

Charles D. Baker
Governor

Karyn Polito
Lieutenant Governor



Marylou Sudders
Secretary

Peter J. Forbes
Commissioner

Department of Youth Services



2014 Annual Report





The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Health and Human Services Department of Youth Services

600 Washington Street, 4th floor

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December 1, 2015

Dear Colleagues:

I am pleased to present this annual report from the Department of Youth Services (DYS). This report reflects the hard work of the entire team at DHS that includes direct care staff, managers, licensed professionals and a rich network of human service non-profit providers.

As the juvenile justice agency of the Commonwealth, it is our mission to protect the public and prevent crime by promoting positive change in the lives of the youth that we serve. We accomplish this mission by partnering with communities, families, our sister agencies within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, other public agency partners, and our non-profit providers. This report reflects the strategic effort by a wide-range of professional and dedicated staff.

Our priority initiatives in 2014 included:

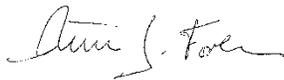
- The enhancement of our service continuum to effectively serve an older population of youth who have been redirected to DHS as a result of the 2013 legislation that "Raised the Age" of the jurisdiction of the juvenile court from 17 to 18 years of age.
- An increased reliance on data to inform decisions and activities throughout the agency. DHS has implemented a new management information system called the Juvenile Justice Information Management System (JJEMS) that has greatly improved our ability to understand client level and trend level data.
- A continued priority on positive youth educational outcomes that tracked High School Diplomas and GED-HiSet Certificates, post-secondary courses and placement, MCAS achievement scores, and a wide range of vocational and career readiness training opportunities.
- DHS achieving the top rating of compliance in our first round of audits associated with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) federally mandated standards. This audit outcome underscores our commitment to youth and staff safety at all DHS program locations.
- DHS organizing a strategic effort to better support discharge and post-discharge planning for committed youth yielding significant success in engaging youth in supportive services beyond their formal discharge from DHS. This effort is aligned with our commitment to reduce recidivism through promoting positive outcomes for DHS involved youth.
- DHS strengthening support of the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative ("JDAI") in partnership with the Juvenile Court, Probation, Department of Children and Families and other Executive Office of Health and Human Services agencies as well as the Law Enforcement community and Family Partners.

- DYS making intentional investments in our effort to engage families in a productive partnership in our work with their children. In 2014, DYS completed a survey of 300 families that is informing our efforts. Additionally, we engaged the *Professional Parent Advocacy League*, *Parenting with Love and Limits* and *Roxbury Youth Works* to strengthen our focus and improve our outcomes with families.

I recognize that our agency accomplishments in 2014 would not be possible without the sustained and committed effort of our staff and the support of a wide range of public and private agency partners. We are committed to improving public safety through engaging youth in a constructive process that results in skills attainment, academic achievement, increased personal insight, better decision making and to supporting youth to enter adulthood prepared to contribute to the communities of the Commonwealth.

I am honored to have the privilege of being the Commissioner of DYS and look forward to moving forward with your support.

Sincerely,



Peter J. Forbes
DYS Commissioner

The Massachusetts Department of Youth Services

As the juvenile justice agency for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Department of Youth Services (DYS) promotes positive change in the youth in our custody. Our mission is to make communities safer by improving the life outcomes for youth in our care through investing in highly-qualified staff and a service continuum that engages youth, families and communities in strategies that support positive youth development.

These investments are guided by the following principles:

- **Youth success is improved through a continuum of services grounded in the most current science and evidenced based and promising practices.**
- **The right youth, is in the right place, for the right reasons.**
- **After discharge from DYS, youth sustain the gains they made while in DYS custody.**
- **Strengthening the operational capacity and physical infrastructure needed to support staff in their work.**

The DYS Population by the Numbers

The Department of Youth Services, under the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, is charged with the detention, custody, diagnosis, education and care of youth who are detained or committed to DYS by the courts.

2,349 Youth Served by DYS in 2014			
903 Youth adjudicated delinquent and committed to DYS until age 18	171 Youth adjudicated as youthful offender and committed to DYS until age 21	1,596¹ Youth arrested and detained at DYS pending future court date	
87% Male & 13% Female Percentage of Committed Youth by Gender		82% Male & 18% Female Percentage of Detained Youth by Gender	
27% Caucasian 38% Hispanic 1% Asian 29% Afro-American 5% Other Percentage of Committed Youth by Race		30% Caucasian 37% Hispanic 1% Asian 27% Afro-American 5% Other Percentage of Detained Youth by Race	

¹ 320 youth were both committed and detained in 2014

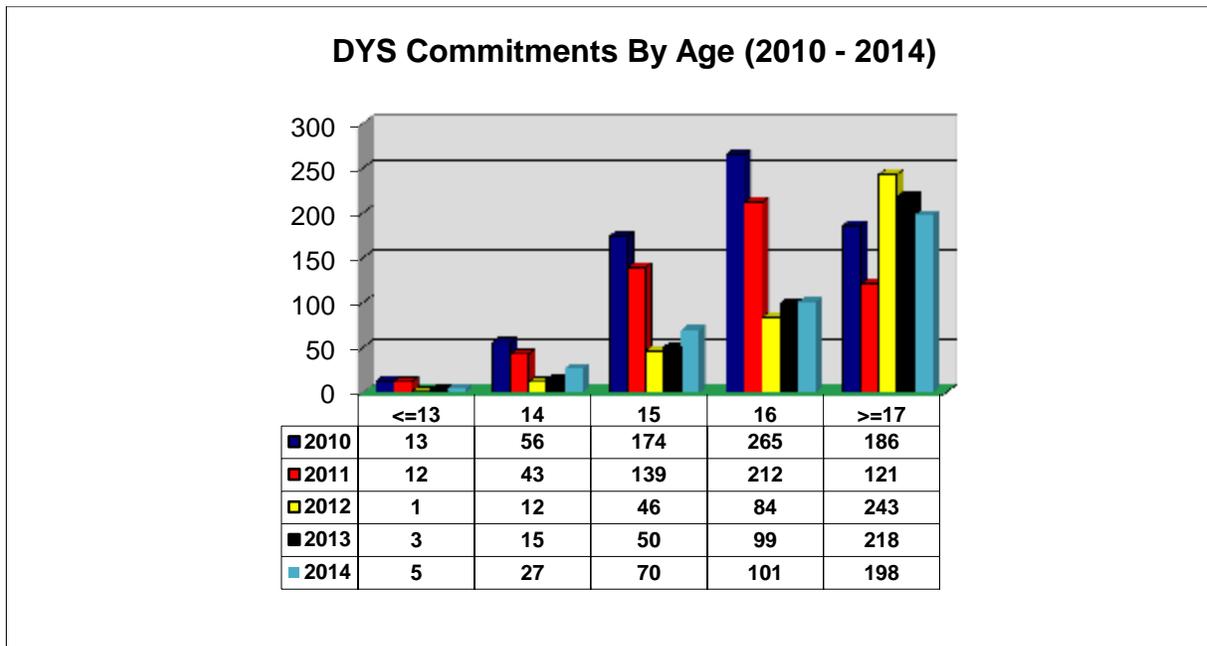
DYS Youth Demographic Trends (Calendar Years 2010 – 2014)

Committed Youth

The graphs below present data on the age, race, gender, and grid level of the youth who were committed to DYS over the course of the past 5 years. The majority of these youth was between the ages of 16 and 17, male, and fell in DYS Offense GRID Levels² 2 and 3. In CY 2014, there was a total of 1,074 youth committed to DYS of which 320 were youth on both committed and detained statuses.

