



**Multipurpose Juvenile Homes  
Annual Evaluation Report  
March 2011**

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**Special Provision: S.L. 2009-451  
Section 18.1**

Submitted by:  
Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Multipurpose Juvenile Homes Program**

Responding to the requirement of *Session Law 2009-451, Section 18.1, Annual Evaluation of Community Programs*, the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention undertook careful evaluation of the contracted provider's compliance with the requirements of the existing contract and the *Juvenile Justice Reform Act, S.L. 1998-202*. The Department also considered whether participation in the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes results in a reduction of court involvement among those youth who participate in the program.

The Department's findings document the following:

- The program has been contracted to Methodist Home for Children since 1993.
- The Homes are viewed as a valuable community resource that served 13 judicial districts and 31 North Carolina counties during FY 09-10.
- The Homes utilize a model of care that is grounded in evidence-based practices.
- All youth received in the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes were referred by their local juvenile court and ranged in age from 12 to 16.
- Most residents are minority males from a single parent home.
- Seventy-five (75%) of those youth admitted are still enrolled in school but are typically performing poorly in all academic pursuits.
- Of the 85 youth admitted during FY 2009-2010, 60 (71%) were referred for a crime against a person and 25 (29%) were referred for a crime against property.
- A total of 223 youth were served through the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes program during FY 2009-10.
- Sixty-seven (67%) of the youth served returned to the home of their parent(s) upon discharge.
- Eighty-two (82%) of discharged youth enrolled back into a public school in their home community, 1% graduated, 14% were enrolled in a GED or ABE program, 2% were expelled, and 1% dropped out.
- Seventy-nine (79%) of the youth served in continuing care (180 days of post discharge support) had no violations of their community supervision standards while receiving continuing care.

- Evaluation data show that in the six months prior to admission to a Multipurpose Juvenile Home, 201 complaints and 91 adjudications occurred, but during the six months subsequent to discharge only 31 complaints and 10 adjudications occurred.
- Only ten (10) youths received new delinquency petitions during the time they were receiving continuing care. Only ten (10) youths were adjudicated for new offenses during the six month period following their release from continuing care.
- Parental accountability/involvement was improved in a majority, sixty percent (60%), of cases.
- Twenty percent (20%) of the admitted youth were functioning at grade level at the time of admission, while forty-nine percent (49%) were functioning at grade level at the time of discharge.
- Three (3) Multipurpose Juvenile Home youth received a post secondary scholarship through Methodist Home for Children.
- Overall, the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes operated at eighty-one percent (89%) of capacity at a cost per bed day of \$197.

## **Introduction**

Responding to the requirements of *Session Law 2009-451, Section 18.1, Annual Evaluation of Community Programs*, the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (hereafter the “Department”) is submitting the evaluation of its Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program for FY 2009-2010. In so doing, the Department has considered whether a youth’s participation in the Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program results in a reduction of court involvement and whether the Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program is achieving the goals and objectives of the *Juvenile Justice Reform Act, S. L. 1998-202*.

## **Historical Background**

The Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program has been a mainstay of the Department’s early intervention and prevention strategy since 1993. This program represents a state-community partnership with ten of North Carolina’s most economically and service-deprived rural judicial districts for the provision of residential care and treatment for juvenile offenders.

Originally, these facilities offered secure detention, long term treatment, and a place of safe transition between institutional confinement and a youth’s local community. Development of additional detention capacity and passage of the *Juvenile Justice Reform Act* allowed the Department to strengthen the Multipurpose Juvenile Home’s treatment component while continuing to serve as a place of safe transition between youth development centers and local communities.

During FY 09-10, Multipurpose Juvenile Homes were operational in Chowan, Craven, Hertford, Macon, Robeson, and Wayne Counties. Jointly, these homes served youth from Judicial Districts 1, 2, 3A, 3B, 6A, 6B, 7, 8, 10, 12, 16A, 16B, and 30. Youth from Judicial Districts 7, 10, and 12 are not typically served by the homes but were placed because of a critical need.

The Craven County Multipurpose Home closed in January 2010.

