

Ohio

**Department of
Youth Services**

Mike DeWine, Governor
Ryan Gies, Director

ANNUAL REPORT



FISCAL YEAR

2019

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about us

The Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) is specifically tasked to confine felony offenders, age 10 to 21, who have been adjudicated and committed by one of Ohio's 88 county juvenile courts.

**A safer Ohio:
one youth,
one family,
and one
community
at a time.**

DYS provides a variety of services and treatment for youth, including a fully-accredited high school, behavioral health services, unit management, medical and dental care, recreation, religious services, community service opportunities, victim awareness, and reentry services.

The two DYS parole regions supervise youth on parole, working with them and their families to provide the guidance necessary for youth to become positive, contributing members of society. Beyond the task of supervision, staff help youth on parole to receive needed services including housing, public assistance, education, and treatment for medical, mental health, and substance abuse. Having access to these services reduces the likelihood of a youth committing a new offense.

Our Mission: Improve Ohio's future by habilitating youth and empowering families and communities.

Letter from the Director

I am proud to present the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) Annual Report for FY 2019. In the following pages, you will learn more about our efforts over the past 12 months to improve the lives of justice-involved youth.

We are at an exciting time of progress in juvenile justice, one in which we can play instrumental roles in the success of the youth within our system. The staff at DHS – whether youth specialists, parole officers, case managers, community justice professionals, medical professionals, or maintenance workers – are dedicated to helping these youth succeed and making our communities safer.

Governor DeWine has prioritized building a brighter future for Ohio's children, including those who come into contact with our juvenile justice system. As Lieutenant Governor, he helped spearhead Ohio's RECLAIM initiative, which has revolutionized juvenile justice in our state and supported communities in holding youth accountable and meeting their needs.

The Governor has also demonstrated a commitment to education and employment opportunities, so we continue to focus on helping youth build more positive futures. Like all of us, they want a job with livable wages, a safe place to live, reliable transportation, and time with loved ones. Education and training create hope for such a future.

At DHS, we have been expanding vocational programs designed to ensure youth are job-ready when they go home. We are prioritizing training that can be completed at DHS, or finished in the community, for youth to gain industry-recognized credentials for in-demand job opportunities.

This year, we doubled the number of youth employed in our facilities, allowing them to save for reentry needs and gain work experience.

We take pride in the American Correctional Association's reaccreditation of the Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility. ACA accreditation ensures that we are in compliance with national standards, and are best positioned to help youth within our facilities.

Regardless of their struggles, youth can make it to the other side with dedication and persistence. We strive to help them become well-equipped to better their lives, while contributing positively to their communities.

These are just a few highlights of our work. To learn more, read ahead or visit www.dys.ohio.gov.

Sincerely,



Ryan Gies, Director

Fiscal Year 2019 Highlights

Education Successes

The Buckeye United School District (BUSD), operated by DYS and chartered by the State Board of Education, offers year-round classes to students grades 6-12 through an array of academic courses. BUSD meets all of the Ohio Department of Education standards, and all educators are licensed in their respective areas. The three schools within DYS facilities offer basic academics (math, English/language arts, science, and social studies), special education, career technical education, electives, and even post-secondary options.

Accomplishments in FY 2019 include the following:

- ◆ 581 students served
- ◆ 80 youth received a GED
- ◆ 1,118 credits were earned
- ◆ 25 youth received a high school diploma

Career technical certificates awarded in FY 2019 include the following:

- ◆ 11 Auto Tech
- ◆ 19 Digital Print Design
- ◆ 82 Plant and Horticulture Science
- ◆ 34 Construction Technical-Core and Sustainable Construction
- ◆ 74 Introduction to Family and Consumer Science
- ◆ 112 Career-Based Interventions
- ◆ 324 Transitional Skills

Preparing Youth

The agency also focused on preparing youth for in-demand jobs and careers. By expanding the offering of industry-recognized certificates and credentials, DYS can help youth create road maps to careers and higher education opportunities. The agency added two new career field offerings in FY 2019, to include Auto Technology and RAMTEC robotics. Industry credentials awarded in FY 2019 include the following:

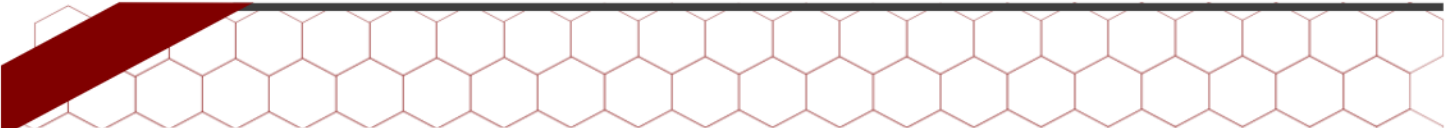
Preparing for Employment

Industry Certificates Earned

- ◆ 24 Binding and Finishing
- ◆ 4 Greenhouse Production
- ◆ 2 Landscape Management
- ◆ 7 Offset Printing
- ◆ 44 Push Mower
- ◆ 35 Rototiller
- ◆ 27 Stand-On Mower
- ◆ 1 Turf Management
- ◆ 26 Vegetable Gardening
- ◆ 61 Zero Turn Mower

