the MDT meetings.



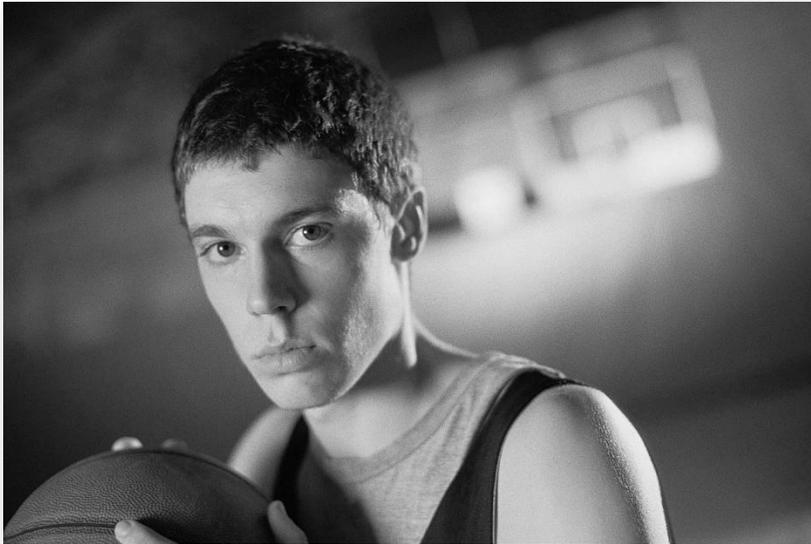
While participation in MDT meetings has been extended to a wider set of disciplines and relationships to the family, Senate Bill 484 also recognizes the importance of advocacy for the youth, family and community at the dispositional hearing. The right to be heard at disposition is especially important for those adults who can positively affect the outcomes for the youth, and could mean the difference between success and failure. All situations are unique, however, according to statute 49-5-13(b) following the adjudication, during the mandated dispositional proceeding, all parties are given an opportunity to be heard. The Youth Service worker, agency representatives or any other person who may assist in providing recommendations for the particular needs of the family and the Juvenile shall be given an opportunity to be heard by the court.

Out of Home Placement

All children need a safe environment and caring adults to thrive. Youth Services is statutorily charged with the responsibility to make a reasonable effort to prevent placement of youth outside the home. A thorough Youth Behavior Evaluation with detailed documentation is integral to that responsibility. The completed Youth Behavior Evaluation will help that family and social worker assess the presence and level of risk and behavioral control influences which could affect the safety of the youth, the youth's family or the community. The process assures that the parent/caregiver understands Youth Service's role in providing services to address issues relating to troubled youth.

If any Behavioral Control Influences are present then the worker must develop an In-Home Behavioral Control Plan to bring stability back to the family.

In some cases the worker will identify Behavioral Control Influences which when taken together with the conditions in the home preclude development of an In-Home Behavioral Control Plan. The reasons that an In-Home Plan will not be feasible will vary from case to case. In some instances either the parent or the child may not agree to cooperate with the Plan. In other instances the home may be chaotic and the level of strife between the family members prevents the use of an In-Home Plan.



In some instances it may be advisable to assist the family make arrangements for a child to stay with friends, family or even an Emergency Shelter for a period of time until the home situation is calm enough for the implementation of an In-Home Behavioral Control Plan. Removal from one's home is a traumatic event, but out-of-home care placements and social services can help ease the transition for children and families. The Youth Services worker will discuss the arrangements with the family, the child and the alternate caretakers so that everyone is clear about their responsibilities, the conditions surrounding these arrangements including time frames and the conditions under which the arrangement will end and the youth returned home.

Depending on the needs and behaviors of the child, the worker may choose to discuss with the parents the filing of a petition. Pursuant to the petition, the court may place the Juvenile in a temporary out-of-home situation either through DHHR or DJS.

Reunification

When a youth is placed outside of their home, planning begins immediately with the family and a Youth Services Worker to provide a permanent living situation, preferably back with the family. Reunification is the first plan of action. While the data below reflects all children in West Virginia who enter a Foster Care Placement after reaching age 12, the data does include the age group in Youth Services. Thus the inferred success of reunification efforts can be in part attributed to Youth Services staff. Along with excellent resources in the community and the resiliency of families, more than 85% of children were reunified.

