



# John Howard Association of Illinois

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“CHARTING CHANGE”

PROGRESS IN THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

IYC HARRISBURG

MODELS FOR CHANGE INITIATIVE  
JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION  
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**The John Howard Association of Illinois** provides critical public oversight of the state's prisons, jails, and juvenile correctional facilities. As it has for more than a century, the Association promotes fair, humane, and effective sentencing and correctional policies, addresses inmate concerns, and provides Illinois citizens and decision-makers with information needed to improve criminal and juvenile justice.

**As a partner in the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Models for Change juvenile justice initiative**, the John Howard Association of Illinois has been tasked with observing first hand each of Illinois' eight Youth Centers, the secure correctional facilities operated by Illinois' new Department of Juvenile Justice, and to report on the Department's progress toward reforms consistent with Models for Change goals. Progress will be measured according to "performance measures" proposed for each Youth Center and for the Department overall.

**This report** describes one Youth Center and the performance measures proposed for it in 2007. The report also describes first steps that have been taken by the new Department of Juvenile Justice to improve conditions and operations, as well as particular obstacles associated with the Youth Center. Collectively, the reports on all eight of Illinois' Youth Centers are intended as a resource for policymakers, advocates, Models for Change partners, the media and the public who seek to understand secure confinement as it exists for youth in Illinois and the challenge of bringing about change in the ways that Illinois now incarcerates troubled youth. Individually and collectively these reports provide a base-line reference for annual updates on the Department's progress at each Youth Center and on periodic reports on issues such as education, staffing, disciplinary practices, reentry or "aftercare" for youth, and the Department's budgetary needs.

**This report draws upon the observations of volunteer citizen visitors** who through the John Howard Association provide public oversight of prisons, jails, and juvenile corrections facilities. These visits bring people from many walks of life into closed institutions where they can observe activities and conditions and speak with residents and employees.

This report was written by and under the direction of Malcolm C. Young with Patricia Connell and with contributions from John Howard Association of Illinois staff members Charles A. Fasano and Jannifer Nevilles.

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CHAPTER THREE: “CHARTING CHANGE”  
PROGRESS IN THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE  
IYC HARRISBURG

**IYC Harrisburg**

**IYC Harrisburg** was constructed as a facility for children with developmental disabilities. In the early 1980’s it was converted to a medium security level institution, opening as a Youth Center in July 1983.

IYC Harrisburg is about 300 miles south of Chicago, just short of 25 miles east of Interstate 57 on Illinois Highway 13. It lies on a gentle flat slope on the edge of the town of Harrisburg. The entrance from the highway leads to a parking lot on the front side of an administration building, which faces east. The administration building houses the Superintendent’s office, meeting rooms, visitor rooms, and common offices on one floor. The school which occupies two floors is connected to the administration building. Occupying a separate building on the west side of the administration building is the school’s gym, and in a smaller building, a greenhouse and beyond that the dining hall. On the other side of the administration building from the parking lot, to the south and west, over the crest of the ridge and therefore not visible from the parking lot, are about five large buildings and several smaller ones.

A long, wide straight sidewalk runs from the back of the Administration building to the west. Three nearly-identical large rectangular buildings which house living units are lined up along the sidewalk on its south side. These three buildings are beige colored brick, with small windows. A fourth large building, now unused, lies behind the middle of the three that face the sidewalk. The sidewalk comes to its end at the right front side of a fifth large building, which is the dining hall.

There are four living units in each of the large rectangular buildings. One unit, “Reception and Classification,” (“R & C”) holds boys who recently arrived and are undergoing review and classification prior to their assignment to a Youth Center and to programs. In addition to the R & C unit there are two substance abuse treatment units and a unit to which youth are assigned before being released on parole.

There are a few trees in the northeast corner of the compound and a few more around or behind a couple of the buildings. Otherwise the site is sparsely planted, covered mostly with close cut grass. Before the facility was transformed in 1983, these buildings may have been dormitories. But today, the high, double security fence topped by razor wire which stands out from almost any position inside or outside the compound unmistakably identifies the compound as a corrections facility. A double line of boys marching silently in blue uniforms and loose formation under the escort of two uniformed officers drives home that IYC Harrisburg is, indeed, like a prison and not a home for children with disabilities.

Harrisburg is the antithesis of a small youth correctional facility. It is in fact much a middle size adult prison. The living units, described below, are nothing like the “cottages” at some other Youth Centers. They were home to over 360 boys when we visited in September 2006; that number had been cut to fewer than 300 boys when we visited in October 2007. Each unit holds about 40 - 50 boys. Boys live two to a cell about 25 cells in a row along the side of the building.

Access to cells is through heavy metal doors facing a common area. Cells are very hard and secure, metal walled with fixed metal bunks and windows that admit little light. There is a narrow security glass window and a “chuckhole,” a slot through which food trays can be passed or into which a prisoner places his hands so that he may be handcuffed before the door is opened by a corrections officer, in each door.

