

2018

## 2018 Positive Youth Outcomes in Maine's Juvenile Justice System

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**2018**

**POSITIVE**

**YOUTH**

**OUTCOMES**

*In Maine's Juvenile Justice System*



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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USM MUSKIE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE

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This report can be found on the Maine Statistical Analysis website:

<http://justiceresearch.usm.maine.edu/>

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## LETTER FROM THE ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OVERSEEING JUVENILE SERVICES

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The Maine Department of Corrections Juvenile Division is committed to the result that all Maine youth successfully transition into adulthood. The Juvenile Division's contribution to this result is to ensure that all justice involved youth experience a fair, equitable, and responsive juvenile justice system that provides them with positive outcomes.

As a Department, we have and will continue to train staff in results based leadership. Whereby staff learn to align their day-to-day work with the end result we want to see for each youth: more than simply a reduction in return to custody, but the development and obtainment of external and internal assets that prepare youth for success beyond their involvement with the juvenile justice system and well into adulthood. Ultimately, we want to see positive youth development in every young person in our system.

The following report highlights how the Department of Corrections Juvenile Division is aligning our programs, practices, and policy toward the result of positive youth outcomes.

This report is possible thanks to the Maine Statistical Analysis Center, who along with George Shaler, Senior Research Associate, and Danielle Layton, Research Analyst at the USM Muskie School of Public Service, allowed for the work associated with this report.

My appreciation extends also to Matthew Archibald of Hornby Zeller Associates for his work on creating the exit reviews used by probation.

I offer my sincere gratitude to the women and men within the Department of Corrections who have committed themselves to aligning their work to the positive development of the youth they serve.

I have deep appreciation for Maine's tightknit community of stakeholders and advocates. We are grateful for the role and inspiration of these advocates in ensuring the best for the youth and families we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Colin O'Neill".

Colin O'Neill, LCSW  
Associate Commissioner  
Maine Department of Corrections

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) Juvenile Division works toward the result that all Maine youth successfully transition into adulthood by ensuring that all justice-involved youth experience a fair, equitable, responsive system that contributes to positive outcomes. To measure the extent to which youth are achieving positive outcomes during their time in Maine's juvenile justice system, MDOC adapts the **positive youth development** (PYD) framework to juvenile justice system programming. PYD emerged on the premise that all youth possess assets, both internal and external, that can buffer the risk factors present in their environments and the risk-taking behaviors that are a natural part of adolescent development. With its roots in ecological systems theory, PYD considers the contexts in which youth act, and maintains that **all youth can develop positively when they are connected to the right supports and opportunities**. Youth who become involved in the justice system are often contending with greater environmental challenges than their non-justice involved peers, but a justice system intervention grounded in the PYD framework aims to provide necessary supports and build upon youths' inherent assets and resiliency to help them navigate their adolescence and transition into thriving adults.

Five dimensions commonly used PYD assessment are **competence, connection, confidence, caring/compassion, and character**. Positive development in these areas, combined with the development of goal-directed skills (also known as intentional self-regulation), generally result in youth demonstrating **contribution to themselves, their families, and the community**. In adapting PYD for youth in Maine's justice system, MDOC tracks outcomes in five areas: **education/vocation, employment, home/community, prosocial activities, and positive identity**. Within a month of a youth's supervision ending, their juvenile community correctional officer (JCCOs) administers a client exit review, which tracks activities and achievements that indicate a young person is on a positive trajectory, such as school engagement and advancement, employment, family involvement and positive connections with adults and peers, community service and restorative justice, self-advocacy and positive use of personal time.

Tracking positive youth outcomes for youth who pass through Maine's justice system creates a more complete profile, beyond recidivism measures, of the resiliency and potential of this population. It also serves to highlight areas of strength where the system intervention is helping youth succeed, and point to areas where the system could offer youth more or different supports to facilitate their development in positive tracks.

“ *I found that with positive influence I was able to stay out of trouble and stay on the right path.* ”

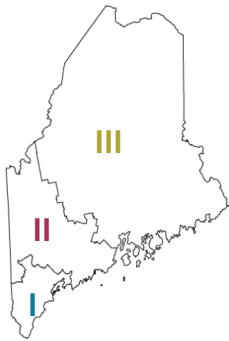
## RESULTS

This report details the findings of **positive youth outcomes** as reported in the client exit reviews for the **174 youth leaving supervision between July 2017 and June 2018**.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### GEOGRAPHY AND ACCESS TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



MDOC contracts with service providers to support youth attaining positive outcomes in their mental and behavioral health, educational and employment progress, home and community relationships, prosocial behavior and positive identity. *Of the youth exiting probation between July 2017 and June 2018:*

**60 youth (34%)** were in **Region I**, where there were **11** contracted service providers working with youth in their communities. Youth in Region I comprised **36%** of all referrals to behavioral health services (BHS), and **84%** of these referrals resulted in youth starting, continuing, or completing services.

**58 youth (33%)** were in **Region II**, where there were **7** contracted providers. Youth in Region II comprised **31%** of all BHS referrals, **73%** of these referrals resulted in youth starting, continuing, or completing services.

**56 youth (32%)** were in **Region III**, where there were **8** contracted providers. Youth in Region III comprised **33%** of all BHS referrals, **73%** of referrals resulted in youth starting, continuing, or completing services.

**29%**  
OF YOUTH  
were in home-based programs.  
Most (78%) of these were in Regions I & II.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

Of the 174 youth exiting probation, **90%** were **White** and **10%** were **Youth of Color**. **83%** were **male**, **16%** **female**, and **1%** **transgender**. Youth were on average **16.9 years old**.

### ASSESSING RISK AND NEEDS

**68%** of youth saw their risk level decrease, and overall risk scores dropped **3.4 points**, representing roughly a **31% decrease** over the course of their supervision. Youth who were under supervision for between 7-12 months demonstrated the most positive change: this group started with a lower average risk score, and decreased their risk score by 37% by the time they completed supervision.

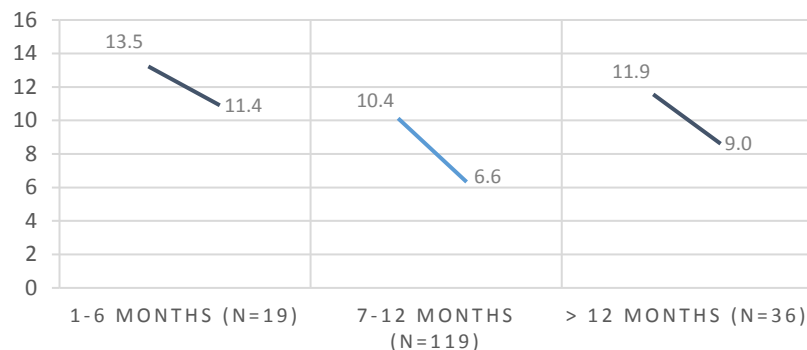
**MENTORSHIP** is one of several risk reduction services offered to youth.