## **Contracted Provider**

The Methodist Home for Children, Inc. (MHC) has served as the Department’s contracted provider since the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes opened. The Agency has 112 years of experience serving children, youth, and families. It employs 182 trained and professionally competent staff members and is nationally accredited. During FY 09-10, the Methodist Home’s service continuum included a five star child care center, seven group care facilities, supervisory and management services for 97 foster families, adoption services, in-home family counseling, substance abuse counseling, gang prevention education, program consultation, and staff training activities.

## **Scope of Services Rendered**

The nature and duration of the services rendered by each of the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes are diverse. Services are provided to address the needs of court-ordered youth, their families, the court, and the community. The process begins with the development and implementation of an individualized service plan for each youth and family served. In all of the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes, any youth known to the court for the commission of a Level II offense may be admitted to one or more of the several programs offered. For example, a youth categorized as requiring secure custody may be admitted, assessed, and provided care for a period of time before being returned to court for adjudication. Disposition may see the same youth returned to the Multipurpose Juvenile Home for treatment as a component of probation. Once residential treatment goals have been realized, the youth may be served through the Multipurpose Juvenile Home's continuing care program. Another Multipurpose Juvenile Home client may progress through treatment and be released to some other community plan of care coordinated by the Multipurpose Juvenile Home's staff and the youth's court counselor.

Each Multipurpose Juvenile Home maintains a staff of one program manager, one family service specialist, one teacher, six residential counselors, one full time overnight awake, and one part-time overnight awake. At least two staff members are always present with the group and overnight awake supervision is provided during nighttime hours.

Methodist Home for Children continues to strengthen the model of care relied upon in these facilities. The model focuses on evidence-based treatment principles<sup>1</sup> in its programming. The primary principles relied upon are the following:

- Addressing antisocial/pro-criminal attitudes and antisocial personality factors such as impulsiveness, risk taking, and low self-control;
- Applying effective interventions that involve behavioral, social learning, and cognitive behavioral change strategies;
- Delivering treatment and academic education in a style and mode that are consistent with the learning styles of the offenders.

The model of care addresses antisocial behaviors by implementing a social and life skills curriculum that has been individualized for each youth. Implementation involves consistent and continuous behavioral teaching and the practice of selected skills. This practice and skills focus meets the learning-style needs of the youth served and leads to an internalization of these skills and the values of honesty, respect, responsibility, empowerment, compassion, and spirituality.

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<sup>1</sup> Howell, J.C. 2003. Preventing & Reducing Juvenile Delinquency: A Comprehensive Framework. p. 212-213. Sage Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, California.

### Admission Characteristics

During FY 2009-10, a total of 85 youth were admitted to Multipurpose Juvenile Homes. These 85 youth joined 39 youth already in residential care and 42 in continuing care on July 1, 2009. Demographically, the diverse nature of those admitted to care is reflected in the tables and charts that follow:

**Table 1 – Multipurpose Juvenile Homes: Admission Characteristics**

	<i>N</i>	%
Admissions by Referral Source:	85	Court =100%
Admissions by Age:	85	100%
12 Years Old		2.4%
13 Years Old		8.2%
14 Years Old		29.4%
15 Years Old		31.8%
16 Years Old		28.2%
Admissions by Gender:	85	100%
Male		81%
Female		19%
Admissions by Race:	85	100%
African American		53%
Hispanic		1%
Multiracial		5%
Native American		8%
White		33%
Living Arrangements upon Admission:	85	100%
Both Parents		5.9%
Father & Stepmother		1.2%
Father Only		3.5%
Foster Care		1.2%
Friend		1.2%
Group Home		1.2%
Institution (YDC)		2.3%
Mother & Stepfather		9.4%
Mother Only		40.0%
Multipurpose Home (MPH transfer)		2.4%
Relatives		15.3%
Secure Custody (Detention Center)		12.9%
Wilderness Camp		3.5%
School Status upon Admission:	85	100%
Enrolled		75.3%
Expelled or on a Long Term Suspension:		20.0%
Dropped Out		4.7%

