



Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention

TRIBAL HEALING TO WELLNESS COURTS

PERFORMANCE REPORT

January-June 2021

WORKING FOR YOUTH JUSTICE AND SAFETY

VISION STATEMENT

OJJDP envisions a nation where our children are free from crime and violence. If they come into contact with the justice system, the contact should be rare, fair, and beneficial to them.

MISSION STATEMENT

OJJDP provides national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to youth delinquency and victimization. The Office helps states, localities, and tribes develop effective and equitable juvenile justice systems that create safer communities and empower youth to lead productive lives.

This report was produced by Booz Allen Hamilton under contract number GS-00F-008DA, awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice. It is important to note that accurate data rely on correct data tracking and entry by the grantees and those agencies reporting to grantees, as such the data and analysis findings provided reflect the information as reported. These analytical findings make no claims of causation or demonstrate evidence of program effectiveness, and, as with all performance data, readers must use caution when interpreting the results, as factors other than the program may have contributed to the performance outcomes reported.

Data during the January to June 2021 activity period was impacted by the Covid-19 global pandemic. Grantees and service providers experienced a disruption to services, which raised obstacles for service delivery and data collection. The following data reflect services adapted to and provided during the Covid-19 pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

The Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts (THWC) program, administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), enhances the capacity of tribal courts to respond to substance use disorders of tribal youth under the age of 21. THWC are specialized, problem-solving courts, which use the juvenile drug court framework to integrate traditional tribal healing techniques with western substance use treatment. The primary goals of the THWC program include the development of comprehensive, culturally appropriate intervention services for at-risk tribal youth.¹ THWC grantees create, expand, and strengthen culturally specific approaches within their local juvenile justice system.

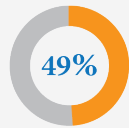
OJJDP requires grantees to report youth served, target behaviors, and offending and reoffending outcomes. THWC grantees also report planning activities conducted during their first year of their award; planning activities include training activities and partnership development.

Highlights

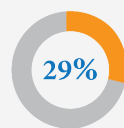
244

Number of youth served

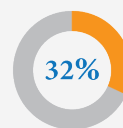
Youth demonstrating positive behavior change



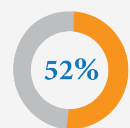
Youth offending



Youth reoffending



Awards implementing an evidence-based program



OVERVIEW OF AWARD INFORMATION

During the January–June 2021 activity period, OJJDP’s THWC program funded 31 awards with 87 percent of awards completing their reporting requirements (see figure 1). Twenty-seven THWC awards were operational (expending grant funds) during the period. The total available funding during the period exceeded \$8.7 million (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Award Details



EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

OJJDP encourages grantees to use evidence-based programs shown, through rigorous evaluation and replication, to be effective at preventing or reducing juvenile delinquency or related risk factors. THWC grantees implement evidence-based programs and practices that utilize culturally based strategies to address individual youth needs.² During the January–June 2021 activity period, 48 percent of THWC awards used one or more evidence-based program or practice.

¹ See *Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts: Treatment Guidelines* http://www.wellnesscourts.org/files/Treatment%20Guide%202nd%20ed_%202017.pdf.

² <http://www.wellnesscourts.org/files/Tribal%20Healing%20to%20Wellness%20Courts%20The%20Key%20Components.pdf>

YOUTH AND FAMILIES SERVED

THWC grantees are required to report on the number of youth and families served during each activity period. During the January–June 2021 activity period, THWC program grantees served a total of 339 youth and families. Seventy-two percent of individual grantees served were youth ($n = 244$), while 28 percent of those served were family members ($n = 95$).

244

Number of youth served

PROGRAM YOUTH OFFENSES AND RECIDIVISM

Grantees report short-term³ data for program youth who offend and recidivate to gauge the program’s success at reducing delinquency and improving outcomes for program participants. During the January–June 2021 activity period, 29 percent of the youth who were tracked offended in the short term (see figure 2), and 32 percent of tracked youth reoffended in the short term (see figure 2).