**19 youth** were referred to mentors

**79%** of these youth engaged with their mentors.

Over half (53%) of these mentorships were in **Region II**.

#### YOUTH UNDER SUPERVISION FOR 7-12 MONTHS SHOWED THE MOST POSITIVE CHANGE IN RISK LEVEL



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### EDUCATION

**85%** of the 174 youth leaving probation were **engaged in school**.

**57%** of those enrolled **advanced a grade**.

On average, youth were engaged in school for **76%** of their total supervision time (including summer months).

### HOME

**72%** of youth had **family involvement** during supervision, and for **79%** the family situation **improved** (family improvement is not exclusive to youth whose families were involved).

**70%** of youth had **positive peer relationships** and **86%** had a positive relationship with a **caring adult**.

### PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES

**59%** of youth engaged in **prosocial activities**.

**34%** of youth engaged in **community service**.

**9%** of youth engaged in **restorative justice**.

### EMPLOYMENT

**72%** of youth aged 16 or older **held a job** for an average of **55%** of their time under supervision.

**90%** of youth who were not working during probation **were in school**.

**Region I youth were most likely to be connected with work**, with **88%** of youth 16 or older holding a job while under supervision.



### POSITIVE IDENTITY

**88%** of youth **advocated** for their needs and their goals while under supervision.

**53%** had an identified hobby that they were **interested and engaged in**.

**30%** were involved in a **physical activity**.

“**My JCCO has been working with me for a long time. He never gave up and always worked with me to help keep me in a right-minded position. I feel he is a huge part of my youth who helped me achieve beating my demons.**”





# POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED YOUTH

## Background

In the 1960's, ecological systems theory began to shift the focus of developmental psychology away from viewing adolescence as an inherently stressful phase, and emphasizing instead the contexts in which youth exist and act.<sup>1</sup> This view began to displace the pervading individualistic perspective in which delinquency was understood as a symptom of disturbance located within the youth, rather than as a normative response to dysfunction located in the youth's environment.<sup>2</sup>

Instead of reducing maladaptive or anti-social behavior to individual acts and orientations, **ecological systems theory** created a framework to see adolescent behavior as the outcome of complex relationships, structures and influences, taking into account all of a youth's internal and external assets and liabilities.

*(Such & Walker, 2005)*

By the 1990's there was growing interest in what internal and external assets are present in youth who thrive, and what could enhance their development of these assets rather than simply manage their behavior.<sup>3</sup> The field of positive youth development (PYD) emerged on the premise that all youth possess assets, both internal and external, that can buffer the risk factors present in their environments and the risk-taking behaviors that are a natural part of adolescent development.<sup>4</sup>

PYD literature categorizes assets that all youth possess into a set of common competencies referred to as the Five C's: competency, confidence, connection, character, and caring/compassion.<sup>5</sup> Because cultural values determine what is seen as successful transition into adulthood, the indicators

PYD shifts the focus away from solely mitigating risk, and toward bolstering internal and external assets, recognizing that the **potential to thrive occurs when youth are aligned with resources in their ecological systems.**

*(Lerner et al, 2009; Benson et al, 2006; Damon, 2004)*

used to measure each competency may differ and still be valid within that cultural context. These competencies are largely agreed upon for evaluating PYD and are adapted here into five domains (education/vocation, employment, home/community, prosocial activities, and positive identity) to assess PYD for justice-involved youth in Maine.

### External assets may include:

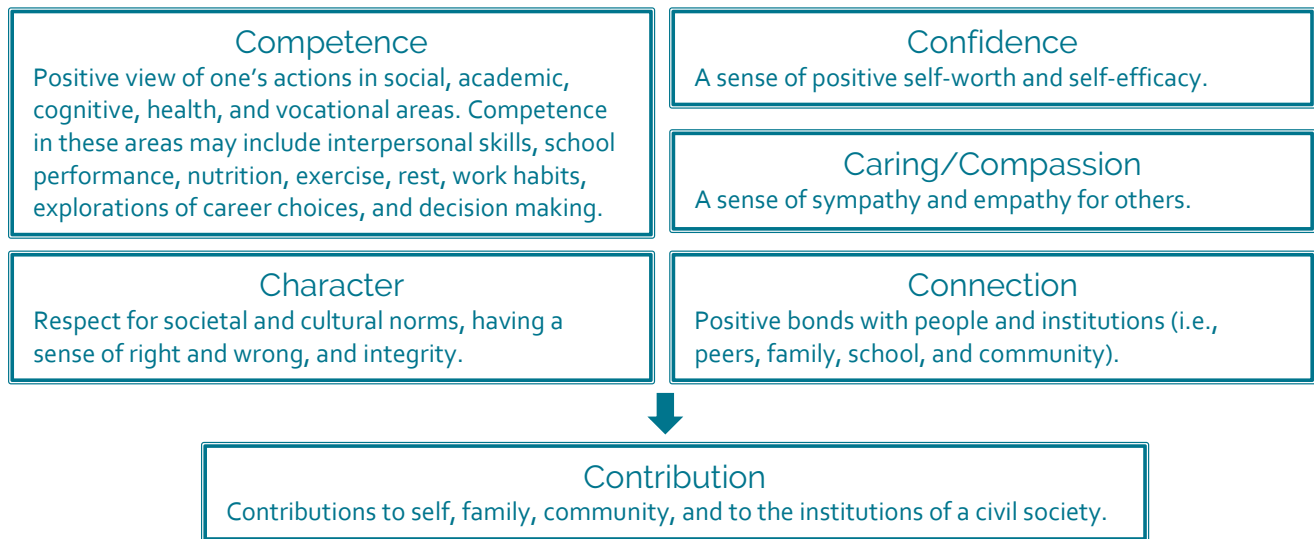
- Physical & emotional safety
- Family & community support
- Schools with accessible teachers, engaging curricula & clear expectations
- Positive peer relationships
- Constructive activities to participate in

### Internal assets may include:

- Commitment to learning
- Social skills
- A sense of personal responsibility
- Confidence & self-efficacy
- A sense of right & wrong, integrity
- Positive self-image

*(Search Institute, 40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents, 2017)*

## The Five C's of PYD



The presence of **the first Five C's** is often a marker that adolescent development is on a positive trajectory which ultimately **results in a sixth C: contribution**.<sup>1</sup> These assets in turn buffer against or compensate for risk-taking behaviors.<sup>1</sup> Reduction in risky or harmful behaviors may be a side-effect of PYD, but the occurrence or persistence of some negatives does not necessarily impede PYD.