**Table 1 (Continued) - Multipurpose Juvenile Homes:  
Admission Characteristics**

Legal Status upon Admission:	85	100%
Probation		48%
Adjudicated Delinquent		47%
Petition Filed Against Youth		5%
Admissions by Referral Reason:	85	100%
Problem Behavior (Person Crime)		71%
Problem Behavior (Property Crime)		29%
Admissions by Disposition:	85	100%
Level I		3%
Level II		94%
Level III - Post Release Supervision Plan		3%

During FY 09-10, Multipurpose Juvenile Homes served youth and families through the provision of residential care and continuing care. The continuing care component of each Multipurpose Juvenile Home is provided for at least 180 days following discharge. Some youth were already being served through residential and continuing care when the fiscal year began. New admissions caused the numbers of youth served to expand.

**Table 2 - Total Served Characteristics**

	<i>N</i>
Number of Youth Served Through All Program Components:	223
In Residence on 7/1/09	39
Admitted in 2009-2010	85
Total Served in Residence 2009-2010	124
In Continuing Care on 7/1/09	42
Admitted to Continuing Care 2009-2010	57
Total Served in Continuing Care 2009-2010	99

Each Multipurpose Juvenile Home has a capacity of eight youth. Demand varied in accord with the resources and needs of the judicial district(s) served. See Table 3 below:

**Table 3 - Percent Capacity Filled During FY 09-10**

	%
Chowan	97.9
Craven	74.7
Hertford	89.6
Macon	87.2
Robeson	99.1
Wayne	80.8
All Homes	89.4

**Outcomes – What are the results?**

Because the timeline structure of this report is limited to twelve (12) months, multi-year results of program participation are not identified. Available short-term (single year) results are outlined below.

**Youth Outcome Survey**

In order to follow the progress of program-served youth, the contracted provider conducts outcome surveys at six and twelve months post discharge from the continuing care program. These surveys help all parties understand the success of post discharged youth served through a Multipurpose Juvenile Home. Listed in Table 4 below are data from the surveys completed during FY 2009-2010.

**Table 4 – Provider’s Outcome Survey**

Living in a safe home environment that is either in the child’s permanent home or the next logical, most appropriate setting towards a permanent home	86%
Maintains a positive on-going relationship with a caring, responsible adult	72%
Is maintaining optimal health functioning with needed and appropriate supports	85%
Avoiding subsequent complaints at 6 months post discharge	87%

**Change in Risk & Protective Factors by Discharge**

The information provided in Figure 1 below reflects data from the *Risk and Protective Factors Worksheet* for youth served during FY 2009-2010. Risk factors are evidence-based characteristics that increase the likelihood of a youth being at high risk for committing delinquent acts and therefore needing continuous services to manage functioning. Likewise, protective factors are characteristics that protect the youth and reduce this risk.

This assessment is completed for each youth at admission and at discharge. The categories listed represent a set of protective factors that have a positive correlation to youth resiliency and success. The data show a significant positive increase in critical protective factors for youth while in care.

