



COLORADO
Division of Youth Services
Office of Children, Youth & Families

**FY
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21**

ANNUAL REPORT

Division of Youth Services
Colorado Department of Human Services
Office of Children, Youth & Families

January 6, 2022

www.colorado.gov/cdhs/dys



Welcome to the Division of Youth Services

Annual Report 2020-2021

The report highlights youth population and achievements, stories of success youth achieve while in the Division's care, and the care of community partners throughout Colorado.



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



The Division of Youth Services (DYS) is proud to share this year's Annual Report covering fiscal year 2021 (FY21). As you read through the report, you will explore population data, programming, areas of challenge and celebration, and many success stories of the youth we serve. I am honored to share with you how our staff face challenges together to positively impact the lives of youth and their families, their peers, and the communities around them.

Coinciding with a steep decline in juvenile arrest trends over recent years, FY21 saw the lowest total number of newly committed youth recorded (187) for the first time in over 60 years. Given the declining population spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic and several other factors, the division is receiving a "distilled" population of youth committed for the most severe offenses while, at the same time, the complexity of the youth population is increasing.

Despite these challenges, the division continues the forward momentum for positive change. In 2021, all DYS youth centers were accredited by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC), demonstrating an integrated and collaborative health care approach to providing services to youth. DYS increased Career and Technical Education programs and expanded the partnership with Colorado State University-Pueblo to allow 42 students to enroll and complete courses. The DYS Education program and all associated schools received the prestigious accreditation by Cognia, which aligns practices to meet the students' individual needs while allowing DYS schools the authority to offer diplomas for graduates. The Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI) replaced the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA). It will better allow the division to measure the changes in risk while youth are in placement. Built on last year's momentum, which increased the clinical services to the youth in our care, further growth was achieved for the DYS Treatment Model. Youth are now receiving more clinical services than ever before.

As we highlight the advancements made over the year, it is essential to look at one of the measurements of improvement -- recidivism rates. For the first time, DYS observed in the 2021 recidivism report an across-the-board decline in the one-, two-, and three-year post-discharge recidivism rates. The reduction included a robust 10% decline in the one-year rate. This is a testament to our team's hard work, dedication, and service effectiveness.



As we celebrate the accomplishments of FY21, we are humbled by the challenges we face as a community and our own limitations. With the commitment of our teams, the partnership of our community stakeholders, and your support, we will continue to push ourselves to grow as individuals, community, and as a division, as we work side-by-side with our youth in 2022.

Anders Jacobson
Director, Division of Youth Services

Division of Youth Services

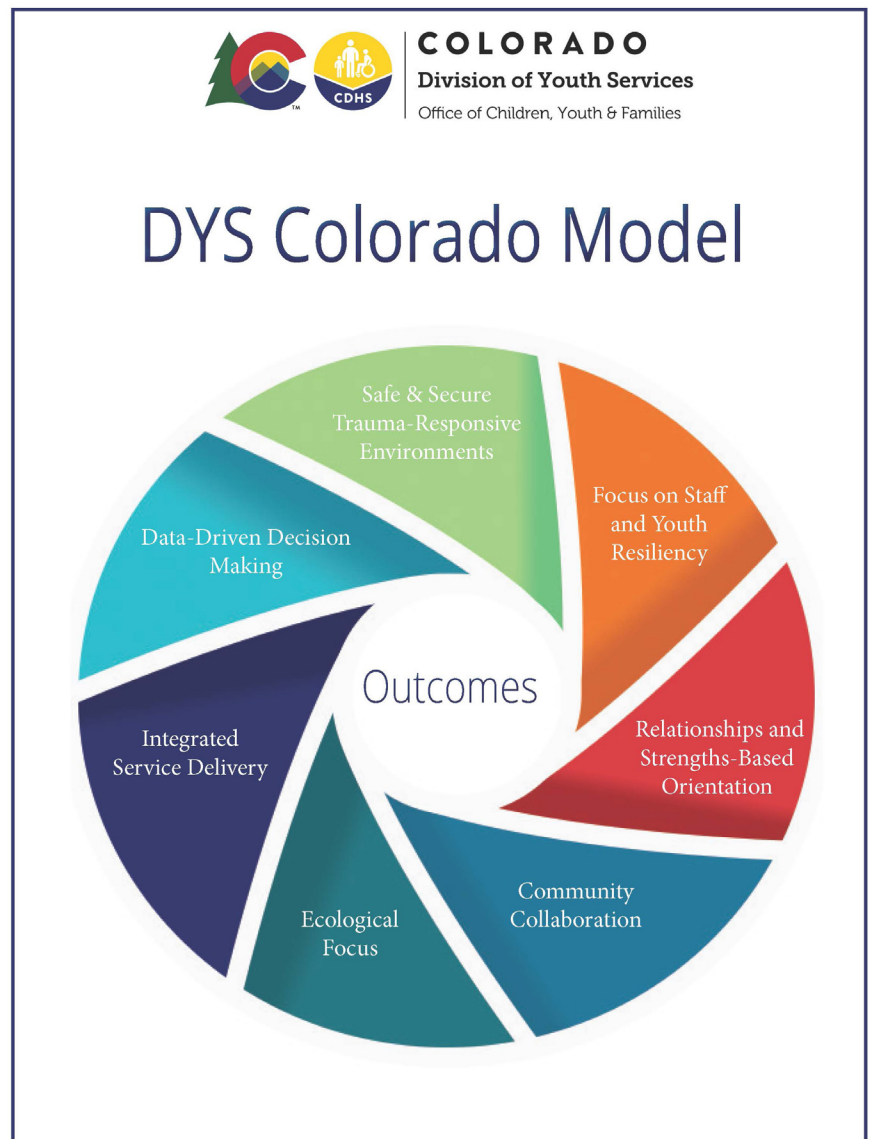
Mission & Vision

Mission: to protect, restore, and improve public safety utilizing a continuum of care that provides effective supervision, promotes accountability to victims and communities and helps youth lead constructive lives through positive youth development.

Vision: Achieving youth success and safer Colorado communities

What is the role of the Division of Youth Services?

The Division of Youth Services (DYS) provides for the care and supervision of youth committed by the District Court to the custody of the Colorado Department of Human Services. DYS operates 12 secure facilities that serve youth between the ages of 10-21 who are pre-adjudicated or committed. In addition to residential programming and treatment services, DYS administers juvenile parole services throughout Colorado.