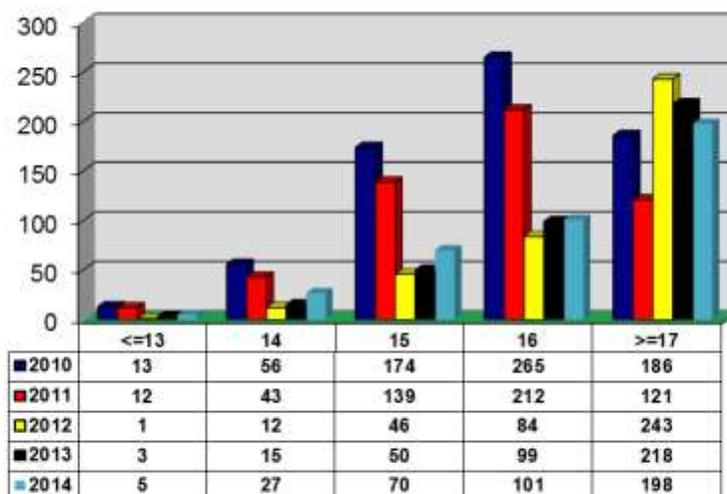
The average age of a youth at the time of initial commitment to DYS was 16 years.

The average age of the population of committed youth in CY 2014 was 17 years and 4 months.



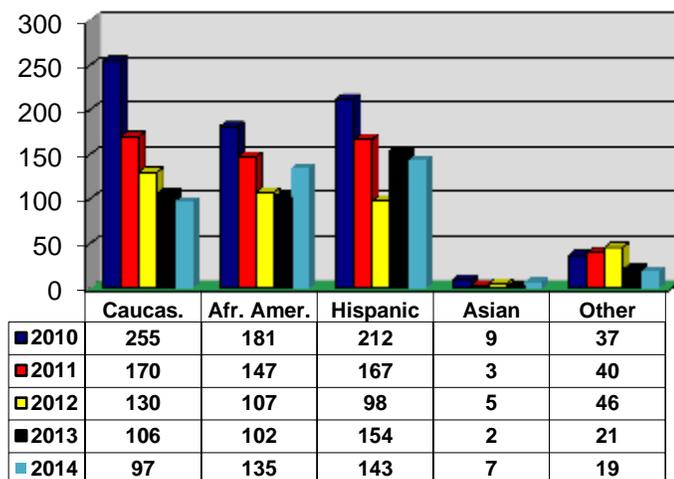
² The DYS offense grid level system is a 1 to 6 scale that represents the severity of an offense. The grids and typical corresponding offenses are as follows - Grid 1 (Operating a MV with a suspended license, drug possession, shoplifting, disorderly conduct, trespass), Grid 2: (OUI liquor or drugs, possession of heroin, assault, assault & battery, tagging, breaking & entering), Grid 3 (Indecent A&B on a child, robbery, stalking, burning buildings), Grid 4: (Involuntary manslaughter, assault to murder, A&B with dangerous weapon, armed robbery, carjacking, kidnapping), Grid 5: (A&B on a child with substantial injury, attempted murder, armed robbery, assault to murder, armed carjacking), and Grid 6: (Murder, manslaughter, home invasion, rape, trafficking firearms).

DYS Commitments By Age (2010 - 2014)



Between 2010 and 2014, DYS has seen the racial composition of the number of youth committed during the year shift from a majority of Caucasian youth to more youth of color.

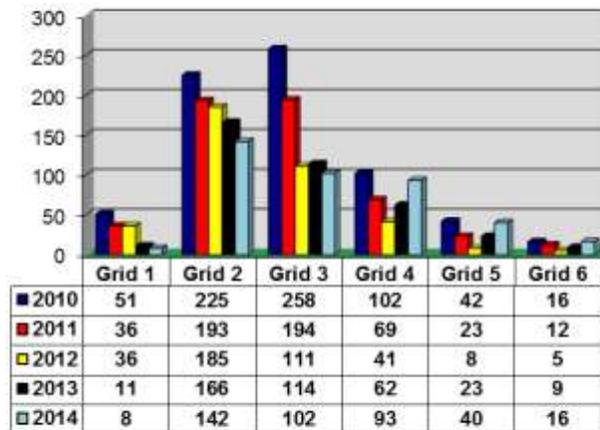
DYS Commitments By Race (2010 - 2014)



In 2010, 37% of committed youth were Caucasian, 26% Afro-American and 31% Hispanic. In 2014, 24% were Caucasian, 34% Afro-American, and 36% Hispanic

A committed youth is assigned by DYS an Offense GRID level that corresponds with the severity of their committing offense. DYS uses a grid comprised of six levels of severity in its classification process to determine initial time assignments. As displayed in the chart below, the majority of committed youth are in Offense Grids 2 and 3.

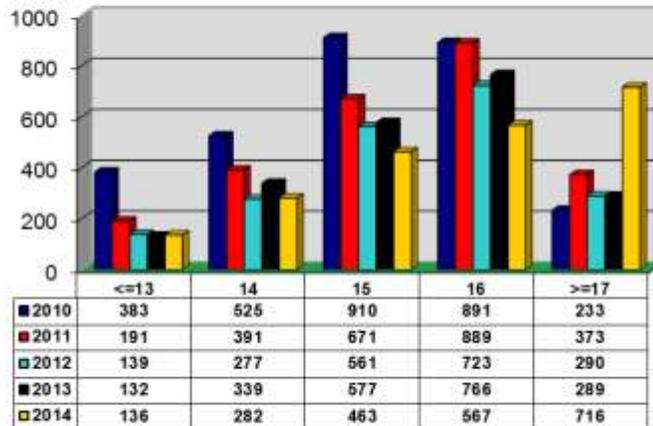
DYS Commitments By Grid (2010 - 2014)



Detained Youth

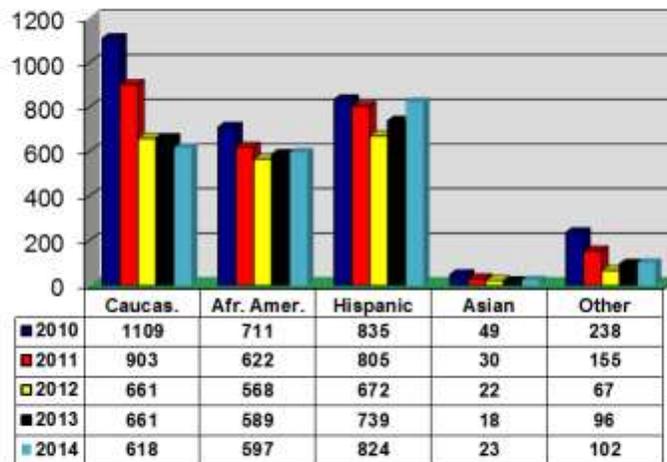
Youth who are arrested and are pending a future court date are placed in the physical custody of DYS in detention programs. In 2014, DYS had 2160 detention admissions. Approximately 20% of juvenile arraignments have resulted in a DYS detention.

