



FY 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
YOUTH SERVICES



INTRODUCTION FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Greetings to DYS staff, our non-profit partners and other stake-holders. Fiscal Year 2019 (FY 19) was a challenging and productive year for our agency. We continued to pursue a comprehensive rehabilitation agenda for the young people that we serve as an approach that produces positive youth outcomes and increases safety in communities across the Commonwealth. We've embraced Positive Youth Development (PYD) as a guiding construct. PYD encourages us to view young people as assets to be developed and not problems to be fixed.

In FY 19 DYS received strong support from the Baker-Polito administration, EOHHS Secretary Marylou Sudders and the legislature. Our budget and resource allocation allowed us to continue to be innovative and to improve our agency practices as we seek the best possible outcomes for young people, their families and the communities that they come from.

Our educational platform continues to support positive academic achievement. Our caseload has decreased and grown older. This has provided the opportunity to strengthen our approach to post-secondary course offerings available to DYS involved youth. We remain committed to Empower Your Future as a strategy that supports youth voice, encourages youth choice and supports youth as they look forward to their life options as they grow up.

The enclosed report is an opportunity to share some of the exciting activities and developments that took place in FY 2019.

Thank you for your partnership, interest and support of our work at the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services.

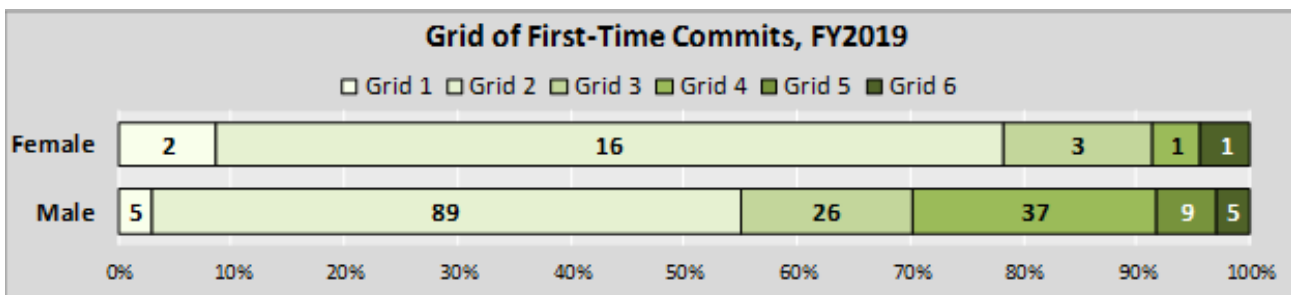
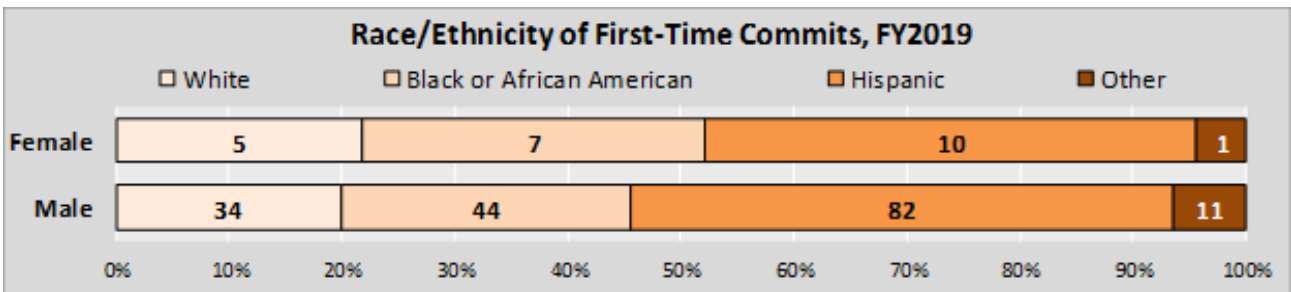
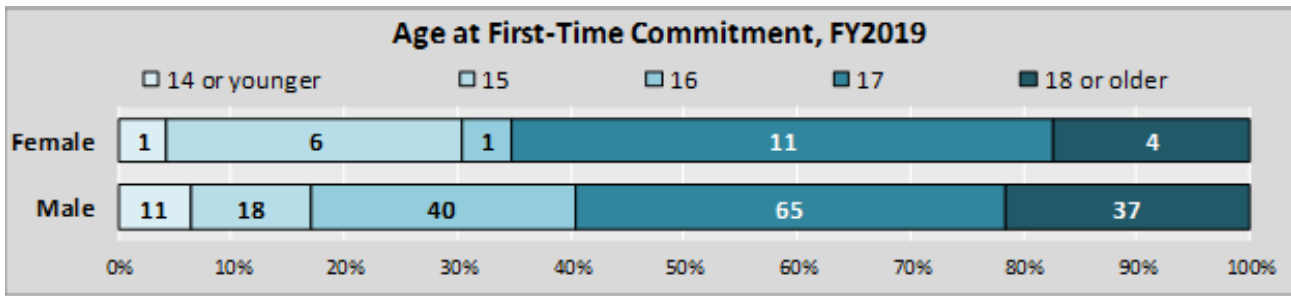
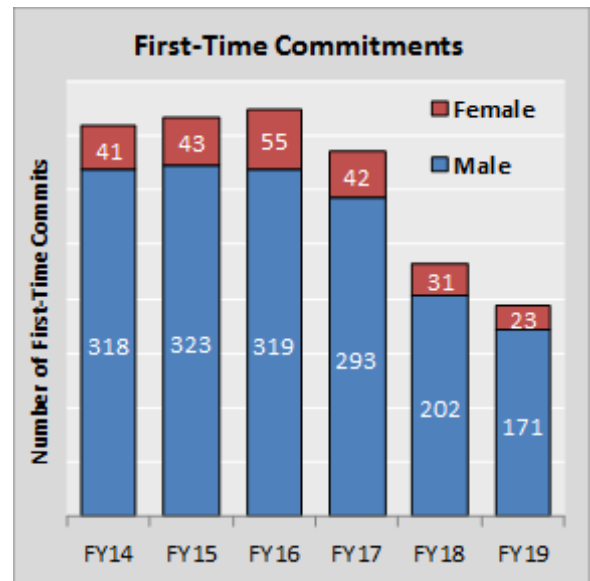
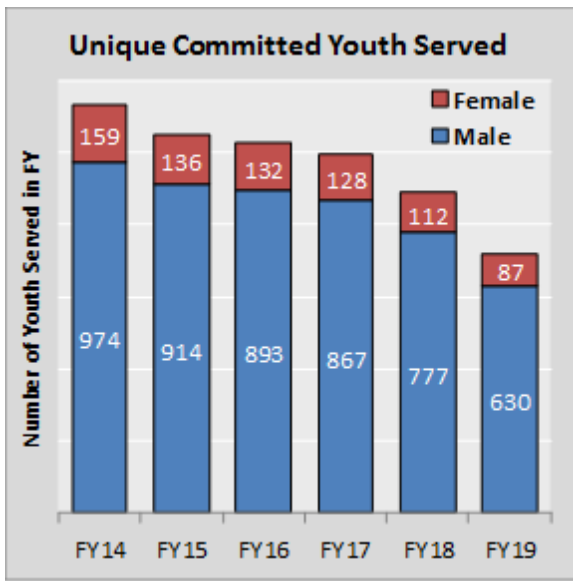
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Forbes".