Industry Credentials Earned

- ◆ 18 CPR Certification
- ◆ 26 Forklift Certification
- ◆ 37 ServSafe
- ◆ 1 Ohio Nursery and Landscape Certified Nursery
- ◆ 17 Occupational Safety and Health Administration -10 hours
- ◆ 1 Occupational Safety and Health Administration - 30 hours
- ◆ 2 National Center for Construction Education and Research



To prepare youth for the workforce, DYS provides them with employment opportunities through its facility youth job assignment program. The program offers youth full or part-time employment with on-the-job training in areas of maintenance, food service, recreation, apprenticeships, and much more.

At the close of FY 2019, a total of 318 jobs were filled by youth, including positions in maintenance, food service, recreation, apprenticeships, and supervised off-grounds opportunities. This number reflects an increase of 160 jobs from the 158 jobs reported last year. Facility employment provides youth the opportunity to earn money to help with reentry needs, as well as gain quality experience to list on a resume.

The agency also focused on preparing youth for in-demand jobs and careers. By offering industry-recognized certificates and building relationships with employers, more youth have the education, skills, and connections needed to access quality employment.

Giving Back Through Community Service

Community service provides meaningful activities for youth to give back to society while learning valuable skills. During FY 2019, a total of 27,844 hours of community service were provided by youth in facilities and 1,044 hours of community service were provided by youth on parole.

“This is my way of giving gifts,” said a youth from Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility (JCF) as he loaded boxes at the Shoes and Clothes for Kids warehouse in Cleveland. Youth who have earned the privilege of participating in off-grounds community service spend time sorting and packing items at the only non-profit organization in Greater Cleveland that provides new shoes, school uniforms, clothes, and school supplies throughout the year, at no charge, to thousands of children in need.

Youth at Indian River JCF worked with horticulture teacher James Hoskins to separate two pounds of seed from milkweed pods. Milkweed seed is critically important to the monarch butterfly, which depends solely on milkweed as a host plant for eggs. In fact, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will decide later this year whether monarch butterflies will receive federal protection under the Endangered Species Act, demonstrating this to be a very worthwhile community service project.

Youth at Circleville JCF packed 50,000 meals for the needy in November 2018. The project, in collaboration with the Governor’s Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives and the Outreach Program, helped families served by foodbanks in Circleville, Washington Court House, and Logan. Some meals were also donated to the Columbus-based After-School All-Stars, which focuses on using health and fitness to help at-risk youth get back on track.

Investing in Our Community Programs

DYS provides funding and technical assistance for a continuum of programs and interventions that serve youth closer to their families and in the least restrictive, appropriate setting. This includes statewide support of juvenile courts and county partners through RECLAIM Ohio (Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors), Targeted RECLAIM, Competitive RECLAIM, Youth Services Grant, Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice, and CCFs. These community investments provide youth with the intensity of treatment and community supervision that matches their risk to reoffend. Indeed, DYS is known as a national leader in the use of funding to divert appropriate youth from incarceration to community-based

Fiscal Year 2019 Highlights

programs and services. To provide some context, the number of DYS admissions dropped from 1,895 in FY 2007 to 343 in FY 2019. In FY 2019, Ohio courts admitted 92 fewer youth to DYS than were admitted in FY 2018, representing a decrease of 21.1 percent. Thus, our JCFs have decreased significantly in population over the years, but the youth who are now sent to those facilities have been adjudicated for some of the most serious offenses in the State of Ohio. More information on these initiatives and their outcomes can be found at <http://dys.ohio.gov/Community-Programs> by pulling down the Community Programs tab and selecting the desired initiative.

Expanding Detention Alternatives

The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) promotes the practice of only placing the right youth into secure detention, while others receive less restrictive services, thus preventing youth from going deeper into the juvenile justice system. In FY 2019, JDAI expanded to 14 counties, to include Greene and Paulding counties. As a result of persistent JDAI efforts, Montgomery County Juvenile Court was selected for intensive racial and ethnic equity and inclusion training and technical assistance provided by the Oakland, California-based Burns Institute. DYS, in collaboration with Ashtabula, Franklin, Summit, and Montgomery counties, was selected by the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) to participate and become train-the-trainers for the Reimagining Juvenile Justice Curriculum, a positive youth development program. Additionally, the department worked with the AECF to create a web-based space on JDAIconnect that is specific to Ohio. This space allows counties to network and share resources to reinvest in alternatives to better serve youth, families, and community.