Population Review

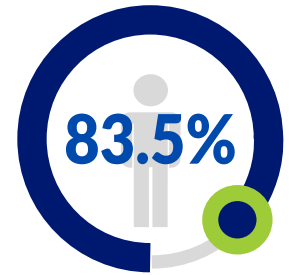
Detained Youth Services

DYS is responsible for the operation of Colorado’s secure juvenile detention. This consists of screening to determine detention needs, community supervision strategies, and secure detention in youth centers operated by DYS. In Colorado, detention serves two purposes:

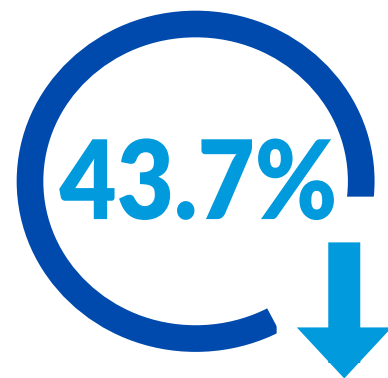
1. To ensure that a youth accused of a delinquent act appears for hearings ordered by the court
2. To sentence adjudicated youth for a period of up to 45 days as a sanction by the court

DYS Youth Center Highlight:

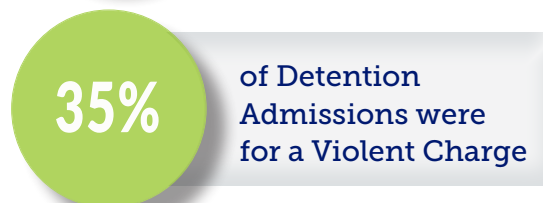
Opening of the new Prairie Vista Youth Services Center in May 2021, Sanctuary Certified



Gender Distribution
Detained



Percentage decrease in the number of newly detained youth
From FY20 to FY21



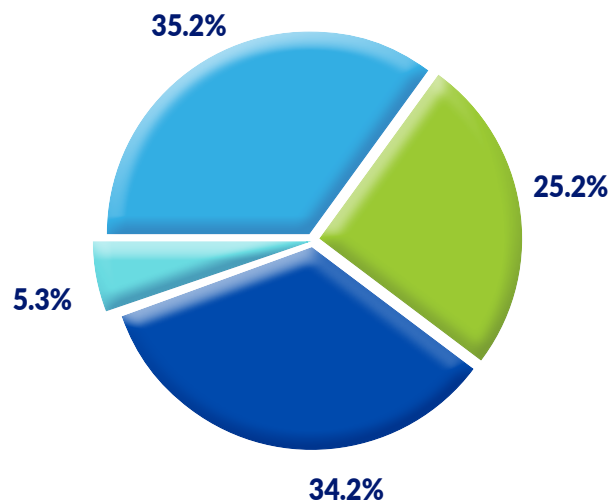
Senate Bill Impacts

Work-related to SB 19-108 continued during the fiscal year. Workgroups focused on the re-design of the Juvenile Detention Screening and Assessment Guide (JDSAG). Training of judicial district staff is ongoing as well as efforts to gather data and validate the new tool. The Department and the Colorado Youth Detention Continuum (CYDC) continue to refine the use of the Relative Information Form also outlined in SB 19-108.

During the 2021 legislative session, Senate Bill 21-071 reduced the detention statewide detention bed cap from 327 to 215, beginning in FY 2021-22. The act removed monetary bonds for juveniles charged or accused of committing a delinquent act and added additional responsibilities to the statutorily created “working group”, i.e. the CYDC Advisory Board. The Advisory Board is tasked with examining the availability, use, and funding for alternatives to detention, including less restrictive placements, and community services. The group is also charged with the development of performance standards and outcomes related to youth being served in the least restrictive setting. The bill established reporting requirements focused on these topics.

Ethnicity Distribution
(across detained population)

- Anglo-American
- African-American
- Hispanic/Latinx
- Other



Population Review

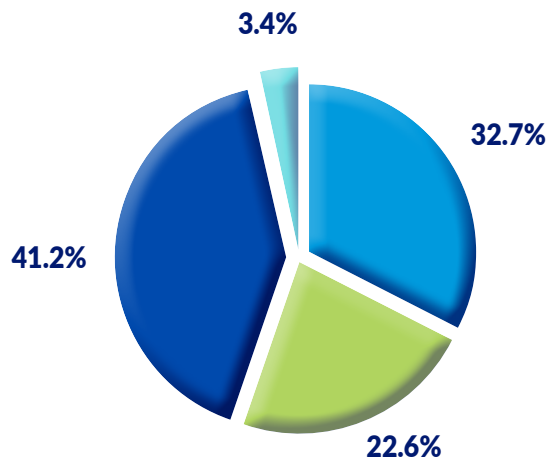
Committed Youth Services

DYS operates a full continuum of services for committed youth through a Continuum of Care model. The Continuum of Care guides the activities of the Division throughout the commitment process from the initial assessment to residential placement, and through transition and parole supervision and services.

In 2021, as new youth commitments declined, DYS reduced building pod sizes to less than 10 youth allowing for an improved staff to youth supervision ratio.



Reduction to Commitment Beds



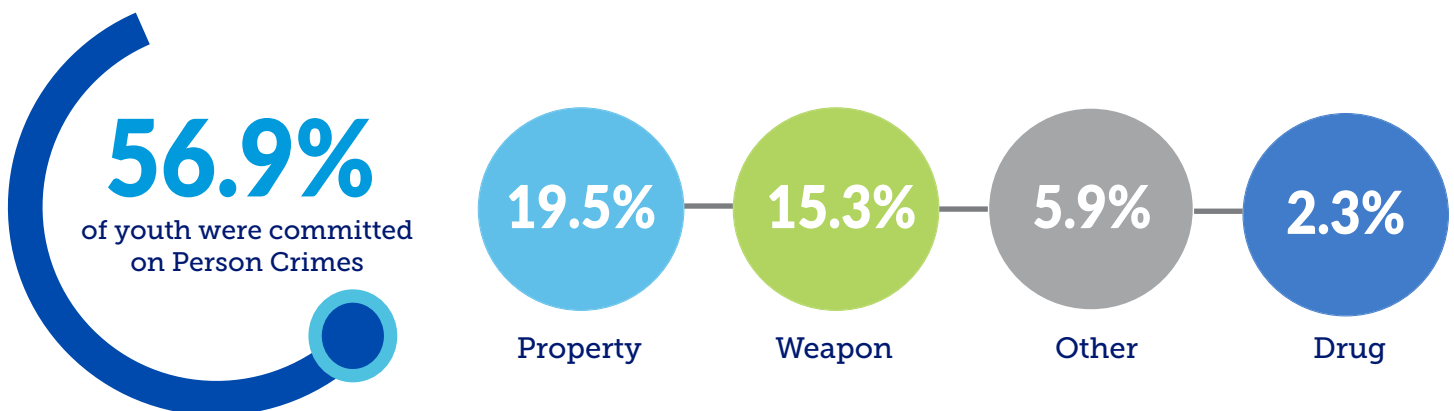
Ethnicity Distribution
(across committed population)

