



THE DYRS APPROACH: ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT

General Approach

DYRS applies a six-pronged strategy for youth who need services to address alcohol and substance abuse issues:

1. **Screening.** Utilizing a reputable screening tool (MAYSI).
2. **Initial Assessment.** Generally occurs after the selected screening tool indicates further assessment. Again, utilizing a reputable tool (GAIN-I).
3. **Service Coordination.** Driven by the assessment results, we develop a comprehensive service plan (substance abuse services, educational, work, and pro-social activities).
4. **Service Initiation.** Occurs within 14 days of the completed full assessment.
5. **Service Delivery and Engagement.** Youth and families receive additional service contacts within 30 days of the youth's full assessment.
6. **Transition.** Service plan is implemented and youth and family transition to long term community supports.

Alcohol and Substance Use Screenings and Assessments

DYRS uses the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI) to screen all youth for substance use issues upon admission to the Youth Services Center or the New Beginnings Youth Development Center. Juvenile justice agencies across the country use MAYSI to screen court-involved youth for mental, behavioral, and substance use problems.

We also use the Global Appraisal of Individual Needs-Initial exam (GAIN-I), which is an evidence-based diagnosis, placement, and treatment planning tool. The GAIN-I is comprehensive and typically lasts two hours. Substantial research supports its reliability and validity. All New Beginnings youth receive the GAIN-I within 30 days of admission. As of March 14th, 2013, we assessed 83 New Beginnings residents using the GAIN-I, none required inpatient treatment. However, the GAIN-I indicated that 65% of them would benefit from outpatient services.

For youth in the community, we administer the GAIN-I if they repeatedly test positive following drug and alcohol screenings. Since January 2013, 57 youth received the GAIN-I, only 3 required inpatient care.

Alcohol and Substance Use Treatment

The patterns and severity of a youth's substance use problem are critical factors in how we determine which course of treatment is appropriate. We also consider co-existing medical concerns and other social and environmental factors. The described above assessments tell us

that outpatient treatment is appropriate for nearly 95% of our young people who are found to use drugs.

New Beginnings uses the SAMHSA-recognized, evidence-based Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT) to serve residents' mental health and substance use needs.¹ MRT seeks to teach youth to "think before they act." MRT trainers have certified agency case managers as well as New Beginnings and YSC staff to administer the program to youth. Additionally, three DC YouthLink providers have been certified to offer MRT in the community.

For youth in the community, DYRS' multi-faceted approach provides consistency and continuity with that of the Addiction Prevention and Recovery Administration (APRA). APRA's Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment Expansion Program is commonly known as A-STEP. When a youth in the community needs treatment, we involve an A-STEP provider.

LOOKING AHEAD?

We've made much progress in strengthening our approach to substance use and mental health, but there is more to do. Upcoming fiscal year 2014 initiatives include:

- *Substance Abuse Prevention and Recovery Support in the Community:* Through DC YouthLink, we will continue to provide youth with substance abuse counseling and recovery support. Starting in October, we'll expand our capacity to offer MRT in the community in addition to other counseling services.
- *Address Synthetic Drug Use:* We will require our community-based providers to cover synthetic drug use in their substance abuse awareness curricula. We'll also expand alcohol and substance use testing to include synthetic drugs.
- *Residential Treatment Services:* We've issued a request for proposals for a substance use facility. Once we select the vendors, we'll make this service available to youth whose combined treatment needs necessitate residential placement.
- *Collaborative Approach:* DYRS, APRA, and other youth-serving agencies will launch an integrated service delivery model that provides a comprehensive continuum of community-based and residential in-patient counseling and treatment services.

¹ Juvenile justice systems in Pennsylvania, Florida, Virginia, Maryland, Nevada, New Mexico, Canada, and other jurisdictions actively use MRT