Exits of children who were 12+ at entry into Foster Care	2008	2008	2010	2011
Adoption	1.0%	.05%	1.1%	1.5%
Guardianship	2.6%	3.3%	2.9%	3.3%
Reunification	81.3%	87.1%	86.6%	86.7%
Other (this may include Kinship Placement which is not a legal guardianship)	14.8%	8.9%	9.3%	8.3%

*Data gleaned from Child Welfare Outcomes Data report at <http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/overview>

A comparison of West Virginia’s Reunification statistics to other states with similar populations and factors that led to foster care placement, indicates that West Virginia is progressing at higher rates in this area.

2011: Nebraska, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wyoming

	Nebraska	South Dakota	West Virginia	Wyoming
Adoption	0.4	2.3	1.5	0.2
Guardianship	6.4	8	3.3	3.3
Reunification	68.5	53.4	86.7	74.4
Other	24.5	36.2	8.3	22
Missing Data	0.1	0	0.2	0
Number	1,379	174	1,259	450

*Data gleaned from Child Welfare Outcomes Data report at <http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/overview>

Reunification is more than the return of a child to their family. Reconnecting a child to their community, to their school, and to positive friends and adults is equally as important. Raising the protective factors and removing the negative behavior influences for a child is the ongoing work of the caring adults in that child’s life. Through Youth Services, youth are encouraged to develop interests and talents in sports, music, art and extracurricular activities. These connections can be fundamental to the success of every young person and can provide the refusal supports to deter youth from alcohol, tobacco and drug use. Coaches, teachers, spiritual leaders and neighbors are crucial members of the support network outlined in family meetings who will aid the family as they overcome obstacles, achieve maximum potential and improve their quality of life.





Transitioning Adults

In relation to Youth Services, a Transitioning Adult is a youth who is eighteen years of age but under twenty-one years of age, was in DHHR custody upon reaching eighteen years of age and committed an act of delinquency before reaching eighteen years of age, remains under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile court, and requires supervision and care to complete an education and or treatment program which was initiated prior to their eighteenth birthday. For each transitioning adult who remains in foster care, the circuit court shall conduct status review hearings once every three months until permanency is achieved. For each child or transitioning adult who continues to remain in foster care, the circuit court shall conduct a permanency

hearing no later than twelve months after the date the child or transitioning adult is considered to have entered foster care, and at least once every twelve months thereafter until permanency is achieved. For purposes of permanency planning for transitioning adults, the circuit court shall make factual findings and conclusions of law as to whether the DHHR made reasonable efforts to finalize a Permanency Plan to prepare a transitioning adult for emancipation or independence or another approved permanency option such as, but not limited to, adoption or legal guardianship pursuant to the West Virginia Guardianship and Conservatorship Act.

Cross Functional Communication

Many families are served both by the DHHR and by the various components of West Virginia's Juvenile Justice System. Communication between these systems and service providers is essential to the success of families to overcome the stressors which have adversely impacted their children and communities.

A Multidisciplinary Treatment Team (MDT) is a group of individuals, from different disciplines, who work together with the Juvenile and family to develop a Service Plan and coordinate services. When appropriate, the Juvenile case manager in the DHHR and the DJS shall cooperate in conducting MDT meetings when it is in the Juvenile's best interest. Mutual participation by both DHHR and DJS should be expected when the youth has been or will be involved in both systems. Any person or professional who may contribute to the team's efforts to assist the family and the young person must be notified and invited to participate in the MDT, but extra attention must be placed on encouraging the Juvenile and family to participate in the MDT process.



Youth Services Caseworker Grant Program

In order to best serve children and families in West Virginia, a grant was established to provide additional staff in Youth Services. These contracted licensed social workers adhere to the same policies, procedures and requirements of DHHR workers.

