NYC Department of Correction - Young Adult Plan Update

October 9, 2018

The NYC Department of Correction (DOC) is committed to managing its young adult population in a way that addresses their needs, the foremost of these being their safety. Although the Minimum Standard §1-02(c)(1) requires all young adults (18 to 21 years old) be housed separately from adults (22 years old and older), the Department found that, in attempting to fully meet the Standard in the Summer of 2016, violence among the young adult population sharply increased. In response, the Department began to reimagine a young adult strategy that enabled young adults to be housed safely while still meeting their unique housing and programmatic need, which involved seeking a variance from the Board of Correction Minimum Standard § 1-02(c)(1) in order to house some young adults ages 19-21 with adults ages 22 and up. As a result, slashing / stabbing incidents involving young adult males fell by 50% (64 incidents in FY17 to 32 incidents in FY18) and young adult slashing / stabbings incidents in within George Motchan Detention Center (GMDC) fell by 91% (20 incidents in FY17 to 2 incidents in FY18). Similarly, young adult male on young adult male fights dropped at rate of 21% from FY17 to FY18 (1662 incidents to 1377 incidents) over all and fights within the young adult male population at GMDC dropped by 54% (808 incidents in FY17 to 433 in FY18).

The Department has defined its directive to house "substantially all young adults" in exclusive young adult housing as those young adults who can safely be housed exclusively with those of their same age group¹. Based on our prior experience we believe "substantially all" can be quantified as no less than 50% of the general population of young adults (both male and female) at any given time. While the Department aspires to the housing of all young adults with their peers, the total young adults that will be housed with their peers must be contingent on security and programming considerations.

As of October 1, 2018, the Department had 664 male young adult inmates, and 37 female young adult inmates in custody. Currently, 470 of the 664 males and 31 of the 37 females are non-special population status and therefore eligible for general population housing. Of those eligible, 242 (52%) males and 28 (90%) females, were in pure young adult housing units. At the July 2018 Board meeting and in public testimony to City Council, DOC committed to transferring as many young adults as we can safely move to young adult housing units within the Robert N. Davoren Complex (RNDC). Details of the Department's work to achieve this goal over the next six months are included within this report.

Over the past several years, the Department has moved away from a one-size-fits-all approach of managing its inmates – whether this means eliminating punitive segregation for young

¹ That is, young adults aged 19-21. DOC does not commingle 18 year olds.

people or implementing innovative programs for men and women – because the needs of different individuals in our custody must be addressed individually. The same idea applies to young adults – while the young person's age is a primary factor, it cannot be the only determining factor in addressing his/her most appropriate housing. Other needs, such as security, programming and medical/mental health, must be considered as part of the comprehensive view of the young person, and must be incorporated into his/her housing placement.

The Department plans to immediately begin the improvement repairs of housing units at RNDC that are vacant following the transfer of the adolescent population. We will transfer the young adult protective custody population and larger groups of general population young adults into RNDC, initiate an agency wide new admission processing of all young adult males at RNDC, and, in consultation with H+H, review young adults presently assigned to commingled mental observation housing for potential assignment to existing exclusive young adult mental observation housing. Through these actions over the next several months DOC will increase the number of young adults assigned to exclusive young adult housing at RNDC and other facilities as necessary. Regardless of whether a young person is housed with other young adults or with adults, the person's safety, educational, and programming needs must be addressed. Below, the Department describes work that has been done to improve these aspects of a young person's time in its custody, and plans to further improve and enhance its approach to this uniquely challenging population.

Housing Plan and Movement of Young Adults

Housing and Recreation: As of October 1, 2018, all adolescents in DOC custody were transitioned to the off-island Horizon facility. Moving adolescents into a dedicated facility will provide youthful offenders with support and guidance in a juvenile justice model. As a result of Raise the Age, the Department now has the opportunity to advance an ongoing plan that will increase young adult housing units in the general population, protective custody and new admission settings. As described in more detail, herein, this plan begins with the movement of young adult protective custody inmates into RNDC by the end of October 2018 and the movement of general population inmates into RNDC beginning in November 2018 as the newly renovated units become available. Beginning in January 2019, the Department will designate RNDC as the new admission facility for all 18-21 year old inmates.