**Figure 1: FY 2009-2010  
Protective Factors**

Admissions = 79

Discharges = 79

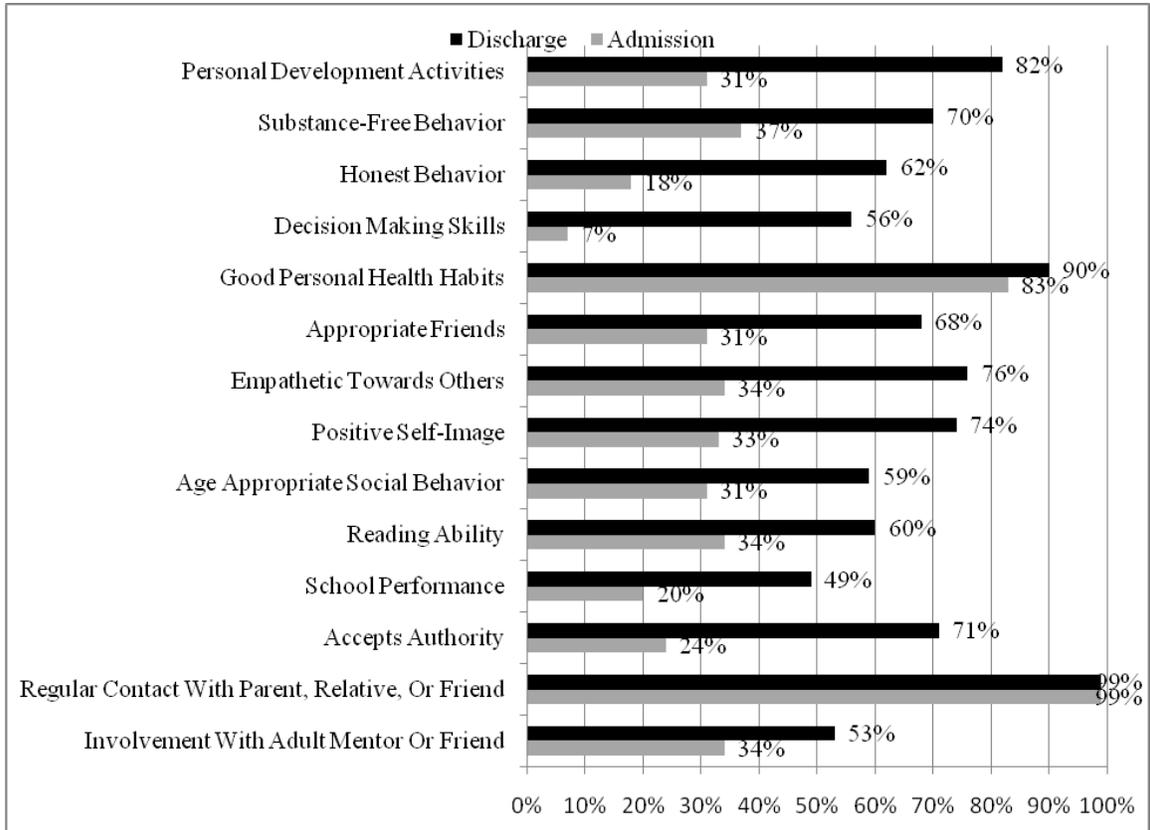


Table 5 below shows that a significant majority of youth resided with their family and enrolled in school following discharge from a Multipurpose Juvenile Home.

**Table 5 - Multipurpose Juvenile Homes: Discharge Characteristics**

	<i>N</i>	%
Living Arrangements Upon Discharge:	87	100%
DSS Foster Care		2.2%
Group Home		2.2%
Multipurpose Home (Transfer)		3.5%
Parent's Home		66.7%
Independent Living		1.1%
Relatives		7.0%
Secure Custody (Detention Center/Jail)		9.2%
Runaway		3.5%
Therapeutic Foster Care (MHC)		1.1%
Psychiatric Hospital/Substance Abuse Treatment		3.5%
School Status Upon Discharge:	87	100%
Enrolled		82%
GED/ABE		14%
Graduated		1%
Expelled/Long Term Suspension:		2%
Dropped Out		1%

The Department's ability to accumulate data regarding youth who are no longer subject to a juvenile court's jurisdiction is limited. All discharged youth are followed for 180 days post discharge by the contracted provider. Additional outcome related data are presented in Table 6 below:

**Table 6 - Outcome Characteristics within Six Months of Release**

	<i>N</i>
N = 89 Distinct Juveniles	
Reduction In Subsequent Complaints:	
Number of Complaints Six Months Prior to Admission to a Multipurpose Juvenile Home	201
Number of Complaints Six Months Subsequent to Discharge from a Multipurpose Juvenile Home	31
Reduction In Subsequent Adjudications:	
Number of Adjudications Six Months Prior to Admission to a Multipurpose Juvenile Home	91
Number of Adjudications Six Months Subsequent to Discharge from a Multipurpose Juvenile Home	10
Distinct Number Of Juveniles With Complaints:	
Six Months Prior to Multipurpose Juvenile Home Admission	54
Six Months Subsequent to Discharge from a Multipurpose Juvenile	14

Home	
Distinct Number of Juveniles with Adjudicated Juvenile Complaints:	
Six Months Prior to Admission to a Multipurpose Juvenile Home	38
Six Months Subsequent to Discharge from a Multipurpose Juvenile Home	9

Table 7 below reflects findings that only two new petitions were filed against youth while they were in residence at a Multipurpose Home. Sixty-six (76%) had no new court involvement. Motions for Review were filed on behalf of eighteen youth in residential care for various reasons. The majority of the motions and new delinquency petitions filed were for offenses that occurred prior to admission.