In the common area round tables and metal or hard plastic seats are immovably secured to the floor. The walls are cinderblock and the floor linoleum square tiles, shined but hardly a cheering color. Across the common area from the boys’ cells there are shower rooms, offices and individual utility rooms. As the common area is in the middle, between rows of cells and rooms facing outward, it is without windows or natural light. The ceiling is some kind of white synthetic or wood material. The area is lit by fluorescent lights. At the time of our September 2006 visit, the walls in the living units, the hallways, and mess hall were painted a regulation military gray throughout. In fact, the entire Youth Center, outside the school, was gray.

## Performance Measures for IYC Harrisburg

### A. Physical Setting

*IYC Harrisburg severely challenges the goal of rendering Youth Centers into places that are physically appropriate to developing youth. It is, to be sure, currently intended for boys who are classified for maximum security. But if it has the design, ambiance and architecture of a medium to maximum security adult prison, and it is ever to be different, with the exception of the school IYC Harrisburg needs a lot of work including capital improvements.*

*The walk from the back of the Administration Building to the dining hall is bleak and exposed. On the left side of the sidewalk there are the three prison-like living units. On the right or north side there is a small cluster of utility buildings, the gymnasium and only bare grass. The walkway is fully exposed to the hot sun in summer and a biting wind in the winter.*

*The inside of the mess hall at the downhill end of the walk is a dull, gray and regimented assembly area which looks at best like a waiting area for troops in a soon-to-be-closed military base. The building contains a cafeteria-styled food line that lacks the grace of the worst high school cafeteria, and a sectioned mess area with hard, fixed tables and chairs. There is no color or decoration. The paint is spotty and dull. The only alteration in the gray of the walls are black on white printed lists of rules, the "don'ts" for boys waiting to eat.*

*The living units are like the inside of a jail or prison that would be considered harsh punishment for adults. Cell walls are painted gray and fixtures within them are made of gray metal. The rooms in Building B have windows which are 9" by 13," while the windows in Buildings C and D are 13" by 29." Not much light comes in most of the day.*

*At some point in the past, under the administration of the Illinois Department of Corrections, administrators approved construction of a "Resocialization" living unit in Unit 6. John Howard Association of Illinois staff and volunteers viewed this for the last time during their visit in September 2006. Boys who misbehaved were placed in Unit 6 as an alternative to being placed in segregation. But they would be held for longer periods of time than if they had been sent to disciplinary segregation. The most striking aspect of the "Resocialization" unit was steel cages built into the middle of the common area, approximately 12 by 20 feet on the floor. Boys in Unit 6 were only allowed out of their cells for an hour or two each day, and for that hour or two they were confined, singly, in these cages. The exercise equipment given them was a basketball, but no basket.*

*The "Resocialization" unit was as drab, metallic, and closed in as were the other units at IYC Harrisburg. But the doors to some half dozen or more cells in this unit had black rubber strips covering the gap between the cell door and the door frame, installed to protect Corrections Officers from urine or feces thrown at them by boys held inside the cells. These doors gave the unit the aura of a place designed to house, not young people, but animals.*

*By the time of our visit in October 2006, the Department had revamped Unit 6. The administration had removed the cages, repainted the walls with pastel colors, and replaced the*

*floor tiles. Someone had helped boys paint some individual signs over doors and small designs in a few places. The staff was excited to show us the change.*

*The elimination of the cages and of the “Resocialization” unit was remarkable mostly because of what had been replaced. While a step in the right direction, removing a cage that looked to be designed to hold a captive wild animal and repainting walls with pastels didn’t change the reality of steel prison cell doors, tiny windows, grim cells and metal walls in the living units or the institutional setting in the dining room. What had been accomplished, though an improvement only begins to mitigate against the absence of warmth and the atmosphere of a prison which, except at its school, flavors IYC Harrisburg.*

*The school is different. There, the approach taken with the same youth that live at IYC Harrisburg is strikingly different. The school has the benefit of more open space and a design that is less security-driven. It provides lots of room for student displays of creativity and expression.*

1. IYC Harrisburg needs to increase the amount of displayed art work, inspirational posters, notices of achievement and bulletin boards on the living units, and in confinement, treatment and mess halls, and increased displays in the school area.

*IYC Harrisburg Youth is starting at almost “zero.” And before artwork or designs created by boys at IYC Harrisburg can be posted or displayed, there need be arrangements to allow boys to make these things in the first place and supplies provided with which they can do so.*

*It may be useful to seek ideas from the “artist in residence” at IYC Warrenton or from an art teacher who might be known to someone at the school. It might be possible to find an individual or arts group within the town of Harrisburg or in the area that might, with Departmental staff, develop some larger plans for accomplishing this goal. As a **performance measure**, IYC Harrisburg will develop a program to brighten and lighten up living areas that will involve some outside talent or expertise. But then it is important to move on this, so another **performance measure** is to have areas for displays of boys’ art, awards, writings, or recognition of achievement in each unit, and to have them filled.*