## Theory into Practice

PYD is a strengths-based, relational developmental model that fosters youth programs containing the following **"Big Three" characteristics**:<sup>6</sup>

1. Positive, sustained (for at least one year or more) adult-youth relationships (i.e. mentoring),
2. Life-skill-building activities (i.e. learning time management skills), and
3. Opportunities to use these skills as participants and leaders of valued community activities (i.e. serving as leader in organizing a volunteering program).

PYD programs built on these tenets provide youth with opportunities to have diverse experiences while building affective relationships (sustained, supportive and emotionally expressive relationships). Participation in PYD programs alone does not guarantee a positive trajectory, but research suggests that youth who participate in PYD programs and who also exhibit **intentional self-regulation** tend to develop the sixth C, contribution.<sup>7</sup> Intentional self-regulation is overwhelmingly identified as an important ingredient that helps develop the Five C's.<sup>8,9,10,11</sup> A combination of hope, self-efficacy, and resilience, intentional self-regulation motivates us to engage with connections and persist in

The centrality of **intentional self-regulation** to PYD is particularly important to consider in the context of the juvenile justice system. Justice-involved youth are contending with an environment that offers fewer opportunities to exercise free decision-making and self-efficacy. Recognizing the importance of intentional self-regulation and taking into account the diminished free will of youth in the justice system, programming and policy need to work in concert to create an environment that affirms these skills. This unique tailoring of PYD principles for youth in the justice system is the emerging field of positive youth justice.

behaviors that move us toward our goals, and to find work-arounds when progress is thwarted. Intentional self-regulation consists of **three goal-directed skills**:

1. selecting goals (hope)
2. optimizing resources (self-efficacy)
3. compensating when goals are blocked (resilience)

Youth develop intentional self-regulation by practicing identifying goals that are meaningful to them, leveraging assets to make progress toward those goals, and persisting through obstacles and failures. This is key to youth believing from experience that they can forge and alter their own life course, make important changes in themselves and their path, and realize goals to build a fulfilling life.

## A New Pathway for Accountability

While focusing primarily on asset development, PYD recognizes the value of resilience, which is a product of the vital interplay between challenges and strengths. Longitudinal research indicates that resilience is a dynamic equation—the ever-accumulating sum of experiences that lead a person to surmount or succumb to challenging circumstances and major stressors.<sup>12</sup> Advantages and protective factors are helpful in development, but a person becomes resilient particularly through overcoming adversity and compensating creatively for vulnerabilities with other strengths, resources and optimism. Not only can liabilities and assets coexist in a positively developing young person, but learning how to respond to obstacles and compensate for failures by leveraging one’s resources cultivates resilience.

System-involved youth often experience a variety and degree of challenges that are not shared to the same extent in the general population. Despite the greater degree of adversity faced by justice-involved youth and the systemic challenges to implementing PYJ, the guiding principle of PYD is that **even the most disadvantaged young person can develop positively when connected to the right mix of opportunities, supports, positive roles, and relationships.**

Considering its roots in systems theory and its application of resilience, PYD is an apt model for the justice setting due to the high prevalence of trauma. Research suggests that youth who are identified as offenders by social systems are more likely to have been victims of crime than their non-system-involved peers.<sup>13,14</sup> By contextualizing youths’ actions thus, PYJ helps to merge these often compartmentalized identities and acknowledge the connections between these phases of a youth’s life and development.<sup>15</sup>

When delinquent behavior is divorced from the contexts of the youth’s life and from what is known about adolescent developmental, society expects the youth to assume exclusive responsibility for that harm.<sup>16</sup> Viewing the same behavior through a PYD lens, the mutually influential relationships that exist between youth and their contexts become apparent, and a more nuanced and comprehensive system of accountability becomes necessary. This reframing presents an alternative pathway for accountability.

In the PYD framework, holding youth accountable for harm they commit must also account for the conditions that precipitated harm occurring. Recognizing the role that mutually influential relationships play in adolescent behavior and development, **positive youth justice means repairing, developing, and then leveraging the relationships between young people and their contexts.**

## METHODS

To assess PYD in Maine's youth justice system, **the Five C's are translated into five domains:**

- education/vocation
- employment
- home/community
- prosocial activities
- positive identity

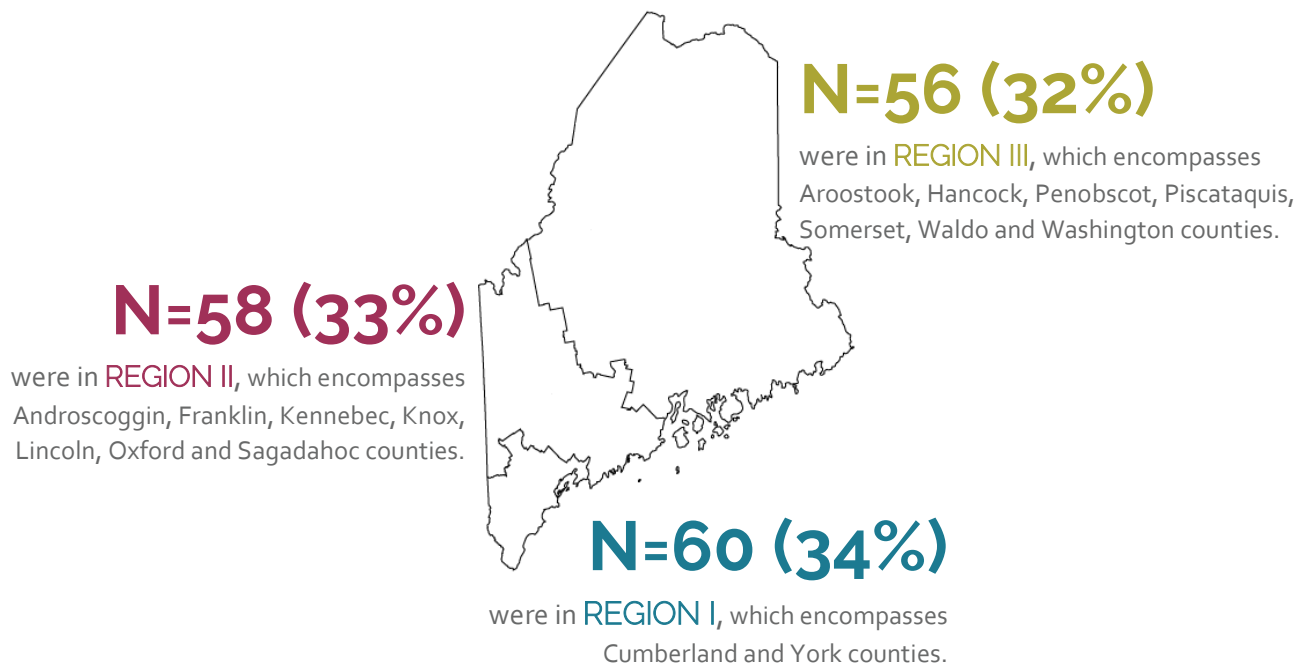
Indicators used to track development in these areas are detailed on page 21. A client exit review was developed in 2016 through a collaboration of DOC and Hornby Zeller Associates to measure positive youth outcomes and reinforce performance-based standards across DOC field staff. The exit review was based on PYD literature and input from Regional Correctional Administrators, Regional Correctional Managers, and Juvenile Community Corrections Officers (JCCOs). After regional trainings on administering the exit review, implementation began in July 2017. JCCOs complete the exit review within a month of youth finishing probation. The review includes questions regarding education, work, relationships, and positive activities during the period of supervision, as well as an array of behavioral health services youth were offered.

