
IV. STAGE 2: RESIDENCE

INTRODUCTION

All activities during a youth's stay in a correctional facility should focus on preparing the youth for release. Residency is the phase in which the most time can be allotted to planning and working toward the youth's future in the community. This time should be used wisely and diligently.

WHAT WORKS AT THIS STAGE: INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Several strategies can be used during this stage move toward a successful exit from the system. When a youth is residing in a correctional facility, activities begun at intake should be continued and new activities that take advantage of this time should be started. Below are overarching strategies that focus on eventual transition out of an institution.

Strategy One: Continue Activities Initiated at Entry

Continue to conduct **academic and behavioral assessments** throughout the youth's stay, and conduct regular **needs assessments** for support services. These should be entered into a **data system** and analyzed for progress and/or changes in needs.

The **transition team** should meet regularly to review data and discuss the various options and **wraparound services** available, altering the **transition plan** as necessary. The youth's **mentor** (a member of the transition team) should meet with the youth regularly and frequently.

As discussed in the family involvement section, if families are not able to be involved, **surrogate parents** can have a positive impact on outcomes. California found that many of its institutions' residents lacked involved families and for that reason established its **Foster Grandparent Program**. In this program, senior citizens mentor youth. Although these programs have had success, some concerns have been raised about confidentiality.[†]

Strategy Two: Provide Pre-Release Training and Supports

Pre-release training and associated activities should begin during residency well in advance of scheduled release dates. In addition to the regular academic program, pre-release training should include instruction in social skills, independent living skills, and pre-employment training—all corresponding to and supporting the youth's transition plan.¹⁷ For example, the Virginia-based **REACH program** teaches detained youth how to make positive and appropriate choices during incarceration. REACH integrates good citizenship, teamwork, a sense of community, compassion, organizational skills, physical fitness, self-improvement, character development, and self-empowerment. Youth are given opportunities to demonstrate acquired skills and be rewarded for their efforts.

[†] For more information about California's Foster Grandparent program, see http://childlaw.sc.edu/frmPublications/v1n2_115200443220.pdf.

Pen or Pencil is a social studies curriculum that teaches responsibility and good decision making through a series of history lessons based on the Underground Railroad and civil rights movements. Use of media and technology, combined with a service-learning component, help develop complex cognitive skills, knowledge acquisition, intrapersonal skills, academic achievement, and other important areas in the formation of highly at-risk youths' development.^s

Hawaii's Girl Court was established in 2004 to promote improved outcomes for girl offenders. Based on the recommendation of the court, gender-specific programming is offered to girls and their families on a case-by-case basis. Programming can include parent education and support groups, where girls meet to discuss issues such as preventing teen pregnancy, preventing domestic violence (and using intervention), healing from trauma, avoiding substance abuse, and setting positive and healthy goals. The girls also receive intensive supervision and participate in workshops and activities.^t

Educators in juvenile justice know how difficult it can be to teach this specific population, due to the challenges these youth face in addition to learning. Their teachers need training that is different from that provided to teachers in public schools. The **Educator's Curriculum** is a 40-hour staff development curriculum developed by and for teachers of students in confinement. It contains nine modules: current trends and issues in juvenile justice education, institutional culture, student assessment, curriculum, teaching and learning, behavior management, social skills, and transition.^u

Strategy Three: Ensure Appropriate Educational Placements

Correctional educators, one of whom should be part of the transition team, need to select **curriculum** appropriate for the youth on the basis of past school placements and records as well as intake assessments. Because of the prevalence of disabilities among youth who are incarcerated, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) may be a component of the transition plan, requiring a **special education** curriculum. Ideally, the curriculum used in a correctional facility should parallel that used in the mainstream school so that the youth can earn credits while incarcerated and stay on track with the school he or she will eventually re-enter.¹⁸ **Formal agreements** between the facility and the school district are a good way to facilitate the use of **dual curricula**. The New York City school district created a dual enrollment policy in 2004, which requires the home school to maintain a youth's information on file during the youth's incarceration. Youth are to re-enroll in the school immediately on release, or the school must initiate an investigation.¹⁹

A. PRACTICES SPECIFIC TO RECORDS MAINTENANCE

Youth in institutional settings often leave facilities with records that do not reflect their academic accomplishments. Maintaining accurate academic records in this stage is essential to maintaining continuity of educational services. The following strategies can be used by transition program managers when considering records transfer procedures during residency.