- Anglo-American
- African-American
- Hispanic/Latinx
- Other

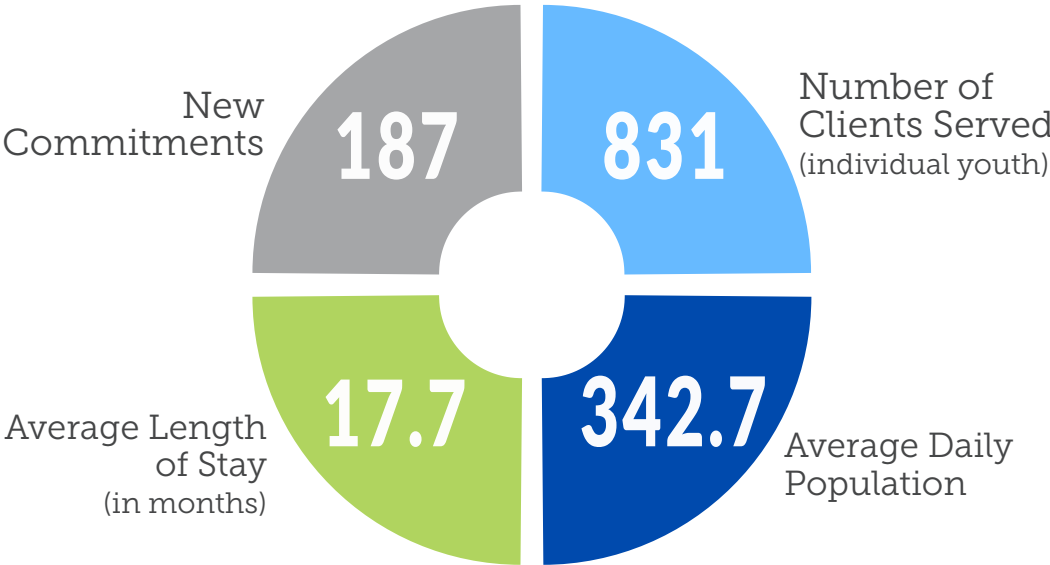


Committed Offense Type

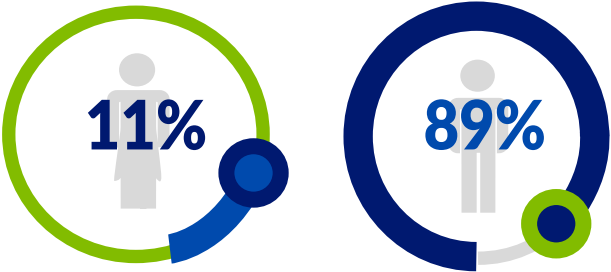
While property commitments declined by 4.3% in the last year, person crimes experienced the second year of substantial growth moving from 39% of the total DYS population in FY19 to 57% of the total DYS population in FY21. This swing plays a role in demonstrating the youth committed to the DYS are now primarily the result of crimes of violence.



Committed Youth Statistics



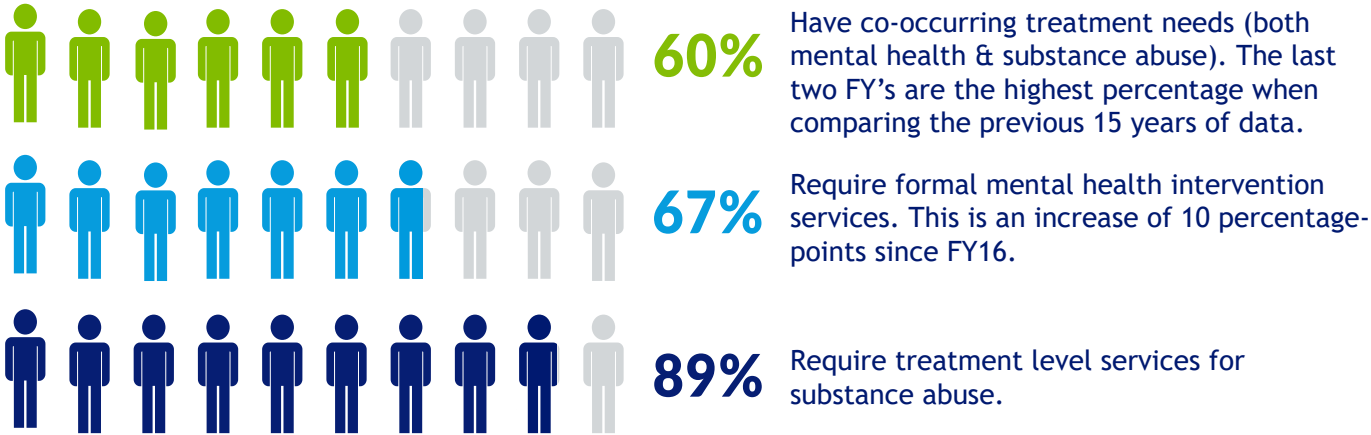
Gender Distribution Committed



Treatment Needs

The treatment needs of newly committed youth continue to increase in complexity. In comparison to FY19, the categories of co-occurring treatment needs (an increase of 4 percentage points) and treatment level services for substance abuse (an increase of 6 percentage points) experienced the largest jumps. Additionally, the need for formal mental health intervention services has increased a staggering 10% over the last 5 years.

Treatment Needs of Newly Committed Youth



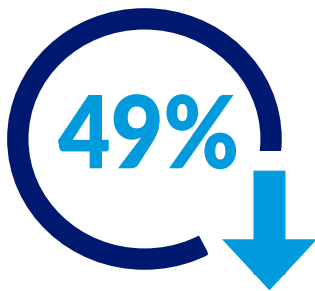
Impact in Numbers

When studying the overall scope of services offered to youth by DYS, the potential for long-term impact and positive change is evident. Mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, education, special education services, vocational training, and transition services are all a part of the transformational support provided to the youth within DYS.

Changes in Risk Scores from Assessment to Discharge (for Committed Youth)

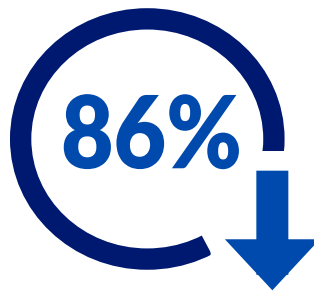
Attitudes & Behaviors

Assessment: 94.0%
Discharge: 47.5%



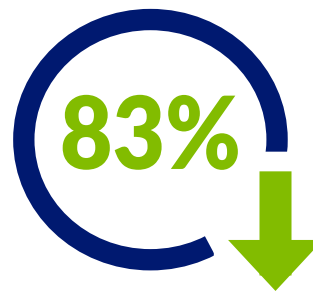
Alcohol & Drugs

Assessment: 65.9%
Discharge: 9.2%



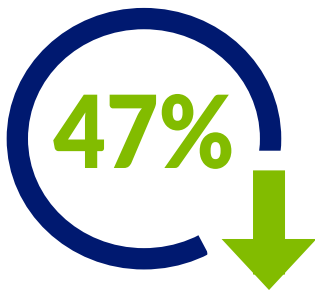
Social Proficiency Skills

Assessment: 79.2%
Discharge: 13.4%



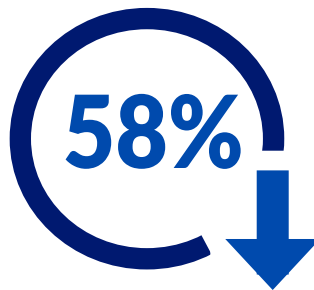
Relationships

Assessment: 86.6%
Discharge: 45.7%



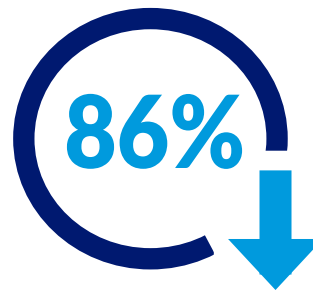
Aggression

Assessment: 80.4%
Discharge: 33.8%



School

Assessment: 44.3%
Discharge: 6.0%



Recidivism

The Division defines recidivism as the adjudication or conviction of a new misdemeanor or felony offense within a specified time period.

