Coming Soon...

DYS staff are appreciated for making impressive reform progress during the past year. While we celebrate all of the strides we have made, we continue to focus on reaching our remaining goals, which include the following:

- Continuing staff training in areas like Family Engagement, Strength-based Behavior Management, and Structured Programming
- Expanding the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) pilot unit throughout all DYS facilities and Community Correctional Facilities
- Implementing the Phoenix/New Freedom program, a comprehensive, strength-based curriculum that uses the CBT model to address needs such as substance abuse, anger, gangs and violence
- Modifying classroom management strategies

Big Steps Forward

The Department of Youth Services has taken big steps forward the past year, and there is much for which to be proud. Enhancements have been made on a number of fronts including reducing the facility population, increased safety and security, expanding community capacity and supporting lasting change in the lives of youth through rehabilitation, education and treatment.

Highlights of Progress Made During the Last Year

- The youth population is down from 1365 in April 2009 to 969 in April 2010
- Juvenile Corrections Officers became Youth Specialists, re-emphasizing the importance of their presence in the facilities while focusing on greater participation in programming for youth, Interdisciplinary Teams, training and skill building
- Facilities are being enhanced with expanded structured programming to keep youth continually engaged in pro-social activities and programs
- A new approach to use of force, Managing Youth Resistance, supports safer environments and fewer injuries
- The Strength-based Behavioral Management System (SBBMS) is being put into place to manage youth behavior through incentives and sanctions
- The grievance policy was revised and streamlined while maintaining a user-friendly way for youth to address their complaints
- Classrooms received technology upgrades including white boards and ceiling-mounted projectors
- A new process for approving a youth's release was implemented with specific guidelines for determining a youth's release date
- The Family Engagement Team is collaborating with regional parole offices to enhance family participation in the youth's treatment
- An agreement with the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services suspends, rather than terminates, Medicaid benefits of eligible youth committed to DYS, allowing benefits to be restored quickly upon release back to the community
- The Ohio Youth Assessment System was implemented statewide to provide consistency in the determination of treatment and level of supervision for juvenile offenders
- The first Community Based Treatment Center opened in Franklin County and provides a 120-day intensive, cognitive-behavioral therapy program
- Targeted RECLAIM was implemented in 6 counties to provide additional funding through RECLAIM to reduce commitments from those juvenile courts that commit the most youth to DYS
- Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice initiatives continued to enhance the community's ability to locally serve juvenile offenders with serious behavioral health needs
- DYS established a partnership with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to support volunteerism