Recognizing youths' capacity for positive development in the community notwithstanding the persistence of some negative behaviors, the interview also tracks whether youth were in violation of their probation conditions, and whether this resulted in a revocation of probation or whether they and their JCCOs were able to manage those challenges with more support in the community.

Taking into account that the quality of relationship between youth and their JCCOs has a bearing on the progress youth make during probation, youth are encouraged to complete an anonymous client satisfaction survey separate from the client exit review. The client satisfaction survey invites youth to assess how well JCCOs helped them navigate their probation and achieve positive outcomes. In addition to positive youth outcome data from the client exit review, data from the client satisfaction survey are included in this report.

## RESULTS

Of the 174 youth who exited probation between July 2017 and June 2018:



**90%**  
OF YOUTH  
were White.

**10%**  
OF YOUTH  
Identified as  
Black, Asian,  
American Indian,  
Hispanic, and/or  
Latino.\*

**83%** identified as male  
**16%** identified as female  
**1%** identified as transgender

\*Youth may report more than one race/ethnicity. 90% represents the unduplicated count of individuals who identified as only white, 10% represents the unduplicated count of individuals who identified as one or more race/ethnicity other than white.



## ASSESSING RISKS AND NEEDS

DOC administers the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) risk/needs assessment to each youth under supervision to help determine their risk level and what combination of treatment and security each youth will benefit from. The YLS/CMI consists of 42 items on which youth score either 0 or 1, with their total scores ranging between 0 and 42. Scores between 0 and 8 are considered **low risk**, between 9 and 22 **moderate risk**, between 23 and 34 **high risk**, and youth with scores above 34 are considered at very high risk for recidivism.

### YLS criminogenic risk areas:

- Prior/current offenses
- Education
- Substance abuse
- Family circumstances
- Personality/behavior
- Peer relationships
- Leisure/recreation
- Attitudes/orientation

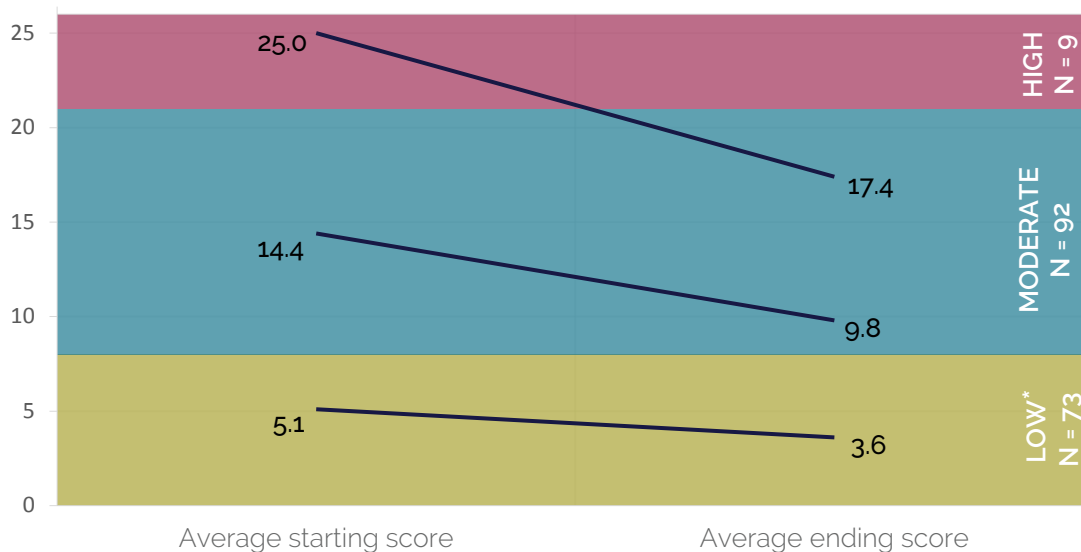
## Breakdown

The average starting score of youth for whom this information was reported was **11.0 (moderate risk)**, and their average score at discharge was **7.6 (low risk)**. Other measures of central tendency also demonstrated a considerable decrease in risk, with the median risk score dropping from 10 to 6, and the mode dropping from 7 to 2.

**Overall risk scores dropped 3.4 points, roughly a 31% decrease.** Youth who started with **high risk** scores demonstrated **dramatic improvement, decreasing their overall score by 7.6 points, or 30%.**

- **119 (68%)** youth in this sample saw their risk level **DECREASE**.
- **26 (15%)** youth in this sample saw **NO CHANGE** in their risk score.
- **29 (17%)** youth in this sample saw their risk score **INCREASE**.