10%

The 2021 recidivism report showed a significant 10% reduction in one-year recidivism rates.

1-2-3

For the first time, DYS observed an across-the-board decline in the one-, two-, and three-year post-discharge recidivism rates.

FY14

In 2021, the Division reached the lowest one-year recidivism rate since FY 13/14.

Population Review

Parole Youth Services

Number of youth served in FY 21 **472**

163.3

Average Daily Population
of youth on parole

6.7

Average Length of Parole
in months

Statute requires every committed youth to serve a six-month period of parole. Based upon criteria, cases may be extended an additional 15 months. The Colorado Juvenile Parole Board hears the cases of each youth preparing for parole, sets terms and conditions, and has the authority to modify, suspend or revoke parole.

DYS is responsible for the operation of the juvenile parole system. This includes parole supervision and the provision of transition and parole aftercare services that are tailored to meet the youth's individual need domains identified by the standardized risk assessment. Each committed youth is assigned a client manager at the time of commitment. Once a youth transitions to parole, the client manager becomes the juvenile parole officer. This system provides seamless case management to ensure youth receive the appropriate services that meet their specific needs.



Treatment Model & Service Delivery

The Division of Youth Services continues to refine, improve, and implement the best practices of the DYS Treatment Model and services provided to youth. The foundation in the principles of Risk-Need-Responsivity was re-affirmed as the root of the treatment model. This foundation is firmly based on research that shows successful outcomes for committed youth require a system focused on the assessment and treatment of criminogenic risk, need, and responsivity.

In fiscal year 2021, DYS began the initial stages of training in Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) across Behavioral Health Staff in youth centers. Also, DYS piloted the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI) and began statewide implementation in July 2021. The YASI is replacing the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA) and is a validated instrument normed on a secure care youth population. The YASI has a different underlying scoring system which allows the Division to better measure the changes in risk while youth are in placement.

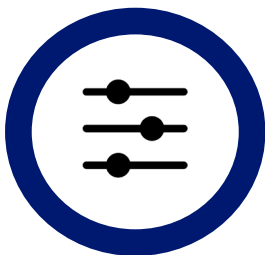
30,044
Treatment Hours
(individual, group, & family sessions)

12 hrs
per month for
each youth

FY21 Highlights



DYS created a new treatment plan and piloted the plan at Golden Peak Youth Services Center. The new plan, once refined and rolled out statewide, will support an increased focus on risk, need, and responsivity.



DYS created a consistent level system incorporating Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Restorative Community Justice (RCJ), and trauma-responsive care. A timeline was developed in June 2021 to ensure all commitment programs are trained in the new DYS Treatment Model to include DBT in the milieu by August 2022.

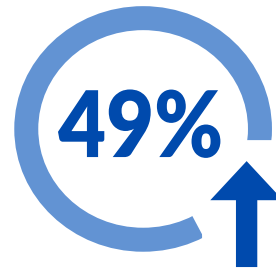
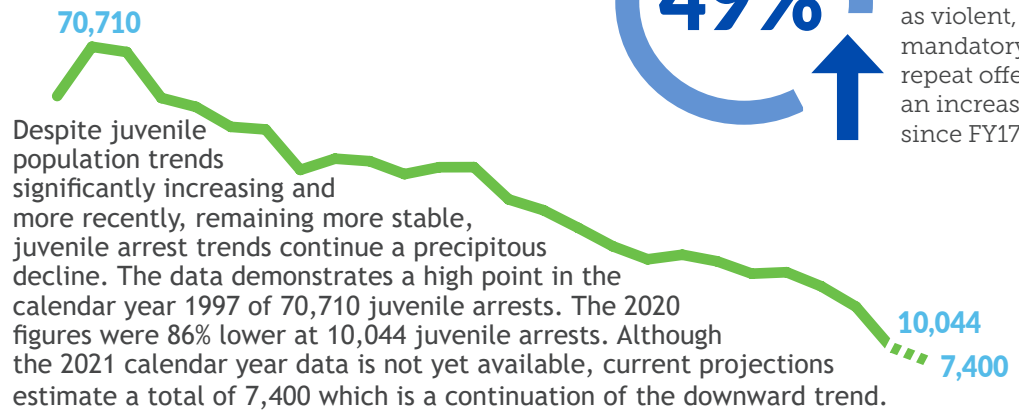


Increased treatment hours to 12 hours per youth each month beginning October 2020. During that time, DYS began specifically tracking treatment hours for youth (individual, group, and family). DYS staff provided 30,044 treatment hours to youth during the months of October 2020-June 2021, equating to an average of 12 hours per month for each youth in DYS care.

Observations: Colorado Juvenile Trends

Juvenile arrest trends show a 55% reduction in arrests between calendar year 2018 and calendar year 2020

**55%
Reduction
in Arrests**



In FY21, 26% of the newly committed population were sentenced as violent, mandatory, or a repeat offender, an increase of 49% since FY17.

FY21 saw the lowest total number of new commitments recorded over a 61 year time period (and potentially beyond), with a total of 187 new commitments. This represents a 28.4% reduction from FY20 (n=261), and an 80% reduction from the high of 950 experienced in FY05. Given the shrinking population of newly committed youth, we appear to have “distilled” the population of committed youth down to largely represent those committed for the most serious offenses. 64.2% of newly committed youth were committed from felony offenses in FY21, which is the largest percentage of felony offense commitments in ten years.

187 FY21 New Commitments

80% Reduction in Commitments from FY05

64% of Youth Committed on Felony Charges

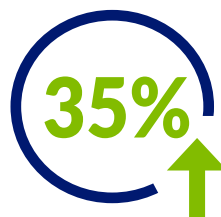
44.4%

of the DYS population is either a mandatory, repeat, violent or aggravated juvenile offender

The Division of Youth Services continues to experience an increase in the complexity of the population served. We are seeing a higher percentage of youth sentenced as either an aggravated, violent, mandatory, or repeat juvenile offender, which are enhanced sentencing options within the statute. In FY21, 44.4% of the DYS population fell into one of these four categories.

When looking at only the newly committed youth, the data shows 43% were committed to the Division of Youth Services on violent offenses in fiscal year 2021, compared to 31% just two years prior.

43% up from **31%**
2 years prior



Nearly 35% of youth were held in detention on violent offense charges in FY21, compared to 29% two years prior.

The number of aggravated juvenile offenders in DYS has increased by 68% in the last five years. This is a movement from 38.1 ADP in FY17 to 64 ADP in FY21.

68% ↑
in the last 5 years

Education Services

During FY21, DYS created three new Career and Technical Education Programs (CTE) at Mount View Youth Services Center. This multi-year project resulted in a new Culinary Arts program, a new Graphic Design program, and a new Hairstyling Program and salon. Post-secondary youth have enrolled in the programs over the course of the year to explore job skills, receive specific training for roles within each field, and have demonstrated learning with performance-based assessments.