2. Repainting walls in common areas in lighter, brighter and varied colors.

*Desperately needed, and as shown in Unit 6, guaranteed to produce a significant impact, repainting and lightly rehabbing common areas including the living areas is an important **performance measure**.*

*The Youth Facility has tried. Two units were repainted. But during our October 2006 visit, we learned that the one available painter had taken sick leave because of Carpel Tunnel syndrome. Painting was halted. But what difference does it make? The area to be painted, much of it with high ceilings, pipes, electrical conduits, and security systems, requires a team of painters with fast equipment if it is to be covered before the end of the next millennium. Meeting this performance measure requires that just such a team be hired and put to work.*

3. Taking steps to reduce noise or soften the appearance of the facility.

*The living units at IYC Harrisburg cannot be easily or inexpensively altered into a child-friendly residence, and it is difficult to see how it can be modified to provide a positive, encouraging environment for adolescent boys.*

*However, it would help to have furniture that is not worn, frayed, scratched and battered, as is the case now. Wooden desks are marred, missing pieces of trim and showing decades of use. Chairs are rickety. There is no discrimination toward the boys. On the units we observed, staff and boys have equally dismal furnishings. Living units and offices look as if they were furnished from a fire sale.*

*The mess hall is large, open, and, of course, gray. In some places the plaster wall is crumbling beneath the paint. Any serious improvement would probably require an innovative use of color, fabric, acoustical tiles, paints, lights and other materials to transform it into anything more the grimmest model of institutional food service. It might take a specialist engineer or designer to come up with moderate-cost modifications that would make the place more fit for adolescents.*

*One minimal **performance measure** would be met if the mess hall and living units were repainted.*

*Another minimal **performance measure** would be met if the furniture in living units and staff offices were replenished. One resource might be large corporations or law firms that are consolidating or ridding themselves of furnishings and for whom contributed goods might stand as a tax deduction.*

*Another **performance measure** would be met if the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice retained an architect who could develop cost-effective plans for rehabilitation and for techniques which might provide light, color, and warmth to this Youth Center. It is possible that such plans are contained in the still unreleased “Master Plan.”*

4. Meals and food service

*While taking the long walk from the administration building to the mess hall at the beginning of the September 2006 visit, a John Howard Association representative asked his escort, a Youth Supervisor, what the leading problems were. The escort’s immediate answer was: “Food. The food is terrible!”*

*Boys agreed. After taking one meal, so did the John Howard Association visitors. So did the Superintendents. And so did the food services manager, newly placed on the job with a charter from the Superintendent to improve the quality of food.*

*Several reasons were given for the “uninspired” quality of meals served at IYC Harrisburg. It is not the menu, which is supposed to be the same at all Youth Centers.<sup>1</sup> One explanation given for*

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<sup>1</sup> *Adult and young inmates interviewed by the John Howard Association visitors often claim that “meat is only being served today because you are here,” but the fact is menus are predetermined six months or more in advance and it is the same for both the Illinois Department of Corrections and Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice statewide.*

*the poor quality of the food was the Youth Center's location in the state. But, IYC Murphysboro which serves up meals that are well received by staff and most youth is only fifty miles west, on the other side of Interstate 57.*

*During our visit in October 2006, there were improvements and we found out some of the differences between the two Youth Centers. Apparently smaller Youth Centers can make use of local or private food distributed by private companies or, as in the case of IYC Harrisburg, purchasing government surplus food, which may or may not impact the quality or appearance. Individual kitchens use spices and herbs differently. There is simply a difference in the way different crews prepare meals. In addition, it may be that the challenge of preparing meals for the much larger number of boys at IYC Harrisburg in an older kitchen is greater than at smaller or newer facilities. If so, a planned remodeling of IYC Harrisburg's kitchen in 2008, with new and safer steam ovens installed, may help to improve food service. At Harrisburg, successful remodeling of its aged kitchen will satisfy a **performance measure**.*

*However the kitchen remodeling impacts food service, at IYC Harrisburg an important overall **performance measure** will be met if the food service is notably improved over the next year and beyond.*

*For the Department, one **performance measure** might be to consult with a dietary and nutritional expert to determine how well the adult menu (identical to that used for the Illinois Department of Corrections, save for the addition of milk) meets the needs of youth, both boys and girls.*

*A third **performance measure** would be to bring Youth Center cooks together to discuss recipes, food preparation methods, the state menu, and ideas on employing youth in kitchens or in providing them training and academic or vocational training credits at the same time.*

*Finally, at IYC Harrisburg, where talk in the lines moving to the dining room and in the dining room itself is prohibited, one **performance measure** will be met by evaluating and possibly modifying its rather rigid "no talk" rule to gain a more social experience during meals.*

5. Increasing and maintaining landscaping efforts and the development of recreational fields.

*IYC Harrisburg has a fair portion of unused land within the security fence line, but it would take a trained eye or a survey to determine how much of it is sufficiently level or could be used for recreational purposes. No trained eye is needed to observe that the property is nearly devoid of any planting of any kind, however.*

*Although the Youth Center has a greenhouse and a horticultural program, there is little evidence of the program within the facility's fences. Given the success of horticultural program at Pere Marquette, IYC Harrisburg could consider making use of volunteers and the program to replant the grounds within and without the security perimeter. Shrubs, flower beds, and occasional trees could ease the drab, industrial or prison character of the compound.*

*As a performance measures, the administration at IYC Harrisburg should consider implementing a program of planting and complete a survey of both the land and of needs, thereafter to install one or more outdoor recreational playing fields.*

## **B. Youth at Facility; Classification**

1. Can the facility document the demographic profile and delinquency history of youth at the facility, and is documentation consistent with that provided by other Youth Centers?