Peter Forbes, Commissioner



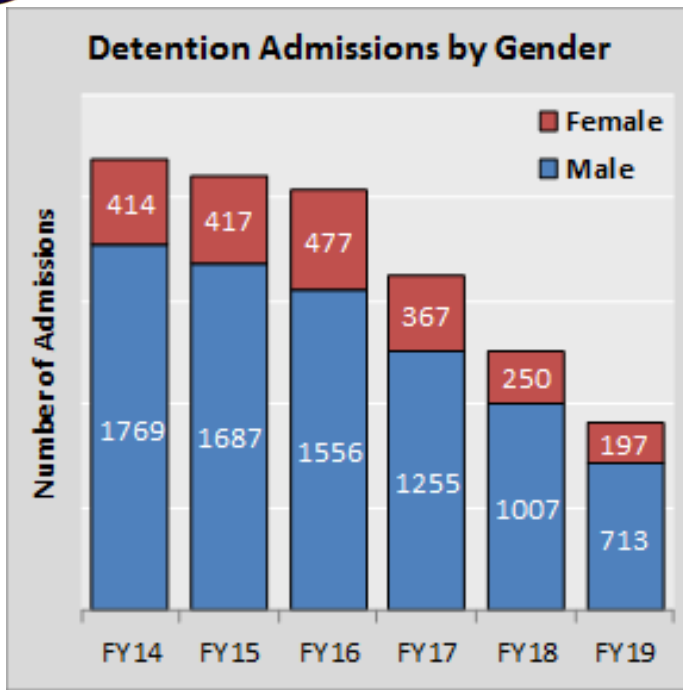
Committed Youth



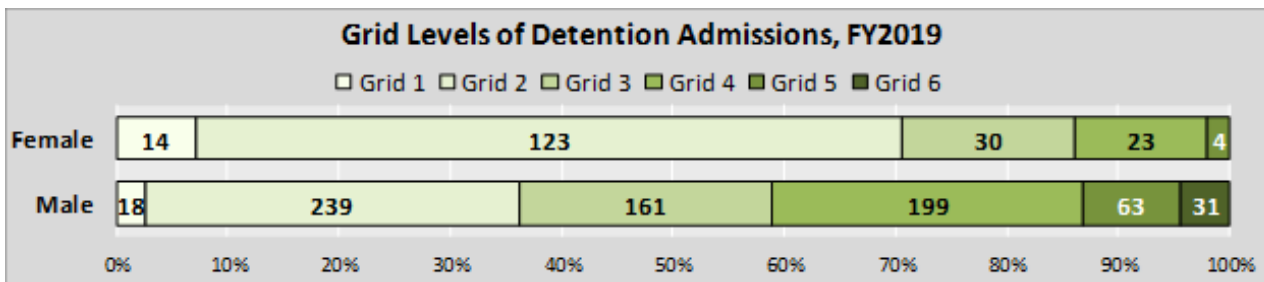
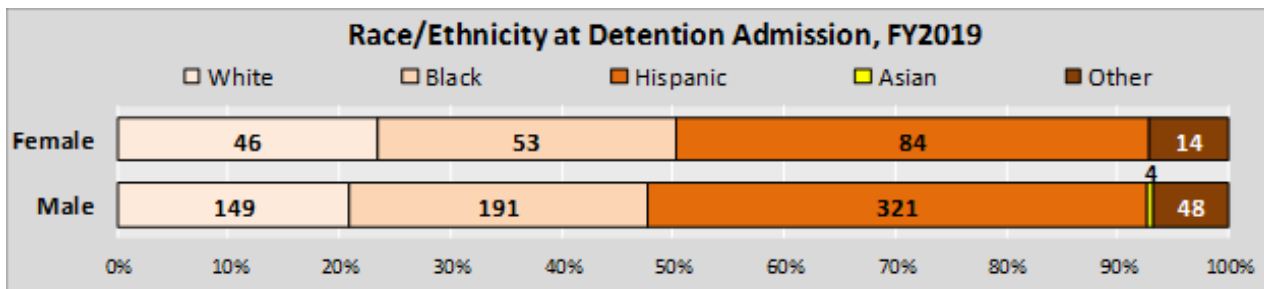
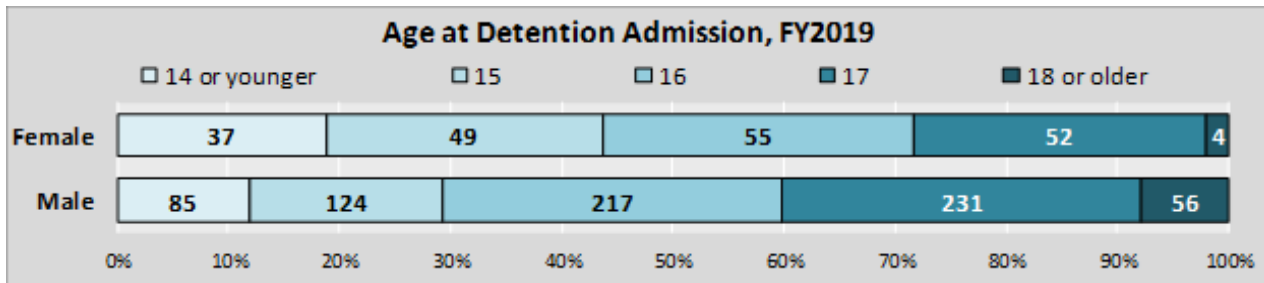
Committed youth are assigned one of six Grid Levels that correspond to the severity of the most serious committing offense and are used by DYS to help determine the initial time recommendation in a community-based or secure residential treatment program.