High School Diplomas
Awarded: 66
GED's Awarded: 49
CTE Certifications
Awarded: 438



The DYS Education program was accredited by Cognia



The Colorado State Library and DYS Education spent \$29,500 to purchase 2,130 new books and 110 subscriptions across all DYS libraries.



18,000

Books circulated to youth across DYS libraries



“The library is becoming a hub for staff to interact with youth in novel ways for learning and education.”

Cognia Accreditation

After a year-long review and standards-based evaluation by educators from across the Nation, The Division of Youth Services' Education program and all of their associated schools received the prestigious accreditation by Cognia, a global nonprofit improvement organization dedicated to helping institutions and other education providers grow learners, educators, and leaders. Based on rigorous research-based standards and evidence-based criteria, the process probes the whole institution—from policies to learning conditions and cultural context—to determine how well the parts work together to meet the needs of every learner. Cognia accreditation gives DYS schools the authority to offer diplomas for graduates, strengthens the focus areas and continuous improvement journey for schools to a specific set of standards, and aligns practices to meet the needs of every youth.



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY PUEBLO

The partnership between Colorado State University-Pueblo (CSU-P) and The Division of Youth Services (DYS) continues to receive recognition for the meaningful impact the program is having on youth. During the fiscal year 2020-2021, DYS had 42 students enrolled in CSU-P courses. The Adult Learning Lead Specialist, Kathryn Starkey, at the university stated, “as soon they finish their first class, they sign up immediately for their second. So we think that’s an indication that they’ve been enjoying it.”

DYS Director, Anders Jacobson added, “our calling in the Division of Youth Services is not to punish, it’s to support and grow young people... although a young person has committed a crime or crimes against the community. This is not about simply serving time. We know how important education is for young people, and this is something they can achieve and nobody can ever take away from them.”



FY21 Highlights

- DYS Education and CSU-Pueblo presented at the National Conference on Higher Education in Prison
- Road to Success Student Portfolio implemented
- Pikes Peak Community College Cooperative Agreement for Concurrent Enrollment
- Three new Career and Technical Education programs (CTE) were created at Mount View Youth Services Center

Vocational Programs

The Division of Youth Services offers a wide range of educational and vocational programs to youth. Youth have the opportunity to learn new activities, develop interests, and establish credible skill sets for work environments upon their release. A few of the popular programs among DYS youth are:

- Culinary and Food Preparation Programs
- Welding and Mechanical Programs
- Screen-Printing Programs
- Construction/Wood-Working Programs
- Barber/Stylist Programs
- Horticultural Education



DYS Culture in Action

Giving Back to Local Communities

All across the Division of Youth Services staff and youth are giving back, supporting, and providing for local communities. Projects and partnerships, some spanning over 20 years, have become annual traditions of giving. Food and toy drives around the holidays, clothing and coat drives when the weather turns cold, and preparing and serving meals for individuals and families that are in need are just a few of the wonderful ways DYS staff show up for those around them.

The year brought to light new needs in the community and DYS youth center leadership, staff, and youth found creative ways to continue to make a difference. At Grand Mesa YSC, youth became pen-pals with individuals at two local senior living centers when the pandemic increased isolation for many. Youth in the Construction Trades program at the Campus at Lookout Mountain used their skills to create picnic tables for The Rocky Mountain Stroke Center. These tables were able to increase the outdoor space available to volunteers and patients. At Mount View YSC, youth decorated and filled goodie bags for Urban Peak to hand out to youth who were experiencing homelessness. Each bag also contained a personalized card with thoughtful and encouraging messages for the youth.

DYS staff lead by example for the youth how generosity and commitment to community involvement can positively impact so many others.



Partnered Organizations

- Sangre de Cristo Community Care
- The Rocky Mountain Stroke Center
- The Food Bank of the Rockies
- Posada Community Center
- Pueblo YWCA
- Stars for Smiles
- Salvation Army's Angel Tree
- Urban Peak
- Kidsville at Parkview Hospital
- Integrated Pediatric Therapy
- St. Mark's Coffee House
- Springs Rescue Mission
- Marian House Soup Kitchen



Donations for Kids Camps

Pueblo YSC provided 20 backpacks full of coloring books, colored pencils, markers, journals, meal coupons, and more for the Sangre de Cristo Annual Kids Camp. Kids Camp brings certified grief counselors, event volunteers, and facility staff together to help children work through the feelings associated with the loss of a loved one.



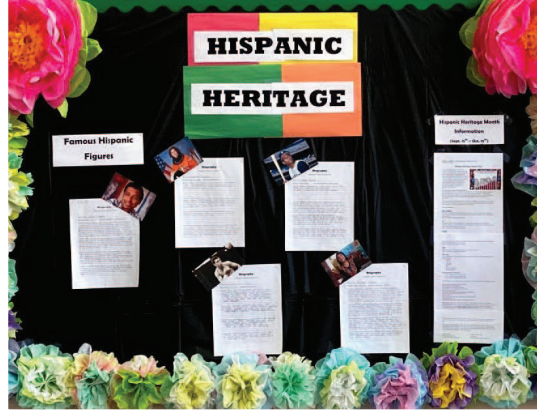
Bringing Joy to the Hospitalized

Spring Creek YSC partnered with Stars for Smiles, a nonprofit that prepares and delivers care packages to hospitals. The bags held Christmas-themed coloring books and crayons, Santa stuffed toys, holiday bookmarks, and the signature Stars for Smiles origami stars. The youth were excited to bring joy to individuals who were going to be in a hospital during the holidays.



Serving Unhoused Community

Zebulon Pike YSC staff are steadfast in their effort to feed unhoused people in Colorado Springs through the Springs Rescue Mission. Staff and youth in the culinary program work at Marian House Soup Kitchen to help prepare and serve food to community members in need. The team also collects and hands out clothing.



Celebrating Culture & Diversity

Between staff members and youth, DYS is home to individuals from nearly every ethnicity, sexual orientation, race, and cultural background. These differences make us stronger and open up opportunities to learn from each other.

A few of the ways DYS has expanded learning and provided new cultural perspectives and experiences are through food programs, heritage months, creative activities, and poster projects. One of the most consistent and popular programs is Platte Valley YSC's "Passport to the World" culinary program. Each month this program brings a new adventure in culinary dining for the youth along with a short presentation of that country's culture, customs, and history.

Staff members bring their own unique cultural expertise to share with the youth. One example of this is when the art classes at Zebulon Pike YSC learned about Korean culture and practiced writing their names in Korean calligraphy. Mr. Jeremy Boyce, Administrative Assistant for the school at ZPYSC, is of Korean heritage and is fluent in the language.

The youth at Pueblo YSC participated in a fun activity during Native American Heritage Month. Naomi DeHerrera, along with other staff members, explained the history of dream catchers found throughout Native American culture. The youth worked together to create a large dream catcher for the unit, including personalizing the feathers with words or pictures that were meaningful to them.

These are just a few examples of the DYS commitment to share, to learn, and to experience cultures outside of our own. Thank you to every staff who has gone above and beyond to provide these valuable learning opportunities to youth.

