



Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention

TRIBAL HEALING TO WELLNESS COURTS

PERFORMANCE REPORT

July-December 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.

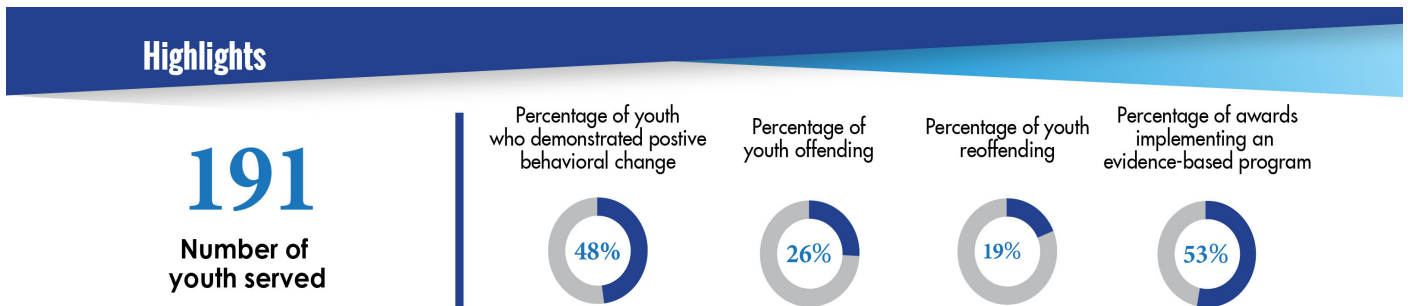
This report was produced by Arc Aspicio under contract number 15PJDP24F00000001, awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice. It is important to note that accurate data rely on correct data tracking and entry by the grantees and those agencies 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 July to December 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 is a specialized, problem-solving court, which uses 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, offending, and reoffending outcomes. THWC grantees also report planning activities conducted during their first year of receiving their award. Planning activities include training activities and partnership development.



OVERVIEW OF AWARD INFORMATION

During the July-December 2021 activity period, OJJDP’s THWC program funded 30 awards with 77 percent of awards completing their reporting requirements (see Figure 1). 23 THWC awards were operational (expending grant funds during the period). The total available funding during the period exceeded \$7.4 million (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Award Details



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

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 July-December 2021 activity period, 53 percent of THWC awards used one or more evidence-based programs or practices.

YOUTH & FAMILIES SERVED

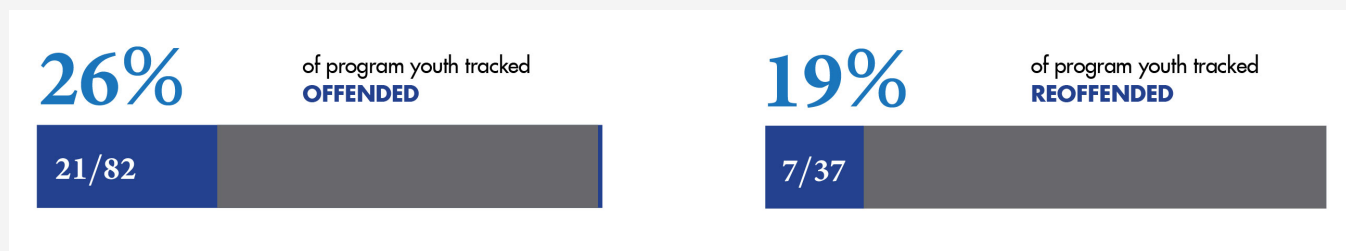
THWC grantees are required to report on the number of youth and families served during each activity period. During the July-December 2021 activity period, THWC program grantees served a total of 250 youth and families. 76 percent of individual grantees served were youth (n = 191), while 24 percent of those served were family members (n = 59).