DYS Detentions By Age (2010 - 2014)



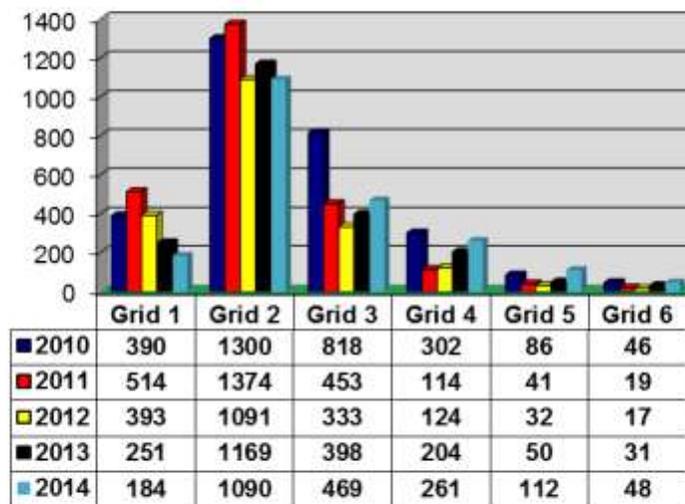
The DYS trend line for detention by race followed a similar trend line for the committed population. Since 2012, Hispanic youth accounted for a larger proportion of the youth in detention as the number of Caucasian and Afro-American youth in detention had dropped. In CY 2014, there were 824 Hispanic youth in detention compared to 618 Caucasian youth.

DYS Detentions By Race (2010 - 2014)

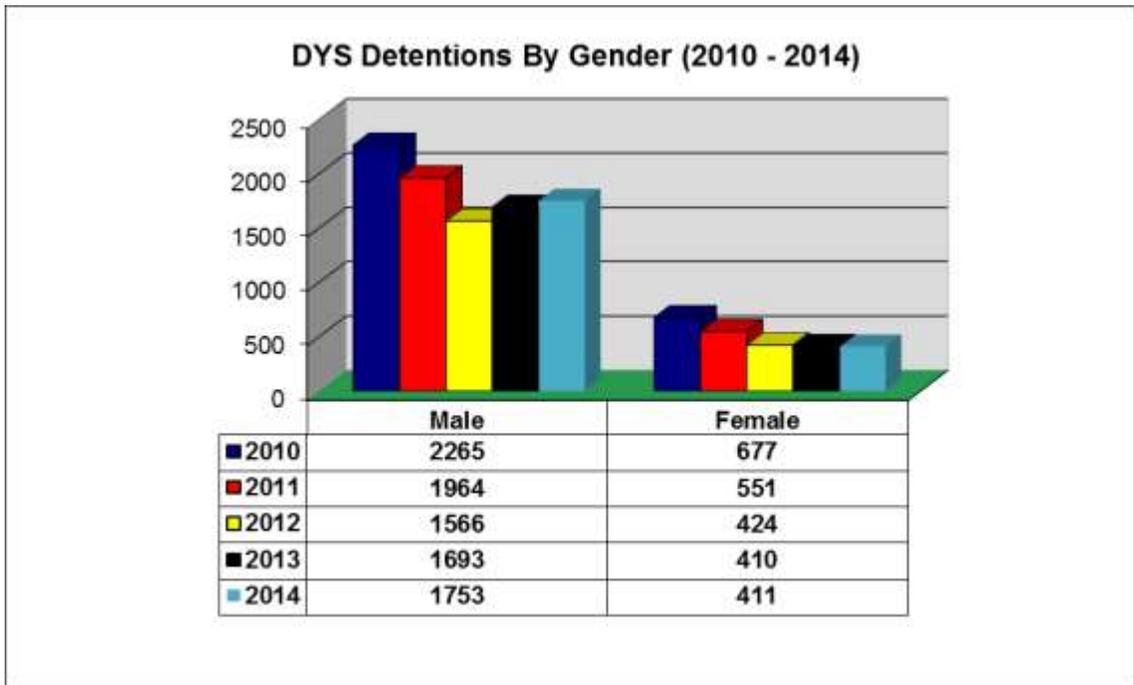


In CY 2014, most of the youth in detention were assigned GRID level 2 for committing offenses such as OUI liquor or drugs, possession of heroin, assault, assault & battery, tagging, and breaking & entering.

DYS Detentions By Grid (2010 - 2014)

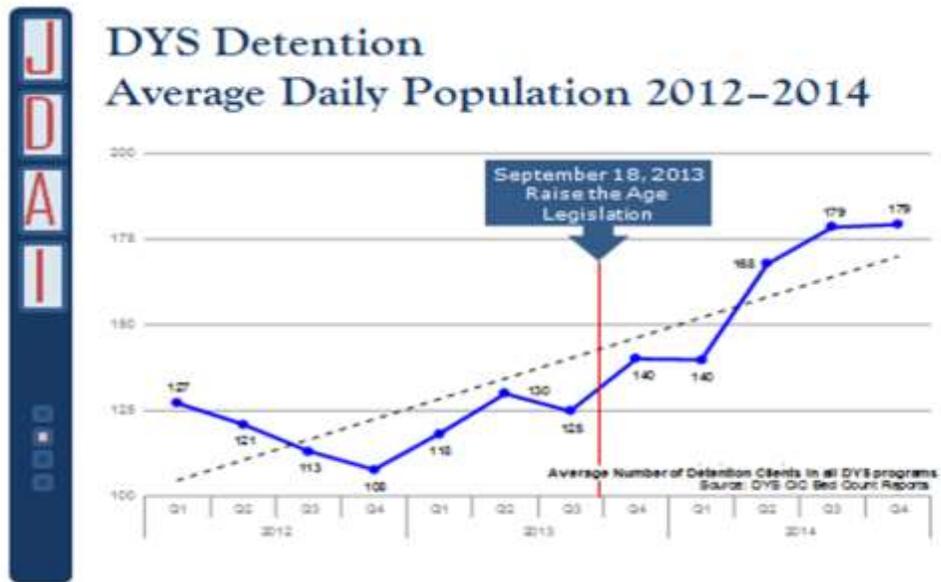


The percentage of females in the DYS detention population dropped from a high of 27% in CY 2012 to 19% in CY 2013 and CY 2014.



Raise-the-Age: Impact on DYS Commitment and Detention

In 2013, the Raise-the-Age legislation was passed in Massachusetts which increased the age of juvenile court jurisdiction from 17 to 18 for delinquency cases and youthful offender matters. Since the enactment of the Raise-the-Age law in September 2013, DYS saw the statewide average daily detention population increase by 43% from 125 to 179 youth.