Black History Month at DYS

February is Black History Month and to honor, educate, and celebrate during this month youth centers are getting creative with the youth in their care. The Division of Youth Services partnered with Mizel Museum which shares impactful programs throughout the year, in particular, their signature "At the Table with Dr. King." This program is a 45-minute video that combines actual footage from Dr. King, musical accompaniment, photography, and video clips from the civil rights movement, and more. The video is also accompanied by discussion questions and topics to foster group work. The youth at Pueblo YSC took the Black History Month social media challenge. They created a Facebook profile for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, an Instagram profile for Jackie Robinson, and group chats between Dr. King, Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, and the Tuskegee Airmen. The youth had fun being creative and deciding how to best represent these icons in today's social media-driven world. They collaborated with staff and researched the history of each person and their final results were amazing!



DYS Culture in Action

Learning & Growing Together

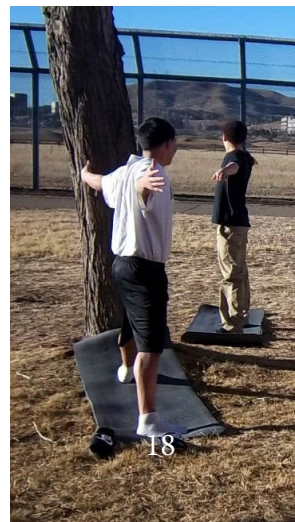
The DYS Treatment Model focuses on serving each youth as a whole. The programs that have been developed, adapted, and implemented throughout youth centers allow space for youth to grow in new ways. This year youth have learned in a wide variety of areas that will serve them beyond their time with DYS. Youth participated in gender-specific groups that allowed a safe space to speak openly, they learned how to garden and the nuances of growing food, and some took part in self-care practices like yoga and were given the space to express themselves creatively.

Many youth centers took advantage of the nice weather during the spring and summer months and revitalized gardens and greenhouse programs. At Lookout Academy, students worked in collaboration with their classroom teachers and coordinator, Clare McKendry, to learn about the process and steps it takes to grow vegetables and flowers from seed. These lessons cover how much water plants need, what kinds of environments are best for different plants, and how to separate seedlings when they outgrow their containers. The youth on Acadia pod at Platte Valley Youth Services Center enjoyed a day of beautifying their spaces by planting flowers and learning to care for them. The youth enjoyed deciding which plants should go together and making the planters pop with color and variety.

The youth in the Culinary Arts Program at Grand Mesa YSC are actively engaged in growing sustainable food with an aquaponics system. The youth care for the fish, clean and refill the tank, plant and harvest the vegetables and maintain the proper PH balance of the water (under the direct supervision of kitchen staff). Aquaponics is one of the most sustainable ways to grow food. The basic premise of aquaponics is that the waste produced by the fish feeds the plants, and the plants clean the water for the fish, producing one continuous cycle. The youth get excited to watch and care for the fish, as well as, seeing the plants growing above as a result of the system working correctly. The youth and staff involved in the program love seeing the green beans, carrots, and strawberries that were grown. A huge thank you to Julie Inman, Scott Cass, and Randy Estes for their contributions to developing this educational and functional learning opportunity!

The staff and youth at Mount View YSC created a new Farm-to-Table program that combines construction and culinary projects, uniting youth across the center. The RCJ team has joined forces with the post-secondary Culinary Arts program to grow fruits, vegetables, and herbs. The youth in the program have built a greenhouse and three gardens to help grow the food, with more gardens planned in the future. The goal of this project is to help give the youth new tangible coping skills while simultaneously engaging in healthy and environmentally friendly practices. All of the food grown by the Restorative Community Justice team will be used by the post-secondary Culinary Arts program to create unique vegetarian dishes that can be shared around campus. Everyone is eager to learn about, grow, prepare, and taste new food dishes.

Pandemic protocols took a toll on everyone and DYS youth found new self-care practices that many still continue today. The youth at Aspire Youth Services Center were able to take advantage of the warmer weather and participated in an outdoor yoga class, led by a youth center staff member. The youth really enjoyed the activity and being able to enjoy the sunshine and outdoors. This is a regular leisure-time





option that the youth have become very invested in and look forward to being a part of.

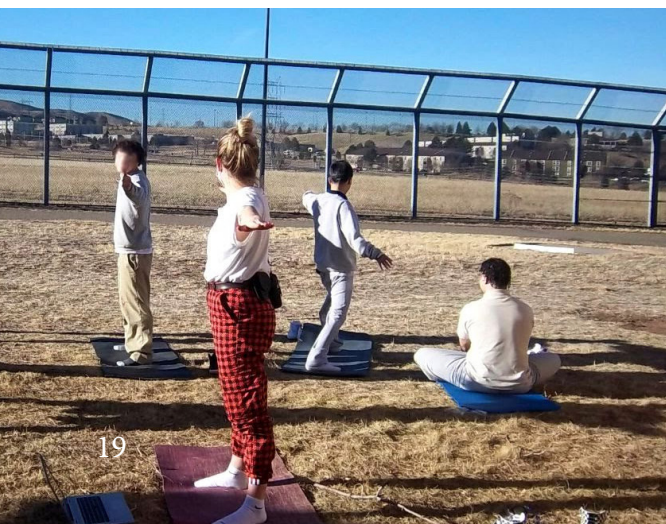
The youth at Marvin W. Foote YSC were featured in an article published by the Cherry Creek School District in regards to their artwork being showcased in a community art show at St. Mark's Coffee House in Denver. The art show, which included a quilt made by the youth, was initiated by Foote art teacher Courtney Thronson. She has been at the center for five years and shared that working with these students has helped her gain inspiration and admiration. The quilt was returned to its place on the wall at MWFYSC after the show. The youth said they "hope it brings comfort to new youth who will see it when they arrive," shared Thronson.



Gender-specific groups and programs were a huge hit this year. The female youth at Spring Creek YSC engaged in the program "Voices" each Friday, led by Ms. Clark, and followed by a yoga class. "Voices" was created to address the unique needs of adolescent girls and young women. It encourages them to seek and celebrate themselves by providing a safe space, encouragement, structure, and the support they need to embrace their journeys of self-discovery. The program includes modules on self, connecting with others, healthy living, and the journey ahead.



All across the state throughout April, youth center staff and youth highlighted National Child Abuse Prevention Month. At Gilliam YSC they created a Child Abuse Prevention Wall and one of their talented youth completed the amazing drawing by hand. The theme of the wall was "We Unearth the Possibilities". The image is of a hill whose roots each have a tip for parents, adults, and others to help prevent child abuse in their homes and communities. During psycho-educational groups, the focus was on the different kinds of abuse, what to do if being abused, and how to get help. Marvin W. Foote YSC had a "dress in blue" day and all staff wore blue to show their support for Child Abuse Prevention and all available staff joined in the courtyard to make a human blue ribbon! Platte Valley Youth Services Center created its own blue paper pinwheels with hopeful messages written on them. The youth-made pinwheels that are on display at the Weld County Office of Family and Child Welfare to highlight the hope this month brings.



These are just a sampling of the amazing and innovative programs taking place in DYS youth centers across the state. Staff members go above and beyond to provide exciting and creative learning and growing opportunities for youth.