*The administration at the facility was able to provide us with the youth profile for the institution. This document provides the overall number and percentages of boys by age, race, type of commitment, class of offense, committing county, mental health level, run risk and gang affiliation. This information is identical to that available at other DJJ facilities. Unfortunately, this data cannot be disaggregated or easily manipulated by the facility staff.*

2. Criteria, and consistency of use thereof, by which the suitability of placement at IYC Harrisburg is determined.

*IYC Harrisburg is used for both medium and maximum-security classified youth. They are separated into different living units and by the color of the shirts they are assigned, blue for medium security, green for maximum security. There are some modest benefits to the lower classification, including more complete access to the school and some additional privileges such as later bed times, but the housing and basic security conditions are identical for both classifications of youth.*

*At the time of our visit in September 2006 there were more than 360 boys including two units of sex offenders at Harrisburg, making it the largest of the Youth Centers. By May 2007, the new Department had intentionally reduced the population to about 290 in part by the transfer of all sex offenders to IYC Kewanee. One result of the reduction has been the closing of two housing units.*

*IYC Harrisburg is the Reception and Classification Center for boys who enter DJJ from the southern part of the state. Youth in R and C are housed separate from the rest of the population in two units. The R and C process which typically takes about two weeks includes health and mental health screening, an assessment of the youth's need for substance abuse treatment or counseling, and an assessment of other treatment needs. Once these activities have been completed the youth is assigned to a "permanent" institution. The assignment can be to any of the six DJJ facilities for boys although it has been reported that a large number of the youth remain at Harrisburg or are sent to Murphysboro. It is not clear whether this is because of the Department's push to regionalize the placement of youth, or whether it is because these institutions best fit the youth's need for services. It was also reported to us that there are a large number of parole violators assigned to IYC Harrisburg.*

*A performance measure for IYC Harrisburg will be a review of the assignment criteria and a reconsideration of the level or seriousness of the offense, the appropriateness of programming, and of the role of location within the state as factors in assigning boys to IYC Harrisburg. This review will particularly address the number of parole violators and whether their numbers justify establishing a program similar to the Parole Readjustment Unit found at Joliet. The same*

*review might address possible changes in the assignment of both maximum and medium security boys to IYC Harrisburg and whether classification as a medium security facility only might be advantageous and possible.*

3. Monitoring classification and assignment of youth by race and ethnicity.

*IYC Harrisburg is basically a maximum security Youth Center with heavy adult correctional overtones. Geographically it serves as a counterpart to IYC Joliet, far to the north. The two Youth Centers have different programs, so that geographic location cannot be the sole basis for assignment to one or another of the two facilities. In general, IYC Harrisburg might serve the state's southern counties and IYC Joliet those to the north, although the dividing line is given as Route 80 which runs just south of Chicago and is still well north in the state because of Chicago's large contribution to the Department's overall population.*

*As reported elsewhere, the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice took over classification and assignment of youth from the Illinois Department of Corrections in early 2007. Along with downsizing Harrisburg, the Department has attempted to address classification issues, including a practice charged against the old Illinois Department of Corrections, of classifying more youth than necessary as maximum security because of the number of open beds in Youth Centers with that classification.*

*A **performance measure** that is particularly relevant to IYC Harrisburg will be satisfied as the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice balances the program offerings, security needs, treatment needs, and location of youth in making rational, criteria-based classifications and assignments of youth, particularly between the boy's Youth Centers of St. Charles, Joliet and Harrisburg.*

**C. Behavior Management and Discipline**

*At IYC Harrisburg there are major differences in the way boys are treated between the school and within the rest of the Youth Center. The remarks in this section apply to the treatment of boys outside the school. Behavior management, discipline, awards and recognition at the school will be described in Section F, below.*

1. Modifying behavior management and institutionalizing balance and restorative justice

*As is true at all Youth Centers, IYC Harrisburg is ultimately run to comport with security requirements set forth by regulation, and as security needs are perceived by supervisors and staff. Historically, security has played a very dominant role in determining practices and policies at IYC Harrisburg, and many Youth Supervisors (the formal title for line security staff) strongly identify with that role. Visitors were told that many security staff do not want to do anything with boys at the Youth Center except to preserve order. The "Resocialization" unit exemplified this approach: boys who were considered "hard cases" were sent here after having served a period of confinement for such offenses as staff assaults. Once on the unit the boy spent a minimum of three weeks confined to cells, out only for one hour a day which was spent in the day room "cage," and to a class taught to four youth from the same unit one day a week, then were allowed to attend regular school for two weeks, and then to return to the regular population. No particular counseling or therapy was necessarily provided; boys our visitors*

