



Department of
Youth Services

Message from DYS Director Harvey Reed

Youth Orientation Gets an Overhaul

September 25, 2014

The youth orientation process recently went through an overhaul.

The end result is fewer steps in the process, from 263 to 66.

Also, youth will complete orientation within a 21-30 day period versus the 30-day average.

There was more to restructuring the orientation besides trimming 197 steps. "We couldn't just look at this as a process needing improvement. This is a business about people, and our youth need a solid foundation for a successful stay," said Shannon Komisarek, Unit Management Administrator.

After three days of discussion and jotting down hundreds of ideas on colored sticky notes, the 23-member committee came up with a new orientation program that will put more focus on youth and their families.

Under the restructured orientation, youth will meet with their treatment team during the first week. In the past, that didn't occur until the fourth week.

Also during the first week of orientation, facility staff members, such as the superintendent, deputy superintendents and other key members of the facility leadership, will introduce themselves to the youth, explain



their roles and begin building a rapport with the youth. Ginine Trim, Deputy Director of Facility Programs and Operations, explains: "Youth engaging with the facility leadership and hearing from them first-hand about the importance of school attendance and program participation will assist youth with using their time in DYS productively."

The committee also rearranged the orientation schedule so that youth and juvenile parole officers will meet with each other during the first week. Before, this did not occur until after orientation.

The new orientation program also calls for more family engagement. Coming soon, families will be able to tour all three facilities without leaving the comforts of their home by taking a virtual tour via the DYS website. For many families, transportation can be a big hurdle, and this allows them to get a glimpse inside of a facility.

Since families play an important role in habilitating youth, the new orientation gives parents an opportunity to attend planning and progress meetings in person or via technology. The orientation committee will also be creating a one-page flyer, giving parents an overview of the orientation program.

"We are setting expectations for the youth, but we are also telling the youth and families what they can expect from us," said Assistant Director Linda Janes.

So what can employees involved with the orientation expect?

First, all three facilities will now administer the same orientation program, creating more continuity. Before, each facility developed its own program.

Second, staff will have access to all youth assessments through Juvenile Justice Case Management System.

The group of 23 employees, representing all facilities, departments, bureaus and regional offices, examined the entire orientation process with a fine-tooth comb but did not eliminate any jobs.

Most of the employees participating in the restructuring of the orientation were also involved in the revamping of the youth-intake process in May.

So how did the group tackle the difficult task of reorganizing orientation? ...By using the Kaizen approach. The word Kaizen means "a change for the better."

Kaizen is all about small changes that bring big benefits, such as improved quality, faster delivery, lower costs and greater customer satisfaction. The Kaizen process is one of the tools used by LeanOhio to make government agencies more efficient. LeanOhio is coordinated by the LeanOhio Office within the Department of Administrative Services.

"It was awesome to be part of something where my voice was heard," said William Benjamin, Social Worker at Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility.

I would like to thank the members of the Kaizen Team for their hard work: D'iano Angel, Alisha Bailey, William Benjamin, Randy Blake, Sara Bowling, Lucynda Dunning, Bryon Hall, Ian Fraser, Scharron Kane, Shannon Komisarek, Anthony Glass, Robert Glenn, Sylvia Van Leer, Karen Lemons, Jane Benz-Miller, Lisa Pensiero, William Peters, Eric Suen, Mark Strickland, Vanessa Tower and Robert Walker.

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