DETAINED YOUTH



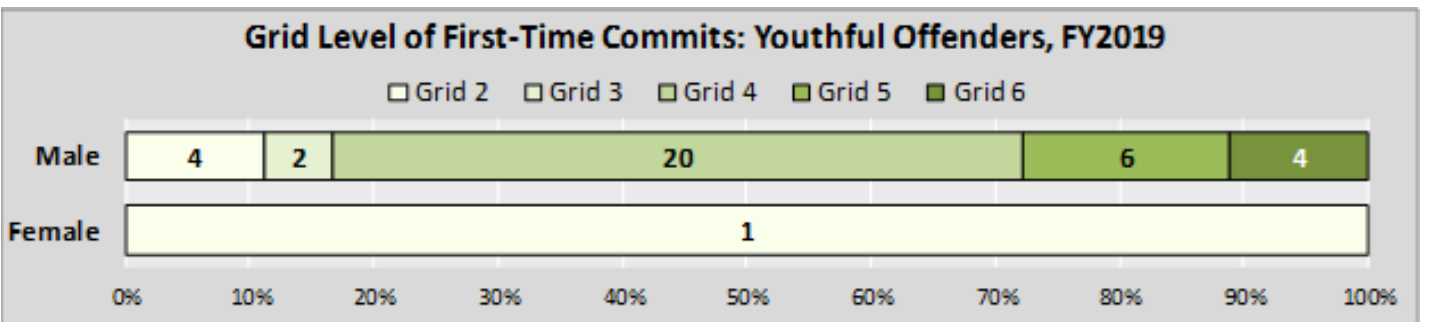
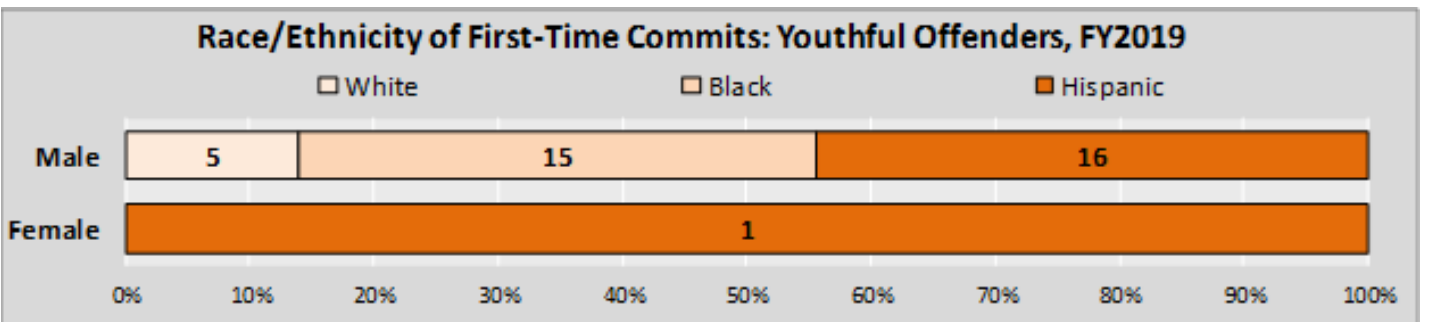
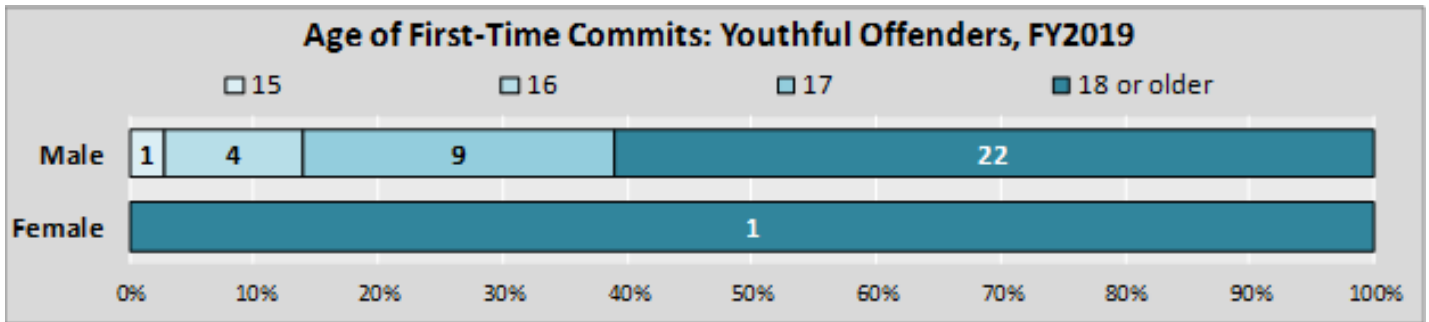
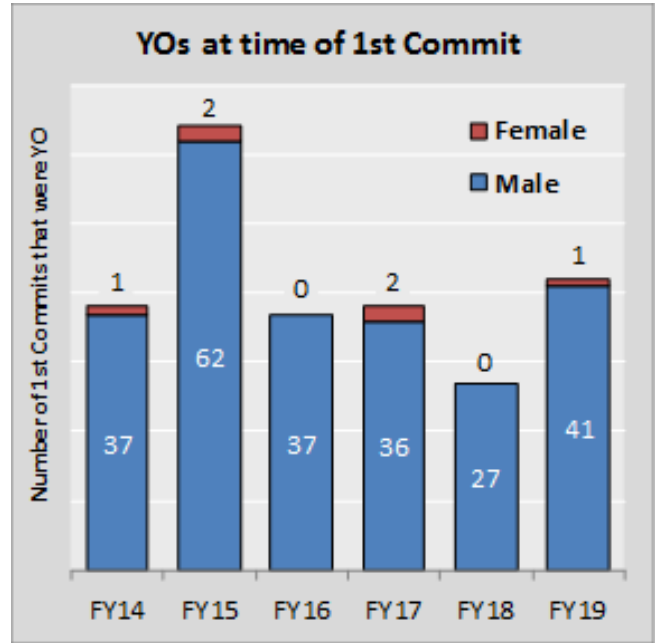
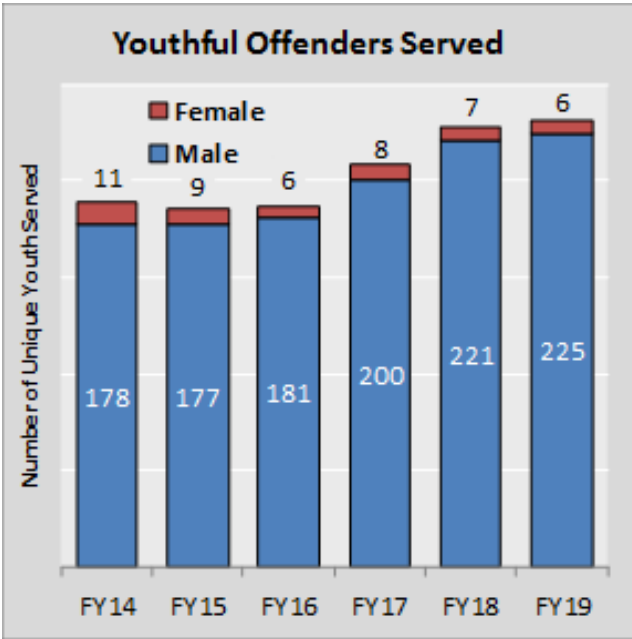
Detained youth charged with an offense are temporarily placed with DYS while awaiting judicial action. Since FY 2014, 16% to 21% of the detention admissions each year result in a DYS commitment.





Youthful Offenders

From FY14 to FY19, the number of committed youth declined from 1133 to 717 while the percentage of youthful offenders increased from 16% to 30% of the total committed population.

