



Youth Academy Program Description and Expectations

Mission

The Mission of Youth Academy is to support each student socially, emotionally, and academically, while developing resiliency and connections to be successful in school.

Program Overview

The Youth Academy serves a specific population of students who are in need of additional resources to fully access academic and school settings. Our program provides transitional support for students needing intervention or recovery in a therapeutic setting to increase social & emotional skills.

The Youth Academy was established to serve several purposes; students may be eligible for enrollment:

1. Through Youth in Care team discussion and recommendation
 - Division of Child & Family Services or Juvenile Justice Youth Services
2. Upon return from residential or day treatment programs and/or home and hospital services
3. District Support Team recommendation
 - At risk behaviors (suicidal ideation)
 - Mental health diagnosis
 - Significant/recent trauma
 - Parent/student referrals will follow the DST process
4. By District Case Management or Safe Schools Referral
 - Assault
 - Distribution of illegal substances
 - Distribution of pornography
 - Fighting (serious bodily injury and serious and continuous disruption that threatens the safety of the school)
 - Gang activity
 - Sexual misconduct

Vision & Expectations

Youth Academy is a short-term program that provides a smaller learning environment to eligible students in grades K-12. Youth Academy is designed to provide individualized instruction focused on serving the unique academic and behavioral needs of each student to increase long-term success once they return to their regular school placement.

- Prior to placement/enrollment, Orientation meetings will be scheduled for each student with the Youth Academy Team as well as the school team; these will occur on Fridays and Mondays.
- Youth Academy provides academic coursework and social and emotional support for students.
- Students are expected to engage in therapeutic opportunities individually as well as in small and whole group settings weekly.
- Youth Academy has been designed to be a temporary enrollment/placement.
 - For students who need therapeutic, social, or emotional support, the length of stay will be based on the needs of each student and recommendations from the Youth Academy Educational Therapists, Teachers, and Administrators.
 - The Youth Academy Teams will collaborate with schools of record, YIC teams and health professionals to determine goals for each student.
 - For students referred through DCMT, the length of stay will be at least six weeks and could be longer based on recommendations presented at review meetings for each student.
 - Considerations will be made based on the end of quarter and timely transitions. DCMT also considers what may motivate each student to achieve their goals.
- School teams are expected to maintain positive relationships, and connections by visiting students weekly. Staff may alternate which adults visit each week.
 - Regarding DCMT, a pause may be put on these visits until the next location of enrollment is determined, so the appropriate team may establish connections.
- Students will be mainstreamed into classes at each level when they reach behavior expectations for engaging with larger peer groups.

Level System

- While at Youth Academy, students will monitor their behavioral progress in coordination with the staff using a level system. Level systems are a behavioral management approach designed to be an organizational framework for managing student behavior where “students access greater independence and more privileges as they demonstrate increased behavioral control” (Heward, p. 306, 2003).



- The four intended student outcomes using level systems are: 1) increasing appropriate behavior; 2) promoting academic achievement; 3) fostering a student's improvement through self-management; and 4) developing personal responsibility for social emotional and academic performance (Farrell, Smith & Brownell, 1998).

Token System

- While at Youth Academy, students will participate in a token economy system. This is an evidence-based, positive reinforcement procedure that reinforces the learner engaging in desired target behaviors. The procedure teaches learners what to do instead of what not to do and helps produce a more reinforcing environment (Cooper et al., 2020).

Exit Criteria & Transition Planning

- Student behavior and participation data is collected daily. Meeting program success criteria may indicate that a student is prepared to transition to their regular school placement. Students meeting their exit criteria will be recommended to the appropriate team and a transition planning meeting will be scheduled with parents and appropriate school staff members.
- DCMT will provide recommendations about behavior expectations and exit criteria. The role of DCMT is to define what the exit behavior must look like before the student may re-enter a traditional school. (DCMT is primarily composed of administrators, not behavior experts or social workers, so the team does rely on the expertise of the Youth Academy Teams to provide additional guidance for students if they see a need.)
 - DCMT does not dictate methods—it relies on the expertise of those with greater knowledge to provide recommendations for achieving the goals set by DCMT.
- Transition meetings will occur on Fridays and Mondays.
- If a student is placed in Youth Academy by DCMT, DCMT will set exit criteria. The student could remain at YA until these criteria are met. It varies based on the actual referral and will be communicated clearly to parents and students and Youth Academy staff at the transition meeting.
- The Youth Academy teams will develop Transition Plans and goals for students enrolled from YIC, DST, treatment centers/Home and Hospital. 3, 6, 8, 10, & 12 week reviews will be scheduled with schools of record. Collaboration with school teams is essential.
- When students meet these goals, they will complete a reflection and “presentation” regarding their hopes for their next steps to support ownership of their potential placement.

Considering our Multilingual (ML) Students

- If a student is not a newcomer and is enrolled in a course at a middle school or high school that utilizes System 44 or Read 180, the same service will continue at YA and would count towards meeting the language goals for the student. If the ML student is performing at a Level 1 or is enrolled in a newcomer class, then an Individualized Language Development Plan will be created by the sending school to make recommendations for the continued language services that can be provided by licensed educators at YA.

Considering Special Education Services

Child Find

- The IEP team at the school of record will work closely with YA instructional and support staff to determine any suspicion of child find and will be the determining body for any student that is believed to be a student with a disability. All decisions for Prior Written Notice (including consent for testing) will be issued from the IEP team at the school of record.

Evaluation/Reevaluation

- The IEP team at the school of record will work to provide evaluation support for any suspected child find case while enrolled at YA. Instructional and support staff can participate in evaluation surveys or other relevant information gathering needs that the school of record IEP team requires to make a determination regarding eligibility for special education or related services or students who might qualify under section 504.

IEP Development and Timelines

- The IEP team at the school of record will work with the YA instructional and support staff to develop an offer of FAPE or maintain annual renewals for such purposes (IEP reauthorization). The staff at YA will assist with providing relevant progress monitoring etc. for teams to have meaningful present levels with which to develop new goals. The YA team will also provide relevant information and assist in creating timely and meaningful progress reports. Coordination for this particular IEP required item should be done in collaboration and under the supervision of administration from the school of record and administrative staff overseeing the YA program.

FAPE

- The agreed upon offer of FAPE, as documented in the agreed upon annual IEP, will be carried out by YA staff during the duration of student enrollment in the program.