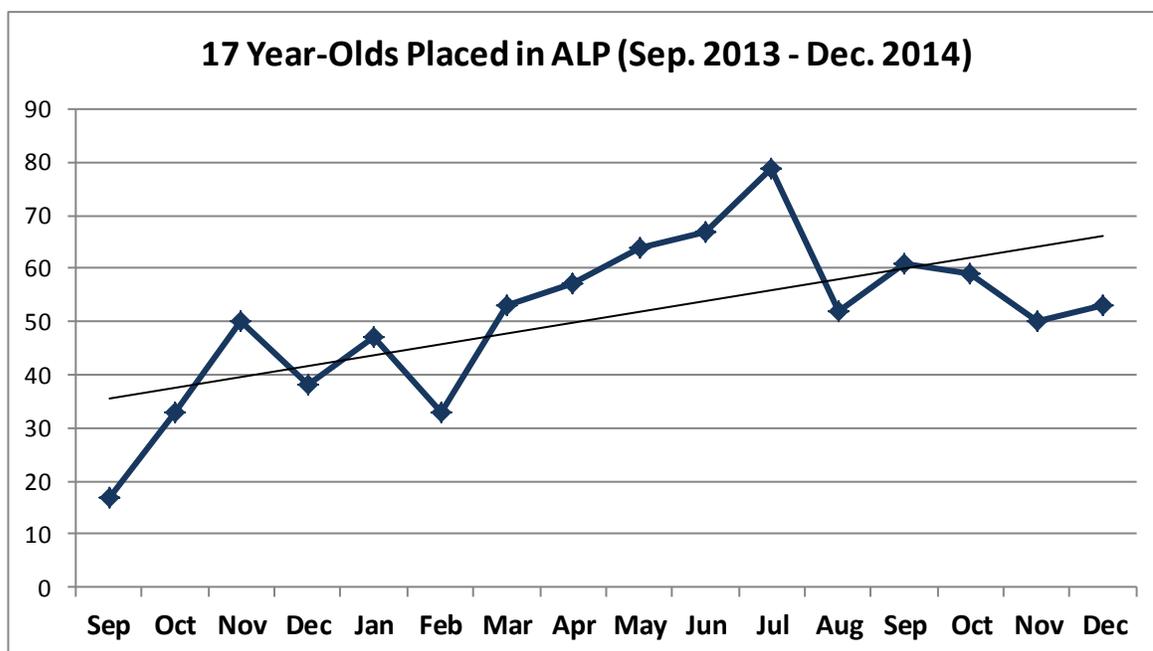
DYS Alternative Lockup Programs

The Department of Youth Services administers the Alternative Lockup Programs (ALP) to find secure placements for youth arrested when courts are not in session. The program is designed to provide a safe (non-police) environment for youth who are awaiting a court appearance.

The alternative placement of youth awaiting arraignment follows both state and federal requirements which include:

- Youth who commit a status offense (an offense that is only prohibited for minors) may not be securely detained for any length of time
- Juveniles charged with a non-status offense may be securely detained for no longer than 6 hours in a local police station
- Youth must be sight and sound separated from adults
- No juvenile under the age of 14 may be held in a police lockup

DYS had 2,054 overnight arrest admissions (placement for youth arrested overnight or during the weekend until arraignment or court date) in 2014. The number of 17-year olds referred to DYS for overnight arrest had steadily increased from an average of 40 youth in the first quarter of the Raise the Age law (enacted on September 18, 2013), to an average of 54 youth in the last quarter of 2014.

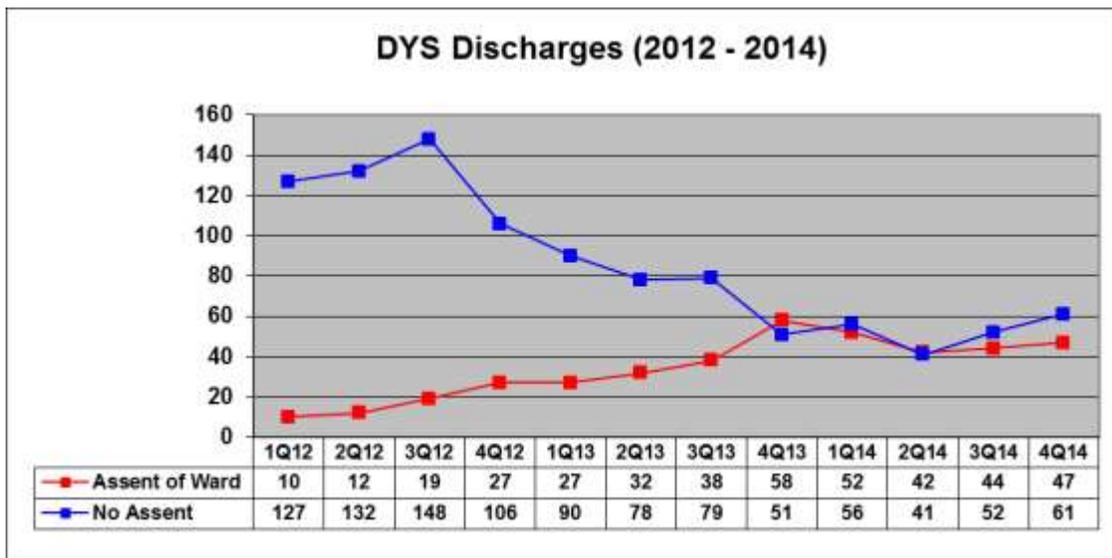


DYS Revocation

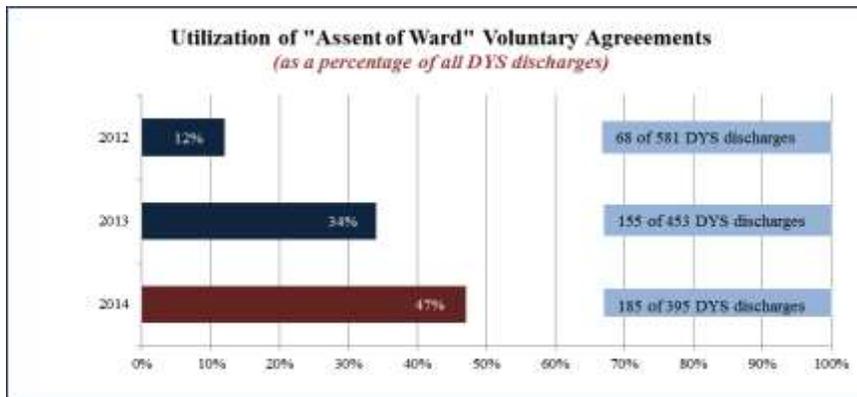
After youth are committed by the court to DYS and complete their time in custody, they are then released into the community under an agreement similar to a parole agreement which is called the Grant of Conditional Liberty, or GCL. The GCL is a document signed by youth and their DYS caseworkers that lists the conditions that the youth must follow, such as attending school regularly and staying in contact with the DYS caseworker. When DYS caseworkers believe that a youth is not following the conditions of their GCL, they may decide to return the youth to custody to face a revocation hearing. Four hundred and five (405) youth were revoked in CY 2014, 426 youth in CY 2013 and 526 youth in CY 2012.

Assent of Ward

In 2013, DYS began offering voluntary community support services to every youth discharging from DYS custody. Through the Assent of Ward voluntary agreements, a youth agrees to abide by the conditions of the agreement following discharge in exchange for continuing case management and other transitional supports such as housing, continued education, treatment and/or job training. The Assent of Ward is a DYS service strategy that is directed to reduce recidivism through increasing skill attainment and supporting other positive youth outcomes.



The Assent of Ward supports the Department's goal of ensuring that youth sustain the gains they made while in DYS custody through improved discharge planning and continuing community supportive partnerships. The duration of the transition supports provided has averaged 3 months. The Assent of Ward voluntary agreements have increased almost four-fold since the inception of the program in 2012 from 12% to 47%. This trend reflects another positive step taken by the youth in planning for their future post discharge.