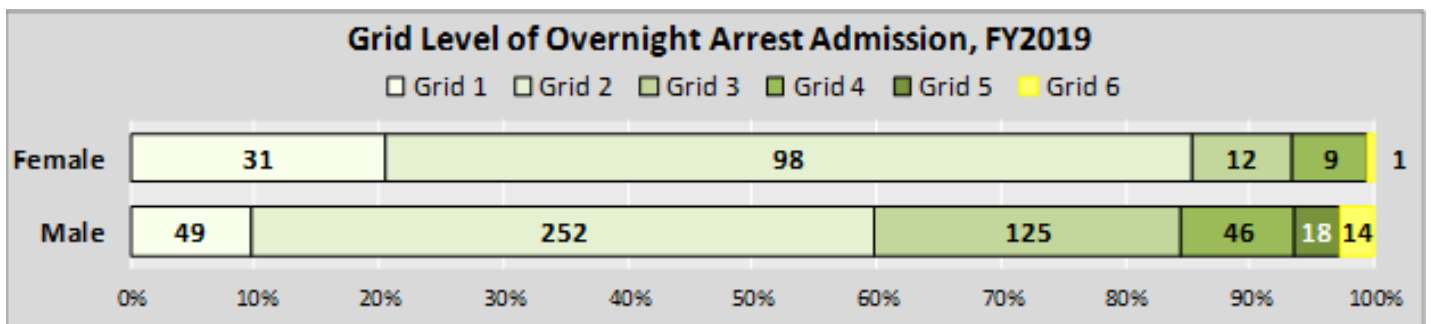
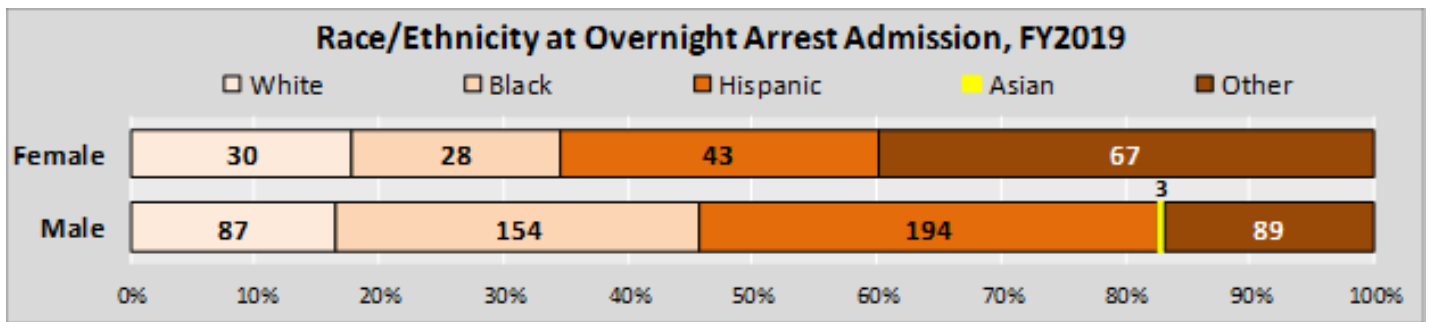
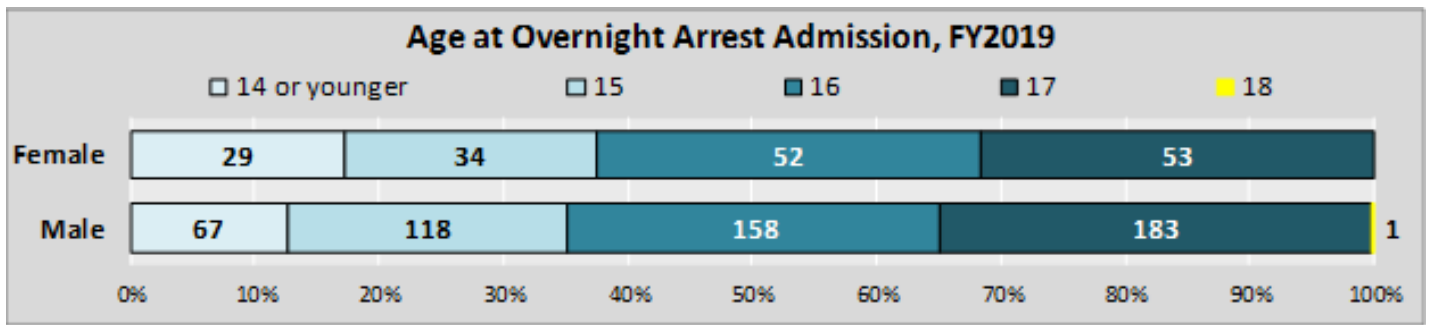
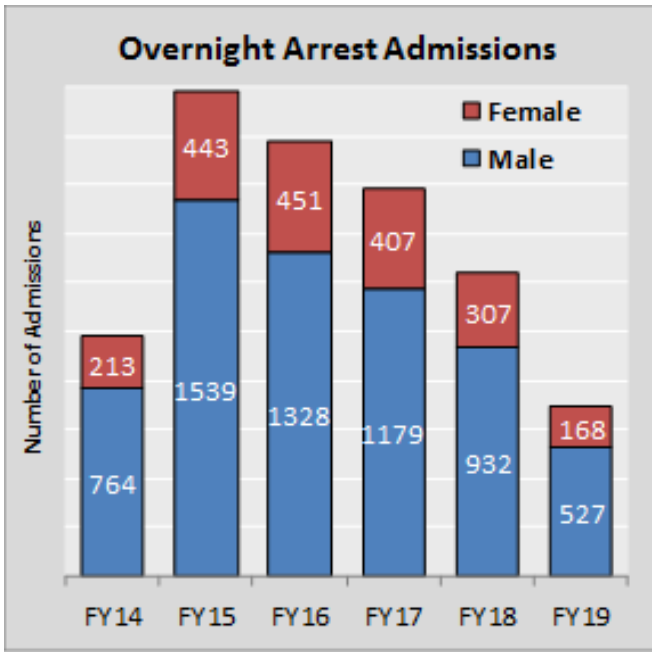




