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 610 direct service programs throughout the state offering nearly 110,000 youth (based on annual program admissions) opportunities and services to effect positive change.

In addition to serving youth in facilities and while on parole, DYS promotes a variety of community initiatives to reach youth, support families and build communities. The agency funds nearly 100% of the operating costs for 12 Community Correctional Facilities (CCFs). There are 355 funded beds available for referral from all 88 juvenile courts. These facilities are operated locally and used to treat felony adjudicated youth who would otherwise be committed to a DYS facility. In Fiscal Year 2011, a total of 71 juvenile courts admitted 539 youth to CCFs.

The decision to place and treat a youth in a CCF instead of a DYS facility is based on validated risk and need assessment tools. Our community-based service delivery system is designed to provide appropriate services and supports for youth by matching risk level with the least restrictive program setting. This approach is less costly and results in better outcomes for youth.

While all CCFs offer rehabilitative programs, services and educational opportunities, each CCF has its own treatment specialties available for youth. Each CCF serves designated counties; however, each is open to all areas of Ohio in order to serve those youth who may benefit most from specialized programming. With 12 facilities located throughout the state, many youth have the opportunity to be served closer to home, promoting family engagement and effective reentry into the community.

Research indicates that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) approaches that target criminogenic risk factors are effective for juveniles. CBT focuses on helping youth restructure the way they think and respond in various situations. The CCFs are currently undergoing a conversion to CBT program delivery. Through training and coaching from the University of Cincinnati, this conversion is scheduled to be completed during 2013. Nine facilities have either transitioned or will transition by the end of Fiscal Year 2012, and the remaining three facilities will begin assessment, training and implementation within the coming months.

More information is available on our website at www.dys.ohio.gov (click on the “Community” tab).