DYS Culture in Action

Culinary Excellence

The youth in the care of the Division of Youth Services are treated to inventive, creative, and delicious meals throughout the year. The Dining Services teams and Culinary classes are unmatched in their passion to teach, inspire, and share their skills with the youth. Youth have developed an excitement for learning these new skills, earned culinary certifications and coveted chef's coats, and took on the responsibilities that these disciplines require.



The youth in the culinary and catering programs develop skills that they can use once they leave DYS. The chef's coat programs require an understanding of every major food group and how to prepare them. These courses also incorporate how to budget for food and prepare delicious meals for less. DYS is proud of the students and instructors for the growth and positive outcomes of these programs.



Throughout the year, special days mark special meals. Cultural and national holidays are always a great excuse to mix up a new menu item or some youth favorites. During the summer months, many youth centers hold barbeques outside with games and treats. In this last fiscal year, there have been several occasions that youth wanted to thank staff by creating meals and special treats for them, honoring the staff dedication through the COVID protocol.

Another successful program is "Passport to the World" at Platte Valley Youth Services Center. Youth enjoy learning about the new cultures and cuisines they may not have had the opportunity to try before. Some notable favorite countries from FY21 were Jamaica, the Philippines, Germany, Greece, France, England, and Mexico.

Food can bring people together, whether preparing and cooking the meals or enjoying them with friends. This statement rings true in DYS youth centers as well, from cultural experiences to homemade specialties to learning skills that last a lifetime.



"My experience in the kitchen making funnel cake was fun. At first, it was nerve-racking, but Todd made me realize that messing up is normal and once you mess up, you learn what your mistake was and are able to keep going. I really appreciate Todd and my BHS helping me to overcome my fear of being in a kitchen."

-DYS Youth

Youth Thanking Medical Staff

Staff and youth across the division were especially grateful to the dedication, efforts, and care provided by the medical personnel at each youth center. Many youth showed their appreciation through “Thank you” cards and signs. Mount View YSC’s culinary class created a unique and thoughtful way of thanking their medical staff. The youth decided to create an omelet station to serve the medical department.



The dedication to the youth in DYS care and critical care workers was and continues to be the backbone of the division throughout this pandemic. Thank you DYS medical staff for always going above and beyond!



COVID Response and Impact

All across the country and world, the need for COVID-related data became increasingly important and sought out as the pandemic evolved. The Division of Youth Services created systems to inform, track, and report this data internally and externally. The ‘DYS COVID-19 Dashboard’ was released in its current version on July 22, 2020, and due to the transparency of information, the data points available, and the consistency of updating this dashboard, Colorado was one of only six states in the U.S. that scored an A or B in COVID data transparency.



[2] Colorado was one of six states in the US that scored an A or B in transparency related to COVID data available.

<p>0 COVID Deaths (youth or staff)</p>	<p>1,922 Staff Cleared</p>	<p>138 Positive Youth Cases</p>	<p>Immunizations Available for All Staff & Youth</p>
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The Division of Youth Services adapted to restrictions and circumstances around COVID protocols in creative ways that kept everyone safe and also gave youth opportunities to connect. Platte Valley YSC put together two very comfortable and relaxing “igloos” in their interior courtyard as a nice meeting space for both youth, staff, families, and teams. These igloos allow for privacy while being outside of the buildings -- which is a welcomed break after this pandemic year. On the first day of visitation, the youth center had a total of four families use the igloos as a way to expand visitations while providing a safe, physically distanced, ventilated space.

Youth Success Stories

Jeremiah

In the summer of 2020, while serving his commitment with DYS, Jeremiah learned that due to the pandemic the only way for him to attend the birth of his daughter was to work towards a step-down program. His determination to be present at such an important life milestone helped him to make lasting personal change. He was able to attend the birth of his daughter, with the support of his Behavioral Health Staff (BHS), client manager, and transition worker.

Jeremiah recently completed his parole and is excited to continue to improve life for himself and his family. Jeremiah now has his own apartment with his one-year-old daughter and partner Lily. Since his time with DYS, Jeremiah has given back to the community through community service at several local food banks and has attained steady employment. His parents are very proud of his achievements and change. Jeremiah has purchased his first vehicle and is saving money to buy his first home. Jeremiah sends a special thank you to all of the staff that supported him throughout the process.



Pedro

When Pedro was first committed to DYS, he was hesitant to participate fully in treatment or therapy sessions, but he began to build positive relationships with his Client Manager, Behavioral Health Specialist, direct care staff, and his peers. Throughout his time at DYS and through these positive relationships, he was able to identify issues and triggers he was facing and had faced in his past to develop healthy coping techniques. He engaged in the decision-making model, understanding boundaries, healthy relationships, and processing the impact of his behaviors. Pedro was able to engage in discussions and

demonstrate competence with treatment objectives. He was able to make significant positive changes that helped him be successful in his parole.

Pedro faced some uncertain times as his parole started the same month that COVID hit and the world seemed to shut down. It was difficult to find employment, participate in pro-social activities, and make new friends. Pedro did not let this get him down. He went out and looked for employment and was hired in the food industry. He continued his treatment in the community and was able to successfully discharge from Savio services. He has reported that his girlfriend is a positive

Jose

When Jose was committed to DYS, he made a decision to leave his old life behind and choose a new life for himself. During his 14 months at a DYS youth center, Jose was fully committed to his treatment, held the highest level, never received an incident report, and demonstrated leadership skills with his peers. He was a co-facilitator of group sessions and led by example on how to apply the concepts learned in treatment. Jose also participated in many activities and pursued new passions during his time in DYS, including Restorative Community Justice projects and learning new skills in culinary arts. Due to his engagement and determination, his sentence was reduced by six months and he was able to move to a step-down program. Jose was successful in that program as well, taking on leadership roles, displaying accountability, and demonstrating emotional intelligence.

He is now employed full-time as a prep lead in a restaurant, taking college classes in culinary arts, and hopes to one day open his own food truck. Jose is a driven individual who longs to separate himself from his previous life. He has overcome much adversity throughout his commitment and has taken advantage of every service that is available. Jose stays focused on his goals, so much so, that he has lost 50 pounds through a healthy diet and exercise.

support to him and has encouraged him to keep making good choices. The same month that Pedro successfully completed his parole, he and his girlfriend welcomed a healthy baby boy. Pedro has gone on to find employment that helps support himself and his new family. Pedro, his girlfriend, and son have moved into a home that he is currently doing new renovations and improvements on. He is proud of the person he has become and is eager to see where his future will take him. "With all the adversity that Pedro has been faced with, he has showed a lot of resiliency. I am proud of the person he has become," shared his Client Manager.



Parker

Parker had been in and out of the juvenile justice system since 2017 and has spent a significant amount of time within DYS youth centers. In December of 2020, Parker turned a corner for himself and experienced an immense amount of internal growth, change, and maturity. He began to stop and think about his actions, take accountability for them, and began to really understand how his behaviors and actions influenced and impacted others. With this newfound maturity and growth, Parker buckled down to achieve his higher-level status on the unit and worked to not only catch up but get ahead educationally. Through his own hard work and dedication, he was paroled early to Wyoming where he continues to work hard and be successful. He is currently living on his own, has two jobs, a steady relationship, and the ambition to continue to be the best version of himself. Parker's client manager said, "Parker has been a breath of fresh air with his positive attitude and dedication to success! He is the perfect example of not letting your past define your future."