Overnight Arrests

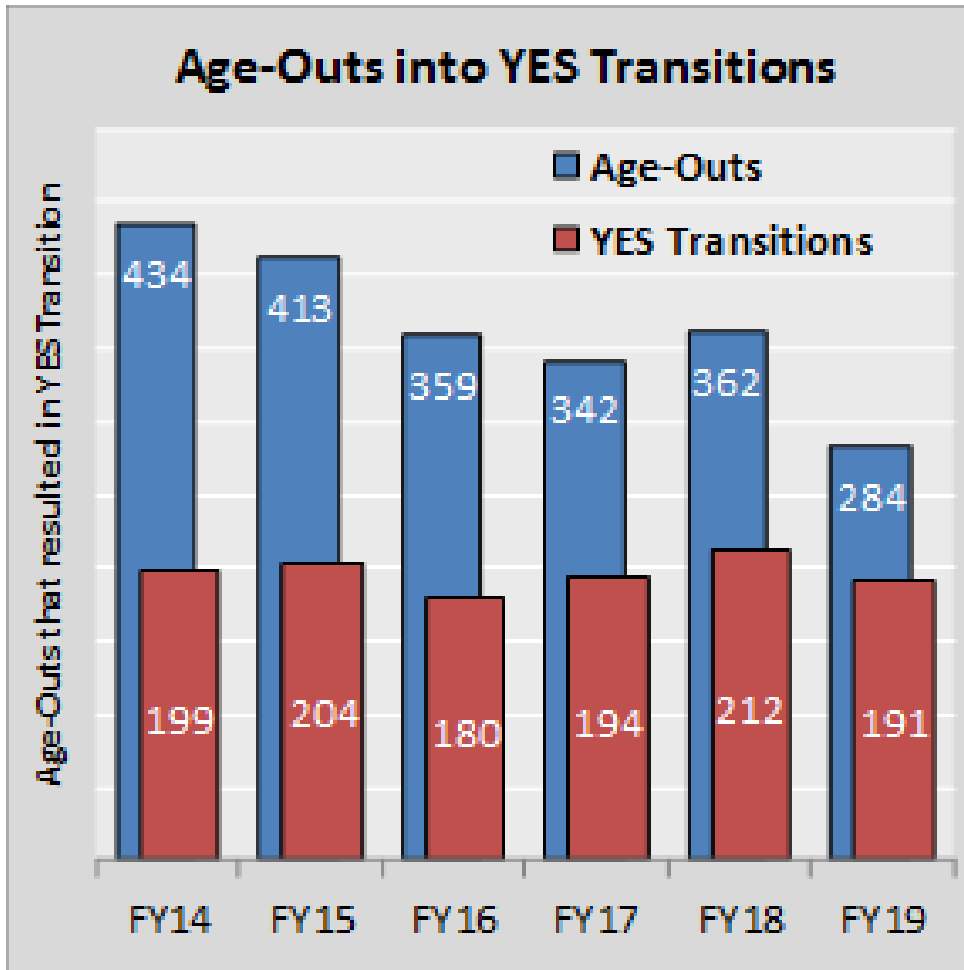
The Overnight Arrest Program is a network of juvenile overnight arrest placements as a service to Massachusetts police departments to house youth between the ages of 14 and 18 who are unable to post bail or ineligible for bail, after court business has concluded for the day.

In FY19, overnight arrest placements declined by 65% from a high in FY 15





YOUTH ENGAGED IN SERVICES (YES)



DYS offers voluntary, post-discharge transition services to all committed youth discharged at 18 and all youthful offenders discharged at 21. In the five years since FY2014 when the Department began offering YES to all youth discharging from DHS, the percentage of youth enrolling in YES has increased from 48% to 67% and the daily YES population served has averaged 142 youth.



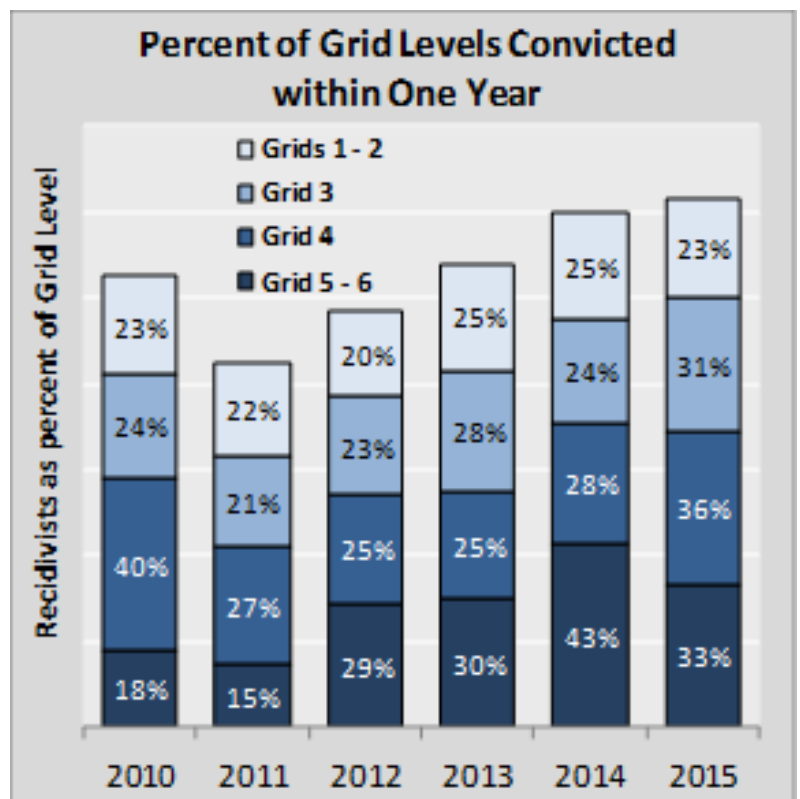
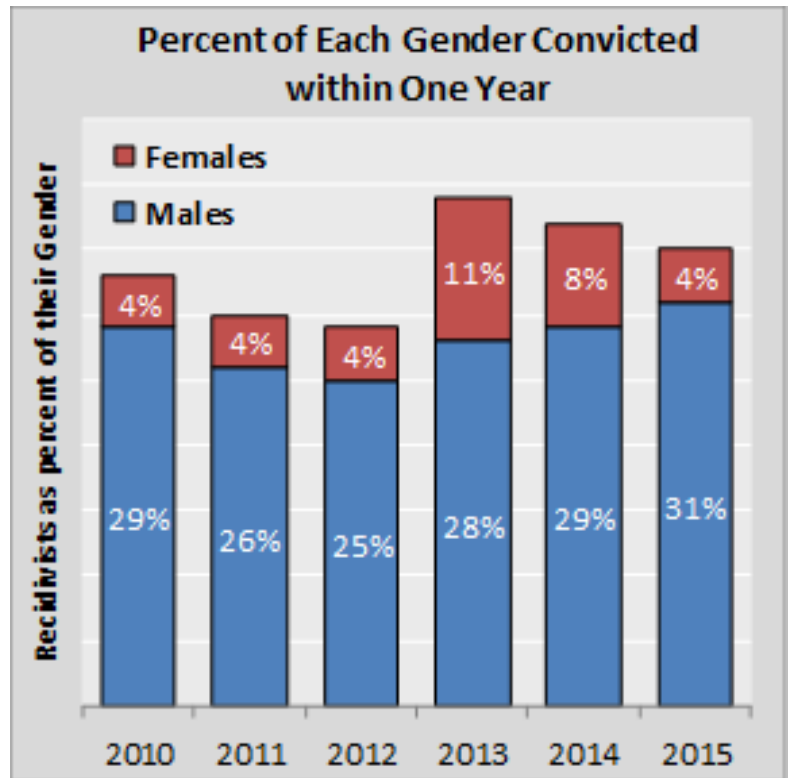
Recidivism

Recidivism is generally the most common measure used to determine the effectiveness of interventions with juvenile offenders. DYS defines recidivism as a conviction in the adult system for an offense committed within one year of discharge from DYS.

For each year's recidivism study, DYS selects the group of DYS youth who were discharged 4 years earlier. The study requires DYS to review and analyze two years of offense histories and an additional year for all court cases to close before beginning the study.

For the group discharged in 2015, the recidivism rate was 28%. The rate was 26% for youth discharged in 2014, 26% for youth discharged in 2013 and 22% for youth discharged in 2012. Over the same period, the recidivism rate for young women has been 11% and lower.