In October 2018, the Department will be renovating the newly vacated housing units previously used for adolescents with the intention of creating dedicated young adult space at RNDC. DOC intends to provide young adults with a space that provides a safe and secure environment, meets their recreational needs, and looks visually similar to spaces in which many were

previously housed at GMDC. These renovations include painting, necessary security enhancement such as repair to the doors and locks, as well as installing additional televisions and adding FM transmitters. We anticipate the first units to be completed in October, with the goal of having all renovation work completed by November 1, 2018. Once the first completed units become available, and after the movement of young adults in protective custody, DOC will prioritize the movement of young adults who have exhibited infraction-free conduct, demonstrated the motivation to participate in programs and services, and requested NYC Department of Education (DOE) services into young adult exclusive housing within RNDC. Initially the Department will identify approximately 100 young adults who meet this criteria and plan to move this cohort into RNDC beginning on November 1, 2018. After the initial cohort is moved to RNDC, DOC will continue to move young adults into RNDC from commingled units based on safety, security and the young person's particular needs. The Department is also planning on establishing several additional young adult protective custody units to address these moves.

The Department will prioritize the transfer of all general population and protective custody young adults into young adult exclusive housing whenever possible. However, there will likely be instances due to safety, security, and best correctional practices, where young adults are unable to be immediately transferred in to young adult housing. In these instances, DOC intends to make best efforts to create housing units consisting of inmates 19-25 years of age. As of October 1, there were 168 housing units that housed young adult inmates ages 19-21 with inmates ages 22 and older. The Department intends to review these housing units and adjust the housing compositions to prioritize assignment of young adults only with adults up to age 25 whenever possible. The Department will closely monitor incident data from these units to inform future decisions surrounding 19-25 commingled housing opportunities.

The Department is committed to the ongoing evaluation and improvement of its approach to young adults in our care. As of October 1, 2018, 52% of the young adult population was housed in young adult exclusive units in RNDC, Anna M. Kross Center (AMKC), Eric M. Taylor Center (EMTC), George R. Vierno Center (GRVC), and Otis Bantum Correctional Center (OBCC). This percentage will increase as DOC implements the comprehensive young adult housing and movement plan. Moreover, DOC will undertake best efforts to house those young adults who are not housed exclusively with other young adults in housing units comprised of ages 19-25, DOC will evaluate metrics, monitor housing units, and gather feedback from staff and inmates to identify and address issues amongst the population. Additionally, based on a conversation with Board of Correction staff, DOC recently expanded the young adult progress report to track a wider scope of housing, movement and program data, and will continue to expand upon these metrics as necessary. (Additional information about program offerings and participation rates for young adults can be found in Appendix A.)

Initiate New Admission Processing at RNDC for All Young Adults: Intake can be an overwhelming process, especially for young people. In an effort to reduce stress, target programs and services, and eliminate unnecessary additional transportation, the Department is in the process of opening a dedicated intake facility at RNDC that will process all male inmates ages 18-21. The creation of this dedicated facility will enable young people entering DOC care to be admitted directly into young adult housing. Barring any safety, security or behavioral concerns, the Department intends for these newly-admitted young adults to remain in RNDC young adult housing. We expect attrition and new admissions through young adult intake to increase and centralize the overall young adult population at RNDC, and therefore increase the number of young adults in the youth-centric facility. At this time, the young adult intake facility is on track to open by January 1, 2019.

Educational, Recreational, and Program Services

Development of Additional Recreation Yards: The Department recognizes that access to recreational space is crucial to the overall physical and emotional wellness of inmates. In September 2018, the Department began construction on three new recreational yards to enhance outdoor activities for inmates housed at RNDC. These new yards, which will serve approximately 18 housing units, are in addition to the facility's main yard, the sprung recreation areas, and the newly opened Building 2 south yard, which itself created space for three additional recreational units. Additional recreation space will increase DOC's ability to provide recreation to more young adults simultaneously and enhance the overall security and safety of all inmates during their recreational time. The Department's goal is to have these three additional yards operational before the end of 2018.