Figure 2. Short-Term Offending and Reoffending Data

29% of program youth tracked **offended**

32/109

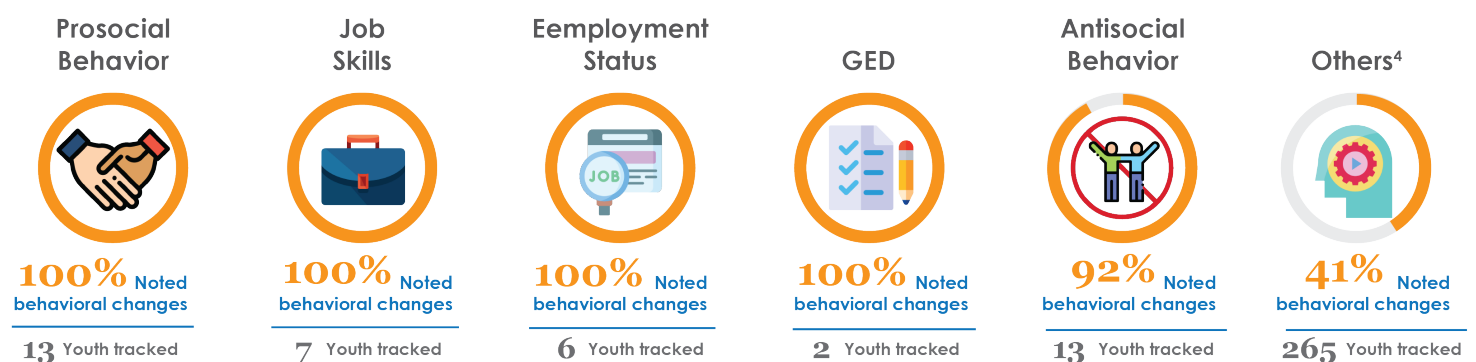
32% of program youth tracked **reoffended**

15/47

TARGET BEHAVIORS

Youth participating in THWC programs are tracked for short-term behavior changes to measure the program’s impact on performance in several targeted areas, such as substance use, school attendance, social behaviors, and cultural skill building. During the January–June 2021 activity period, 100 percent of tracked youth demonstrated the most improvement in prosocial behavior, job skills, employment status, and GED (see figure 3). Overall, 49 percent of program youth tracked exhibited a desired change in a targeted behavior.

Figure 3. Outcome Percentages for the Specified Target Behaviors



³ Short term includes youth tracked for the behavior of interest who received services during the activity period or youth who exited during the activity period.

⁴ Other target behaviors include social competence, school attendance, GPA, high school completion, family relationships, family functioning, substance use, gang resistance/involvement, cultural skill building/cultural pride, community involvement, and occupational skill training.

PLANNING YEAR ACTIVITIES

OJJDP requires THWC grantees to engage in program planning activities during the first year of their award. The planning phase supports grantees through a strategic planning process designed to identify program challenges and strategies when developing their mission, organizational structure, and action plan. This process allows them to create necessary partnerships for program implementation and sustainability.

During the January–June 2021 activity period THWC grantees did not conduct planning activities. Many of the operational grants were awarded in 2015 with others being awarded in 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019. As these awards are well underway, no planning activities were necessary during the current activity period.

CONCLUSION

OJJDP's THWC grant program seeks to strengthen the capacity of tribal courts by applying the Tribal Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court model. This model seeks to develop comprehensive frameworks for addressing substance use and other delinquent issues among at-risk and court-involved tribal youth. The THWC use the drug court model and incorporate concepts of wellness to address the specific substance use needs of individual tribal youth.

OJJDP recognizes that tribes present varying challenges and strengths, which impact their ability to respond to the needs of tribal youth. Tribes use OJJDP funds to expand culturally appropriate approaches to provide prevention and intervention services for at-risk and court-involved tribal youth. The primary goals of the THWC program are to enhance the capacity of tribal courts to respond to the substance use issues of at-risk and court-involved tribal youth.

During the January–June 2021 activity period, 27 operational THWC awards served a total of 339 youth and families. Seventy-two percent of those served ($n = 244$) were youth and 28 percent of those served ($n = 95$) were family members. As this was not the first year for any of the operational awards, no planning activities occurred. Overall, 49 percent of program youth tracked exhibited a desired change in the targeted behavior during the short-term, with youth demonstrating the greatest improvement in prosocial behavior, job skills, employment status, and GED. Additionally, 71 percent of youth tracked did not offend in the short term, while 68 percent of youth tracked did not reoffend in the short term. The performance measurement data suggests that the THWC program achieved its main objectives of using a tribal court model to improve youth outcomes.