Recidivism

In 2014, DYS evaluated the criminal history of 392 former DYS clients who were discharged in 2010 to find the rate of recidivism for the entire cohort. Of the 392 individuals in the study, 25% were convicted of an offense committed within 1 year of discharge from DYS. This compared with a 28% rate for the 2009 discharges; a 37% rate for the 2008 discharges; and a 40% rate for the 2007 discharges. Former clients at high risk for reconviction tended to be males who were high-level offenders (Offense Grid Level 4), and had been committed to DYS on Property or drug offenses.

	One-Year
Gender	Reconviction Rate
Males	26.1%
Females	3.9%
Ethnicity	
Caucasian	22.9%
Afr. American	20.2%
Hispanic	22.0%
Other	22.7%
DYS Committing Offense Type	
Person	21.9%
Property	23.4%
Drug	20.7%
Motor Vehicle	7.7%
Weapons	19.4%
Public Order	24.1%
Grid Level	
<= Grid 2	22.2%
Grid 3	20.6%
Grid 4	27.0%
>= Grid 5	15.4%

The DYS Service Continuum

The Department of Youth Services employs a “continuum model” of services and supervision. This continuum includes residential programs, reception centers/foster care, and community-based sites. DYS divides its services into five geographic regions. While each region has its own continuum of services and supervision in order to serve youth as close to their home communities and families, all DYS residential and community programs provide positive youth development opportunities for DYS youth.

The Department has made Positive Youth Development (“PYD”) a part of every-day practice across its programs statewide. Positive youth development is an asset-based approach used in working with DYS youth that integrates multiple areas of growth and development - physical, cognitive, social, emotional, cultural, civic, and vocational - with education. This interdisciplinary strategy focuses on building on a youth's strengths in order to provide opportunities for the youth to enhance their interests, skills, and abilities and strengthen the gains they make when they return to the community.

In 2014, the Department of Youth Services:

- Continued to promote Positive Youth Development research and best practices that support a strength-based approach to working with youth.
- Provided professional development, workshops, and training on culturally responsive teaching and learning strategies.
- Collaborated with community partners who are motivated and engaged about working with youth from a range of cultural, ethnic, racial and socio-economic backgrounds.

DYS Placement Services

In 2014, DYS operated 63 residential programs for youth, ranging from staff-secure programs to hardware-secure programs. Bed placement is determined by the youth’s status on the DYS continuum, which includes detention, assessment, commitment, and revocation. There are separate programs for girls and boys. Each residential program has a capacity of 6 to 20 beds. Residential programming services include clinical intervention, education, structured recreation and, health services.

In response to the Raise-the-Age legislation, DYS developed eight (8) new programs in 2014. These programs consisted of 2 staff-secure detention programs, 2 hardware-secure detention programs, 2 independent living programs, 1 staff-secure assessment program, and 1 staff-secure treatment programs.

	Total Programs		Security Level		Total
	Provider	State	Staff	Hardware	
Girls	7	1	3	5	8
Boys	31	19	27	23	50
Alternate Lock Up Program	4	1	4	1	5
Total	42	21	34	29	63

As of December 31, 2014, 46% of the committed population had completed a residential placement with DYS and were under supervision in the community. Fifty two (52%) percent of the committed population were placed in residential programs for periods ranging from three months to several years; and two (2%) percent were placed with other agencies.

Residential Highlight: *Through the collaboration established between the Boston Public Library and our education partners, BPL Teen Librarians from various branches in Boston visited youth and brought monthly book deposits to various Metro region residential programs.*



This residential initiative:

- *Provided students with meaningful relationships with the community while in treatment.*
- *Promoted the appreciation of a variety of books on topics that were empowering, fun, career-related and engaged thinking.*
- *Created a post-release connection by inspiring youth to use their local public library for homework help, college application support, research help, and encouraging participation in teen community programming.*

Community Programs

The Community Services Network is part of the DYS service continuum that recognizes and complements work completed by youth in the residential phase through the support of families, and the collaboration with communities and locally based provider agencies to access and develop resources. Through 22 district offices that are strategically located across Massachusetts, DYS has caseworkers who provide supervision and support to committed youth living in their home communities. The caseworkers work with youth by connecting them with education and vocational services, job readiness training, employment, behavioral health, medical services, mentoring, and arts related services.

Community Highlight: The Community Re-entry Initiative provided supports for the successful transition and re-entry of youth through mentoring, arts and cultural programming, GED/Hi-Set and adult basic education services, and workforce development opportunities that foster career readiness and employment. In 2014, DYS created program options with detailed requirements and measurable outcomes that increased opportunities for youth to participate in a variety of programs that matched their interests.



Education and Career-Readiness

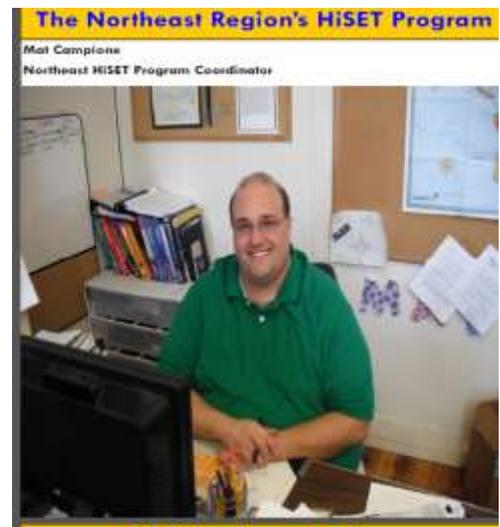
In partnership with the Commonwealth Corporation and the Collaborative for Educational Services, DYS provides a comprehensive education and workforce development program that gives all youth in DYS custody the knowledge, tools, and confidence they need to build a better future. In 2014, the Partnership's achievements included the following:

- Initiation of the blended technologies (e.g. on-line digital portfolios, use of wikis, and certification through on-line technical courses) at five secured programs as one of six states selected to participate in the Blended Learning Initiative sponsored by the Center for Educational Excellence in Alternative Settings.
- Design and implementation of a system-wide conferencing protocol that linked student progress directly to their academic work and provided them with the opportunity to work with their teachers to revisit their academic goals.
- Implementation of the reading curriculum, On the Record, in all treatment, assessment and revocation programs as part of the Comprehensive Literacy Initiative. The curriculum was based on the four social justice platforms of defining self, becoming resilient, engaging others, and building capacity to engage students by using real life stories.
- Implementation of the STAR reading, a tool that helped teachers personalize instruction for students at varied reading levels.
- 100% of the general education teachers working with the DYS youth held a current DESE license or comparable credentials.

Education: A solid educational foundation is one of the greatest protective factors that DYS can provide for youth and is a point of emphasis in terms of our youth engagement strategy. By having youth in residential and revocation programs work closely with Education and Career Counselors and Teaching Coordinators, they were able to transition seamlessly between residential, revocation and community programs with their HiSET studies. This set-up also provided youth with the opportunity to take their test while in a DYS program.

Education Highlight: *In the Northeast Region, the Lynn District Office HiSet Class had successfully achieved a 100% graduation rate for the 2104 calendar year (20 out of 20 students passed)*

DYS committed youth continue to earn HiSets/GEDs (High School Equivalency) and High School Diplomas at a successful rate. In the 2013-2014 school year, 142 out of approximately 700 youth attained their HiSets/GEDs and High School Diplomas. In comparison, 123 out of 1,288 youth received their HiSets/GEDS and HS diplomas in the 2010-2011 school year.