Family Engagement

DYS recognizes the importance of interaction between youth and their families. The CLOSE to Home Project (Connecting Loved Ones Sooner than Expected) provides free transportation to help connect youth with their families. In FY 2019, DYS provided a total of 59 bus trips that served 390 family members.

The Video Communicator Project promotes family involvement using laptops and wireless technology. In FY 2019, the Video Communicator was used for 30 family visits, 59 reentry meetings, and 122 staff meetings (between facility and parole staff) regarding youth.

DYS provides ample opportunities for families to connect with youth. All facilities offer visitation to family members seven days a week, as well as provide special events to encourage family-youth connections. Virtual tour videos, available on the DYS [YouTube channel](#), allow families to see the facilities from anywhere, anytime.

Young Fathers

In FY 2018, we rolled out a new initiative called “Bonding with Books.” Youth, who are themselves fathers, are videotaped reading to their children, and packages including the video, book, and a personalized note are mailed to the young children and caregivers. “Bonding with Books” provides a unique opportunity for young fathers to stay connected with their children while they are away from home. A total of 133 videos were sent to children from their fathers during FY 2019. A few of the books included *Old McDonald*, *Twinkle, Twinkle*,



Little Star and Brown Bear, Brown Bear.

Promoting Youth Responsibility

We launched a behavior management system called PRIDE (Positive Response Incentive Driven Environment) in FY 2017, which raises the bar for how youth behave in the facilities and increases expectations for their participation in education, treatment and programming.

In FY 2019, we added tablets to the list of incentives for Pride Level 4 youth—the highest level in the system— as well as standardizing employment pay rates by PRIDE level instead of job type, and offering facility to facility intramural sports and special off grounds activities. We have learned that incentivizing good behavior encourages youths’ personal responsibility and self-management, which in turn promotes safer, more positive facility environments.

DYS also introduced the Virtual Driver Interactive driving simulator program in FY 2019, which aims to give youth realistic driving experiences and education. The driving simulator provides 17 basic driving lessons, teaching youth how to use turn signals and obey traffic laws while maintaining safe driving practices. Upon completion of the program, youth are eligible to receive a certificate. To date, 37 youth have completed the program.

Sites Reaccredited

Circleville JCF and four Community Corrections Facilities (CCFs) received final approval on reaccreditation from the American Correctional Association in August 2018 and January 2019, respectively. The reaccredited CCFs included Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, Multi-County Juvenile Attention System Community Corrections Facility, Northern Ohio Community Corrections Facility, and Oakview Juvenile Residential Center.

Successful PREA Audits

All state-operated JCFs and county-operated CCFs have previously completed Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) audits, which are conducted at each site every three years. In FY 2019, the following sites passed their PREA audits: Cuyahoga Hills JCF, West Central Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility, Montgomery County Juvenile Court Center for Adolescent Services, Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, and Juvenile Residential Center of Northwest Ohio.

Training Excellence

The Training Academy Pre-Service training program for new employees was offered seven times in FY 2019, with class sizes ranging from 19 to 41. From July 2018 to June 2019, 206 new staff members attended the Academy’s basic training program, averaging 125 hours for a combined 25,676 hours.

DYS, along with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC), partnered with the John Maxwell Company to provide leadership training to employees to continue leadership excellence in the agency. Twenty-five DYS employees attended the leadership seminar, which covered the *5 Levels of Leadership*. DYS and DRC will continue to grow this partnership with the John Maxwell Company for

Fiscal Year 2019 Highlights

workshops and leadership curriculum.

Services for Victims

The Office of Victim Services (OVS) within DHS is responsible for ensuring that the rights of crime victims of DHS youth are recognized and honored. OVS provides written notification of potential or actual status changes of youth, information and support, victim-offender dialogue opportunities, victim advocacy through linking victims with the Release Authority, and referrals. The office offers a support hotline that victims can call for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at (800) 872-3132.

In FY 2019, OVS provided 5,767 written notices of potential or actual status changes of youth and managed 828 victim-related phone calls. During the year, a total of 86 youth successfully completed the Victim Awareness Curriculum, and 19 staff were trained to facilitate the curriculum. This program helps youth acknowledge how victims and the community are affected by crime and offensive behavior.

Supporting Staff

Staff are the most important resource of any correctional system, and they must be healthy in order for youth to be healthy. The agency uses Critical Incident Stress Management to support staff when they experience trauma and Peer Assistance to help staff with personal issues. During FY 2019, Peer Assistance supported staff on 2,435 occasions, totaling 3,097 contacts in all. In addition, one crisis management briefing was conducted.