Average risk scores decreased for all risk categories (N=174)

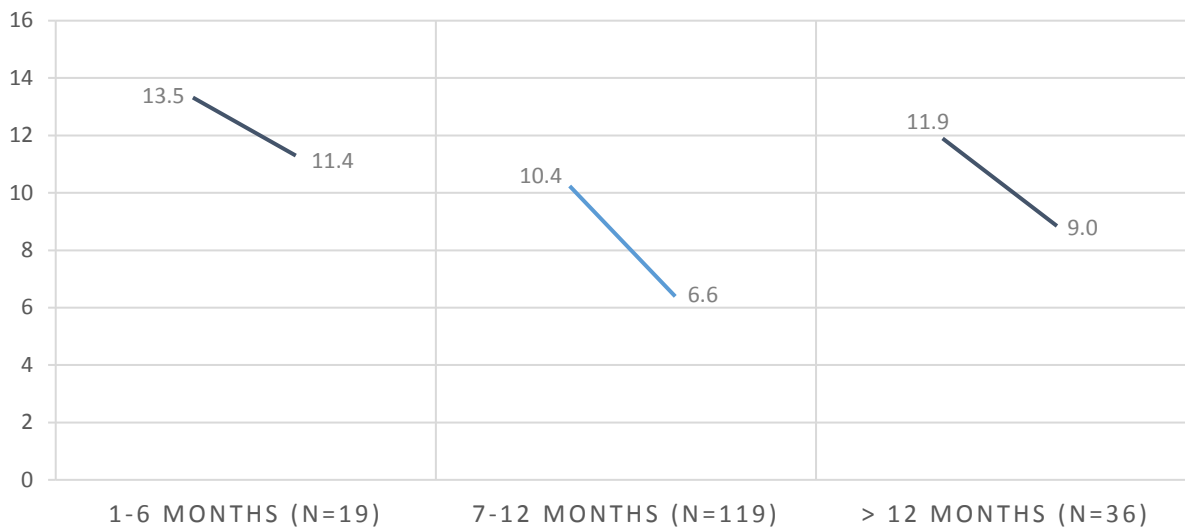


\*Youth whose YLS/CMI score was categorized as low risk may be placed under supervision due to circumstances that resulted in an override of their risk score.

## Length of supervision and lowering risk

The length of time youth spend in the justice system factors into the positive outcomes youth experience as a result of the system's role in their development. Youth in this sample who spent **between 7 and 12 months** under supervision had a **lower average starting score** than youth who stayed in the system for 6 months or less and youth who stayed for more than 12 months. The youth who spent between 7 and 12 months also demonstrated a more substantial improvement, **decreasing their average score by 37%**.

### Youth under supervision for 7-12 months showed the most positive change in risk level



## Managing risk when youth are struggling

Recognizing youths' capacity for positive development despite the persistence of some negative behaviors, the exit review tracks whether youth violated probation, and whether this resulted in incarceration or whether they and their JCCOs were able to manage those challenges with more support in the community.

- **70 youth (40%) violated probation, 55 of these youth (79%) had motions to revoke their probation, and 47 were detained (67% of those in violation).**

Of the 23 youth whose probation was terminated with a commitment to Long Creek,

- **10 (44%) decreased** their risk score,
- **4 (17%) had no change,**
- **9 (39%) increased** their risk score.

**A THIRD OF YOUTH who violated probation were able to remain in their community, working with their JCCO to manage risk and meet their needs.**

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RISK REDUCTION SERVICES

PYD understands problematic behaviors as normative responses to circumstances that exceed a youth's capacity to cope healthily, and assumes that youth can still develop positively if they are connected to appropriate supports and resources. Risk reduction and behavioral health services (such as case management, wraparound services, or family therapy) can be beneficial to youth who are navigating adolescence and may also be grappling with greater challenges than their non-justice-involved peers.

Connecting youth to behavioral health services in their communities has the added benefit of enabling youth to continue using these supports beyond the term of their justice involvement.



To track how often youth are receiving referrals to community-based behavioral health services, the exit interview includes a list of common services that youth receive while on probation, and a spectrum of each youth's level of engagement with these services. **Engagement with these services is voluntary**, so while the exit review tracks youth who have started, completed, or are continuing services at the time they leave probation, but youth may refuse a referral or discontinue services at any point. Referrals are intended to help youth access services that can aid in their positive emotional and behavioral development, but engagement is not mandatory as PYD research underscores the importance of youths' willing engagement in services and programming.<sup>17</sup>

### BHS SERVICES INCLUDE:

- *case management,*
- *individual therapy,*
- *wraparound services,*
- *crisis (hotline or placement),*
- *day treatment,*
- *inpatient hospital care,*
- *residential treatment,*
- *home and community-based treatment (HCT),*
- *functional family therapy (FFT),*
- *multi-system therapy (MST),*
- *multi-system therapy for problem sexual behavior (MST-PSB),*
- *virtual residential family therapy,*
- *group therapy, and*
- *intensive outpatient treatment.*

**82%**

OF YOUTH  
received **at least one**  
referral to **behavioral**  
health services

**36%**

OF REFERRALS  
resulted in youth  
**starting or continuing**  
services.

**41%**

OF REFERRALS  
resulted in youth  
**completing services**  
before discharge.

## Regional breakdown: Youth engagement with voluntary BHS

The chart below shows youth engagement with services for which they received referrals.

- **142 (82%)** of the 174 youth on probation received at least one referral, but as youth could receive referrals for multiple services, individuals may be counted in more than one category.
- JCCOs made a total of **373 referrals**, and **287 (77%)** of those referrals resulted in youth **starting, continuing, or completing** services.

<b>BHS Service</b>	<b>Maine</b> (174 youth)		<b>Region I</b> (60 youth)		<b>Region II</b> (58 youth)		<b>Region III</b> (56 youth)	
	<i>Referrals that were started, completed or continuing</i>	<i>Referrals that were refused or discontinued</i>	<i>Started, continuing, completed</i>	<i>Refused or discontinued</i>	<i>Started, continuing, completed</i>	<i>Refused or discontinued</i>	<i>Started, continuing, completed</i>	<i>Refused or discontinued</i>
Individual	87 (79%)	23 (21%)	35 (92%)	3 (8%)	22 (76%)	7 (24%)	30 (70%)	13 (30%)
Case management	59 (78%)	17 (22%)	20 (83%)	4 (17%)	19 (73%)	7 (27%)	20 (77%)	6 (23%)
Residential treatment	29 (88%)	4 (12%)	13 (87%)	2 (13%)	10 (91%)	1 (9%)	6 (86%)	1 (14%)
In-home MST (multisystem)	18 (69%)	8 (31%)	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	3 (43%)	4 (57%)	7 (78%)	2 (22%)
Crisis	18 (86%)	3 (14%)	6 (86%)	1 (14%)	7 (78%)	2 (22%)	5 (100%)	0 (0%)
Day treatment	15 (88%)	2 (12%)	6 (100%)	0 (0%)	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	6 (86%)	1 (14%)
Group therapy	14 (78%)	4 (22%)	6 (60%)	4 (40%)	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)	0 (0%)
Wrap-around	12 (75%)	4 (25%)	6 (100%)	0 (0%)	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	4 (57%)	3 (43%)
In-home FFT (functional family)	10 (59%)	7 (41%)	4 (57%)	3 (43%)	4 (67%)	2 (33%)	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Intensive Outpatient	9 (64%)	5 (36%)	5 (83%)	1 (17%)	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
In-home HCT (home/comm.-based)	7 (58%)	5 (42%)	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Inpatient (hospital)	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)
In-home MST-PSB (problem sexual behavior)	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)
Virtual Residential Family	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)