Expanding Educational Services: The Department recognizes the significant importance of providing educational services to the young adult population in our custody. This is a serious responsibility and the Department is continuously refining its engagement strategies in order to maximize opportunities for participation and success. As the young adult population transferred out of GMDC and into GRVC, for example, the Department installed additional DOE posts in GRVC's main school to accommodate the increased numbers of young adults housed in that facility. As of October 1, there are 21 young adults enrolled in GRVC educational programs for the 2018-2019 academic year. The Department currently offers DOE services at RNDC, EMTC, OBCC-ESH, North Infirmary Command (NIC), RMSC, and GRVC.

This year, DOC is working on a collaborative program with the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to establish two new High School Equivalency Testing Centers at off-island facilities which will focus on the administration of the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) for anyone ages 19 or older. Over the next six months, DOC and NYSED will work

together to train DOC staff to administer these tests and obtain necessary approvals for opening TASC centers. It is our goal to begin administering the test by the spring of 2019.

Providing educational opportunities for young adults begins at intake, where all young adults are informed of their right to educational services. Upon expressing their interest, young adults are provided a Request for Educational Services form. The Request for Educational Services form enables the Department to assess the education level of the young adult and allows DOC to provide targeted educational opportunities. Upon completion, the form is submitted to DOE as well as the DOC's Educational Services Unit. If a young adult who has expressed interest in educational services is assigned to a commingled unit, the Department ensures his transfer to a facility where DOE provides those services. Young adults who did not initially express interested in education services can do so at any time, at which point the Department will make every effort to transfer him to a facility with DOE services. By centralizing young adult intake at RNDC, the Department anticipates being able to streamline young adult educational offerings and better match individuals with their programmatic needs. The Department is also in the early planning stages of designing multi-platform communication-based strategies to engage young adults in educational services, particularly with those young adults who express a lack of interest in education during the intake process.

The Department remains committed to finding innovative approaches to promoting engagement for students and potential students among the young adult population. Success House, for example, is a program that enables the Department to house young adults currently enrolled in educational programs together so they can live and learn together. The Department has found that housing young adults working towards a common educational goal affords the students an opportunity to foster an intrinsic sense of motivation while providing peer to peer support. Success House is located in RNDC and the Department is looking forward to expanding on the model as the young adult population increases at that facility in the coming months.

Targeted Programming for Young Adults

DOC's approach to young adult programming combines lessons learned from successful adult programs with young adult specific behavior and engagement strategies. A number of approaches and programs work for both adults and young adults in DOC's care including, but not limited to, the designation of program staff focused on group facilitation, use of technology to advance programming, animal assisted therapy programming, the addition of specified introductory workforce courses, and the use of support teams to discuss and track specific populations' behavior. DOC offers a wide variety of program options in both young adult exclusive and commingled units that promote the acquisition of life skills, reentry and overall behavior modification (see Appendix B). In addition, the Department's current programming

menu includes the utilization of tablets, interactive journaling, reentry services, cognitive behavioral workshops, life skills workshops, and family reintegration services.

The Department is committed to the idleness reduction initiative and providing expanded programmatic opportunities to young adults in DOC custody. The Department currently offer 5 hours of programming in the majority of GP housing areas. In addition, the Programs Division is developing a plan to expand programming for young adults in the mental observation, protective custody and other specialized units.

Relocation of the YES and PEACE Centers to RNDC: DOC is in the process of replicating the PEACE and YES Centers previously used at GMDC within RNDC. These spaces will be used to offer incentive and workforce development based programs and services. The anticipated date of completion for the construction and movement of workforce development equipment is February 2019. In the interim, DOC offers enhanced recreation and other incentive-based program options to young adults on the units, in the workforce development trailers, and in the gyms and recreational yards at RNDC.

Young Adult Program Engagement: DOC will continue to use program participation data, surveys, focus groups, and internal/external provider feedback in order to maintain or reengage young adult participation in both programs and educational services. The Department is also working on the development of a full menu of educational and recreational programs and services that will be provided at intake to inform the young adults of the variety and availability of programs and services offered Department-wide. Over the next 60 days, the Programs Division will be evaluating current programs and services for potential inclusion in these new brochures and we anticipate rolling them out on January 1, 2019.

