

DYS / Juvenile Programs

Juvenile Programs

The following are program descriptions for youth committed to the Indiana Department of Correction – Division of Youth Services.

Upon arrival to DYS Intake, youth are assessed for individual needs, including criminogenic, mental health, educational, vocational, aftercare, etc. Criminogenic needs are those that lead to youth committing crimes and getting in other trouble in their home, school, and community. These needs include decision-making; problem-solving; coping skills; peer selection and management; substance abuse; and leisure time pursuits.

Youth are each assigned a correctional counselor/case manager at their treatment facility who manages their treatment plan, which has two parts: First, an Individual Growth Plan (IGP) for treatment while in the facility. Second, an Individual Aftercare Plan (IAP) for setting up services and other supports for after release.

As part of these plans, youth are then matched to appropriate programs in the facility. Core cognitive-behavioral programs and core group therapy help youth develop accountability and positive beliefs. Youth also learn and practice skills that help them reduce their risk to commit crimes and get in other trouble in the future. Programs also equip youth to get their needs met in positive ways, support a positive identity, and develop and maintain healthy relationships. Programs also teach youth how to increase their resiliency, regulate their emotions, and reintegrate with their families. Some specialty units involve all youth on a unit taking part in very intensive programming. Finally, volunteer-led, structured activities and community service projects help youth develop interpersonal skills and positive leisure time pursuits while also helping them have a sense of community and a desire to contribute to the community in a positive way. Overall, DYS juvenile programs prepare youth to either re-enter their communities as positive, productive, and law-abiding citizens.

Core Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment Programs:

Core treatment programs are facilitated by correctional counselor/case managers and include:

- **The Why Try Learning Strategies Program:** Why Try is brief, solution-focused treatment with a strengths-based approach. Why Try helps youth overcome their challenges, achieve positive goals, practice life skills, and develop plans and support for re-entering their community. Why Try pairs cognitive-behavioral lessons with easy-to-remember pictures. These pictures (the metaphors) teach social, coping, and emotional regulation skills to youth in a way they can understand and remember. Youth also learn positive ways to answer the question: “Why try in life?” The metaphors are reinforced by supplements that include short reflective writing; music and music-based projects; art projects; and hands-on physical/experiential activities.

- **Anger Management:** This program is designed to help juveniles understand and utilize ways to not only recognize their anger but also control it through making appropriate choices. Topics discussed include what causes anger, growing up with anger, how emotions develop, relaxation, managing anger, self-talk, action controls, etc.
- **Mindfulness-Based Substance Abuse Treatment:** MBSAT is an evidence-based 12-session curriculum geared toward adolescents involved in the juvenile justice system that promotes self-regulation, decision-making, emotional awareness, drug use, and self-esteem, all in an innovative language relatable by justice-involved youth. Research has shown the MBSAT Curriculum to be effective in reducing behavioral infractions among youth incarcerated at a detention camp.
- **Moral Reconciliation Therapy:** MRT seeks to decrease recidivism among juveniles by increasing moral reasoning. MRT targets youth who are high risk to re-offend and/or are high risk in pro-criminal sentiments, criminal thinking, criminal lifestyle, and anti-social attitudes/values. MRT focuses on seven basic treatment issues: confrontation of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors; assessment of current relationships; reinforcement of positive behavior and habits; positive identity formation; enhancement of self-concept; decrease in hedonism and development of frustration tolerance; and development of higher stages of moral reasoning.
- **VOICES:** VOICES is a gender-specific program of self-discovery and empowerment offered at the LaPorte Juvenile Correctional Facility. It encourages female juveniles to seek and celebrate their “true selves” and explore issues important in the lives of adolescent girls. The curriculum uses a variety of therapeutic approaches, including psycho-educational, cognitive-behavioral, interactive journaling, expressive arts, and relational theory.

