



Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth &amp; Families

## Performance Indicator Findings for Youth Outreach and Tracking Programs

This Rhode Island Data Analytic Center Research Brief summarizes findings of selected performance indicators for eight outreach and tracking programs funded by the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) for the Fiscal Year 2010 (FY10). Outreach and tracking programs are designed to provide community-based outreach services to males and females, ages 9-21. Services include: individual, group, and/or family counseling; recreational activities; culturally enriching experiences; crisis response services; and linkages to educational, vocational, and/or rehabilitation services as necessary. Analyses examined the individual and family characteristics, presenting problems, and discharge criteria for children and youth served by DCYF outreach and tracking programs.

### Demographic Characteristics

**A total of 1,095 children and youth were served in outreach and tracking programs, of which 669 (61%) were newly admitted within the fiscal year.** Of the total sample, proportionately more males (62%) were served, over one-half (92%) were 12-18 years old, and over three-fourths were Caucasian (38%), Hispanic (26%), or African American (21%). These demographic characteristics are detailed in Table 1. Additionally, English was the primary language spoken at home for the great majority of children and youth served (80%), with Spanish as the next most common (14%).

**At admission, 16% of youth age 16 and over were employed (n=185) and 82% were enrolled in school (n=937).** These numbers are higher because duplicate records are possibly included as aggregate data is collected quarterly.

**The majority of children and youth for whom data was reported received passing grades in school.** Math, English, and Reading grades were reported for 45%, 45%, and 18% of children and youth served. Of this group, approximately 53% to 57% received a grade of "C" or better in Math, English, or Reading during the period they were enrolled in outreach and tracking programs.

### Referral Source

**The most common referral source was DCYF Family Services Division (35%), followed by DCYF Juvenile Corrections Probation (14%), DCYF/CANTS (9%), and DCYF Juvenile Corrections-Rhode Island Training School (RITS; 9%).** Internal Agency Referral, Self-Referral, and Court/Family Court each provided 6 percent of referrals while Law Enforcement, School, and Truancy Court/Officers each provided 3-4 percent of referrals. The remaining referral sources each provided two percent or fewer referrals and included Court Diversionary, Social Service Agency, DCYF/Child Protective Screening Unit, Mental Health Agency, other reasons than those listed, and DCYF Placement Unit. Overall referral patterns were comparable from FY09 to FY10, with slight decreases in DCYF Family Services Division (42% vs. 35%), and DCYF/CANTS (14% vs. 9%) referrals.

### Mental Health Needs

**Forty-two percent of the children and youth served had identified needs for mental health services.** Of those in need, the majority (72%) were reported as receiving mental health services, while 31% had additional unmet mental health needs. The most common barrier for receiving mental health services was non-compliant child/youth (44%) and non-compliant parent (21%).

**Data for FY09 and FY10 was generally comparable** with the exception of a slight increase in parent non-compliance (15% vs. 21%).

Variable		n	%
Gender	Male	675	62
	Female	420	38
Age	0-5 years	12	1
	6-11 years	53	5
	12-15 years	487	44
	16-18 years	528	48
	19+ years	15	1
Race/ Ethnicity	Caucasian	416	38
	African American	226	21
	Hispanic	283	26
	Asian/Pacific Islander	30	3
	Biracial	55	5
	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	13	1
	Unknown/Other	72	7

## Performance Indicator Findings for Youth Outreach and Tracking Programs

### Child and Family Presenting Problems

**The most prevalent presenting problems identified among children and youth entering outreach and tracking programs were school problems or issues (59%), behavioral problems (42%), out of parental control (32%), relationship problems/issues (28%), and anger/aggression (26%)** as depicted in Table 2. Additional presenting problems not included in the table are developmental problem/issue (2%), health problem/disability (1%), prenatal drug exposure (1%), fire setting (1%), eating disorders (1%), and language/speech disorder (1%). Comparisons of FY09 to FY10 indicate that there were slight increases in reports of relationship problems/issues (19% vs. 28%) and mental health problems/issues (10% vs. 16%) and a decrease in family violence/stress (29% vs. 21%) for those entering outreach and tracking programs in FY10.

**The highest percentages of family presenting problems included school problems/issues (48%), family stress (42%), behavioral problems (37%), parenting problems (35%), and financial problems/unemployment (26%).** Overall, FY09 is comparable to FY10 with the exception that there was a slight increase in the percentage of families who reported recreational needs (15% vs. 21%).

### Discharge Reasons and Characteristics

**Sixty-two percent (n=674) of the total number of children and youth served were discharged the same year.** The primary reason for discharge given by programs was that goals were accomplished (53%), followed by other reasons than those listed (17%). Eight percent of children and youth were discharged due to court order, seven percent were discharged for being adjudicated/re-offending, and another seven percent refused services. The remaining discharge reasons each provided four percent or fewer referrals and included Moved Out of State/Area, Left Without Notice/AMA/AWOL, and Child Aged Out of Program.

**The primary placement to which children and youth were discharged was to their home with a parent or guardian (66%), followed by discharge to the RITS (8%).** Seven percent were discharged to a group home and six percent to residential placement. The home of relatives, shelters other than those listed, DCYF foster care, more intensive programs, psychiatric hospitalization, job corps, adult corrections, and supervised independent living each comprised 3% or fewer of findings. Overall, the discharge dispositions for FY09 and FY10 were comparable.

Table 2. Child and Youth Presenting Problems in FY10 (N=669)

Presenting Problem	n	%
School Problems/Issue	395	59
Behavioral Problems	283	42
Out of Parental Control	216	32
Relationship Problem/Issue	188	28
Anger/Aggression	172	26
Criminal/Illegal Activity	158	24
Family Violence/Stress	140	21
Alcohol/Drug Use/Abuse	118	18
Delinquency	114	17
Mental Health Problem/Other	106	16
Hyperactivity/Attention Deficit	85	13
Anxiety	83	12
Depression/Withdrawal	80	12
Violent Behavior	78	12
Death/Absence of Caregiver	51	8
Abandonment	49	7
Grief and Loss	43	6
Abuse-Emotional	37	6
Abuse-Sexual	30	4
Abuse-Physical	27	4
Developmental Delay	24	4
Sexual Problem/Issue	21	3
Other	21	3
Suicide Attempt/Threat	18	3
Self-Injurious Act/Threat	17	3

*Note: Programs may select more than one problem per person. As a result, percents do not equal 100. Data was collected for new admissions only (n=669).*

### Summary of Major Findings

- *There were 1,095 children and youth served in outreach and tracking programs in FY10, of which 669 (61%) were newly admitted and 674 (62%) were discharged within the fiscal year.*
- *Proportionately more children and youth served were male (62%), Caucasian (38%), between the ages of 12 and 18 years (92%), and presented with needs for mental health services (42%).*
- *The most common presenting problems for children and youth entering services were: school problems or issues (59%), behavioral problems (42%), out of parental control (32%); the most common family presenting problems were: school problems/issues (48%), family stress (42%), behavioral problems (37%), parenting problems (35%), and financial problems/unemployment (26%).*
- *The majority of children and youth served (62%) were discharged from services within the same year, and most of these (66%) to a parent or guardian in the home.*