*spoke with described sitting in their cells until lunch, which was delivered through the “chuckhole” in the cell, and then taking their hour in the “cage,” as pretty much the daily routine.*

*At the time of our September 2006 visit, the new Department had installed a new temporary Superintendent, William Kilquist, (previously Superintendent at IYC Murphysboro) to bring about change. One change was the removal of the cages and the “Reorientation Unit;” another was to strive to improve food.*

*Still, at the time of our October 2007 visit, the environment for boys IYC Harrisburg remained relatively restrictive, even constrictive. Signs, almost the only decorations posted, spell out the rules: there is to be no talking in line, no shouting on the playing fields, and no talking in the mess hall. Keeping in mind that it is IYC Murphysboro that is operated as a quasi-military boot camp, IYC Harrisburg is more regimented in ways that make a difference. For example, at Harrisburg, boys are “marched” in silent double lines between buildings and there is no free movement, in contrast to the participatory marching (that is, sometimes to cadences) and unaccompanied individual movement which, as we observed, sometimes leads to conversational encounters between Youth Supervisors and cadets at Murphysboro. In combination with the prison design of the place, IYC Harrisburg’s security rules impose an unnatural, depressing behavior on boys which, along with hours of semi- isolation behind steel cell doors, cannot do much to help teach communications or encourage expression. Overall, there is a definite lack of positive reinforcement, encouragement, and certainly no evidence that restorative justice principles are being considered or even known about in much of the Youth Center and by security staff at IYC Harrisburg.*

*Security staff members have resisted change that has been imposed from above. The union for Youth Supervisors at IYC Harrisburg sharply and publicly opposed taking the cages out of Unit 6 and the requirements imposed by the new Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice to reduce the use of confinement. Union representatives held press conferences highlighting a claimed increase in violence against staff which, it was said, resulted from the change in policies. From what the John Howard Association’s visitors observed, while it is true that Unit 6 was basically deconstructed and that the use of confinement decreased between our visit in September 2006 and our visit in October 2007, there had not, in October 2007, been a real change in “culture.” A number of Youth Supervisors had not accepted the new Department’s policies. On the other hand, and what is promising, some Youth Supervisors see the advantage of change. And, we observed, Counselors are motivated to make change.*

*The exceptions to the predominant attitudes at IYC Harrisburg are important. Some of the Counselors on several units take an entirely different approach to boys than do some security staff. They use rewards, engage in discussion, provide encouragement and try to understand the boys they work with. During our visits, Counselors described individual boys with a great deal of detailed knowledge and empathy for the troubled backgrounds and the difficulties they had overcome or were trying to work with. Nor are all security staff members rigid and authoritarian. On one unit, Youth Supervisors stated their agreement with a less rigid, more therapeutic approach to discipline and the overall treatment of boys.*

*It was thus clear that there are different and inconsistent approaches to discipline and behavior modification at IYC Harrisburg, part a difference of philosophy and part the result of changes that have been requested but are only begrudgingly being put into place.*

*Resistance to change from what are considered the traditional approaches to discipline at IYC Harrisburg may be reduced by peer counseling and a discussion of what, in lieu of traditional adult correctional measures, might be done to decrease threats or violence among the boys who are incarcerated at IYC Harrisburg.*

*Satisfying the training needs at IYC Harrisburg will be one of the more demanding **performance measures** for the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. IYC Harrisburg needs a training effort that amounts to indoctrination for some staff into the Department's overall approach to discipline and behavioral management strategies. This training effort has to successfully challenge past practices and to provide resistant Youth Supervisors and some Counselors with substitutes for the use of strict control, ticket writing, and extensive use of confinement upon which they have relied.*

*Training and indoctrination at IYC Harrisburg will likely be most successful if the several components now at the Youth Center --- school, counselor, program staff, and security staff--- are brought into it as planners and participants. Right now there must be great inconsistencies in what boys experience by way of discipline and behavior modification in the school, from Counselors on some units, and from security staff that prefer the use of confinement and the "Resocialization" approach on the other hand.*

*The John Howard Association of Illinois suggests that some of the resources for training, indeed for helping accomplish "culture change," are within the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. Counselors and some Youth Supervisors at IYC Harrisburg, and Youth Supervisors and Counselors at several other facilities have gone a long way toward introducing different methods of behavior modification and limiting the use of negative reinforcements such as confinement. Much could be accomplished with a training program that relies upon peer consultation and information exchanges between staff. But while this approach may be sufficient to accomplish needed change at some of the smaller Youth Centers, the magnitude of change at IYC Harrisburg and the sheer size of the institution will require effective, strong leadership, designated staff time for strategic planning and training, and outside resources devoted to formal or informal training.*

## 2. Increases in awards and recognition for good behavior.

*Rewards and recognitions have not been a major part of the program at IYC Harrisburg outside the school and some programs and special units.<sup>2</sup> But, while there is still no facility-wide program promoting positive reinforcements, between our visit in September 2006 and October*

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<sup>2</sup> Some might argue that the reduction in restrictions imposed on boys who were placed into the "Resocialization" program on Unit 6 is a system of "positive rewards," but we would agree with staff who told us that the Youth Center staff need to learn to reward positive behavior that is not the product of coercion or punishment and to ignore or not "reward" with attention negative behavior, even if the short term result is some increased disruption in the operation of the Youth Center.