Northeast HiSET Program Coordinator, Mat Campione has helped DYS track all Northeast students on the HiSET pathway in DYS programs and the community.

GED Attainment and High School Diploma Data for the Past 4 Years		
	High School Diplomas	HiSet/GED
2013-2014	69	73
2012-2013	63	80
2011-2012	79	90
2010-2011	57	66

The Department recognized youth accomplishment by hosting graduation ceremonies for the youth across the state. For many families, the graduation ceremonies provided recognition and validation of youth achieving a critical developmental milestone. Students were honored with certificates for receiving their high school or HiSet diplomas. Some youth were also honored for receiving their associate degree while in DYS custody. All the regions celebrated the strong bonds and connections that exist between our community team and the families. That bond helped foster this learning environment for the youth.

Post-Secondary Enrollment: During the 2013-2014 academic year, seventy-eight (78) students enrolled in post-secondary courses. This figure was a reflection of the DYS effort to partner with institutions that are dedicated to providing access to higher education and certifications for youth who are interested in pursuing it.

The Bridging the Opportunity Gap (BOG) Initiative is a combination employability and re-entry program that provides career readiness, work-based learning opportunities and connections to employment. The BOG initiative is based on a positive youth development model that is asset-based, culturally responsive, and delivered by personnel with experience in operating youth employability programs. Programming is interactive and engaging to youth, and is delivered in a way that addresses a variety of learning styles. Human services agencies, community and faith-based organizations, workforce investment boards, career centers, and vocational technical high schools across the state participate in the BOG initiative. These organizations work with Commonwealth Corporation staff to build and expand program services and resources that result in access to a variety of employment and educational opportunities for DYS youth.

In 2014, there were 169 youth enrolled and served in summer programming and 259 youth served during year-round programming.

Profile of BOG (Bridging the Opportunity Gap) Enrollments and Outcomes

Program Options	Number of Youth Enrolled	Percentage that Completed BOG Programs
Work-Based	114	43%
Vocational	50	34%
Arts & Cultural	58	29%
GED/HISET	37	54%
Total Program Enrollments	259	40%



BOG Highlight: In 2014, this DYS youth graduated from high school in Western Mass. He started Springfield Technical Community College in the fall. He resided in our independent living program and is a well-respected member of the BOG program team at Greater New Life Christian Center and was the recipient of "Youth of the Year" award that DYS gives annually to a youth served by the Springfield District.

Industry-Recognized Credentials: During the 2013-2014 school year, the following industry-recognized credentials were earned by students in residential programs:

- 101 students earned their CPR/First Aid Certificate and learned the critical skills needed to respond to and manage a first aid, choking or sudden cardiac arrest emergency while awaiting for emergency medical services to arrive. This included CPR and AED use, as well as how to relieve choking on an adult.
- 11 students earned their ServSafe Food Handler Program Certificate which provided students with the basic knowledge and skills required to work in the food and restaurant industry, such as, Basic Food Safety, Personal Hygiene, Cross-Contamination & Allergens, Time & Temperature, and Cleaning & Sanitation.
- 20 students earned their Copper Wiring C-Tech Certificate through a 40 hour program which uses curriculum materials purchased from C-Tech, a nationally recognized company that has developed programs used by other states for vocational training in institutional schools.

Empower Your Future Initiative ("EYF") is a life-skills, career development and employability curriculum guide which helps youth take more control of their future outcomes by strengthening their voice and developing their academic, technical, workplace readiness, and social competencies. Empower Your Future provides a coordinated system of learning that offers young people maximum opportunities to gain personal, life, and employability skills, explore workplace attitudes and cultures, learn from work experiences, and develop strong workforce portfolios and career pathways.

During 2014, the following actions were implemented to increase the impact of this initiative:

- Curriculum was developed and piloted in revocation programs.
- Educational staff received further training and support related to implementing the EYF curriculum.
- Coaching was provided for teachers to support effective implementation of EYF in classroom instruction.



Empower Your Future Highlight: A residential program in the Southeast Region boasted several Bridging the Opportunity Gap and Empower Your Future accomplishments for youth in 2014. The program had 1 youth complete the EMT licensure course; 2 youth complete driver's education classes; 1 youth obtain a driver's license; 15 youth earn a MA learner's permits; 3 youth complete the Hi-Set testing to earn High School Equivalency; 8 youth acquire Massachusetts IDs; 3 youth earn ServSafe certification; 4 youth and their families participate in family engagement group; and 8 youth who sought and secured employment in the community.

Pictured: 2014 Northeast high school graduation ceremony held at UTEC in Lowell

Initiatives and Partnerships

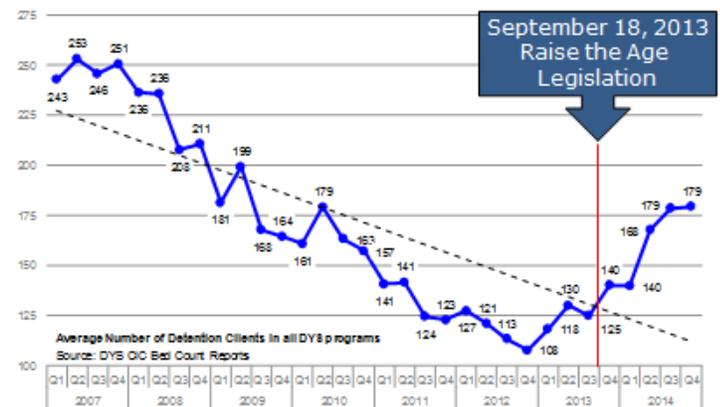
The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (“JDAI”) is a national systems-reform initiative working to improve the detention component of the juvenile justice system. It is a public safety partnership, led by DYS, that focuses on reducing the unnecessary and harmful use of secure detention for low-risk juveniles. JDAI ensures that “the right youth, is in the right place, for the right reasons” through strategies that engage public, private, community and family partners.

JDAI State Partners include:

- Department of Youth Services
- Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association
- Department of Children & Families
- The Office of the Commissioner of Probation
- Massachusetts Juvenile Court Department
- Executive Office of Public Safety & Security
- Department of Mental Health



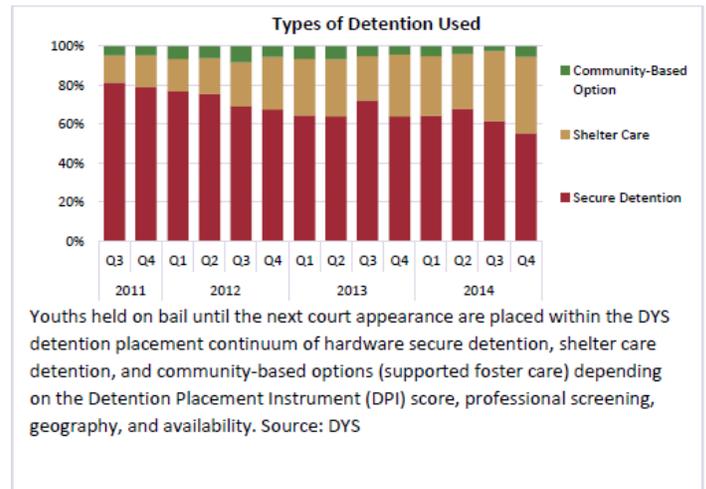
DYS Detention Average Daily Population 2007–2014



In 2014, JDAI Accomplishments included the following:

- Convened the 7th Annual JDAI Massachusetts conference focused on implicit bias and decision making, which has spawned other youth-serving and justice-oriented partners to recognize the need for more training on this topic.

