

TYC Report Relating to Interim Charge #2

Prepared for the Senate Committee on
Health and Human Services

April 14, 2010

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TYC Services Introduction

- TYC closed its *Office of Prevention* in compliance with 78th Legislative requirements
- TYC youth have typically already had failures due to many of the elements being discussed today
- TYC's rehabilitation goal is *tertiary prevention* - strategies targeted to persons for whom adverse outcomes or problems have already occurred with the purpose of preventing reoccurrence
- TYC services include intervention to treat substance abuse, mental illness, criminal sexual behavior, anger and violent behavior, unresolved trauma, and educational deficiencies so that youth may return to their communities as law-abiding, productive citizens

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Who Are TYC Youth?

Increasingly violent and troubled

- 100% are adjudicated felons.
- 43% admitted at intake that they are gang members.
- 48% committed violent offenses.
- 50% had families with histories of criminal behavior.

Serious Needs and Often Co-occurring Disorders

- Median reading and math achievement was four and five years behind.
- 36% were identified as eligible for special education services.
- 85% had IQs below the mean score of 100.
- 47% were chemically dependent.
- 37% had serious mental health problems.
- 77% had parents who never married or who divorced or separated.
- 38% had a documented history of being abused or neglected.
- 57% came from low-income homes.
- 71% came from chaotic environments.

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TYC Enabling Legislation

Texas Human Resources Code § 61.002.

- To provide for administration of the state's correctional facilities for children
- To provide a program of constructive training aimed at rehabilitation and reestablishment in society of children adjudged delinquent by the courts
- To provide active parole supervision for children until officially discharged from custody of TYC.

TYC Mission

The Texas Youth Commission, the state's juvenile corrections agency, promotes public safety by operating juvenile correctional facilities and by partnering with youth, families, and communities to provide a safe and secure environment where youth in the agency's care and custody receive individualized education, treatment, life skills and employment training and positive role models to facilitate successful community reintegration.

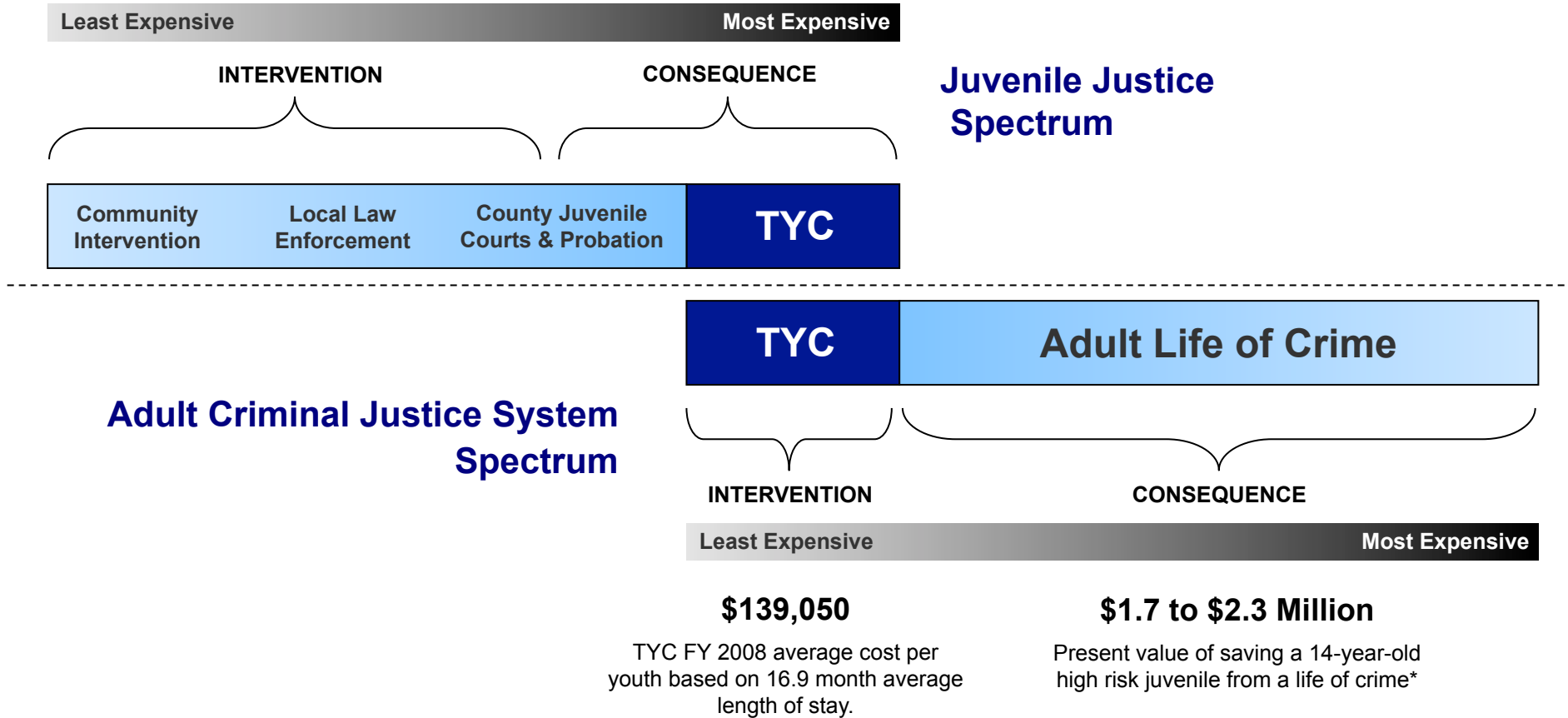
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The Justice Spectrum