YOUTH SERVICES CASEWORK PROGRAMS				
Grantee	Grant Amount	FY 10 Actual Expenditures	FY 11 Actual Expenditures	Counties Served
Youth Services System	\$ 588,732	\$ 541,549	\$ 490,182	Region I
Bralely & Thompson	\$ 1,004,434	\$ 913,062	\$ 858,326	Region II
Burlington United Methodist Family Services	\$ 168,400	\$ 129,300	\$ 168,400	Region III
Elkins Mountain School	\$ 400,890	\$ 382,204	\$ 366,073	Region III
Burlington United Methodist Family Services	\$ 219,721	\$ 219,721	\$ 189,239	Region IV
Children's Home Society	\$ 191,040	\$ 179,494	\$ 181,296	Region IV
Pressley Ridge	\$ 330,799	\$ 273,178	\$ 312,100	Region IV
TOTAL	\$ 2,904,016	\$ 2,638,508	\$ 2,565,615	
Grant Synopsis: The Youth Services Casework grant funds fifty (50) full-time equivalent positions for the delivery of youth services casework in accordance with DHHR Policy				

Regional Data FY 2010 and FY 2011 - July 1, 2009 thru June 30, 2011							
	Actual Expenses FY 2010	Actual Expenses FY 2011	# of Grant Funded Caseworkers	FY11 Average Number Cases per Month	FY10 Average Number Cases per Month	FY11 Actual Caseload per Worker per Month	FY10 Actual Caseload per Worker per Month
Region I	\$ 541,549	\$ 490,182	13	218	256	23	23
Region II	\$ 913,062	\$ 858,326	15	298	293	22	23
Region III	\$ 511,504	\$ 534,473	10	183	260	21	29
Region IV	\$ 672,393	\$ 682,634	12	233	210	24	20

The data below indicates the total population of children in West Virginia and the number of children in Foster Care who receive case management from licensed social workers. While this data reflects children who entered Foster Care through either Child Protective or Youth Services, the data reflects the clear need for sufficient staff. The additional staff provided through the Youth Services Caseworker Grant Program augments the level of service delivery provided to families in West Virginia.

Demographics: Child Welfare Summary

West Virginia: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Children Under 18 Years	387,394	386,449	386,435	384,794
Children in Foster Care on 9/30	4,447	4,226	4,104	4,377
Children at 12+ upon entry who exited Foster Care	1,383	1,354	1,202	1,259

*Data gleaned from Child Welfare Outcomes Data report at <http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/overview>

Appendix: Youth Services Matrix of Socially Necessary Services

Service	YS Foster Care		YS Reunification	YS Chafee
	Specialized	Specialized		
	Therapeutic	Family		
Needs Assessment/Service Plan				
Case Management				
Adult Life Skills	x	x	x	
General Parenting				
Individualized Parenting	x	x	x	
Child-Oriented Activity			x	
Group Child-Oriented Activity			x	
Public Transportation Family			x	
Private Transportation			x	
Agency Transportation			x	x
Safety Services			x	
Emergency Respite			x	
Supervision			x	
CAPS Family Assessment	x	x		
CAPS Case Management	x	x		
Family Crisis Response			x	
Family Crisis Response for Jacob's Law				
Respite			x	
Situational or Behavioral Respite				
Home Maker Services				
Supervised Visitation One	x	x	x	
Supervised Visitation Two	x	x		
MDT Attendance			x	
In State Home Study	x	x		
Out of State Home Study	x	x		
Intervention Travel Time			x	
Transport Time			x	
Connection Visit	x	x		
Daily Respite				
Tutoring	x	x		
Lodging	x	x	x	
Meals	x	x	x	
Intensive Therapeutic Recreation Exp	x	x		
Pre-Reunification Support	x	x		
Away From Supervision Support				
Public Transportation One	x	x		
Public Transportation Two	x	x		
Public Transportation Three				
Private Transportation One Foster Family	x	x		
Private Transportation Two Foster Family	x	x		
Private Transportation Three Foster Family				

Service	YS Foster Care		YS Reunification	YS Chafee
	Specialized	Specialized		
	Therapeutic	Family		
Agency Transportation One	x	x		
Agency Transportation Two	x	x		
Agency Transportation Three				
Chafee Pre Placement				x
Chafee 2/1				x
Crisis Respite				
Lodging Pre Adoptive				
Meals Pre Adoptive				
Individual Review	x	x		
CBT	x	x	x	

X= Existing Service O= Potential New Service

- o Revised 4 – 10 – 12