Justice

During her time within the Division of Youth Services, Justice earned her high school diploma and gained valuable culinary experience while working with the dining services team. While in treatment, she was able to understand and overcome her struggles. Through her individual and group sessions, she learned how to identify and manage her emotions.

Justice was able to parole a few months early due to her positive progress and success at DYS. After she discharged from parole, she moved to Montana, where she has begun building a new life for herself. She earned her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) license and is working full-time at a mental health nursing home. She enjoys and finds fulfillment in giving back and caring for others. She is keeping her options open for the future and is planning to either join the military or become a traveling CNA. Her Client Manager said, "I am proud of the actions that Justice has made to overcome her fears during the time I worked with her. I am especially proud of the continued actions she shows to better herself."

Cora



Cora is the youngest DYS youth highlighted in this year's annual report. Throughout her time with DYS, Cora has engaged in therapy and has worked very hard to develop healthy coping skills. While on parole, Cora has sought out volunteer opportunities, healthy activities, and part-time employment while being enrolled full-time in her high school's gifted and talented program. One of her favorite places to volunteer is at a dog care, boarding, and training location where she has completed over 100 hours of volunteer work! Cora also enjoys being a part of a local boxing club that gives her a "positive and healthy activity to stay grounded." She is also active in after-school programs at her high school including photography, music, LGBTQI, and military clubs. The latter is where she recently earned her military rank. "With the support from her family and all the skills she has learned throughout her time with DYS, Cora has a bright future ahead," said her Client Manager.

Ismael

During his time with DYS, Ismael worked hard to change his mindset to a more positive one. He worked with his team to identify actionable changes and has developed healthy coping skills while in treatment at DYS. As he worked towards transition and parole, he kept his focus on areas within his control and identifying emotions as they arose. He was able to maintain good standing at his step-down placement and earned his high school diploma.

Ismael continues to do well in the community and attends all the services outlined in his parole plan. He has overcome adversity and trials while finding employment and is now working full time at a nursing home as a custodian and has aspirations to become an electrician one day. He spends his free time doing his favorite outdoor activities - hiking and fishing. "Ismael has come a long way despite facing significant adversity in his life. He continues to defy the odds that were stacked against him and make strides towards becoming a successful young man. I couldn't be any more proud of him than I am today," shared his Client Manager.



The DYS Difference: Health Care

NCCHC Statewide Certification

The Division of Youth Services is very excited to announce that the Accreditation and Standards Committee of the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) has evaluated and accredited ALL DYS Youth Centers!

What does NCCHC Accreditation mean for youth centers?

Accreditation by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) is a process of external peer review that grants public recognition to adult and juvenile correctional institutions that meet nationally established and accepted standards for the provision of health care services. Health care services include medical, mental health, behavioral health, line staff services, and administrative services, and are focused on an integrated and collaborative health care approach to providing services.

The accreditation program renders a professional judgment on the quality of health care services provided and assists facilities in their continued improvement.

Since 1983, the NCCHC accreditation standards have been widely accepted by the health, legal, and corrections professions and focus on the following areas: Governance and Administration, Safety, Personnel and Training, Health Care Services and Support, Patient Care and Treatment, Health Promotion, Special Needs and Services, Health Records, and Medical/Legal Issues. The standards lay the foundation for constitutionally acceptable health care services systems. There are a total of 70 standards that are either essential or important to meet in order to earn accreditation.



Why is it impressive that all DYS youth centers are accredited?

To date, less than 10% of juvenile correctional facilities in the United States have earned NCCHC accreditation. With DYS having all youth centers accredited, this puts Colorado at the forefront of integrated and comprehensive health care services to the youth in our care. NCCHC standards and accreditation focus on integration and collaboration between multiple work units within a youth center including administration and leadership, medical clinics, mental health and behavioral clinical employees, line staff/security staff, food services, facility maintenance, and others. In short, every employee has a role in providing health care services to our youth and as a result, NCCHC accreditation (or re-accreditation for some youth centers) means that this accomplishment is shared by all.

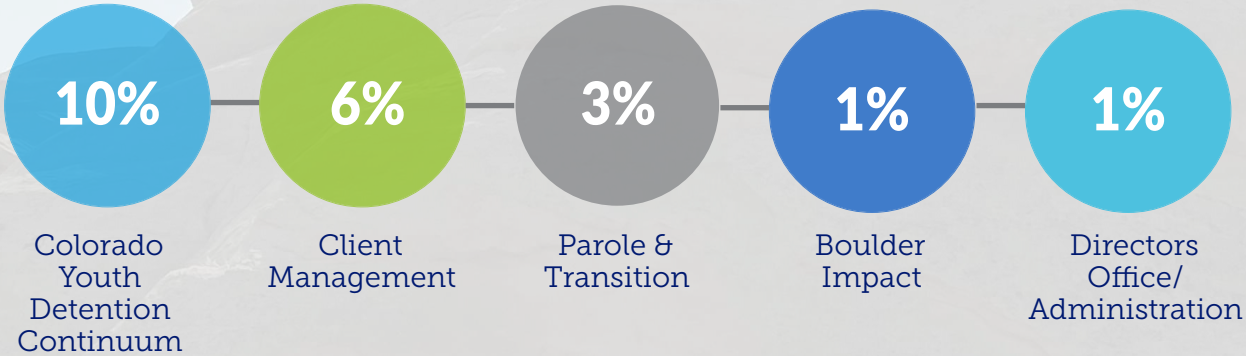
Youth centers that meet NCCHC's standards and achieve accreditation have demonstrated compliance and excellence in meeting the requirements of each standard. There are no correctional health care standards or accreditation processes that are more rigorous or thorough than NCCHC.

Financial Review

*DYS Fiscal Year 2020-2021
Expenditures by Category*



The percentage of the budget spent on direct care and services to youth (education, residential placement, behavioral health, and medical services)



DYS would like to thank the Colorado State Legislature for its support in 2020-2021. The funding backed DYS in the efforts to continue the movement towards smaller, single-purpose youth centers and the expansion of home-like environments for youth.



THANK YOU

DYS would like to recognize the following individuals for their time and assistance in making this report possible.

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Parker's Story - Anthony Marah

Justice's Story - Todd Barchiesi

Cora's Story - April Alvarez

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***DYS & COVID:** The Division of Youth Services would like to acknowledge that all COVID precautions and protocols are followed within youth centers. Any stories, photos, or data that does not reflect these guidelines took place prior to the time restrictions were required.

Data Resources

[1] Colorado Department of Human Services. (2020). *DYS Publication and Reports: Monthly Population Report, Management Reference Manual, Education Outcome Evaluation, and Recidivism Evaluation*. Retrieved from <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs/publications-reports>

[2] Michele Deitch and William Bucknall, *Hidden Figures: Rating the COVID Data Transparency of Prisons, Jails, and Juvenile Agencies*, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, March 2021.

[3] Icon images created by Miho Suzuki-Robinson, MRK, & Alice Design from the Noun Project. <http://thenounproject.com>