*Mark A. Cohen (Vanderbilt) and Alex R. Piquero (University of Maryland): *New Evidence on the Monetary Value of Saving a High Risk Youth* December 2007 [Journal of Quantitative Criminology; Volume 25, Number 1 / March, 2009]

Costs of Individual Crime

Factors considered in the Cohen Study

- Victim Costs
- Criminal Justice Costs (Police, Courts, Prisons)
- Lost Productivity of Incarcerated Offenders
- Fear of Crime Costs (Actions taken by public to avoid the risk of crime)
- Residual Losses to Community (Lack of social cohesion, community development, etc.)

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Rehabilitative Services

- TYC offers general, individualized intervention services and specialized treatment through staff and volunteers
- CoNEXTions Treatment Program
- Specialized Services: capital & serious violent offender, chemical dependency, sexual behavior, mental health, mother/baby, young offenders ages 10-13, and trauma resolution.
- Education and workforce development programs
- Volunteer services including: mentoring, tutoring, faith-based services

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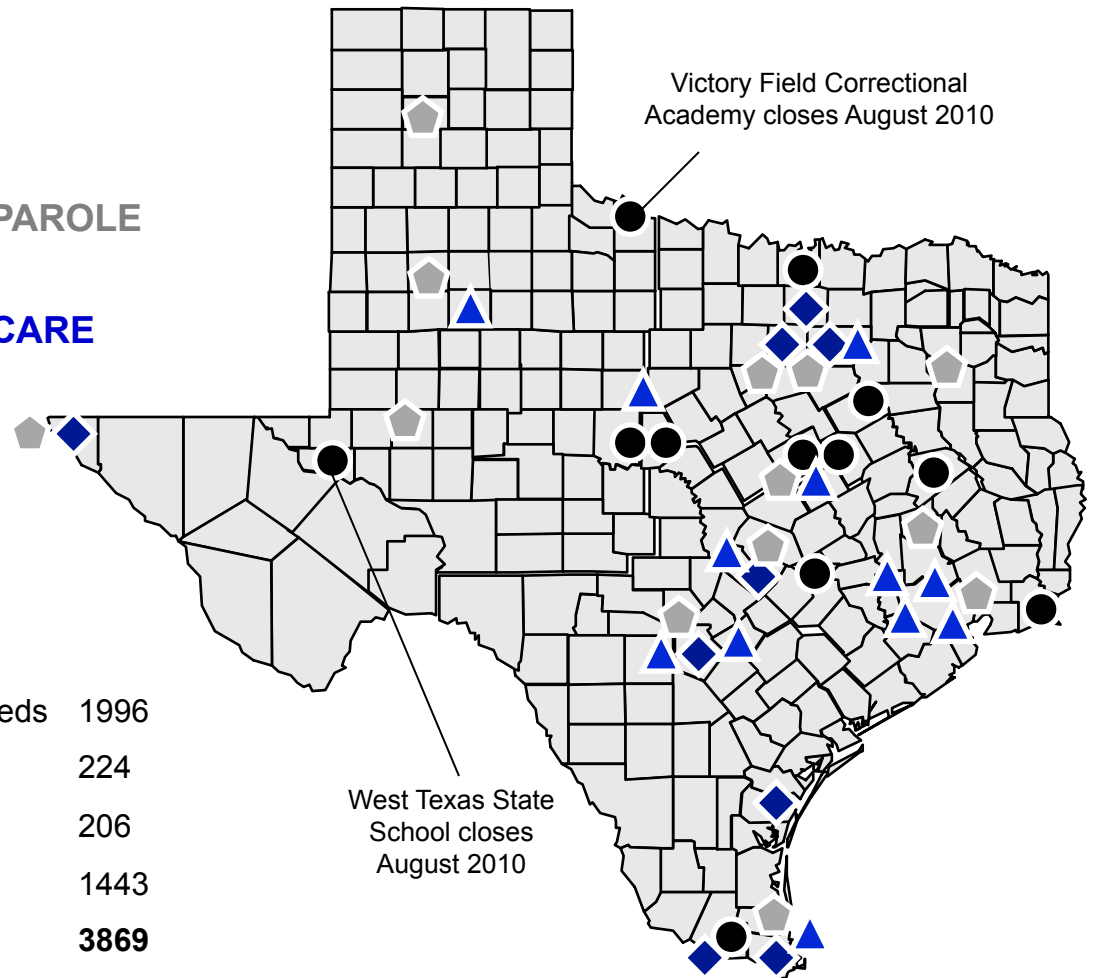
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TYC Service Locations