*2007 the staff who value awards and positive reinforcements appeared to be slightly encouraged by the direction indicated by the new Department, and are looking to more guidance from Departmental leadership in this area.*

*Some of the Counselors and security staff told John Howard Association of Illinois visitors that in their opinion there has been an increase in acting out and misbehavior since the use of confinement has been reduced. The reason given is that staff on most units are not providing positive reinforcement for good behavior but are, through verbal remonstrations and outbursts (example: "Shut up, you're talking too much!") providing the boys who engage in negative behavior with attention, when ignoring the same behavior might produce better results.*

*A measure of performance for coming years would include IYC Harrisburg's widespread and consistent use of positive awards, encouragement, and support for boys in every part of the Youth Center.*

3. Modifications to IYC Harrisburg's disciplinary system and policies to protect staff from violence or assaults by youth.

*The difference between the new Department's goals for disciplining youth and for means other than punishment to safeguard staff, and the practices in place, and desired by some staff to be kept in place, are greater at IYC Harrisburg than at any other Youth Center.*

*In September 2006, we found 28 youth in confinement on charges of fighting, assault, "intimidations and threats," contraband, and "insolence." Thirteen were to be "confined" for more than ten days; only eight were being "confined" for less than a week and the remaining 7 had not yet had their period of confinement set.*

*In October 2007 there were only 21 boys in confinement and only four of them had originally gotten a period of confinement longer than 10 days. Somewhat troubling, however, was the fact that 2 youth received an additional 7 days of confinement for "insolence in confinement." We also know that many youth will subsequently have their time in confinement cut after its initial imposition, and this is reflected in the overall reports of confinement usage at each facility. At IYC Harrisburg there were 2749 days of confinement imposed and served in October 2006. By September 2007 that number had dropped to 1493, even though the actual number of occurrences had risen slightly from 363 to 378.*

*The employee's union has made its strongest complaints concerning the Department's directives on the use of confinement at or about IYC Harrisburg. It held press conferences and issued press releases which attributed incidents of alleged violence against staff to the closing of Unit 6's "Resocialization" program. Then, months before our October 2006 visit, two youth attacked two teachers at the school, and, again, union representatives complained to the media and legislators that these events were the result of a loss of discipline and control tied to a reduction in confinement and the closing of the "Resocialization" unit.*

*Discussions with union representatives at IYC Harrisburg yield a slightly more nuanced description of the differences that exist between staff and administration. Line staff members accurately perceive that the Administration wants to increase the emphasis on rewards for*

*positive behavior over discipline for negative behavior. Part of the objection from some line staff is that the Administration's approach, and public perceptions, fail to account for the seriousness of the crimes which boys at Harrisburg have committed. They fear loss of control of these boys' behavior. Union representatives shared some of the administration's criticism of the "Resocialization" unit at the time it was closed. They described the unit as having had a progressive beginning and a positive impact as originally designed and operated by a skilled mental health professional. Under the direction of a less-capable individual, the unit had in recent years become little more than "long term confinement." According to this opinion, the better step would have been to correct the program's operation, not abandon it. Similarly, line staff feel that confinement needs be in place as a response to any fighting among youth, that the "no talking" rules in lines and at the mess hall are important security measures which allow more "control," and that it was important to have put boys in jump suits before family visits. The complaint is both about changes and that they were not discussed first with staff.*

*Some staff, trained and experienced in adult corrections practices which the new Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice is chartered to change will be unable to adjust to the Department's intentions and its directives regarding the decreased use of confinement, and to operate a less controlling environment for boys.<sup>3</sup>*

*But in order to draw the most from the large majority of staff who will remain at IYC Harrisburg, a critical **performance measure** will be the Department's formal and informal training which will include demonstrations or discussions among Counselors and educators at IYC Harrisburg and also with peer staff from other youth centers. This training will address the policies on confinement and other changes the Department wants to achieve. Training can also be used to introduce the concept of restorative justice principals and their application to discipline and behavior modification for youth.*

*Satisfying this and the **performance measure** mentioned in Section C-1., above, will take considerable effort and commitment. At IYC Harrisburg the training effort will have to challenge not only past practices and engage skeptical Youth Supervisors in understanding the substitutes for strict regimen, control, and extensive use of confinement which the Department expects them to employ. What is needed particularly at IYC Harrisburg is that staff be given an opportunity to learn what the alternatives are to the practices which they have become used to relying upon and which the new Department has required them to end.*

#### 4. Conditions on the Confinement Unit

*The confinement unit at IYC Harrisburg consists of one housing unit. It has a security station that is always staffed, and youth are given limited personal materials while in confinement. Teachers come to the unit to provide class room instruction for a few boys at a time. The unit appears not much different than the other housing units, all of which are built with security utmost in mind. The small cell door windows make it difficult to monitor activity without walking up to and peering into the cell itself. When there are no lights on within the cell, it is difficult to see the youth inside.*

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<sup>3</sup> At the time of our October 2007 visit, union representatives advised that 14 staff members desired to transfer to the Illinois Department of Corrections.