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 July-December 2021 activity period, 26 percent of the youth who were tracked offended in the short term (see Figure 2), and 19 percent of tracked youth reoffended in the short term (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Short-Term Offending and Reoffending Data



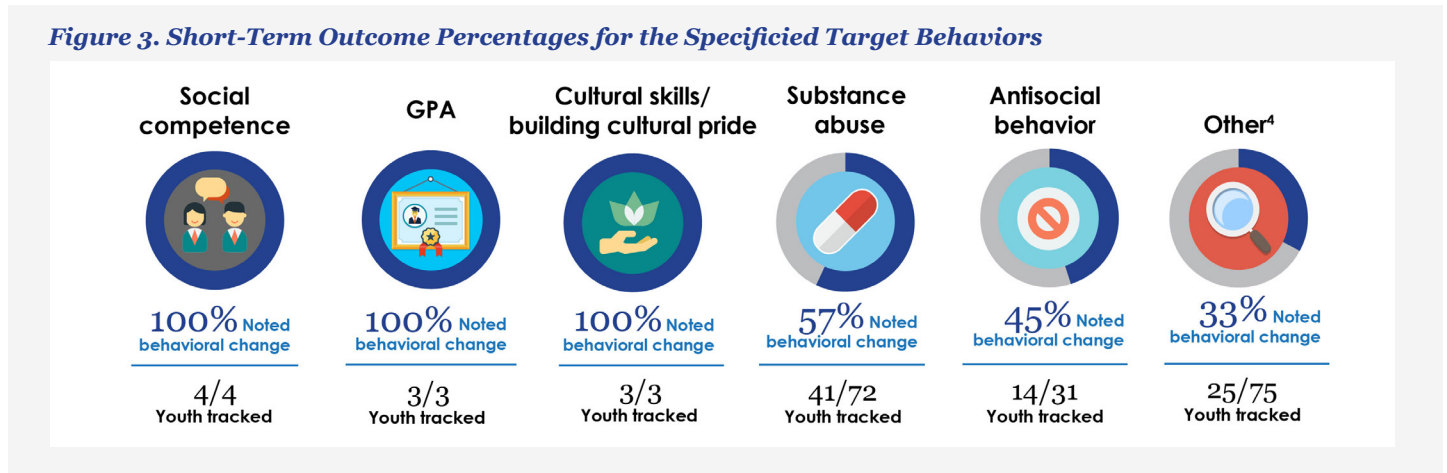
² <http://www.wellnesscourts.org/files/Tribal%20Healing%20to%20Wellness%20Courts%20The%20Key%20Components.pdf>

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.

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 July-December 2021 activity period, 100 percent of tracked youth demonstrated the most improvement in social competence, GPA, and cultural skills building and pride (see Figure 3). Overall, 48 percent of program youth exhibited a desired change in a targeted behavior.

Figure 3. Short-Term Outcome Percentages for the Specified Target Behaviors



PLANNING YEAR ACTIVITIES

OJJDP requires THWC grantees to engage in program planning activities during the start 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 July-December 2021, activity period, THTW grantees did not conduct planning activities. As these awards are well underway, no planning activities were necessary during the current activity period.

⁴ Other target behaviors include School attendance, GED, job skills, family relationships, family functioning, prosocial behavior, and community involvement.

CONCLUSION

OJJDP's THWC grant program seeks to strengthen the capacity of tribal courts by applying the Tribal Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court model to develop comprehensive frameworks for addressing substance use and other delinquent issues among at-risk and court-involved tribal youth. The THWC uses the drug court model and incorporates 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 July-December 2021 activity period, 30 operational THWC awards served a total of 250 youth and families. 76 percent of those served ($n = 191$) were youth and 24 percent of those served ($n = 59$) were family members. Overall, 48 percent of program youth exhibited a desired change in the targeted behavior during the short-term, with youth demonstrating the greatest improvement in social competence, GPA, and cultural skills building and pride. Additionally, 74 percent of youth did not offend in the short term, while 81 percent of youth 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.