

## December 2015

### Blueprint Positions Youth for Success

The Blueprint is a framework of case management principles to support and expand how we serve youth at DYS. While we want our youth to do well during their stay at DYS, it's even more critical that youth succeed when we return them to their communities. The Blueprint provides a model to ensure that a youth is surrounded with services that lead to continued success. For this to happen, DYS staff work together to support youths' reentry.



**BLUEPRINT  
(INTEGRATED CASE  
MANAGEMENT  
MODEL)**

The Blueprint covers youth commitment, assessment, case planning & treatment, and reentry. A summary of its guiding principles follows:

- Parole involved in the juvenile court commitment decision
- Youth assessed & screened at reception (with referral for services)
- Evidence-based programs
- Comprehensive individual treatment plan
- Formal, collaborative interdisciplinary team meetings held monthly
- Program continuity with parole and court

To read more about the Blueprint, please click [here](#).

I'm proud of Youth A and his journey from one of our facilities back to the community this year – it's a great example of the Blueprint at work. While at Indian River and Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facilities, it wasn't always smooth sailing for this young man. Early on, he struggled with gang involvement and nearly had his "Serious Youthful Offender" designation invoked. Thanks to many staff at the facilities, step-by-step Youth A got on the right path. Eventually he obtained his GED and earned the privilege to be employed off-grounds at BurgerFi, a local burger restaurant, earning and saving for his future. He also took advantage of the opportunity to be in a program at the Volunteers of America (VOA) called Face Forward 2, which helped him gain a variety of employment readiness skills.

Beginning in January, Youth A's juvenile parole officer and Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility staff brainstormed an idea: petitioning the court to consider judicial releasing the youth three months before his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. This would provide him 90 days of parole supervision and services to help facilitate his success in the community. Youth A, facility staff, staff members from multiple community-based organizations, an attorney with the Ohio Public Defender's Office, and his parole officer worked together to create a comprehensive plan that was presented to the judge, along with a compelling letter written by the youth.

The judge agreed with the plan, and Youth A was released to parole supervision three months before his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Because of his mother's concerns over her lease agreement, alternative housing was needed. All those involved in planning prior to release helped the young man secure housing at Bellefaire, beginning with transitional living and eventually an efficiency apartment.

Youth A has continued to participate in programming through VOA, which along with Legal Aid, is working to assist Youth A in getting his record expunged as early as it is legally possible. As a condition of supervision, his parole officer required Youth A to avoid his old home community in order to stay away

from former negative peer associations. Along with keeping busy at night by working third shift at a factory, Youth A has avoided old influences pulling him into criminal activity. Once he is 21 years old and no longer eligible to formally receive services from DYS, Youth A will receive follow-up case management services for an additional 9 months through [Home Choice](#), a community-based support network available through the Ohio Department of Medicaid.

Today, with help from parole, Youth A is taking classes to obtain his driver's license and has career aspirations that may include law enforcement. Other youth at the VOA have benefitted from him sharing his journey. He's the picture of what we hope for all of our youth: starting fresh in life, working a steady job, working toward an even brighter future, and giving back to the community.