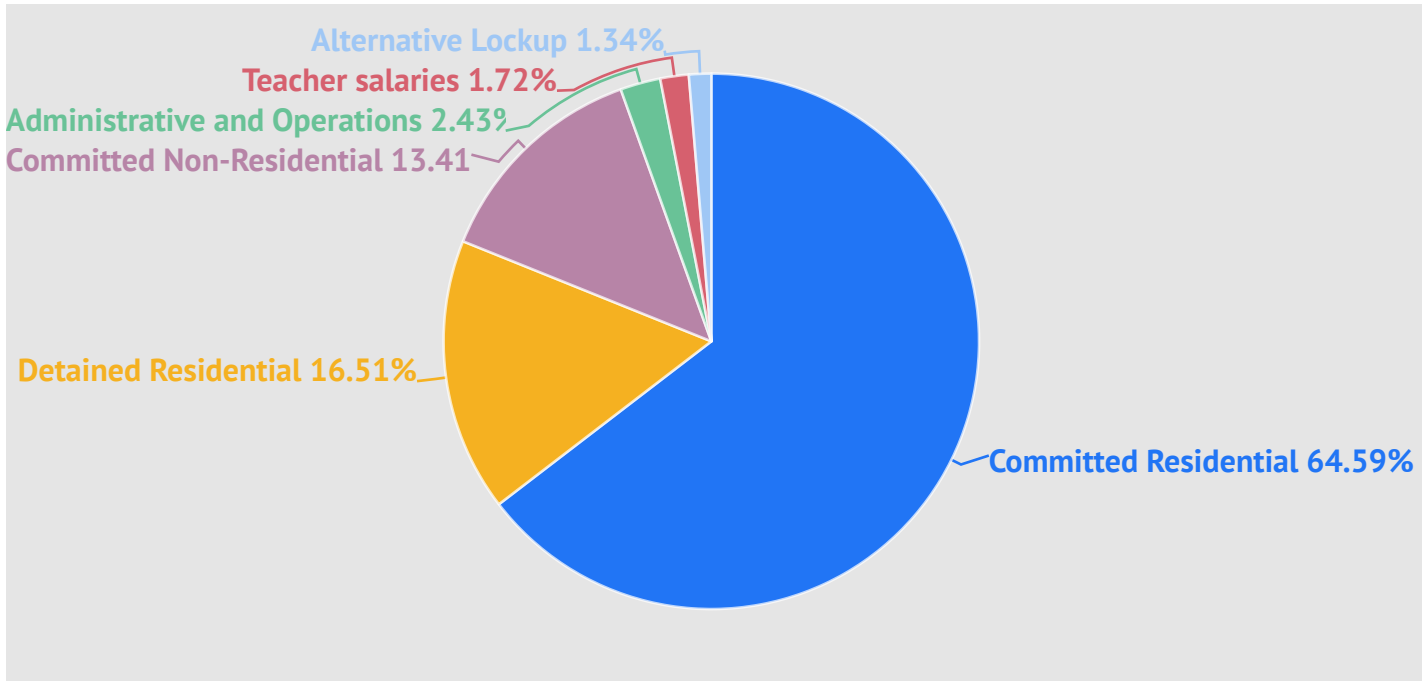
The highest rates of recidivism have generally been by youth who have been committed to DYS for offenses at the Grid level 4 and above. Youth at high risk for conviction as adults were males who had been committed to DYS custody for property and drug offenses.





DYS Budget FY 2019

*In Fiscal Year 2019, the Department of Youth Services
Budget was \$178,337,194*



65%

Percentage of FY 2019 Budget for residential services & committed youth

13%

Percentage of FY 2019 Budget for Community Services & committed youth

17%

Percentage of FY 2019 Budget for residential services & detained youth

2%

Percentage of FY 2019 Budget for DYS Administration and Operations

2%

Percentage of FY 2019 Budget for Teacher Salaries

1%

Percentage of FY 2019 Budget for Alternative Lockup Program (ALP)



Investing in Youth

Education is one of the most important and powerful activities supported and delivered by DYS. Understanding that education improves life outcomes for youth in our care, DYS educational services provides 5.5 hours of instruction, 5 days a week throughout the year in all our residential programs.

Student Academic Performance 2019 Results



91.7%

DYS Youth passed 10th Grade English Language Arts MCAS



46.2%

DYS Youth passed 10th Grade Mathematics



45.7%

DYS Youth passed High School Science

DYS Youth Milestones



105

DYS youth earned High School Diploma, HiSET or GED



78%

DYS Pass rate for HiSET test, compared to 76% Massachusetts Pass rate



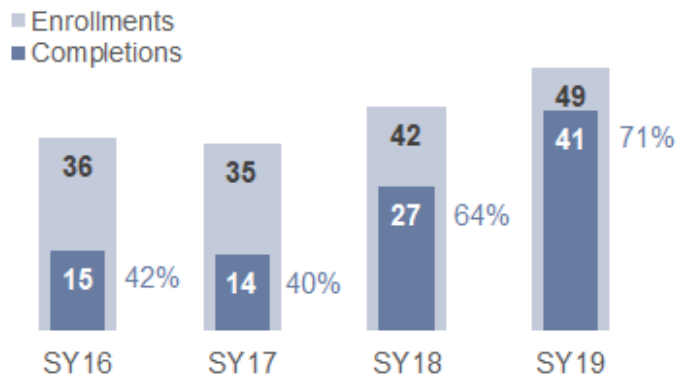
90

DYS youth enrolled in post-secondary education

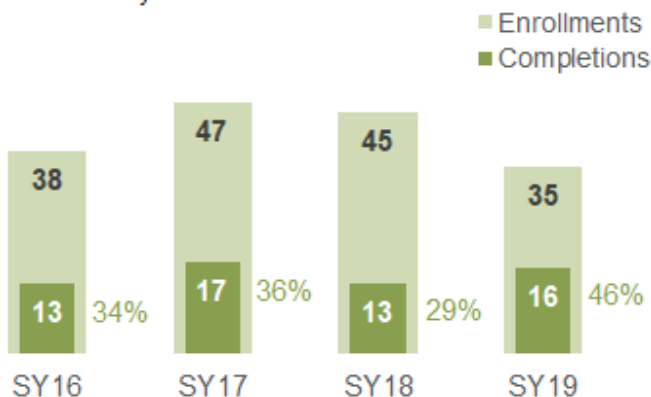
The chart on the right reflects growth of both interest and success in post-secondary education for youth in **residence**.

Since SY 17, there has been a 40% increase in enrollments and a 31 percentage point increase in successful completion in at least one course.

Increasing numbers of **residential** students *enroll in and complete* postsecondary courses



Increasing numbers of **community** students *complete* postsecondary courses



For students in the community, SY19 had the highest proportions of successful completions. There was also one student who earned a bachelors degree and another who earned an associates degree.

