

## RISK BEHAVIORS DECREASE FOR CHILDREN RECEIVING YOUTH ADVOCATE PROGRAM SERVICES

Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. (YAP) provides intensive community-based services to multi-need, system involved youth. Youth are referred for issues related to juvenile justice, child welfare and truancy. Clearly, reduction or elimination of high risk behaviors will have numerous positive effects not only for the youth themselves, but also their family, school and community.

For this analysis, YAP partnered with the University of Maryland, using their KIDnet software to collect and track outcomes. In order to identify and measure change over time, YAP used the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment to target areas of high risk behavior and focus specific service intervention.

The University of Maryland Department of Service Research analyzed the data for a cohort of 456 youth from Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Maryland involved with juvenile justice, child welfare and truancy systems. Assessments were completed at intake and at 3 month intervals. Child risk behaviors include suicide risk, self-mutilation and other self-harm, danger to others, sexual aggression, runaway, delinquency, fire setting and social behavior.

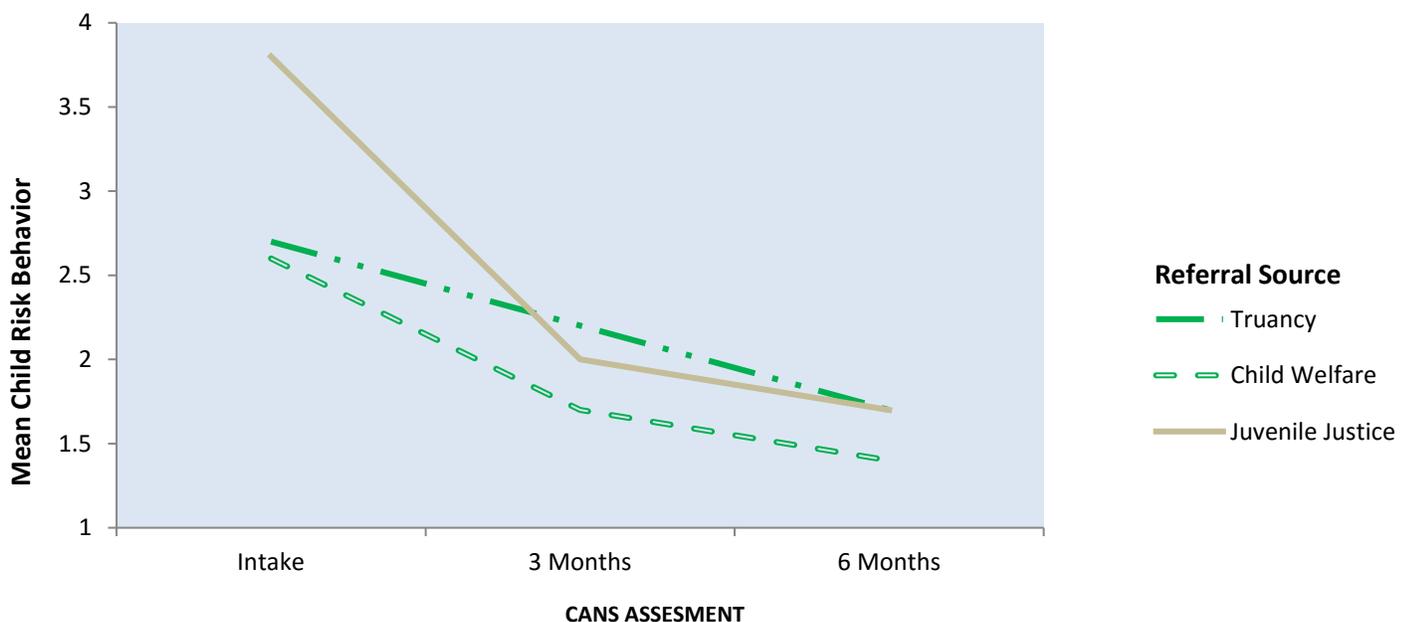
### IMPACT OF SERVICES

During the time that YAP service was provided, staff focused on developing a positive relationship with the youth and family, helping them identify life goals and a plan to achieve them, and helping foster positive connections to community members and resources. These activities contribute to the decrease in child risk behaviors as evidenced in the data analysis.

### REDUCTION IN RISK BEHAVIOR OVER TIME

The graph below illustrates the statistically significant reductions in risky behaviors recorded for all three populations.

#### CHILD RISK BEHAVIOR



The child risk behaviors domain has a total score range of 30. There are 10 items in the child risk behaviors scale. Each item has a range of 0-3. There is a calculation involved in the scoring process.

*CANS Assessment: higher scores indicate more significant or severe problems identified with the child's behavior. Lower scores indicate a reduction in the severity of the child's risk behaviors. Any reduction in severity is viewed as a positive outcome. The reader should note that the reduction in this analysis was statistically significant with all three populations.*