

Quick Stats

Agency	Start Date	Number Served Annually	Annual Budget
Department of Probation	July 2012	840	\$4,700,000

Problem Statement	<p>With 27,000 people on probation city-wide, almost one-third of whom (approximately 8,000) are between the ages of 16 and 24, probation is by far the City's largest alternative-to-incarceration. Of the young adult clients on probation, about 2,700 live in five neighborhoods: Brownsville, Harlem, Jamaica, East New York, and the South Bronx. Eighty-four percent are men, 50% are black and 30% are Latino. In order to improve public safety and reduce crime and incarceration, DOP is implementing evidence-based, cost-effective policies and practices and putting resources in the communities most heavily involved with criminal justice systems. To this end, DOP is developing Neighborhood Opportunity Networks (NeONs) in six neighborhoods where large numbers of people on probation live. Over the next few years, DOP staff will co-locate with neighborhood-based organizations in each NeON community and join or work to develop effective networks of community organizations, government agencies, local businesses and residents to expand client access to the kinds of quality opportunities, resources, and services that build on their strengths and reduce their involvement with the criminal justice system.</p>
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Research and Evidence	<p>Many young adults on probation need intensive interventions to help them desist from criminal activity and strengthen their attachment to education, employment and community. Arches is designed to meet young people where they are in this process of pro-social engagement, focusing on changes in cognition and thinking that often precede the ability to achieve concrete successes in education and employment. Research consistently finds that pro-criminal attitudes are a major predictor of future criminal behavior (Andrews, 1995).ⁱ The good news is that attitudes are productive targets for intervention, with changes in values and beliefs resulting in marked changes in behavior (Krosnick, 1988).ⁱⁱ To date, the most promising interventions for justice-involved young adults involve the use of behavioral, cognitive, and social learning principles. (Andrews et al., 1990; Andrews & Bonta, 1994).ⁱⁱⁱ Cognitive behavioral approaches are designed to help people become aware of and positively change those thought processes that lead to maladaptive behaviors and interfere with successful attainment of personal goals (Meichenbaum, 1977).^{iv} Research finds that group cognitive-behavioral treatment approaches are effective at reducing future criminal behavior among young adult offenders.^v</p> <p>The Arches group mentoring program is based both on cognitive restructuring of the thoughts and attitudes that put one at risk of engaging in criminal behavior and on improving problem solving and social skills. It draws on principles of effective mentoring programs: a 1:4 mentor/young adult ratio for group mentoring interventions, groups that meet at least once a week, group meetings that are combined with case management, and group processes focused on the emotional development of young adults and the professional development of mentors.</p>
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Program Description	<p>The core components of the Arches transformative mentoring intervention include (1) a group process where participants become an important support</p>
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Implementation	<p>system for each other; (2) an evidence-based curriculum centered on cognitive behavioral principles delivered by culturally appropriate mentors; (3) case management provided by DOP probation officers; (4) mentors who are available for support, advice, and guidance; and (5) incorporation of positive youth development values, principles and practices. The focus is on the achievement of developmental outcomes that prepare young people to succeed at education, work, and civic participation.</p> <p>In each Arches mentoring group, a team of five paid mentors deliver a cognitive behavioral curriculum to a group of 20 young adults once or twice a week for six months. The evidence-based curriculum is “Interactive Journaling,” which was developed by The Change Companies.^{vi} Interactive Journaling (IJ) uses journaling to assess client’s readiness to change and provides strategies that lead an individual successfully through the process of change, action, and maintenance of prosocial behavior. The curriculum is age-appropriate, suitable for use by young adult populations, and requires a third grade reading level. In addition to weekly group sessions, mentors are available to meet one-on-one with the young adults and are also available for support, advice and guidance. In conjunction with the mentoring, participating young adults work one-on-one with their probation officer, who is trained in the Arches transformative mentoring approach and provides complementary case management. DOP will also make provisions for ongoing training and technical assistance to mentors, participating nonprofit organizations, and DOP staff in order to ensure that the model is implemented well and consistently across the participating nonprofit organizations.</p>
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Implementation Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for Applications was released in February, 2012 • 14 providers were selected to begin in July, 2012 • 5 providers were selected to begin in September, 2012
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Target Population	The target population is young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 who are serving a sentence of probation and are referred to Arches by their probation officer.
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Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral changes such as increased well-being, decreased substance abuse and violent behaviors, and decreased self-harm • attitudinal changes including better personal and family relationships, increased self-esteem, self-efficacy and social competence • Improved skills for avoiding risky behaviors and engaging in positive behaviors. • Reductions in recidivism
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ⁱ Golden, Lori, “Evaluation of the Efficacy of a Cognitive Behavioral Program for Offenders on Probation: *Thinking For A Change*,” University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, 2002. Pro-criminal attitudes and antisocial beliefs have been characterized by distrust of authority figures (e.g., police, judges), perceptions of the world as hostile and unsafe, endorsement of aggressive solutions, and identification with criminal peers.

ⁱⁱ Id.

ⁱⁱⁱ Id.

^{iv} Id.

^v Id.

^{vi} Proctor, S., Hoffmann, N., & Allison, S. (Feb 2011). The effectiveness of interactive journaling in reducing recidivism among substance-dependent jail inmates. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 1-16; Davidson, J., Crawford, R., & Kerwood, E. (2008). Constructing an EBP Post-Conviction Model of Supervision in United States Probation, District of Hawaii: A Caset Study. *Federal Probation*, 72(2); Parks, G. A., & Woodford, M. S. (2005). CHOICES about alcohol: A brief alcohol abuse prevention and harm

reduction program for college students. In G. R. Walz & R. K. Yep (Eds.), *VISTAS: Compelling perspectives on counseling, 2005* (pp.171-174). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.