^s For more information about Pen or Pencil, see www.nafj.org.

^t For more information about Hawaii's Girl Court, see <http://www.girlscourt.org>.

^u For more information about the Educator's Curriculum, see www.npjs.org.

Strategy One: Make Sure That Records Maintenance Procedures Are Written and Clearly Communicated to Staff

The process for maintaining a youth's records should be **in writing, and clearly communicated** to the staff member who is responsible for keeping records; to other individuals involved, such as the correctional teacher, the transition coordinator, and the probation officer; and to the youth's family. If possible, providing a manual or a quick reference guide of the process will assist staff as they update records.

Strategy Two: Designate One Staff Member to be Responsible for Maintaining Records

Maintaining a youth's records should be the **responsibility of one staff person**, who may not always be the person who was responsible for initially requesting and receiving the records at entry. The individual should either be trained in academic records maintenance, or enlist the support of someone with the proper training. For example, the individual should be familiar with testing policies and in some cases be able to interpret test results and other academic information to properly annotate a student's record. Having only a few people maintain records will help eliminate data entry errors and inconsistency.

Strategy Three: Regularly Update the Youth's Records, Including Conducting Regular Assessments to Document Progress

While the youth is in a facility, it is important that his or her records be **updated on a regular basis**. This way, when the youth leaves, the records will accurately reflect his or her progress, regardless of the amount of lead time given before the youth changes placement. More important, it allows needed services and supports to be continued after the youth leaves. Improper or inefficient maintenance of records can impede transition when the youth leaves a facility.

Documenting a youth's academic progress requires regular and consistent administration of assessments in mathematics, reading, and other content areas in which instruction is provided. The appropriate instruction for the youth will depend on his or her unique needs as well as on State and local curriculum standards. Facilities' schools also need to select appropriate assessment instruments, using tests that are valid, age appropriate, grade appropriate, and free of cultural biases.^v

To ensure that records are reliably maintained, the process for updating records should be **consistent** regardless of who enters data. Automated data collection systems can be powerful tools for maintaining accurate records. At the facility level, an electronic database can store large amounts of youth data and allows an individual's test scores, credits, and grades to be easily updated. In some States or counties, the entire juvenile justice system has an automated data collection system, which allows facilities to enter information into a common database that is available to other facilities and schools within the system.

^v For additional information, see NDTAC's *A Brief Guide for Selecting and Using Pre-Post Assessments* at <http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/resources/spotlight/spotlight200604a.asp>.

Strategy Four: Send Progress Updates to the Family, the Home School, and Other Members of the Transition Team

As discussed previously, a key aspect of ensuring a youth's successful transition is thinking about community reintegration from the beginning. To address the stigma of being in this system, **regularly communicate the progress the youth is making while committed.** Improved test scores, course completions, and credit accrual are all significant and may improve the reception the student receives when returning to the community school. Other types of progress, such as new academic interests or positive responses to specific teaching practices, are also worth communicating.

B. PRACTICES SPECIFIC TO FAMILY INVOLVEMENT DURING RESIDENCY

Family involvement is a key ingredient to the youth's success while at a facility and after leaving. The family should continue to be given opportunities for involvement. Potential strategies to promote family involvement at this stage are identified below.

Strategy One: Offer Programs to Family Members to Develop and Hone Their Parenting Skills

The goal is most often for a youth to return home to his or her family. In preparation, parents can often benefit from **parenting classes**. Classes can cover general parenting skills, such as development stages, positive reinforcement and behavior modification techniques, and effective communication skills. Classes can also **address causes of behavior** associated with incarceration or adjudication and cover strategies to reduce recidivism.