Staffing and Staff Training

DOC recognizes that staff trainings are a critical component of success, particularly with the young adult population. Officers and counselors assigned to young adult programs received the following training sessions in June 2016: Motivational Interviewing, Non-Coercive Approaches to Resolving Conflict (99 staff members trained at each of the sessions), Creating Regulation and Resiliency (70 staff members trained), and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (248 staff members trained). The Department also on-boarded 20 young adult program counselors on June 30, 2015, and, as part of the process, the group spent 30 days at the Academy where they received SCM and Conflict Resolution/Crisis Intervention and training sessions to include trauma informed care. The Academy continues to provide Safe Crisis Management, Crisis Intervention, Conflict Resolution and Direct Supervision training in an effort to ensure all active staff are trained in these areas.

Regardless of their post, the Department firmly believes that targeted trainings for all of its staff are key to long term safety and security. The Department began providing all recruits with Mental Health First Aid training in August 2014, Safe Crisis Management (SCM) in 2014, Conflict Resolution/Crisis Intervention since February 2016, and Direct Supervision training since 2016. The first SCM session for officers assigned to adolescents and young adults was held October 2014, and has been continuously provided to in-service staff since that date. Direct Supervision training and Conflict Resolution/Crisis Intervention have been offered to in-service staff since 2017. Finally, Trauma Informed Care training for officers as well as DOC and DOE staff was conducted September 2014 - June 2015 (377 staff members trained).

In an effort to enhance training, DOC is exploring procuring consultant services to offer targeted trainings to staff working with young adults that will encompass widely accepted evidence-based practices such as effective communication strategies and motivational interviewing techniques. The proposed training course, known as Effective Communication/Motivational Strategies (ECMS), is 5 day learning experience designed to integrate specific knowledge, (social learning theory, what works research, stages of change, and motivational interviewing) within a conceptual framework with which DOC staff is already familiar (such as understanding criminal logic, offender management, risk control/risk reduction strategies and learning in "learning teams"). ECMS will combine theory discussion with a practice of specific communication skills and techniques that reduce resistance to change. ECMS will be rolled out to staff working with the young adult population, starting with YA-ESH staff. The consultant designing the ECMS training is currently contracted to work with DOE in offering similar targeted training to their staff. These materials, adapted for young adults, will strengthen staff's understanding of the correlation between brain development and social learning theory. We anticipate this new training will begin in the spring of 2019.

Identifying, Monitoring, and Reporting to the Board the YAs in Specialized Housing

DOC currently provides the Board of Corrections (BOC) with regular updates on the use of restrictive housing with the young adult population. Monthly reports to the Board include: Young Adult Housing Monthly Progress Report, Young Adult Restrictive Housing Monthly Report, Young Adult ESH Compliance Unit Report, as well as the Secure Unit Compliance Audit. In addition, DOC periodically provides BOC with an evaluation of ESH housing for young adults.

As part of this Young Adult Plan Update, beginning on October 15, 2018, the Department will provide to BOC on a bi-weekly basis a report of all young adults who are assigned to commingled units, including identifying the special population young adults who are in commingled housing (e.g. the Board's variance allowing the Department to house young adults with adults in specialized mental health units, NIC infirmary, and the West Facility communicable disease

unit). The Department will utilize this report to monitor and make adjustments aimed at reducing the number of young adults who are in commingled housing whenever possible, including making best efforts to create commingled housing units consisting of inmates aged 19-25 years of age.

Conclusion

The Department is committed to the age-appropriate management of its young people, which goes beyond their housing and takes into consideration their safety and other needs, such as educational and programmatic. While the Department aspires to house all its young people together, the standard must be primarily one of safety. The management of young people is a dynamic process, and the Department will continue to be flexible to meet the ever-changing and challenging needs of this population.

APPENDIX

Appendix A – Young Adult and Commingled Young Adult Program Participation (DOC Young Adult Housing Month Progress Report, Sept 2018. Pages 7-12.)