5. Chemical and waist-belt restraints and shackles

*At IYC Harrisburg chemical restraints (pepper spray) and body restraints are on hand for use.*

*There appears to have been a decline in any use of chemical restraints. There was not, at the time of our September 2007 visit, a new written policy on use and availability of chemical and physical restraints. For some security staff at IYC Harrisburg and other Youth Centers, these policies are contentious issues.*

**Performance measures** in this area will be met when the Department develops a reasoned, standards and “best practices” driven policy governing the use of chemical and waist-belt restraints.

*A second performance measure will be met with the successful implementation of that policy at each Youth Center.*

6. Adoption and distribution of new policies for staff and youth.

*IYC Harrisburg has not updated the written policies in place for boys to read either while in the Receiving and Classification Unit or when they are assigned to general population or one of the programs at the Youth Center. The language in program overviews and materials prepared for youth which the visiting teams have seen appear to be on language levels suitable for a well-read high school student or an adult and may not be clearly understandable for the large portion of the population with special education needs, students with IEP’s (Individual Educational Plans), or who read well below grade level.*

*A performance measure will be met when the Department and Youth Centers have prepared and published updated policies and manuals for youth written to be clearly understandable and, if merited by numbers of non-English speaking youth, available in other languages than English.*

D. Restorative Justice

*As at all Youth Centers, there was virtually no familiarity with the term “Restorative Justice” among staff at almost any level at IYC Harrisburg outside of the school. There has been no formal introduction or training on Restorative Justice Principles as of our visits in 2007, and outside the school there is almost no understanding of the potential for application of Restorative Justice Principles at IYC Harrisburg. Consequently, there has been very little movement to satisfy **performance measures** related to implementing restorative justice as a guiding principle at the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice.*

*The following performance measures apply to IYC Harrisburg as they do to all Youth Centers at this time:*

1. *Establishment of a program to train staff and design and incorporate a program to orient boys into a restorative justice approach to resolving disputes and correcting for past wrongs.*

2. *Review methods now in place to resolve disputes and impose sanctions on boys at IYC Harrisburg with Restorative Justice practitioners, giving consideration to adding “courts,” “circles” or “peer panels” and to otherwise incorporating restorative justice principles.*
3. *Change disciplinary procedures and facility rules to provide for restorative justice-based responses to rule violations and disputes among boys.*
4. *Monitor and review incident reports with a restorative justice practitioner; consider restorative justice responses to typical incidents, confer and discuss with staff, and change policies to encourage those responses.*
5. *With restorative justice professionals, develop a program to encourage and facilitate interactions between boys and crime victims guided by restorative justice principles in cases where there is an identifiable victim and where interaction is likely to be constructive for the boy.*

*While some line staff at IYC Harrisburg seem less receptive to modifying past approaches to discipline and behavior modification than do staff at other Youth Centers, the principal and staff at the school have explored application of restorative justice principles, see Sec. \_\_\_\_\_ below. Our recommendation and a **performance measure** for IYC Harrisburg, repeated from Sec. \_\_\_\_\_, above, is that Departmental and Youth Center leadership try to draw upon, and expand, the experience on the school side to the changes in practices it desires for staff on the residential and program side of the facility.*

#### **E. Community and Family Contact**

*Although IYC Harrisburg is supposed to draw boys committed to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice from the southern portion of the state, in essence this includes the entire state below Interstate Route 80 which runs east and west through Joliet, not far from Chicago. A large number of boys are more than 100 miles from homes to which public transportation is limited. For this and other reasons, many boys receive few family visits and contact between family and staff are limited.*

##### 1. Steps to increase parent contact

*A **performance measure** will be met when staff members have reviewed the form and nature of information sent parents to assure openness, cultural fit, and that communications are as effective as possible. Additionally, consideration could be given to identifying boys during orientation for which family involvement, communications, or support might be most helpful to his success in the program. For these boys, special or targeted and continuing outreach to parents might have significant benefits.*

*A second **performance measure** will be met when staff members have given careful and creative consideration to ways to increase effective communications with parents, guardians or*

*responsible family members at the outset of the program as an important part of developing aftercare (see below).*

2. Seek parent's ideas on increasing visiting

*As of our visit in October 2007, the administration had not formally surveyed or inquired of parents about ways to increase their participation in their son's program. This step would contribute to the careful and creative review of ways to increase communications with and participation by family members, guardians and responsible family members.*