- DYS staff, in conjunction with the judiciary and public defender’s office, trained every bail magistrate in Massachusetts authorized to post bail overnight. The training was on the Juvenile Overnight Arrest system. The goal was to reduce the number of youth in the ALPS (alternative to lock-ups) who do not have a bail set.
- Expanded JDAI to Hampden County with the goal of reducing the number of low-level offenders held in DYS facilities.
- Produced County-Level Detention Data Dashboards for the six JDAI counties to support data-driven decision making by local stakeholders and to strategically focus reducing disparity at each decision-point within the system.
- Trained 100 School Resource Officers (SRO) in Adolescent Brain Development and Delinquent Behavior in an effort to reduce system involvement for typical adolescence behavior. DYS is now seen as a key partner in police trainings across the state, training 400 police and clinical staff at the DMH mental health and law enforcement conference, in addition to regional trainings with officers (150+) throughout the state.



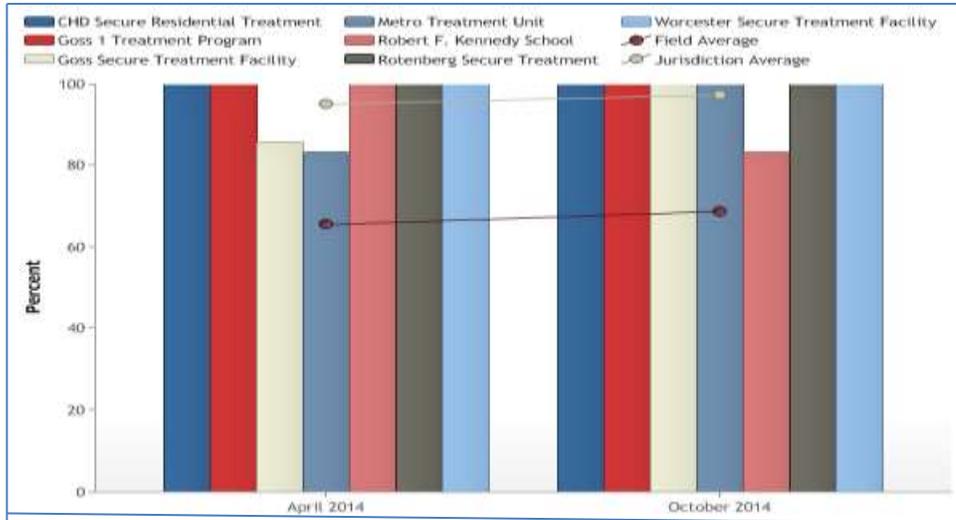
DYS Leadership Training for External Stakeholders: The Department of Youth Services, the Office of the Commissioner of Probation, the Administrative Office of the Juvenile Court, the Youth Advocacy Division, the Department of Children and Families and the Governor’s Juvenile Justice Advisory Council collaborated to create a high -impact training series for senior field based managers from the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to learn more about cutting edge concepts that included trauma, positive youth justice and the impact of chronic marijuana use on adolescent development. A primary purpose of the six-session training series was to coalesce leadership across agencies on Positive Youth Development, “what works” with at risk and high risk adolescents and provide the opportunity to exchange ideas, network across agencies, and share meaningful learning opportunities to improve collective impact.

Performance based Standards (PbS) is a data-driven improvement model grounded in research that holds juvenile justice agencies, facilities and residential care providers to the highest standards for operations, programs and services. PbS was launched in 1995 by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to improve the deplorable conditions reported in the 1994 Conditions of Confinement Study.

DYS and its programs have been active participants in the national PbS initiative which promotes facility based practices that support quality standards of care and enhanced safety for youth and staff. Data is collected and evaluated twice per year.

In October of 2014, 9 out of the 12 DYS programs participating in PbS achieved the top rating (Level 4) and the remaining 3 programs achieving Level 3. DYS distinguished itself in a number of PbS practice areas including: family engagement, limited use of room confinement and positive staff and youth reports of safety in their program environments.

Family Engagement: Visits by Parents and Guardians of Youth in DYS programs



Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) is a federal law passed in 2012 that required states to come into compliance with a comprehensive set of standards focused on safety from sexual assault for all people confined in correctional settings, including youths in DYS residential programs.

In 2014, DYS completed the first round of PREA audits and achieved the highest rating of “compliance” in all programs reviewed. As a part of the auditing process, more than 200 staff members and 200 youth from 34 residential programs were interviewed about their experiences and knowledge of PREA policies and trainings. In a follow-up letter, the PREA auditor opined that the *“DYS commitment to PREA ...to implement PREA compliance across the full spectrum of services providers (state operated programs and contract vendor providers) was second to none... All used the same language, knew the same policies and procedures, received the same high quality training and had the same commitment to keeping youth safe. These outstanding efforts are, in my professional opinion, making youth committed to DYS some of the safest youth in the country in terms of protection from sexual violence.”*

Pay for Success: DYS is a project partner in the Department of Administration and Finance’s Pay for Success/Social Innovation Financing Initiative. The Commonwealth has contracted with Roca, Inc. to implement an intensive intervention program for youth referred by both DYS and Probation that is designed to help youth find jobs and develop life skills. The services are provided post-discharge from DYS. Eligible youth who live in the designated geographical catchment areas are randomly selected to receive the services provided by Roca, Inc. through this initiative. The program’s goals are to reduce recidivism and to increase positive education and employment outcomes. Under this Initiative, the goals will be measured through an extensive evaluation process based on data collected from participating youth.

DYS Statewide Youth Showcase: “Share Your Art- Share Your Voice” is an annual event where the positive achievements of our youth are on display. The Showcase brings together DYS youth, teachers, clinicians; community programs, and DYS community staff and caseworkers, and illustrates how the Department supports youth towards achieving educational, social, and vocational goals.



The 2014 DYS Youth Showcase featured 350 pieces of youth artwork, theatrical performances, personal testimonials, and displays of grantees that provide high-quality education and employability opportunities for DYS youth.

Family Engagement is a Department priority that is practiced throughout DYS programs statewide. The Department of Youth Services recognizes that an effective intervention for youth in the juvenile justice system is the engagement of families in a strength-based partnership.

Highlights of the DYS family engagement activities in 2014 include:

- Established *Assessment Family Orientation Groups* throughout the state that support families of newly committed youth by providing them with information on the DYS service continuum (detention, assessment, residential treatment, and community), related services (e.g. clinical, educational, vocational, medical, behavioral health, and case work services), and community opportunities (e.g. arts programming and membership in local YMCA) that are available to the youth.
- Initiatives to encourage families to attend monthly treatment meetings and regional classification review meetings where major decisions on classification, placement, treatment and discharge are made about the youth in residential treatment.
- Family events such as Family Night Events, Actors’ Shakespeare Project performances, Mother’s Day Brunch and Parent Café held by the regions throughout the year.
- Connecting parents of youth in detention to the Parent Professional Advocacy League (PPAL), a statewide, grassroots family organization that advocates for improved access to mental health services for youth and their families.
- Parenting with Love and Limits (“PLL”) piloted in the southeast region. PLL is an evidence-based program that combines a 6-week parent education and group therapy program with individual “coaching” (family therapy) sessions for youth and their parents. PLL gives the youth and family strategies to address problems, learn new skills and practice them over a 3 to 6 month period to enhance their ability to engage with one another.