Appendix B – Program Offerings for Young Adults (DOC Young Adult Housing Month Progress Report, Sept 2018. Page 6.)

APPENDIX A

- b. Overview of comingled programming:
 - <u>Internal:</u> DOC-led programming designed to provide group facilitation, individualized
 counseling and structured leisure time activities promoting critical thinking and positive
 behavioral change.
 - External: DOC partners with seven nonprofit organizations to support incarcerated individuals pre and post release. During incarceration, DOC partners run classes on topics such as anger management, parenting, relapse prevention, and job readiness. They also offer vocational training to expand participant's employment opportunities, including industry-recognized certificates in the construction and food industries. After release, they provide assistance with job placement, paid internships, housing, treatment referrals and other services.
- c. External Programming participation for young adults in comingled units⁶

Facility	# of Classes Offered	YA Average Daily # of Participants	Participation Rate	Topics		
АМКС	532	228	41%	-Intrapersonal Communication Building -Socialization and Relational Skill Building -Re-entry Tools -Career Counseling		
BKDC	79	49	18%	-Intrapersonal Communication Building -Socialization and Relational Skill Building -Re-entry Tools -Career Counseling -Anger Management -Parenting Skill Building		
ЕМТС	212	111	42%	-Intrapersonal Communication Building -Socialization and Relational Skill Building -Re-entry Tools -Career Counseling -Anger Management -Parenting Skill Building -Relapse Prevention (SMART Recovery) -Stress Reduction -Mindfulness (DBT) Skill Building		

⁶ The scheduled duration of each programming class is two and a half (2.5) hours, which includes one and a half (1.5) hours of group sessions and one (1) hour of individualized re-entry planning.

Facility	# of Classes Offered	YA Average Daily # of Participants	Participation Rate	Topics
GRVC	168	71	54%	-Socialization and Relational Skill Building -Career Counseling -Anger Management -Parenting Skill Building -Mindfulness (DBT) Skill Building
MDC	117	56	19%	-Intrapersonal Communication Building -Socialization and Relational Skill Building -Re-entry Tools -Rational Thinking
NIC	36	8	67%	-Intrapersonal Communication Building -Socialization and Relational Skill Building -Anger Management -Relapse Prevention -Rational Thinking -Stress Reduction
OBCC (Non- ESH)	269	104	30%	-Intrapersonal Communication Building -Socialization and Relational Skill Building -Re-entry Tools -Career Counseling -Anger Management -Rational Thinking
OBCC (ESH)	20	9	67%	-Challenge Curriculum -Rational Thinking -Targeted Behavioral Modification -Mindfulness Skill Building
RMSC	163	102	5%	-Intrapersonal Communication Building -Socialization and Relational Skill Building -Re-entry Tools -Career Counseling -Anger Management -Mindfulness (DBT) Skill Building -Targeted Behavioral Modification
RNDC	141	5	66%	-Intrapersonal Communication Building -Socialization and Relational Skill Building -Rational Thinking

Facility	# of Classes Offered	YA Average Daily # of Participants	Participation Rate	Topics
VCBC	191	194	32%	-Housing after incarceration -Thinking errors and patterns -Ways to avoid future incarceration -Handling irrational thoughts -Improving negative behaviors -Focusing on goals for the future -Coping skills for adjusting to jail -Recognizing negative behaviors

d. Internal Programming Participation for young adults in comingled units

Facility	# of Classes Offered	YA Average Daily # of Participants	Participation Rate	Topics	
AMKC	309	42	-Positive Thinking in Stressful Situations -Defining Leadership -Importance of Good Influence and Bad Influence 42% -Impact in Society -Re-entry Tools -Influence = Leadership -Utilize your Leadership Style to Improve		
ВКДС	45	13	20%	-Socialization and Communication Skills -Forgiveness -Anger Management -Parenting Skills -Improving Communication and Relationships -Resume Building and Work Skills	