## EDUCATION AND VOCATION

Education as a part of positive youth justice means supporting students with accessible and enthusiastic teachers, counselors, and administrators<sup>18</sup> who help to establish positive, caring and inclusive school cultures,<sup>19</sup> and who motivate students to engage in school and excel academically and socially. Conventional school culture, which emphasizes standardization, testing, and conformity of achievement, is not always compatible with adolescent development.<sup>20</sup> **PYJ aims to facilitate youth-centric learning environments, with the goal that youth obtain diplomas and credentials that will aid in their successful transition into a thriving adulthood.**

Instability in the family, combined with a school environment that does not deliver the needed care and attention, can contribute to absenteeism. Rather than enforcing attendance, **PYJ focuses on exploring the reason for absenteeism and providing more support to reduce it.**

DOC contracted with **12** service providers<sup>1</sup> (63% of DOC-contracted providers serving youth during 2017-18) whose objectives included positive educational outcomes, such as ensuring that youth were actively enrolled in school, taking higher level or college classes if they have completed high school, passed the HiSET exam, achieved a GED, high school diploma, or achieved a vocational certification.

**85%** OF YOUTH  
were engaged in school

**57%** OF YOUTH  
IN SCHOOL  
advanced a grade

### A closer look

- Duration of school engagement and grade advancement can depend on how long youth spend under supervision and during which calendar months. Among the 148 youth in school, engagement ranged from 1 month to 3 years, with an average of **8 months**, or **76% of their probation period**. Youth who advanced a grade were generally under supervision for at least a year (**13 months** on average), whereas youth who did not advance a grade generally completed supervision in under a year (**11 months** on average).
- School engagement can also depend on age. The 26 youth who were **not** in school were on average **1 year older** than their peers who were in school (**17.7** years old, compared to **16.8**) and may have already completed high school.
- **89%** of youth of color (16 of 18 unduplicated), and **85%** of white youth (132 of 156 unduplicated) were engaged in school during their supervision.
- **89%** of females (25 of 28) and **85%** of males (123 of 145) were engaged in school during their supervision. Education data for 1 transgender youth is suppressed due to sample size.
- School engagement can be a strong protective factor for youth successfully completing probation. **22%** of youth whose probation was revoked were **not** in school.

<sup>1</sup> Some providers work with youth in more than one region. **6** (50%) providers served youth in Region I: Spurwink D2A, Spurwink FFT, Goodwill Industries, Learning Works, Maine Behavioral Healthcare, and New Beginnings. **5** (42%) providers served youth in Region II: Catholic Charities, Kennebec Behavioral Health, Tri-County Mental Health, New Beginnings, and Tree Street Youth. **4** (33%) providers served youth in Region III: Catholic Charities, Kennebec Behavioral Health, Tri-County Mental Health, Carlton Project, and Aroostook Mental Health.

## EMPLOYMENT

Employment is an important dimension of PYJ, improving youths' attitudes toward their communities and enhancing their skills and their potential for paid employment. Focusing on employment as a strategy for positive youth outcomes means facilitating career counseling and connecting youth to apprenticeships or job shadowing experiences that exploration into careers that youth could pursue and enjoy.

Research shows that working with relatively small, close-knit work groups can also help facilitate acquisition of pro-social norms and behavior. (Butts, Bazemore & Meroe, 2010)

DOC contracted with **11** service providers<sup>2</sup> (58% of DOC-contracted providers serving youth during 2017-18) whose objectives included positive employment-related outcomes, such as ensuring that youth were connected to jobs, actively working, and making plans for continued employment beyond the period of supervision.

**74%**  
OF YOUTH  
aged 16+  
were **employed**.

**90%**  
OF YOUTH  
not working during  
probation were  
**in school**.

### A closer look

- **61% of all youth on probation were employed.** However, employment can depend on age. Youth who were not working while under supervision were on average **1.6 years younger** than their employed peers. Working youth averaged **17.6** years of age, compared to **16.0** for non-working youth. **74% of youth aged 16 years and older were employed.**
- Duration of employment can depend on the length of time a youth spends under supervision. Length of employment ranged from 1 month to 2 years, with youth being employed for an average of **6 months**, or **54% of their time under supervision.**
- Of youth who were 16+, **72% of white youth** (92 of 128 unduplicated) and **69% of youth of color** (9 of 13 unduplicated) held jobs during probation.
- Of youth who were 16+, **72% of males** (86 of 120) and **70% of females** (14 of 20) held jobs during probation. Employment data for 1 transgender youth is suppressed due to sample size.
- As with school, employment can aid youth completing probation and successfully transitioning into adulthood. **61%** of youth whose probation was revoked were **not** employed.

<sup>2</sup> Some providers work with youth in more than one region. **5** (58%) providers served youth in Region I: Spurwink D2A, Spurwink FFT, Goodwill Industries, Learning Works, and Maine Behavioral Healthcare. **4** (36%) providers served youth in Region II: Catholic Charities, Kennebec Behavioral Health, Tri-County Mental Health, and Tree Street Youth. **4** (36%) providers served youth in Region III: Catholic Charities, Kennebec Behavioral Health, Carlton Project, and Aroostook Mental Health.



