

January 1, 2010

Missouri DYS Treatment Beliefs

Safety and structure are the foundation of treatment – Meeting youth's basic needs and providing physical and emotional safety is the foundation of treatment. Youth need to know that staff cares enough about them to expect them to succeed. This is demonstrated by staff's ability to provide safety and structure.

Each person is special and unique - Services and supports are individualized. Through this process youth recognize the value and strengths of self and others, and are challenged and inspired to reach their full potential.

People Can Change - While change is often difficult and naturally leads to resistance and fear, people more readily embrace change when included in the process. Youth need to be guided and supported to try new behaviors, practice, succeed, and learn from mistakes as they internalize positive changes.

People desire to do well and succeed - All youth need approval, acceptance and the opportunity to contribute. Programs and services are structured in a manner that taps into and builds upon these universal needs.

Emotions are not to be judged - Feelings are not right or wrong. Personal disclosure and reconciliation of life experiences are important for healing and personal growth. As a part of the treatment process youth explore behaviors, thoughts, and emotions.

All behavior has a purpose and is often a symptom of unmet needs – Challenging behavior is often symptomatic of core issues or patterns. Services are designed to help address these needs and assist youth in investigating and understanding their history, behavior, healthy alternatives, and facilitate internalized change.

People do the best they can with the resources available to them - Youth often come to the agency with limited resources and a lack of knowledge and awareness of their behavioral and emotional options. In the situations they have experienced, their behavior may have seemed logical and understandable.

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The family is vital to the treatment process – Families want the best for their children. Services provided to youth must take into account the values and behaviors established within the family system. Family expertise and participation is essential in the youth's treatment process, and facilitates system change within the youth's family.

True understanding is built on genuine empathy and care – Respect and appreciation for the inherent worth and dignity of self and others forms the foundation of safety, trust, and openness necessary for change to occur. Demonstrating respect and appreciation for the worth of youth and families is essential.

We are more alike than different - Everyone has fears, insecurities, and basic needs including safety, attention, and belonging. Programs and staff normalize and attend to these needs, assisting youth in meeting their needs in positive and productive ways.

Change does not occur in isolation – youth need others. Treatment is structured to assist youth in experiencing success through helping others and being helped. This need is also addressed through accessing community resources and enabling youth to develop healthy supportive relationships with peers, adults, family, and in their neighborhoods and communities.

We are a combination of our past and present - Youth have learned through a wide variety of experiences. It is through investigation and linking past and present experiences that youth develop the knowledge, skills and emotional capacity to succeed in home and community.

Respect and embrace diversity – services, supports, and interactions demonstrate respect for and build on the values, preferences, beliefs, culture, and identity of the youth, family, and community. Diversity in expression, opinion, and preference is embraced.