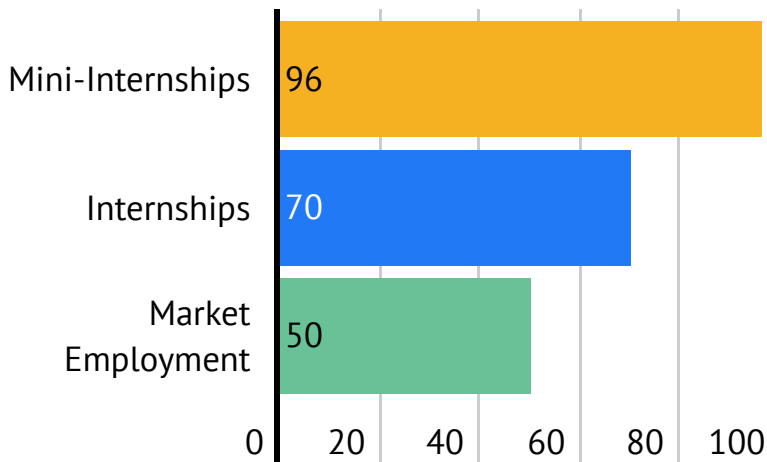
Career Readiness

Career Readiness Attainments Earned During SY19

Industry Recognized Career Readiness Attainments Earned in Residence	SY19
American Screen Printers Association Certificate Screen Printer	6
CPR Infant, CPR Child, CPR Adult, First Aid	112
OSHA 10: General Industry, Construction, Agriculture and Healthcare	63
Compliance Training Online	35
C-TECH Copper Wiring	17
ServSafe	33
International Sports Sciences Association (ISSA)	2
Grand Total	268

Bridging the Opportunity Gap (BOG) in SY 2019

Number of Youth with Employment Experiences in SY19



The Bridging the Opportunity Gap (BOG) initiative funds workforce development programming that supports DYS committed youth. The BOG is based on a 'tiered' program model with youth moving to advanced levels of the program as they gain work readiness competencies and meet specific performance benchmarks



THE DYS ARTS INITIATIVE

Arts programming at DYS provides a connection between youth success in the arts and youth success in workforce development/career readiness. The DYS Arts Initiative provides the following:

Visual Art Education

The Visual arts education project provided Six (6) art teachers helped students and teachers in the DYS residential programs to use the arts to improve teaching and learning, recognize and validate the creativity of our youth, and develop workplace readiness skills, such as creative problem solving.

Artist Residencies

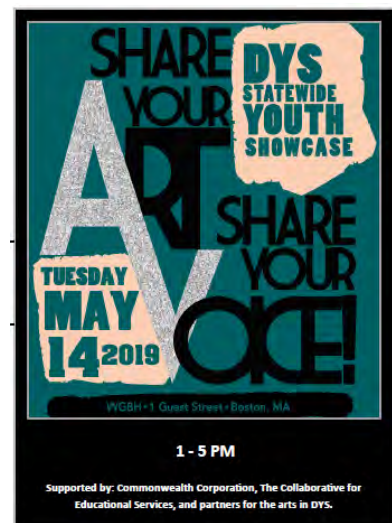
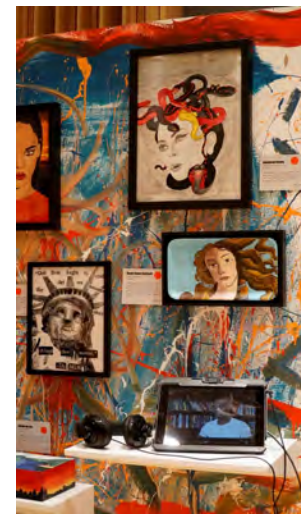
There were twenty-nine (29) artist residencies that engaged 19 professional teaching artists to work in 21 residential programs with students over a 6-12 week period on projects crossing many media including improvisation, drumming, poetry, drawing and painting, music production and lyric writing, and theater.

Arts Internships

Through the art internship program, youth throughout the state worked independently and in small groups with artists and arts organizations to refine their Showcase performances, create commissioned artwork, and engage in other requested performance opportunities with community partners or at DYS events.

Annual Statewide Youth Showcase

The 7th Annual "Share Your Art/Share Your Voice" Youth Arts Showcase held at the WGBH Studios in Boston was a big hit with the more than 400 guests attending. Youth visual artists submitted over 250 pieces of art for sale, with proceeds going directly back to the youth artists. Twelve (12) youth performers shared their talents in spoken word, drumming, dancing, singing, rapping and original electronic music composition.





Investing in Staff

FY 2019 DYS Employee Demographics

More than 80% of the DYS workforce is employed in a direct care role.

The titles of these employees are:

- Juvenile Justice Youth Development Specialist
- Youth Services Caseworker
- Clinician
- Institutional Security Officer
- Detention Coordinator
- Transportation Officer
- Apprehension Officer



837

Full-Time
DYS
Employees



435

DYS
Employees
identified as
Minority



110

DYS
Employees
who were
new hires in
FY 2019



43.2

Average age
of DYS
employees



52

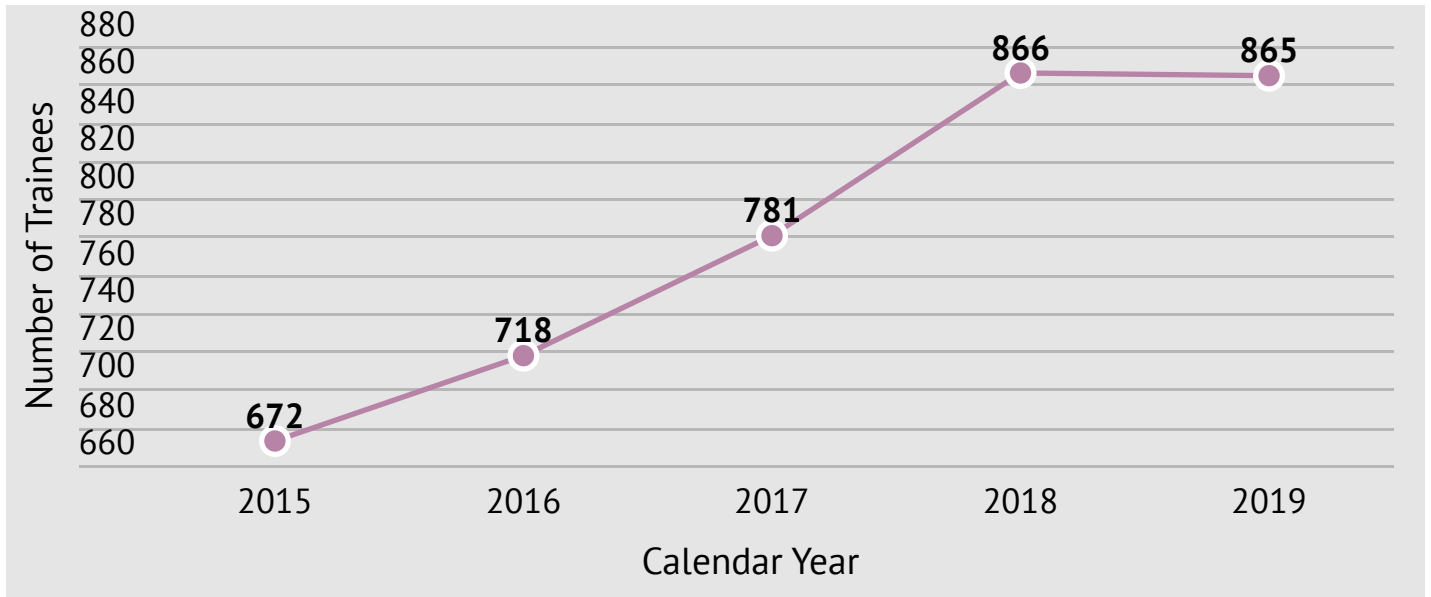
DYS
Employees
promoted in
FY 2019

The direct care staff in our residential programs are now known as Juvenile Justice Youth Development Specialists (JJYDS). This rebranding reflects the evolution of their role and responsibility for maintaining safety and security in the programs. This change emphasizes the shift from managing youth conduct and behavior through physical interventions to providing guidance, encouragement, and support through positive programming and youth engagement. Experience has shown that youth and staff feel safe when staff are seen by youth as caring adults who are there to help them to achieve their educational, career, treatment and life goals.