**Table 7**

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Reduction in Violations of Community Supervision of Discharged Youth While In Residence	87	100%
No New Problems	66	76%
Motion(s) for Violation of Court Order	18	21%
New Delinquency Petition(s)	2	2%
New Undisciplined Petition(s)	1	1%
Increased Parental Accountability/Involvement of Discharged Youth While the Youth were in Residence:	87	100%
Appropriate and Acceptable Parent Child Relationship	4	5%
Significant Improvement	27	31%
Some Improvement	34	39%
Unchanged	19	22%
Unknown	2	2%
Decreased	1	1%

As reflected in Table 7 above, evaluation showed that of the eighty-seven (87) youth discharged from a Multipurpose Juvenile Home during FY 2009-2010, four sets of parents were deemed to display appropriate acceptable involvement with their child at admission and during the period of residence. Thirty-four parents demonstrated some improvement in involvement with their child, and twenty-seven parents reflected significant positive change in their degree of involvement with their child during his/her residence at a Multipurpose Juvenile Home. Nineteen parents remained unchanged in their degree of involvement with their child, and one set of parents showed a decrease in involvement with their child. The nature of the relationship between one parent and his/her child could not be assessed.

Of the 73 youth discharged from the continuing care program during FY 2009-2010, only ten (14%) had new delinquency petitions filed against them during the time they were receiving continuing care. Another four youth demonstrated behavior that caused the court counselor to file a motion to review or vacate their order of community supervision. One other youth was charged with being undisciplined. Seventy-nine (79%) successfully completed their order of community supervision without a violation. This positive outcome is likely linked to an improvement in parental accountability/involvement.

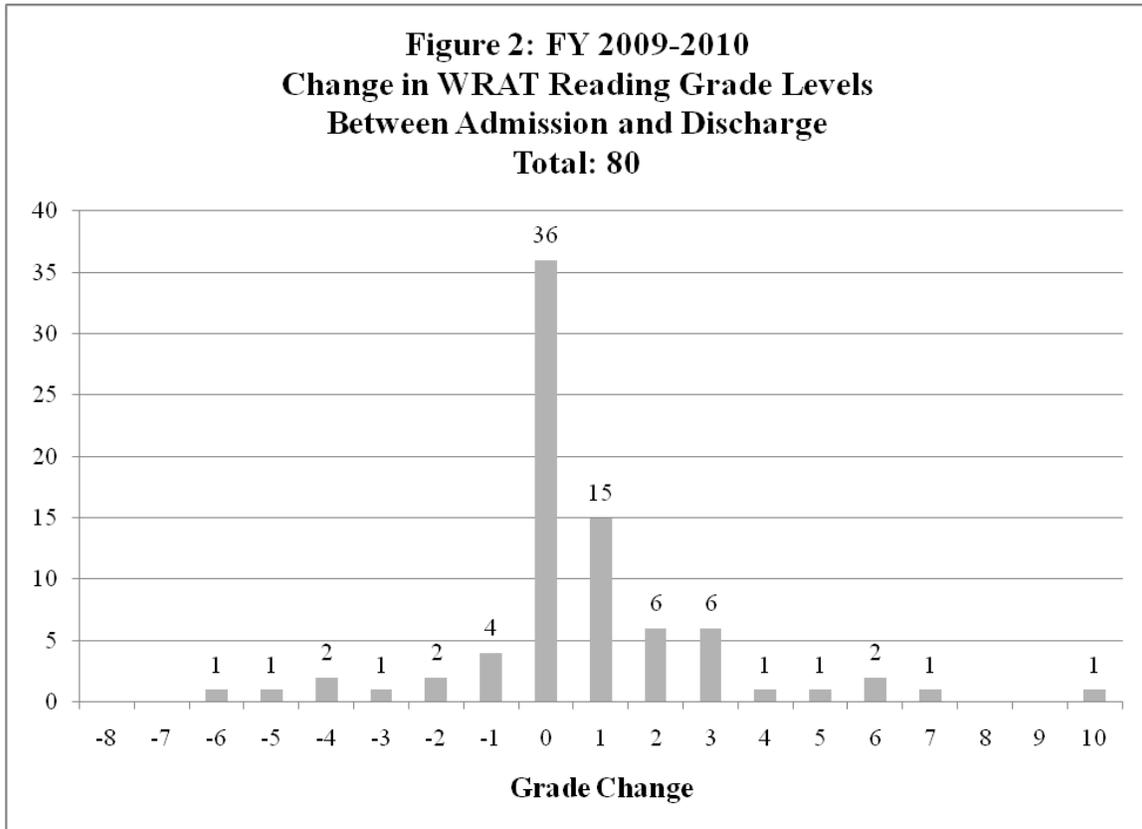
Additional analysis of the data displayed in Table 8 below showed that eight parents demonstrated acceptable appropriate involvement with their child at the time that he/she was admitted to continuing care. During the time that continuing care was offered, twenty-nine parents were deemed to demonstrate some improvement in involvement with their child, and fifteen others were rated as showing significant improvement in involvement with their child. Thirteen parents remained unchanged in the degree of involvement demonstrated during the period of continuing care, and two parents were viewed as having a decrease in involvement with their child. The status of the relationship between parent and child was not rated in six cases at the time of termination.