Core Group Therapy:

Core group therapy is facilitated by trained mental health professionals and/or addiction recovery specialists and includes:

- **Dialectical Behavior Therapy:** DBT is for youth who struggle with regulating their emotions. Youth are referred to DBT when they experience ongoing difficulty with chronic issues of frustration tolerance, anger management, impulsivity, acting out, and other behavior problems; or when they need more frequent and/or intensive mental health interventions in order to function in their environment. DBT’s lessons include mindfulness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance, and interpersonal effectiveness skills. DBT is offered both individually and in group settings.
- **Integrated Dialectical Behavior Therapy with the Twelve Step Facilitation:** Integrated DBT-TSF is a one-of-a-kind, addiction-recovery, group-based program that integrates Dialectical Behavior Therapy with facilitation of a Twelve-Step program. Combined, these widely used, evidence-based therapies provide a dynamic treatment modality to help strengthen a client's recovery from substance abuse.
- **Relapse Prevention:** After completing Integrated DBT-TSF, youth then complete the following curricula: The Adolescent Relapse Prevention Planner (RPP),

Mindfulness Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP), Making Your Last Relapse the Last (MYLRTL), and a Gratitude/Mindfulness of Daily Life Group. RPP contains a variety of educational information, discussion topics and exercises around substance abuse that are geared to the teen level. MBRP focuses on a variety of skills that youth learn and then put together to compile his or her own individual relapse prevention plan. MYLRTL focuses on the positive and negative influences on lapse and relapse that are within an individual's control. It gives practical examples and information on how to make life changes that increase the probability of leaving addiction behind. Gratitude/Mindfulness of Daily Life Group focuses youth on being grateful and utilizing various mindfulness activities, including creating their own personal Vision Board.

Specialty Unit Programs:

DYS specialty units help immerse youth in targeted need programs with staff members who are specifically trained in the program.

- Some specialty unit programs are designed to help youth focus on more intensive interventions with a treatment community approach. These include:
 - **Recovery While Incarcerated (RWI):** RWI is conducted on the Recovery Oriented Community (ROC) Unit at Logansport JCF. RWI is designed to provide intensive treatment services to youth who have experienced significant negative life experiences as a result of substance abuse or residing with family members who use substance abuse. RWI offers youth not just Integrated DBT-TSF and the Relapse Prevention curricula but also intensive individual counseling, group counseling, pro-social skills training, and family counseling provided by Addiction Recovery Specialists. The ROC Unit creates a structured, shared environment for youth live and work together to change their thinking and behavior, which results in opportunities to develop and maintain a clean and sober lifestyle. **Note:** Youth must first qualify at Intake for a referral. Then, youth are reviewed by the Addiction Recovery Specialists that run the unit. **Note:** Not all youth are accepted into the program, and priority is given to those with the most acute needs.
 - **Sex Offender Treatment and Education Program:** STEP is a Pendleton JCF program that is provided to all youth who are adjudicated of a sex offense. Youth will be housed in a complex / single unit for the duration of their STEP programming but would be eligible for alternative housing once they have completed their individual STEP programming. The STEP Program is facilitated by Liberty mental health professionals. Youth receive sex offender specific treatment that requires them to take responsibility for their offenses and that introduces the need for sex-offender specific, intensive treatment; polygraph examinations; and specialized parole stipulations after release to the community.
 - **Making a Change:** Each DYS facility has a MAC Unit. They are for youth who are struggling with problematic behaviors that impact their ability to function well and consistently with other youth in general population. MAC programming refocuses youth through education,

treatment, and mental health services while still maintaining a safe environment. The goal of this programming is to return all youth into general population settings as quickly as possible.

- Some specialty unit programs are designed to help youth develop positive interactions and pro-social skills. These include:
 - **Pendleton Boot Camp:** This is a separate complex within Pendleton JCF that is Indiana's only paramilitary and therapeutic boot camp. The complex carefully blends military components with a programs approach to address the needs of adolescents and to afford the best possible environment for change and growth. Through the paramilitary, normative culture as well as full criminogenic and mental health programming/services, the boot camp complex staff instill discipline, self-confidence, and individual responsibility in youth so that when they re-enter their communities, they will have the opportunity to be productive citizens.
 - **Venture Scouts Program:** The purpose of this Pendleton JCF unit is to identify youth who are interested in developing their character, life skills, and commitment to the community through the principles of the BSA Venture Scouts Program. Unit counseling staff members are trained as BSA Venture Scout Leaders.