In May 2019, an agency-wide employee recognition program was held. Alicia Rushing, Investigator at Circleville JCF, was named Employee of the Year. Terrence Arthur, Youth Specialist at Cuyahoga Hills JCF, was named Youth Specialist of the Year. Bryan Weimerskirch, parole officer from the northern region, was awarded the first-ever Community Engagement Liaison Award.

Alternative Placements for Youth

DYS uses a continuum of residential facilities to meet the individualized treatment, education, and behavioral health needs of committed youth. In FY 2019, these included the following sites: Applewood Centers, Lighthouse Youth Center at Paint Creek, and Pomegranate Health Systems, as well as several Community Corrections Facilities (see below). Alternative placements give DHS more options to provide the treatment and services youth need to become responsible young men and women. Alternative placements served a total of 134 youth during FY 2019.

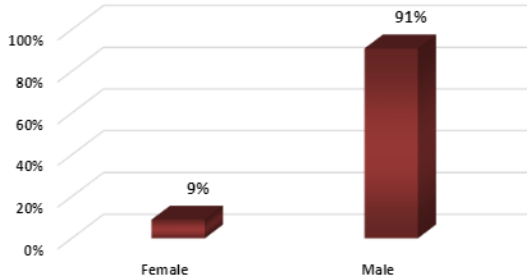
Community Corrections Facilities

There are 12 Community Corrections Facilities (CCFs) which are used by juvenile court judges in lieu of committing to DHS boys and girls who have been adjudicated for a felony offense. CCFs served a total of 577 youth during FY 2019. The average length of stay in CCFs was 7.16 months.

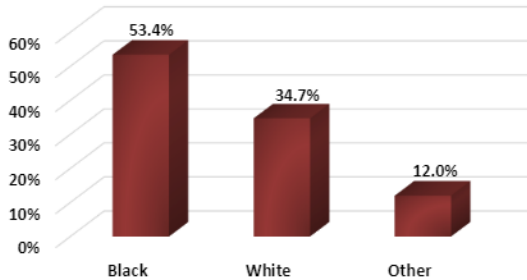
In addition, CCFs play an important role in expanding our alternative placement options. Not only are DHS girls served by a CCF (Montgomery County Center for Adolescent Services), but this past year, DHS implemented a step-down program. This program allows youth the opportunity to move from a JCF to a CCF in order to receive an array of additional programming, potentially reside closer to home, and generally allow for a smoother reentry into their communities. DHS transitioned the first three youth in FY 2019 who took advantage of this opportunity.

Fiscal Year 2019 Statistics

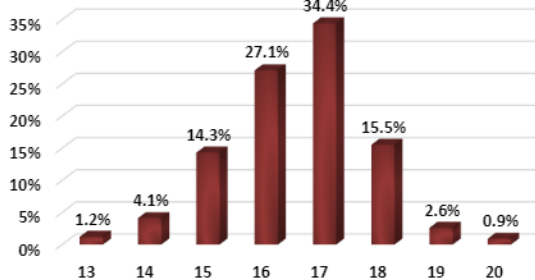
Admissions By Gender



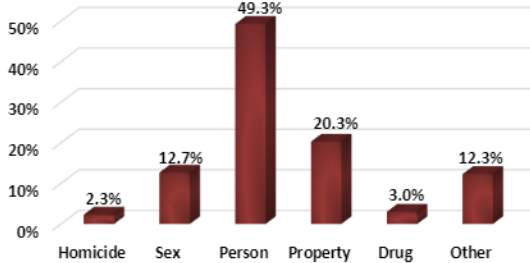
Admissions By Race



Admissions By Age



Admissions By Offense
(Does not include revoked youth)



Average Daily Facility Population By Site

Applewood Centers	2
Montgomery County Center for Adolescent Services	13
Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility	145
Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility	171
Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility	141
Lighthouse Youth Center - Paint Creek	48
Pomegranate	9

Average Daily Population— All DYS	530
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Average Daily Population for the 3 Juvenile Correctional Facilities	457
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Average Daily Parole Population for the Northern and Southern Regional Offices	245
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Admissions By County

Cuyahoga	Hamilton	Franklin	Licking	Summit
19.8%	16.9%	12.2%	5%	3.8%
<i>Top five counties only</i>				

FY 2019 Expenditures

Administrative Support	Final expenditures to be determined and will be added December 2019
Community Corrections Facilities	
Debt Service	
Facilities	
Juvenile Court Subsidies and Grants	
Parole	
Alternative Placements	

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4545 Fisher Road, Suite D
Columbus, OH 43228
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