**Table 8 - Outcome Characteristics During Continuing Care**

Reduction in Violations of Community Supervision Standards of Youth Completing Continuing Care:	73
No New Problems	58
Motion(s) for Review Of Court Order	4
New Delinquency Petition(s)	10
New Undisciplined Petition(s)	1
Increased Parental Accountability/Involvement of Youth Completing Continuing Care:	73
No Problems at Referral or Since	8
Significant Improvement	15
Some Improvement	29
Unchanged	13
Decreased	2
Not Rated	6

## Reading Ability

Youth continue to improve in reading ability as evidenced by *Wide Range Achievement Test* scores. Youth are tested on their reading ability upon entry into the program and at several intervals while in residence. During FY 2009-2010, the *Wide Range Achievement Test* was administered to eighty (80) youth. See Figure 2 below for the gains individual youth were able to make at discharge.



\*Data are available on 80 of the 124 youth served in Multipurpose Homes.

## Overall Academic Functioning

Overall academic functioning showed a positive change as well. Risk and protective factor assessments showed that at admission 20% of youth were functioning at grade level, while at discharge 49% were functioning at grade level. Experience and best practice options suggest that addressing problem behavior is critical to educational success. The *Value Based Therapeutic Environment Model of Care* created and offered by the contracted provider incorporates this insight. The program focuses on identifying behavioral deficits and teaching skills to perform new, more positive behaviors. Trained staff spends considerable time helping students to see the value in engaging in appropriate school behavior and creating a living environment that promotes learning.

### **Scholarship Program**

Methodist Home for Children continues to offer a scholarship program for post-secondary education or vocational training as a benevolent contribution to the future of these youth. All youth served by the program are eligible for this scholarship. Methodist Home for Children funds this program independent of this contract and bears all of the financial responsibility. Three (3) Multipurpose Juvenile Home youth benefited from this program during FY 2009-2010.

### **Staff Enhancement**

Sixteen (16) staff members earned their resident counselor certification during FY 2009-2010. The Department and contracted provider continue to view the certification process as an ongoing method for verifying staff competency that creates additional incentive, recognition, and reward for excellence.