## HOME AND COMMUNITY

Positive relationships within a youth's family system, peer group, and community comprise a vital support network when a youth transitions from supervision into the community. A relationship with one caring adult (such as a mentor, coach, teacher, sponsor, clergy, relative, or program staff) is not only a source of personal value and encouragement, but can also be a practical resource for employment references, opportunities to acquire new skills, and forging positive connections in the community for a youth navigating reentry. PYJ interventions should take into account the social disconnection and economic exclusion along with the high prevalence of trauma and neglect among

Given the importance of supportive, enduring relationships for positive development, PYJ programming needs to plan around the time-limited nature of the justice setting in order to support these relationships being nurtured and sustained.

justice-involved youth, and facilitate youth building affective (sustained, supportive, and emotionally expressive) relationships with adults and other young people. Programming should help youth build skills to nurture and maintain healthy relationships, and also provide a setting in which youth can build or improve relationships, creating a "family-like atmosphere."<sup>21</sup>

DOC contracted with **7** service providers<sup>3</sup> (37% of DOC-contracted providers serving youth during 2017-18) whose objectives included relationship-related outcomes, such as having youth live successfully with their family, or have a successful reunification with their family and community in instances where youth had been removed.



### A closer look

- **72%** of youth had some level of family involvement, and for **79%** the family situation improved (family improvement is not exclusive to youth whose families were involved).
  - Among the 23 youth whose probation was revoked, there was less family involvement and improvement. 39% of these youth had some level of family involvement, and 52% of family situations improved prior to probation being revoked.

**29%** (N=50)  
OF YOUTH  
were in **home-**  
**based programs**

<sup>3</sup> Some providers work with youth in more than one region. **3** (33%) providers served youth in Region I: Spurwink D2A, Spurwink FFT, and Maine Behavioral Healthcare. **3** (33%) providers served youth in Region II: Catholic Charities, Kennebec Behavioral Health, and Tri-County Mental Health. **3** (33%) providers served youth in Region III: Catholic Charities, Kennebec Behavioral Health, and Aroostook Mental Health.

## PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Community engagement such as volunteering, community service and civic engagement can promote connection, develop a broad set of skills, and help youth find a role for themselves in society where they may have been accustomed to feeling disconnected and excluded. Prosocial activities can not only repair harms that led to a youth's involvement in the justice system, but also help a youth build a sense of belonging and ownership in their community.

Prosocial activities in PYJ context may be restitution or restorative justice connected to a harm committed. PYJ programs have seen success with placing delinquent youth in high profile, collective efforts to improve their communities. (Bazemore & Karp, 2004).

DOC contracted with **4** service providers<sup>4</sup> (21% of contracted service providers) whose focus objectives included positive prosocial-related outcomes, such as matching youth with a peer advocate or facilitating their participation in school-based prosocial activities.



### A closer look

Prosocial Activities	Community Service	Restorative Justice
57% of white youth engaged in prosocial activities, compared with 72% of youth of color.	35% of white youth did community service, compared with 28% of youth of color.	8% of white youth engaged in restorative justice, compared with 17% of youth of color.
62% of males engaged in prosocial activities, compared with 39% of females.	34% of males did community service, compared with 39% of females.	9% of males engaged in restorative justice, compared with 11% of females.

<sup>4</sup> 2 (50%) providers served youth in Region I: Spurwink FFT and Maine Youth Court. Tree Street Youth served youth in Region II, and Carlton Project served youth in Region III.

## POSITIVE IDENTITY

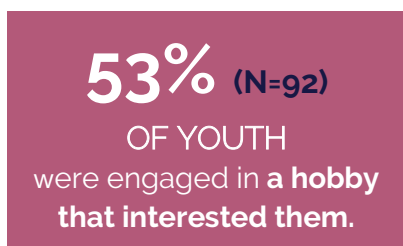
The ultimate positive youth outcome is that youth are on a better track to be happy, resilient, confident, prosocial, self-efficacious people who are developing their own sense of purpose. Youth with positive identities have a sense of worth that is the basis for healthy lifestyle choices and relationships. Positive identity and PYD are mutually influential—positive development can improve one’s self-perception, and a having a positive sense of self can lead to more positive development. Bolstering intentional self-regulation gives youth an advantage to engage with their own positive development trajectory and work towards creating a life they value.

Part of developing positive identity means having access to resources and choices that enable youth take care of themselves, within communities that affirm their identities. Having the ability and resources for self-care builds an empowering sense of worth, autonomy, and hope, while also nurturing resilience, coping skills, positive relationships, and a decreased vulnerability to life stress.<sup>22</sup> Youth also need access to enriching activities and a positive environment in which to participate. Particularly for justice-involved youth, creative programming may be the first opportunity to participate in self-expressive activities where they can learn healthy self-expression that anticipates how that expression will impact observers. Outcomes for youth who participate in an art, sports, and life-skills programming reveal strong associations between participation in arts programming and reduced criminal behavior.<sup>23,24,25,26</sup>



DOC contracted with **4** service providers<sup>5</sup> (21% of contracted service providers) whose objectives included youth developing a positive sense of identity by increasing their overall developmental assets, increasing awareness of the impact of their behavior on others, and seeing the relationship between feelings/beliefs and problem behaviors.

Of the 174 youth in this study...



<sup>5</sup> All four providers served youth in Region I: Spurwink D2A, Learning Works (Back on Track), Maine Youth Court, and Restorative Justice of the Midcoast. Restorative Justice of the Midcoast also served youth in Regions II and III.

## POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN YOUTH AND JCCOs

Facilitating positive outcomes for youth who pass through the justice system depends not only on the range and quality of services and opportunities available to youth during their supervision, but also on the quality of their relationship with their JCCO.

Instability within the family system is common among youth who become involved in the justice system, and the relationship between youth and their JCCOs may be one of few sustained, supportive relationships. While probation is time-limited and correctional in nature, grounding the intervention in PYD principles means focusing on the JCCO relationship as an opportunity to develop a positive, consistent relationship marked by mutual trust, respect, and clear boundaries. Akin to the client-therapist alliance that proves vital for progress regardless of treatment model,<sup>27</sup> developing rapport between youth and their JCCOs is critical to the success of their work while under supervision. To assess how well JCCOs are connecting with the youth they serve, youth have the option to complete an anonymous client satisfaction survey at the end of their supervision. Youth rate how well they felt their JCCO supported them in meeting the requirements of their probation, making progress toward their own goals, and accessing the help and resources they needed to succeed.

“ “ *DOC helped me straighten my life out. Even when I did not want the help.*

Of the 174 youth leaving probation between July 2017 and June 2018, **52** (30%) completed the client satisfaction survey.