- A statewide family survey was completed in 2014 and, based on feedback, demonstrated positive interaction / experience with the parents.

Grants Awarded to DYS

In 2014, DYS successfully applied for national grant assistance to address some critical areas for our youth. The funding from the following grants has enabled DYS to make improvements and strengthen key systems.

Detention Diversion Advocacy Program (DDAP), Hampden County was funded by the Juvenile Accountability Block Grants (JABG) Program. Through this grant, DYS, in partnership with the Robert F. Kennedy Children's Youth Action Corps, operated a program with the goal of reducing recidivism among juveniles who were medium to high-risk by diverting them from DYS detention. Youth were referred to DDAP by the presiding juvenile court judge and are assigned a probation officer and a DDAP youth advocate

Technical Assistance For Dually-Involved Youth, Essex and Suffolk Counties. Under this grant, the case-flow-pathway for youth with open cases at the Department of Children and Families and presented in juvenile court for delinquency petitions was changed. Instead of pre-trial conferences, the Juvenile Court clinic convened case conference meetings where a multi-disciplinary team would meet with the family and youth to identify and arrange for services that would keep the youth in the community and out of DYS detention.

Council of Juvenile Criminal Administrators (CJCA) Program Services. Technical assistance was provided to DYS on information systems and data capture design from the Oregon Youth Authority ("OYA") on its Youth Reformation System ("YRS"). The focus of the grant was on improving youth and public safety outcomes by using and integrating OYA YRS predictive functionality into the DYS Juvenile Justice Enterprise Management System.

Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Second Chance Grant. In 2014, DYS continued through this grant the development and administration of the REACH program to reduce juvenile delinquency and criminal activity among committed male youth with co-occurring disorders (mental health and substance abuse). Using the Adolescent Community Reinforcement approach (an evidence-based promising practice) DYS and Spectrum Health Services transformed a staff secure residential substance abuse treatment program into a best practice model for integrated care with arrangements for the companion Assertive Continuing Care to provide continuing care in the youth's home upon release. The grant funded training of caseworkers and program evaluation.

2014 OJJDP Emergency Preparedness Grant funded DYS senior staff to attend a training in Washington DC where they had the opportunity to receive technical assistance and network with other states. As a result of this grant, DYS developed an Emergency Operations Plan with statewide implementation guidelines for each program location including regional planning to improve emergency preparedness at all DYS residential and community programs.

DYS Staff, Infrastructure & Finance

The DYS Staffing at a Glance

Human capital is the Department of Youth Services' greatest asset. In 2014, DYS had 863 employees; 29.5% were female, 40.5% were minority and 3.5% were veterans. DYS had 77 new hires and promoted 31 employees. Below is the 2014 breakdown of DYS staff by job categories used in the Commonwealth's affirmative action reporting.

Officials/Administrators	124
Professionals	190
Technicians	9
Group Youth Workers/ISOs	436
Office/Clerical	58
Skilled Craft	36
Service Maintenance	10
Total Number of DYS Employees	863

Training and Staff Development

Training Academy: In 2014, the DYS F. Robert Brown Training Academy provided Basic training to 716 state and vendor staff. Basic training is a 3 week course that is an essential element to the onboarding of new employees. Basic training consists of 23 classroom modules, 6 e-Learnings, and an on the job training component.

The Training Academy also facilitated and supported 63 Annual Review trainings where 1,040 state provider staff were trained. The Annual Review was a full day's training for veteran staff. In 2014, the Annual Review covered the DYS Strategic Plan, De-escalation and Adolescent Brain Development, PREA, Searches, Restraint Techniques and Defensive & Disengagement Techniques

Staff Development in 2014

- Community Services Statewide Professional Development Day was attended by 200 community-based staff (central office and regional administrators, caseworkers, district managers and provider staff) from across the state to learn and share information pertinent to the community operation – including revocation, MassSTART, youth and family perspective, education and team building activities.
- The Clinical Services Staff Conference in 2014, sponsored by the DYS Clinical Services Department and the Justice Resource Institute, focused on new and innovative treatment approaches for ensuring family engagement and best practices in supporting youth who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual Transgender, Queer, Intersex or Gender Non-Conforming.
- Residential Services Staff Development Day was attended by more than 200 DYS residential staff. The day focused on positive youth development principles and featured guest speaker, Charlie Applestein, MSW, who spoke on how to reshape the lives of at-risk youth using positive, trauma-informed, strength-based theories and techniques.

Workforce Planning

In 2014, a DYS employee competency model was developed to identify skills, behaviors, personal attributes and other characteristics associated with or predictive of superior job performance and to set the foundation for improved recruitment, selection, and retention practices for supervisors and managers. The competencies introduced included Adaptability, Building Trust, Cultural Competence, Guiding and Developing Others, and Stress Tolerance.

In addition, a standardized hiring procedure along with a strength-based supervision form and process were developed and implemented for supervisory positions in the group youth worker and caseworker classification series.

DYS also tested an updated exit interview process to improve its understanding of the workforce.

Highlights of DYS Capital Projects

The physical environment of our facilities is important to helping DYS execute on the various strategies efficiently and effectively in order to achieve the agency's operational goals and mission. In 2014, the DYS buildings where state residential programs operated were the Judge John Connelly Youth Center in Roslindale, the Metro Youth Service Center in Dorchester, Chelmsford Cares in Chelmsford, Goss Building in Taunton, Zara Cisco Brough, Sharp, and Allen Hall buildings in Westboro, Leahy Center in Worcester, Tinkham Road Building in Springfield and the Westfield Detention in Westfield. In 2014, DYS focused on the following:

- Prepared and issued Facilities Maintenance and Repair (FMR) Contract to address ongoing, non-capital department maintenance needs of the DYS buildings.
- Started the study, design or implementation of department capital deferred maintenance projects worth approximately \$1.4 million.
- Identified specific department vehicle fleet needs in preparation of lease program activation.
- Teamed with Division of Capital Assets Management and Maintenance to initiate and push forward the Accelerated Energy Program projects in 4 regions.
- Worked with the DCAMM and design team on the design and construction of the new DYS residential facility in Middleton that is scheduled to open in the summer of 2016. The new facility will incorporate all modern technology, floor configurations and adjacencies essential for the programmatic needs of youth in DYS care, including classrooms equivalent to those in the newest public or private schools, a gymnasium, an outdoor exercise field with a track, dining facilities, and residential units with plenty of natural light. The new building is an energy efficient facility that was designed in accordance with LEED Silver standards.

DYS Fiscal Year 2014 Budget at a Glance

In 2014, the DYS operating budget at the beginning of the fiscal year was \$160,372,207 for the following six categories of services:

ACCOUNTS	TOTAL
Administration	\$4,082,818
Community Services	\$22,956,829
Pre-Trial Detention	\$21,637,087
Residential Services	\$106,622,349
Teachers' Salaries	\$2,973,124
Alternative Lock-Up	\$2,100,000
TOTAL	\$160,372,207

The Department of Youth Services received an FY 2014 supplemental budget of \$7.9M to cover the additional operational, educational and programmatic costs projected for the increased caseload associated with Raise the Age legislation that was enacted on September 18, 2013.