Staff Training

All new DYS staff complete three weeks of basic training, two of which are at the DYS F. Robert Brown Training Center. Many provider staff also attend Basic Training at the Training Center.



DYS Training by the Numbers



476

DYS and
Provider
staff trained
in LGBTQI-
GNC



589

DYS and
Provider staff
trained in First
Aid/CPR/Narcan



286

DYS and
Provider staff
completed
Statewide
Trauma
Informed Care
Training



Innovating & Improving

DYS Post Assault Study

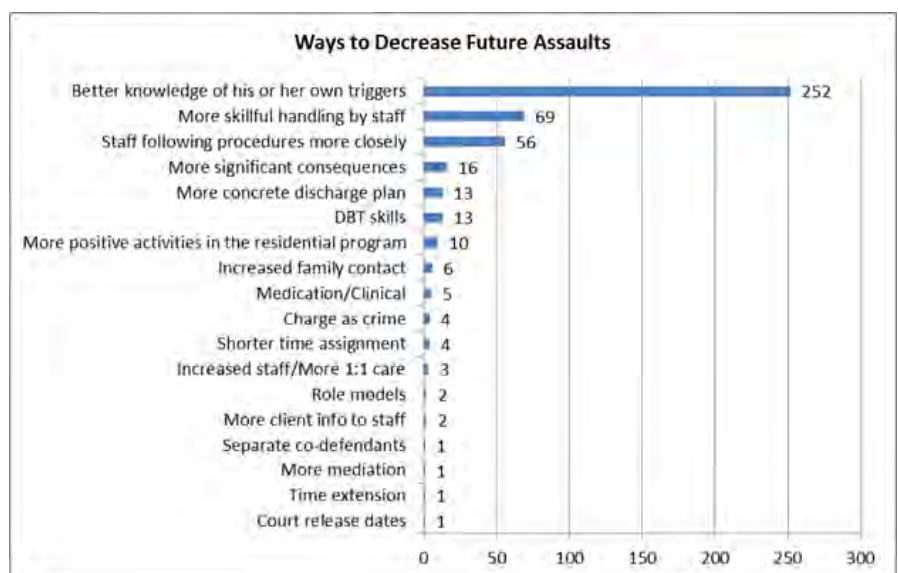
In a continuing effort to improve safety and security in our residential programs, the DYS Post Assault Study 2.0 was expanded to include 22 hardware secure programs, including detention, revocation and treatment programs from all five DYS regions. As was undertaken in the pilot study of 8 residential programs, the 2.0 study collected quantitative data and qualitative information (observations and interviews) to determine the cause(s) of assaults and recommend strategies for addressing the issue of assaults in the programs. Below are highlights of the findings:

Findings:

- Detention programs had the most incidents and treatment programs tended to have the fewest incidents.
- Newer programs tended to have more incidents than long established programs.
- The majority of assaults occurred during second shift when the youths were engaged in various activities and transitions, particularly between 8:00 PM and 8:59 PM.
- Staff and youth ranked gang issues as only the fifth most likely reason for assaults while the immediate words or behavior of the person assaulted ranked first for both groups.
- Programs that had the highest number of youth on staff assaults also included the instances when the staff did not seem to understand the youth’s viewpoint

Recommendations:

- Provide more training to Improve situational awareness of staff
- Help staff better understand the youth’s viewpoint.
- Continue use of the DBT based mini-chain which the study validated as an important part of the repair process to help youth with their thinking, their attitudes, and their resistance to or openness to examining triggers and the use of coping skills.





Innovating & Improving

DPR-CBO

In FY 2019, improvements were made to the Detention Placement Instrument (DPI), an objective risk screening tool that DYS used to help with detention placement decisions. A new tool, Detention Placement Recommendation (DPR) is now completed for all detention admissions and is combined with the Community-Based Options Placement Screening Instrument (CBO-PSI) which further assesses youth for placement in a foster care setting. The DPR not only takes into account the risks of re-arrest and flight but also assesses risk for aggression in placement

DYS Youth Sleep Study

In the Fall of 2018, the DYS Sleep Study Committee issued its recommendations for promoting healthy sleep practices and developing strategies for lifelong health and wellness for youth in DYS residential facilities. After collecting and analyzing data on current sleep practices and protocols and reviewing scientific literature and evidence-based practices on evaluating sleep problems and developing healthy sleep habits in teenagers, DYS has implemented the Committee's recommendations including:

- Guidelines for evaluating a sleep complaint with introduction of a new Youth Sleep Log, Sleep Questionnaire and Sleep Journal.
- Guidelines on improving the residential facility environment, e.g. placing pictures of family/caregivers and pets in the bedroom, painting bedrooms in more comforting colors to aid with sleep, and providing more home-like bedding to increase comfort and avoid stigma of wool blankets.
- Guidelines on improving residential facility programming and schedules, e.g. comforters/bedspreads, adjust/change lighting from nightlights, adjust temperature in bedrooms, and reduce/eliminate external noise.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

In FY 2019, DYS issued the Residential Visitation Policy that incorporates the Family Engagement Principles. Based on the principles of Positive Youth Development, the policy’s goal is to support engagement of youth with their families through increasing and encouraging visits; by simplifying the process for families to engage with youth; by providing family support services during visits; and by better promoting opportunities for participation by families so that they are involved in all aspects of a youth’s care.



Survey Question Asked of 117 Families	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel I can trust my child's caseworker	37%	42%	12%	4%	4%
I helped to choose my child's treatment goals	17%	35%	35%	9%	4%
The services my child and/or family received were right for us most of the times-	26%	43%	22%	4%	5%
I participated in my child's treatment by helping my child learn skills and overcome challenges	21%	33%	29%	4%	4%

The encouraging results of a recent family survey above that DYS is making progress in getting families actively engaged with their child’s treatment while they are with DYS. According to Vera Institute of Justice, parental and family engagement by the juvenile justice system is proven to be effective for better youth outcomes.

"The young men at Bright Futures have been working with Marquis Victor, Director of Elevated Thought, an art and social justice organization based out of Lawrence, MA. With Marquis they have been exploring identity through photography and potentially poetry."



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