



Department of
Youth Services

Message from DYS Director Harvey Reed

Enhanced Trainings
December 17, 2013

Dear Staff and Stakeholders:

The importance of training our workforce - both new and seasoned staff- cannot be overemphasized. Effective training results in employees who are knowledgeable and effective, and it's critical for promoting safe environments for both youth and staff.

With assistance from the National Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Resource Center and the Project Addressing Prison Rape at the Washington College of Law, DYS has reviewed its training of new staff and current employees, targeting issues associated with PREA and appropriate staff and youth relationships. Training has been provided to all behavioral health staff on red flags related to sexual misconduct. The behavioral health staff has been directed to explore sexual victimization during individual sessions with youth.

Pre-service training for new staff now includes training on appropriate relationships and boundaries. The curriculum raises awareness of youth manipulation that could occur, with special consideration of adolescent development, and promotes staff responsibility for preventing crossed boundaries. It was rolled out for pre-service employees in October 2013.

A total of eight DYS staff participated in a PREA investigation training provided by the PREA Resource Center and The Moss Group, Inc. The training assisted DYS administrators and investigators in ensuring that DYS conducts quality investigations of all PREA incidents. The training also meets the requirements of the PREA standards related to specialized training for investigators and administrative agency investigations.

In order to better train existing staff, DYS benchmarked with national experts on evidence-based practices and strategies to address the issue of sexual misconduct in juvenile correctional facilities. Sources used included the National Institute of Corrections, American University, Washington College of Law, Just Detention International, Center for Children's Law and Policy, among others. A comprehensive, four-hour training entitled, "No Means No...And Yes is Not Allowed" will begin next month. All staff will receive this training that addresses boundary issues, red flags and the effects of the culture of silence.

These efforts support a safe and positive environment for youth and staff. I appreciate your full participation in these excellent training sessions.