



# The Path to Safer Facilities

# Efforts to Support Staff

- Critical Incident Stress Management Program
- Peer Assistance
- Desert Waters
- Cultural Assessment “One Wish”
  - “To see youth held more accountable”
  - “Consistency for what is allowed and what is not allowed”
  - “More structure”
  - “To feel safe and help others”

# The Landscape of Seclusion

- Congressional bill introduced in U.S. House of Representatives to end solitary confinement in juvenile correctional facilities
  - Bill H.R. 4124
- 6 state juvenile justice systems have banned (or have very limited uses) of solitary confinement
- 1 adult system (NY) has banned confining juveniles
- 3 states have pending legislation
- DYS data indicates the use of seclusion does not result in less incidents of violence against staff and youth in the facilities

# What Do We Know

- Good programming = good security



Meaningful Programming



Safer Environments

- Shifting away from seclusion as a punishment
- Increase programs while maintaining security

# What We Know

## Seclusion DOES NOT:

- Make facilities safer
- Reduce assaults on staff and youth
- Prevent violence
- Help youth develop and mature
- Teach youth skills for problem solving
- Provide treatment and education

## Seclusion DOES:

- Deteriorate mental health
- Increase youths' desire for revenge
- Encourage anti-social behavior
- Desensitize youth & increase anger
- Compromise positive relationships with staff (trust)
- Re-traumatize youth

# Mission and Vision

- Mission: to improve Ohio's future by habilitating youth and empowering families and communities
- Vision: a safer Ohio: one youth, one family and one community at a time

# Good Programming = Good Security

- Treatment **PREVENTION STRATEGIES** to be completed by September 1<sup>st</sup>:
  - Comprehensive initial assessments
  - Diagnostic case formulation
  - Treatment delivery with integrity/fidelity
  - Individual treatment
  - Utilize Security Threat Group (STG)/gang data to develop targeted interventions

# Good Programming = Good Security

- **PREVENTION STRATEGIES-IMMEDIATE**
  - Frequent recognition and reward for positive behavior
  - Reduce youth idleness
  - Consistent application of rules and expectations
  - Engage youth in meaningful activities with MINIMAL unstructured time
  - Increase volunteer activities

# Good Programming = Good Security

- Changes in Seclusion Procedures-  
**INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**
- As of July 1<sup>st</sup>:
  - Any youth serving seclusion for over 72 hours (Pre-Hearing or Intervention) in a rolling 30-day period must be reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Team
  - Any continued seclusion within that 30-day period must be approved by the Superintendent

# Good Programming = Good Security

- Changes in Seclusion Procedures-  
**INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**
- As of July 1st:
  - Youth with multiple Acts of Violence will be referred to a Special Review Team (SRT)
  - When warranted, treatment will intensify
  - Increasing youth-clinician contact
  - More individualized, targeted treatment

# Good Programming = Good Security

- Treatment **INTERVENTION STRATEGIES** to be completed by July 1<sup>st</sup>:
  - Within 2 days of every Act of Violence, the treating clinician/Interdisciplinary Team will review the youth's treatment plan.
  - Intensity of treatment will be increased to 3x/week individual sessions for two weeks; daily homework assigned

# Good Programming = Good Security

- Changes in Seclusion Procedures-**SAFE TO RELEASE**
- As of September 1<sup>st</sup>
  - All youth who engage in Acts of Violence and are placed in seclusion will be assessed for safe release between 2-4 hours.
  - If a 24hr period is reached and the youth continues to refuse or the climate indicates safety concerns, the Superintendent must approve further seclusion after an assessment is conducted.

# Good Programming = Good Security

- Changes in Seclusion Procedures-**INTERVENTION SECLUSION**
- As of September 1<sup>st</sup>:
  - Intervention Seclusion will:
    - Be only for those Acts of Violence that are “severe” rule violations (one exception)
    - 24 hr. maximum
    - 4 hr. increments with 1hr break
    - Served on Friday evening after school, Saturday & Sunday
    - Youth permitted to attend programming & treatment

# Tools and Resources



# Tools and Resources

## Upcoming Trainings for DYS Staff:

- Desert Waters
- Motivational Interviewing
  - Verbal Strategies
  - De-escalation Techniques
- Annual Mental Health Training
- Trauma-Informed Care

# Tools and Resources

**Desirable Incentives** - 85% of youth were not involved in incidents

- **Strength-Based Behavioral Management Sub-Committees**
  - Reducing the layers
  - Soliciting input from youth and staff
- **Preferred Housing**
- **Increased off-campus activities**
  - College courses
  - Job Placements

# Tools and Resources

## Meaningful Activities

- Staff and youth partnership
  - Beautification of units
  - Step program
  - Running/fitness club
  - Chess club
- Community service
- Partnerships with volunteers

# Tools and Resources: Education

- Developing and implementing a structured program for reading and math remedial services
- Plans to increase Career Technical opportunities
- Improving the Individualized Education Plans for special education students
- Developing Student Growth Teams designed to address education attainment

# Tools and Resources: Freedom Schools

- Partnership with the Children's Defense Fund
- Multi-cultural, high energy program utilizing college-aged interns
- Goal is to increase reading skills and love of learning
- Currently in juvenile justice programs in 4 states
  - These systems have seen decreased violence and behavior problems and increased reading abilities
  - Ohio will be the first whole state juvenile correctional system to have Freedom Schools
- Will utilize on weekends and during intersessions

# Tools and Resources: Post Secondary and Other Education Initiatives

- Increasing Post Secondary College and Career Opportunities
  - Ashland University
  - Apprenticeships
  - Other initiatives



# Tools and Resources

## Cultivating External Partnerships

- Petitioning Court and Release Authority for early releases when youth are engaging in positive behavior
- Enhancing family involvement
- Expanding mentoring & volunteering
- Involving Reentry Coalitions
- Enhancing relationships with county prosecutors and the OSHP
- Making the Serious Youthful Offender process more efficient

# What's Important

- Training staff
- Effective treatment and delivery of services to youth
- Reward and recognition of positive behavior
- Increase in meaningful programming & activities
- Building relationships between youth & staff
- Family engagement
- Accountability





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