### **Compliance with the Goals of the *Juvenile Justice Reform Act S. L. 1998-202***

*The Juvenile Justice Reform Act* supports change from earlier operational processes found throughout Juvenile Justice in North Carolina. Its authors foresaw the need for different outcomes and provided a road map to achieve the envisioned ends. Prominent among the established goals are:

- Development of a sound admission and intake program to juvenile facilities
- Creation and operation of programs that meet the needs of juveniles receiving services
- Adoption of rules and regulations that implement the various provisions of the Act
- Development and coordination of comprehensive multidisciplinary services and programs for the prevention of juvenile delinquency, along with early intervention, and a focus on the rehabilitation of juveniles
- Collection of data
- Assisting private agencies in the development of juvenile prevention services
- Purchase of services from private agencies
- The development of community-based alternatives to YDC commitment
- Working with communities to provide services and treatment options to meet the physical, emotional, and mental health needs of juveniles and families including group homes with psychological treatment and programs

The Department and its contracted provider expend considerable effort in support of achieving compliance with the requirements of this legislation. Since their creation with 1989 Prison Bond Referendum funds, Multipurpose Juvenile Homes have consistently operated as evolving rather than static entities. Physical structures have been maintained and updated as funds have been available. Positive community relations have been enhanced, and the community partnerships that have been developed have expanded access to medical, dental, clinical, educational and recreational resources. Within the Multipurpose Juvenile Home's program, service outreach has been broadened to embrace the client's family. Staff training has been strengthened and an evidence-based model of care has been adopted. Outcome data are being amassed and utilized to guide treatment and programmatic decisions. The Department's evaluation of the Multipurpose Juvenile Home's compliance with the requirements and tenor of the *Juvenile Justice Reform Act* has resulted in a determination that that the compliance rating is "high."

**Program Cost**

During FY 2009-2010, the Multipurpose Juvenile Home program operated at 89% of capacity. The cost per bed day was \$197.

**Summary**

February 2010 marked the Department's seventeenth year of experience in the operation of Multipurpose Juvenile Homes. Each Annual Evaluation Report has shown the program to be an effective means of interrupting placement in a detention facility and commitment to a youth development center. This accomplishment occurs while serving a youth and his/her family in their home community. Over the years the six (6) original Multipurpose Juvenile Homes accumulated a long history of acceptance by, and cooperation with, the communities and judicial districts served. This achievement has been due to the quality of the services rendered, the physical location of the Homes, the community's appreciation of the resource, and the desire of staff to maintain and promote positive relationships.

At the request of the Department, independent researchers have reviewed the Multipurpose Juvenile Home Program Model and determined that it is sound, progressive, and effective. It relies on specific counseling approaches that include cognitive-behavioral interventions. The model emphasizes the values of compassion, honesty, empowerment, respect, responsibility and, spirituality. The program model supplements these interventions and values with services such as mentoring, academic tutoring, and the improvement of interpersonal skills. Together, these options serve to provide effective treatment ingredients within a comprehensive program structure. This conclusion is supported by the nationally recognized meta-analysis research of Dr's. Mark Lipsey and Buddy Howell, consultants to numerous state juvenile justice systems.

The program's emphasis on empowering youth to stay connected with, and reintegrate back into their home community on discharge has caused Multipurpose Juvenile Homes to be viewed as an integral part of the Department's habilitation strategy in the underserved communities and judicial districts where they are located. Outcome data show that the program structure of the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes allows youth to acquire the skills and values they need to be successful upon return to their local communities.

## **Multi-year Outcome Study**

This section gives a brief description of a three year study conducted by Research Triangle Institute International (RTI). The focus of the study was to determine the efficacy of the model of care implemented in the Multipurpose Juvenile Homes. The model of care is referred to as Value Based Therapeutic Environment (VBTE). Methodist Home for Children (MHC) received funding from The Duke Endowment and sought the expertise of the highly regarded RTI to design and conduct the study. This project began in 2007 and was completed in the fall of 2010. This study gives a much broader perspective on the program's effect.

The MHC treatment group and eligible comparison group were drawn from Department's management information systems, NC-JOIN and Client Tracking databases. Youth included in the treatment group were those who were identified in Client Tracking as being admitted to a Multipurpose home between January 1, 2005, and June 30, 2008. Youth in the eligible comparison group include youth identified in NC-JOIN as having a Level II disposition imposed during the same period. RTI also used MHC treatment data to assess intermediate outcomes from the 2008 year.

