Responsible Public Policy

The Department of Youth Services (DYS) touches the lives of thousands of youth in Ohio. Beyond youth in DYS facilities and those on parole, DYS funds and supports over 680 direct service programs throughout the state offering more than 124,000 youth (based on annual program admissions) opportunities and services to effect positive change.

Grants to Support Reentry of Youth

I am pleased to announce that the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs recently awarded DYS over a million dollars in “Second Chance Act” Grants. The Second Chance Act, signed into law in 2008, was created to improve outcomes for people returning to communities from prisons and jails.

DYS will receive more than $600,000 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention through the Juvenile Mentoring Initiative. The grant will be used to provide mentoring services for approximately 245 youth leaving DYS facilities and returning to Cuyahoga, Franklin, Montgomery, Summit and Allen counties. Three community based organizations (True North Ministry, Heart of Ohio Mentoring and Men of Standards) will begin mentoring youth four to six months prior to their release and will continue mentoring youth in the community for at least six additional months. Mentoring services will support each youth’s reentry plan and assist with education, employment, housing and behavioral health treatment services.

Nearly $500,000 has been awarded to DYS from the Bureau of Justice Assistance through the Technology Careers Training Demonstration Projects for Incarcerated Adults and Juveniles Initiative. The grant will assist around 60 juvenile offenders from Franklin County with training and employment for information technology-based careers. Basic computer technology training and career coaching will be provided by Ashland University. In the community, youth will receive technology careers education, training, work experience and reentry counseling from Henkels and McCoy (H&M) and Ashland University at the H&M Success Center located in Columbus.

These funds will provide youth with opportunities to enrich their lives. DYS staff Kim Humphrey, Reentry Administrator and Clifford Smith, Community Partnerships Administrator, will lead mentoring efforts. Mark Powell, Career-technical Director, will manage the career technology grant while the Correctional Education Association will complete evaluation of the project.