Facility	# of Classes Offered	YA Average Daily # of Participants	Participation Rate	Topics
ЕМТС	129	19	22%	-Current Events -Communication and Relationship Skill Building -History of Body Language -Mindfulness - arts intervention -Career Pathways -Risk Taking -Righting our Wrongs -Using Community Services -Modern Poetry and Interpretation -Meditation and Mindfulness -Stress Reduction -Improving Memory and Mental Sharpness - Positive Social Activities -Relapse Prevention -Cinematic Therapy -Practicing Forgiveness -Conquering Bad Habits -Fatherhood -SMART Recovery Curriculum
GRVC	82	16	23%	-Self-Reflection; Reentry -Forgiveness -Anger Management -Parenting Skills -Improving Communication and Relationships -Resume Building and Work Skills
MDC	197	24	31%	-Positive thinking -Problem solving -Entitlement barriers, issues, outcomes, causes -Overcoming entitlement and moving forward

Facility	# of Classes Offered	YA Average Daily # of Participants	Participation Rate	Topics
NIC	144	12	34%	-5 Keys to Control Anger -Improving Communication -Writing Workshop -Success over failure -Current Events -Law of Forgiveness -Conscious and Unconscious Mind -Professional Role Reversal -Behavior and Critical Thinking -Substance Abuse Awareness -Dealing with your Emotions -Anger Management -Identifying Triggers - Dealing with your Emotions

Facility	# of YA Average P Facility Classes Daily # of		Participation Rate	Topics
	Offered	Participants		
OBCC (Non- ESH)	116	30	47%	-Life Transitions and Re-entry -Cognitive Restructuring -Strengths and weaknesses -Current Events -Strengths and weaknesses -Job Readiness -Anxiety Relief -Aggression Cycle -Rational Thinking -Relationship workbook -Free write; self-expression -Understanding and decoding music lyrics -Summer time/staying away from troubleMotivational interview -Inspired Poems
OBCC (ESH)	79	11	96%	-Challenge -Behavior modification -Trauma

Facility	# of Classes Offered	YA Average Daily # of Participants	Participation Rate	Topics
RMSC	4	1	50%	-Self Reflections -Re-entry: Housing, Public Assistance, Employment -Resume Building, Interview Techniques -Improving Self-Esteem -Improving Communication -Self-Transformation -Self-Expression -Healthy Relationships -Cage Your Rage
VCBC	91	11	46%	-Housing after incarceration -Thinking errors and patterns -Ways to avoid future incarceration -Handling irrational thoughts -Improving negative behaviors -Focusing on goals for the future -Coping skills for adjusting to jail -Recognizing negative behaviors

APPENDIX B

Young Adult Housing Monthly Progress Report September 2018

3. Programming

a. For each program offered to young adults at all facilities, provide the number of classes or meetings offered and the average number of participants.⁵

Program	# of	Total # of	Available # of	Average # of	Participation
	Sessions	Participants	Participants	Participants	Rate
	Offered				
Anger Management	132	362	364	3	99%
Animal Assisted Therapy	1	3	3	3	100%
Anti Violence/Culture	26	114	125	4	91%
Community Meeting	89	502	502	6	100%
Conflict Resolution	9	69	69	8	100%
Creative Arts	139	611	657	4	93%
Dialectical Behavioral	120	463	475	4	97%
Therapy					
Drug Alcohol Awareness	3	11	11	4	100%
Healthy Relationships	31	119	122	4	98%
Horticultural Therapy	30	68	68	2	100%
Program					
Individual Counseling	237	839	845	4	99%
Industry Recognized	35	80	80	2	100%
Training					
Interactive Journaling	104	361	378	3	96%
Interpersonal Skill	105	295	295	3	100%
Development					
Leadership Development	221	1114	1134	5	98%
Literacy	13	51	51	4	100%
Mentoring	10	42	42	4	100%
Politics/Current Events	2	11	11	6	100%
Reentry Services	312	1736	2264	6	77%
Self Guided Activities	44	392	392	9	100%
Structured Recreation	511	3274	3309	6	99%
Trading Futures	51	197	201	4	98%
Youth Communication	121	394	411	3	96%

 $^{^5}$ These metrics will be eventually be broken out by facility that houses YA populations (YA only & comingled) housing areas