### **Subjects Profile**

- Compared to the general population of Level II juvenile offenders, VBTE study subjects' delinquency histories were more extensive, placing them at greater risk of continued delinquency.
- Nearly 1 in 4 VBTE study subjects was assessed as functioning below grade level and nearly 8 in 10 study subjects were assessed as having serious school behavior problems.
- About one third of study subjects were reported to be substance users, and nearly one quarter were reported to be substance abusers in need of assessment and/or treatment.
- About 9 in 10 study subjects were assessed as having mental health needs and nearly one-third of subjects were reported to have a history of victimization (e.g., evidence of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect).
- Nearly half of study subjects were assessed as having experienced conflict in their home within the 12-month period before assessment and fewer than 1 in 10 parents of study subjects were described as having adequate supervision skills.
- About 7 in 10 study subjects were reported with either regularly or sometimes associating with peers involved in delinquent or criminal activity.
- About 40% of subjects had a parent, guardian, or siblings who had a record of convictions and 17% had a parent, guardian, or siblings who were incarcerated, on probation or parole, or were known gang members.

## Findings

- Fewer MHC subjects than comparison subjects were charged with a new offense during the 16-month follow-up period (62.8% of MHC and 67.8% of comparisons). The difference in recidivism rates is statistically significant.
- MHC subjects had, on average, fewer charges during the follow-up period than did comparison subjects. This difference was statistically significant.
- Participation in MHC was associated with a significant delay in the time to first recidivist charge. The rate of reoffending in the first 8 months of the follow-up period for MHC subjects was significantly lower than that of comparison subjects.
- MHC subjects were significantly less likely to be convicted of a new offense during the 16-month follow-up period (36.5% MHC and 45.7% of comparisons).
- MHC subjects were also significantly less likely than comparison subjects to be convicted of a person offense. About half as many MHC subjects as comparison subjects were convicted for a person offense.
- Among study subjects who were incarcerated, MHC subjects spend significantly fewer days, on average, in either an adult or juvenile facility than did comparison subjects (129.5 days for MHC and 194.5 days for comparisons).
- High-risk MHC subjects had a significantly lower rate of recidivism than did their comparison counterparts (57.7% MHC and 71.6% comparisons).
- Among study subjects in the high-risk, high needs, and high-risk/needs groups, significantly fewer MHC subjects than comparison subjects were charged with a new misdemeanor offense. High-risk, high needs MHC subjects were also significantly less likely than their comparison counterparts to be charged for a new person offense.
- Among study subjects assessed in the high needs level or in the combined high-risk/needs level, significantly fewer MHC subjects than comparisons were incarcerated for a recidivist offense during the follow-up period.
- MHC youths showed statistically significant improvement in all six areas shown to be predictors of future success. (Making good decisions, Honesty, Goal oriented, Personal development activities, Positive self image, Empathy behavior)

## **Impact**

- In the months during MHC participation, the vast majority of study subjects remained crime-free, nearly all subjects were engaged in school, runaway episodes were noticeably reduced, home and school problems were reduced or eliminated for most study subjects, and improvement in parental involvement was achieved for more than two-thirds of study subjects.
- Improvement was noted on family indicators, family conflict, and parental supervision, but not as much as on some individual-level indicators. This signifies the efforts of MHC to work with the family as well as the difficulty to instill change at the family level.
- MHC participants fared better at discharge with respect to school behavior problems and school achievement. Further, there was a significant difference in the proportion of youth performing at appropriate grade level or performing at a level that was consistent with their age and/or abilities. Reentry programming should focus on maintaining and building upon the educational progress that was made during time in MHC.

Since the study began, the MHC has been responsive to the information learned. MHC has implemented a comprehensive on-line data collection system to greatly enhance the collection and analysis of treatment data. MHC has also worked closely with the local judicial districts to strengthen the referral process so that regular staffings occur to target the youth in greatest need of this type of service. These staffings also help to reduce time between the court's disposition and the placement, therefore reducing the chance for re-offending prior to admission. Finally, MHC voluntarily extended the continuing care program from three months to six months to further assist in the community reintegration process.