-  **SECURE FACILITIES**
-  **HALFWAY HOUSES**
-  **DISTRICT & PAROLE OFFICE**
-  **CONTRACT CARE PROGRAM**



Secure Institutional Beds	1996
Halfway House Beds	224
Contracted Beds	206
Parole/Reentry Beds	1443
Total Beds	3869

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TYC's Intervention Philosophy

- By the age of 16, most of the youth committed to TYC have experienced or engaged in most of the usually defined problem behaviors (child abuse or neglect, truancy or school dropout, substance use or abuse, sexual promiscuity, teen pregnancy, and involvement in delinquent or violent acts).
- Agency staff and volunteers work to decrease the likelihood that youth will continue to engage in problem behaviors and to stop the progression of criminal behavior.

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Measuring Effectiveness

- State Performance Measures
- Annual Treatment Effectiveness Report, used to regulate programming needs and curriculum
- Various internal reviews and surveys
- Special internal studies and reports

Note: TYC underwent significant programming changes and improvements in 2007, requiring the development of new performance measures.

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Measurement Examples

Education Achievements (Current School Year To-date)

- 248 youth earned GEDs and 17 youth earned full high school diplomas
- 392 youth earned industry certifications
- 53 youth enrolled in fall semester dual credit college Algebra & English
- 33 youth enrolled in spring semester dual credit college English

TYC Internal Mentor Effectiveness Study

- Tracked 725 mentor matches over 4 years
- 50.7% of youths without mentors were successful after release compared with 71.6% with mentors at TYC
- Results estimate that rearrests within 2 years for any offense are reduced by 12.4% when statistical controls are in place

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Internal Collaboration & Coordination

- Significant, uniform direct care staff training
- Multi-Disciplinary Team Case Planning
- Positive Achievement Change Tool
- Regular facility superintendent and other leadership meetings & video conferences
- Successful programs, practices, and outcomes regularly communicated to all agency staff

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External Collaboration & Coordination

Staff and volunteers participate in a number of task forces, committees, and planning initiatives, with the following partners:

- Other State Agencies and Local Governmental Entities
- CRCGs – Community Resource Coordination Groups
- Child Advocacy Organizations
- Faith-based Organizations
- Volunteer Councils Specifically Created for TYC Youth
- Youth Family Members
- Civic Clubs Offering Services and Assistance

Barriers

- Technology (different state agencies have different platforms for databases and data sharing)
- Lack of agreed common outcomes that indicate or uniformly measure youth success
- Post-release follow-up care (once TYC loses jurisdiction)

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Recommendations

- Adequate funding to ensure youth continue to have access to evidence-based prevention programs.
- Continued support as agencies work through technology challenges to share data.
- Enhance current tax incentives for corporations and private businesses to hire re-entering juvenile offenders and at-risk youth

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