Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. (YAP) works with over 19,000 youth and families annually in 23 states and the District of Columbia in over 100 communities. YAP safely and successfully engages youth in the juvenile justice system across a wide-spectrum of needs with a singular focus: to safely integrate youth within their community by building their skills and positive connections to the community.

OUR SERVICE MODEL

SERVICES TO THE HIGH AND COMPLEX NEED YOUTH: YAP has a rich history of providing services and supports to the most challenging youth in the juvenile justice system, including: youth with cross-systems involvement; violent or gang-involved youth; youth with multiple offenses; youth who have sexually offended, youth with emotional and behavioral challenges; or commercially exploited youth.

SERVICES THAT ARE FLEXIBLE YET INTENSIVE: The National Institute of Corrections calls for 40-70% of high risk-offender’s time to be engaged in structured activities. Youth are provided with structure, supervision and support through frequent contact with their staff at the times, days and locations most needed, such as the youth’s home, school and community. Youth are seen 10-25 hours a week, up to seven days a week. Individualized safety plans are developed with each family, and staff are available 24/7.

SERVICES ROOTED IN THE PRINCIPLES OF WRAPAROUND: Each young person and family is engaged as equal partners in our planning and service delivery processes. We learn the family’s needs, strengths, interests, preferences and priorities. We then engage a team of community supports- made up of system and provider stakeholders, but also positive people, places and activities in the community- who help the family to achieve its goals. Some of the members remain in the family’s lives even when our services end.

SERVICES THAT ARE CULTURALLY COMPETENT: Paid, trained and carefully supervised Advocates are recruited from the same neighborhoods where the youth and family reside. Advocates have GEDs to PhDs. They are carefully matched with their youth and families and often share attributes such as ethnicity, race, language, and interests. They work closely with youth and families to help them achieve the goals in their individualized service plan.

SERVICES THAT ARE FAMILY FOCUSED: Respectful partnership with families is one of YAP’s guiding principles, and creates an environment that fosters youth and family active participation and engagement in services. Staff help parents work on meeting the needs of their young person and on meeting their own concrete and emotional needs.

UNCONDITIONAL CARING: We maintain a “no reject, no eject” policy: No one is ever refused services or discharged from service due to their previous history or reluctance to engage in the program.