

DENVER DISTRICT ATTORNEY JUVENILE DIVERSION SERVICES

Diversion programs are based on social development strategy focusing on teaching skills to youth, providing opportunities to practice them and receiving positive recognition. We staff clients into programs according to their individual needs.

COGNITIVE - BEHAVIORAL CLASSES:

We design programs to address the thoughts, feelings and behaviors of clients. Groups are based on gender, age, language and degree of antisocial thought patterns. Most programs occur over a span of 8 to 12 weeks. Clients may be assigned to complete more than one class.

A) Life Skills: Life Skills is designed for clients 10-13 years of age. During the class, clients learn problem solving skills, peaceful conflict resolution, and identification of feelings and communication skills.

B) Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT): MRT is open ended, self / group directed program that utilizes a normative peer culture and staff as facilitators. Clients work independently from a work book and share information with the group who provides feedback.

C) Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R): R&R classes are designed to target specific cognitive skill deficits. Cognitive training focuses on modifying the impulsive, egocentric, illogical, and rigid thinking offenders by teaching them to stop and think before acting. Gender specific groups are taught to clients 14 – 18 years of age.

D) Thinking for a Change (TFAC): TFAC classes are designed to target specific cognitive skill deficits. Cognitive training focuses on modifying the impulsive, egocentric, illogical, and rigid thinking of offenders by teaching them to stop and think before acting. Clients, ages 14-18, participate in classes based on gender and language. The group focuses on clients with higher levels of antisocial thought.

FAMILY SERVICES:

Parent Support Group provides parents the opportunity to learn from each other, while receiving training on parenting skills, and topics such as adolescent development, mental health in adolescents, and the school system.

COMMUNITY / VICTIM JUSTICE SERVICES and RESTITUTION SERVICES:

A) A.R.T.T. - Acquiring Restitution Through Talent provides an opportunity for clients, especially those 15 and younger to earn money for restitution for their victims. Clients work in various art forms such as woodworking, painting, drawing, stained glass, and ceramics. They then sell the items at local businesses, fairs and conferences. In addition, clients are taught employment skills including job seeking, interviewing, marketing and sales.

B) Internship - The Diversion Internship Program has a primary purpose, to assist Diversion Clients in earning money that will be paid to the victims of their crime(s).

C) Community Service: Clients are assessed a minimum of 30 hours of community service. At least one of the events is completed with their parents. Community service projects such as graffiti removal, trash pick up, food distribution, neighborhood information distribution, community event set up and take down, etc. provide clients an opportunity to repay their community for their crimes.

D) Victim/Offender Mediation: provides victims of crimes the opportunity to meet face to face with the person(s) that perpetrated against them. Mediations involve trained neutral mediators to help ensure that the needs of the victim and the offender are met. Through mediation, both parties receive answers to questions, restoration and closure. This is especially important in property crimes. Often the offender does not understand the impact of his/her offense because he/she does not associate a "person" with the offense.

E) Community Accountability Boards: operated by the Denver Juvenile Court Probation Unit, hold the juvenile accountable for their actions to the community in addition to the Diversion Program.

INDIVIDUAL CLIENT SERVICES:

A) Educational Enhancement includes school visits by staff, regular feedback from the client's school regarding attendance, behavior and performance. When the client has truancy, school failure or lacks skills they are enrolled in a tutoring program. Tutoring includes assistance in completing homework and specific topic instruction.

B) *Referrals for community services* allow Diversion to provide for prevention, intervention and treatment in specific areas such as mental health concerns, substance abuse treatment and establishing mentorship relations.

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