### A closer look

- **100%** of youth felt that their JCCOs had helped connect them with positive activities, find services, improve their communication skills, understand the impact of their offenses, achieve their goals, and build confidence.
- **98%** said their JCCOs helped them **explore hobbies and create ways to stay out of trouble.**
- **96%** said their JCCO helped them **address substance abuse issues** and **42%** said their JCCO helped them **reduce their use.**
- **94%** said their JCCOs asked them about their progress toward their goals, and 90% felt their JCCO recognized and appreciated the progress they were making on their goals.
- While all 48 white youth felt that their JCCO respected their **traditions and values**, 3 of the 4 **youth of color** who completed the survey reported less favorable experiences in this area.

“ “ *This whole experience really helped me grow physically and emotionally. I wouldn't change any part of the journey. I'm grateful for the opportunities that have come my way because of sobriety.*

## REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Indicator	Region I (N=60)	Region II (N=58)	Region III (N=56)
Total referrals to behavioral health services (N=373)	133	116	124
Engagement with BHS	111 (84%)	85 (73%)	91 (73%)
School engagement	54 (90%)	48 (83%)	46 (82%)
Grade advancement	43 (72%)	30 (52%)	27 (48%)
Employment among youth aged 16+	42 (88%) N=48	31 (65%) N=48	28 (62%) N=45
Family engagement	45 (75%)	45 (78%)	36 (64%)
Family improvement	48 (80%)	48 (83%)	42 (75%)
Positive peer relationships	44 (73%)	43 (74%)	35 (63%)
Relationship with a caring adult	53 (88%)	51 (88%)	45 (80%)
Engagement with a mentor	4 (7%)	8 (14%)	3 (5%)
Home-based program	19 (32%)	20 (34%)	11 (20%)
Community service	19 (32%)	10 (17%)	31 (55%)
Prosocial activities	38 (63%)	34 (59%)	30 (54%)
Restorative justice	8 (13%)	4 (7%)	4 (7%)
Physical activity	53 (33%)	19 (33%)	14 (25%)
Engagement with hobby or interest	92 (52%)	34 (59%)	27 (48%)
Advocating for own needs and goals	56 (93%)	52 (90%)	45 (80%)

## PYD EVALUATION MEASURES

The client exit interview aims to measure the progress youth make in each PYD domain during their time under DOC supervision. Interview questions include various indicators of educational, employment, prosocial, home, and positive identity development to demonstrate the areas where justice-involved youth are attaining positive outcomes. The following table displays the PYD indicators captured by the exit interview, as well as other topic areas that are commonly used to measure PYD and how these data could be gathered.

EDUCATION / VOCATION	
Literacy / academic performance	GPA, reading/writing scores at grade level
School engagement	Client exit review: Questions 2-3
Credentials	HS diploma, GED, certificates
Engagement in self-directed study	Number of books checked out from library, Enrolled in elective courses not required for diploma
Vocational skills	Taking vocational courses (carpentry, small motors, culinary)
Career planning	Meetings with career counselor
EMPLOYMENT	
Apprenticeship / internship	Possible follow-on question to Question 1 whether youth interned or apprenticed
Employment	Client exit review: Question 1
Income / economic independence	Whether youth have their own bank account
PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES	
Community service	Client exit review: Section 2 – Questions 1-2.
Helping others / leadership	Involvement in youth group, club, or student organization
Voting / civic engagement	For 18+ whether they are registered to vote
Responsibility	Client exit review Section 2 – Question 6: restorative justice
HOME / COMMUNITY	
Family involvement or support network	Client exit review: Section 2 – Questions 3- 5 tracks individual and family therapy engagement
Housing stability	Shelter care and transitional living tracked on client exit review under Other Risk Reduction Services
Social support	Client exit review tracks referrals to behavioral health services
Positive relationship with a caring adult	Client exit review: Section 2 – Question 11
Positive peer relationships	Client exit review: Section 2 – Question 7
POSITIVE IDENTITY	
Engagement in hobbies	Client exit review: Section 2 – Question 10
Advocating for goals	Client exit review: Section 2 – Question 12
Creative expression	Arts programming participation data possibly available
Physical activity	Client exit review: Section 2 – Question 9
Healthy sexuality	Level of comfort or confidence in sexual identity, having healthy relationships, using safe sex practices
Access to healthcare and behavioral/mental healthcare	Client exit review charts engagement with behavioral health services. MaineCare / insurance data possible.



## PYD INSTRUMENTS USED IN OTHER RESEARCH

Administering youth justice with the principles of PYD should facilitate positive youth outcomes that can be measured with similar tools that are used to study PYD in the general population. The following instruments, along with several sample questions, are used to study the various dimensions of PYD. These tools may provide additional data to assess the positive outcomes that justice-involved youth are achieving, and highlight areas where the justice setting needs more specific tailoring to facilitate better outcomes for this unique population.

"C"	SAMPLE QUESTIONS USED	INSTRUMENTS USED
COMPETENCE	<p>"Some teenagers feel that they are pretty intelligent, BUT other teenagers question if they are intelligent"</p> <p><i>Responses scaled from "really true for me," "sort of true for me," etc.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Self-Perception Profile for Children</b> (self-report survey)</li> <li>• <b>School grades</b></li> </ul>
CONFIDENCE	<p>"All in all, I am glad I am me"</p> <p><i>Scaled from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composite of positive identity measured by <b>Profiles of Student Life-Attitudes and Behaviors Survey</b></li> <li>• Self-worth measured by <b>Self-Perception Profile for Children</b></li> </ul>
CONNECTION	<p>"In my neighborhood, there are lots of people who care about me"</p> <p>"If you had an important concern about drugs, alcohol, sex, or some other serious issue, would you talk to your parent(s) about it?"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection to family/school/community measured by <b>Profiles of Student Life-Attitudes and Behaviors Survey</b></li> <li>• Peer connection measured by <b>The Teen Assessment Project Survey</b></li> </ul>
CHARACTER	<p>"Helping other people"</p> <p>"Knowing a lot about people of other races"</p> <p>"Telling the truth, even when it's not easy"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social conscience/value for diversity/values measured by <b>Profiles of Student Life-Attitudes and Behaviors Survey</b></li> <li>• Behavioral conduct measured by <b>Self-Perception Profile for Children</b></li> </ul>
CARING/ COMPASSION	<p>"I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective."</p> <p><i>Scaled from "does not describe me well" to "describes me very well"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Eisenberg Sympathy Scale</b></li> <li>• <b>The Empathic Concern Subscale of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index</b></li> </ul>
CONTRIBUTION	<p>"During the last 12 months, how many times have you been a leader in a group or organization?"</p> <p><i>Scaled from 1 = never to 5 = five or more times</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Teen Assessment Project Survey</b></li> </ul>

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