For example, the **Strengthening Families Program (SFP)** is a behavioral and cognitive skills training program for high-risk families that research has shown to have positive results (especially for African American families). It requires the participation of the parents/guardians and children, and is designed to increase resilience and decrease delinquency, depression, school failure, and violence.^w

Strategy Two: Enhance Family Involvement Through Family Counseling

Family counseling can benefit both the youth and his or her family. Family counseling that "is carefully structured, teaches skills, and focuses on family problems or youth needs is shown to reduce recidivismA **combination of cognitive problem solving training and parent training** has been found to be the most effective approach for reducing antisocial behavior in youth and in reducing stress and depression in parents."²⁰

Strategy Three: Continue to Make the School Inviting to the Family

Although strategies for making the school inviting have already been presented, additional opportunities occur at this stage. One strategy is to **open the school to families during the**

^w For more information about the Strengthening Families Program, visit www.strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org.

facility’s regular visiting hours, with teachers on hand, for family tours and informal parent-teacher conferences. Opening the school during visiting hours several times a year gives parents another opportunity to engage in their child’s education.

NEXT STEPS

In the Appendices is a self-study tool specific to this stage of transition. The tool will help you gather applicable institutional data on your transition processes, determine your status in implementing key strategies, and plan next steps in program improvement efforts. Additionally, resources specific to this stage have been compiled, below, as examples of how States are implementing the presented strategies. For each document, the source, a Web site to access the document, and a brief description are provided. Action documents that are pertinent to this stage include: the Youth Climate Survey developed by the Performance-Based Standards (PbS) Learning Institute, Inc., a juvenile questionnaire created by the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Merging Two Worlds (M2W) curriculum.

Resources for Residence
<p>Youth Surveys</p> <p>Conditions for Learning Survey Source: American Institutes for Research (AIR) URL: http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/docs/cflsurvey_hs.pdf (high school version) http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/docs/cflsurvey_ms.pdf (middle school version) Description: This schoolwide assessment instrument collects information on how students experience the school climate. It can be administered on a schoolwide basis or to a sample of students, and their data can be disaggregated to see how subgroups of students are experiencing the school environment. This instrument, initially developed for use in Chicago Public Schools, is now being applied in a number of U.S. districts.</p>
<p>Youth Climate Survey Source: Performance-based Standards (PbS) Learning Institute, Inc. URL: http://pbstandards.org/DocLib/Youth_Climate_Survey_October2008.pdf Description: This survey is used to obtain youths’ opinions about basic safety and security issues and about the extent to which programs are implemented and policies are followed.</p>
<p>Juvenile Questionnaire Source: North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention URL: http://www.ncdjdp.org/resources/policies/ydd/ycd/forms/029- Juvenile_ Questionnaire.pdf Description: This brief questionnaire is a form for youth in correctional facilities to complete regarding their feelings toward various aspects of their experience in detention. Satisfaction with treatment plan, level of understanding of treatment plan and goals, level of satisfaction with the education they are receiving, and whether or not they feel respected by facility staff are asked, among other areas. The data obtained through this questionnaire will enable facility staff to better understand youths’ perspectives and feelings on various components of their detention.</p>
<p>Curriculum</p> <p>Transition Curriculum Source: North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention URL: http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/docs/transition_curriculum.pdf Description: This document defines and lists the services a youth needs in order to transition successfully. These services include: education, community/institutional experiences, employment, adult living skills, daily living skills,</p>

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and functional vocational training. This curriculum includes the targeted objectives to which the youth may aim within each of these service areas.

Merging Two Worlds (M2W) Curriculum

Source: Arizona Department of Education

URL: <http://www.ade.az.gov/ess/SpecialProjects/securecare/>.

Description: Merging Two Worlds (M2W) is a curriculum designed for youth in correctional facilities. Through four chapters containing 40 lessons, M2W teaches life skills in preparation for youths' exit from the system. The chapters teach areas such as self-awareness, career aptitude, personal skills, goal-setting, health and wellness, responsibility, and money management. A mini version of the curriculum consists of 12 lessons. Both versions are available for free on the ADE Web site, although teacher training is recommended prior to using the materials.

School-Parent Compact

School-Parent Compact

Source: North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

URL: http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/docs/school_parent_compact.pdf

Description: The purpose of this compact is to foster the development of a school-parent relationship to help students achieve State academic standards. This compact delineates the responsibilities of the parent, staff person, student, and principal; each person signs and dates the document.

If an agency, organization, or publisher wishes to suggest additional documents or resources for this Toolkit, it may submit a request to ndtac@air.org. NDTAC will review the information and consider it for inclusion in a future version of the Toolkit.