3. Flexibility in admitting boy's visitors

*This **performance measure** appears to be met. The administration does not impose strict hour requirements on visitors.*

4. Increasing the availability of transportation for family visitors

*As of our visit in October 2007, neither the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice nor Youth Center administrations had taken steps to increase the availability of transportation for family visitors to any Youth Center. A **performance measure** for the Department would be met by reviewing a range of steps which might make travel to Youth Centers easier and affordable, including subsidized busses, vans between rail stations and facilities, and cooperative arrangements with local motels or restaurants.*

5. Activities for boys and visitors.

*As of October 2007 few activities are available for visitors and boys together. A **performance measure** would be met if the Youth Center created a program which allowed joint or competitive athletic activity observed by visitors, an opportunity to show academic achievement, or other ways in which time might be spent in some activity beyond sitting in a visiting room, at least for medium if not maximum security residents.*

6. Surrogate or volunteer visiting program for boys who do not receive visits.

*As of October 2007, there was no program involving 'surrogate' or volunteer visitors for the boys who receive no visits.*

7. Increased telephone access to parents, family or guardians.

*While there are no exceptional restrictions on telephone calls made, collect, from IYC Harrisburg, one solid **performance indicator** would be a policy allowing more calls, made at lower cost, and integrated into reentry and aftercare strategies.*

F. **Education**

*The school at IYC Harrisburg is exceptional among the schools at all Youth Centers. While not over-staffed --- there were vacant teaching positions during our visits in 2006 and 2007, and no secretarial or support staff --- compared to other youth facilities it is relatively richly staffed*

*with teachers in all academic areas, special education, and college-level instructors teaching computer and business classes. There is at least one program that brings in tutors for extra help and to augment class room teaching. The principal, Ms. Melva Clarida, adroitly draws upon several grant and special funding programs to support the school's relatively rich mix of staffing and programs. One of these, the Macon Special Education program, seems to have a greater role than at other Youth Centers; as far as we observed, this is the only school that draws upon AmeriCorp Volunteers and a state institution of higher learning, Southeastern Illinois College in Harrisburg, for tutoring and college-level classes, respectively.*

*The school appears fairly well equipped. There are teacher and administrative areas and a number of classrooms with and without computers. There are a number of posters and items hung on walls which are other colors than gray. There is some spontaneity to the organization of the place, and teachers and students move about with apparent ease. Security staff members are not normally stationed in the school's classrooms or hallways.*

*The school's approach to control, discipline and behavior modification is markedly different than the approach taken within the rest of the facility. At the time of our September 2006 visit, the principal had already introduced school staff to Balanced and Restorative Justice ("BARJ"). Some teachers have been trained in Victim-Offender Reconciliation Programming ("VORP"). At this time, no one outside the school had explained BARJ or the direction which the new Department planned to take regarding discipline and behavior modification to security or other staff. At the time of our October 2007 visit, the principal reported that the school was employing "a few BARJ practices" such as "circle" mediation, and that she would like to see some form of victim-offender reconciliation occur. She was just preparing to attend a statewide conference in Springfield, Connecting the Pathways, where she anticipated participating in a BARJ educational program. Apparently no other Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice staff had been invited to the BARJ sessions. As far as we have observed, the school at Harrisburg has engaged further with restorative justice than any other Youth Facility or component within the Department.*

*Students in classes we observed, including a class for special education students with severe limitations, appeared engaged with their teachers and intent on work or projects. They conversed readily with visitors. They acted courteously and respectfully to the school staff. Some students stated that this was the best school they had attended.<sup>4</sup> Asked what he most wanted at the school, one student replied that he hoped for a secretary so that the staff did not have to do so much filing and paperwork.*

*The difference between atmosphere and attitudes in the school and the rest of the facility was palpable. Classes ended during our visit in October 2006. Students put their papers away and moved from classroom to the hallway. There they reassembled to move to their living units. The regrouped students then entered a "holding area," a gray room overseen by the security staff who would escort the residents, in silence, to their units and cells. As the students entered, a Youth Supervisor commanded that they line up and to keep quiet. The faces of these boys changed; they lost expression, they looked sullen; eyes dropped and jaws tightened. Resentment crept around the corners of some of their faces. In a matter of a few minutes, these boys visibly*

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<sup>4</sup> This comment is fairly frequently made by students at several of the state's Youth Centers.

*transformed from boys who were students to boys who looked like and were treated as inmates in a very gray prison.*

### 1. Teaching and school staff

*While the teaching staff at IYC Harrisburg is more complete than at other Youth Centers, it faces unique demands, some of them artificially imposed. The Youth Center operates two different drug treatment programs and also houses medium and maximum security youth. Federally-imposed regulations for the drug programs and Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice requirements for managing mixed maximum and medium security inmates requires separation of youth. This results in a need for additional and separate classrooms and more teachers per student than at some other Youth Centers. The Department should concentrate on filling the 3-4 vacant teaching positions and maintain levels of special educational teaching positions and tutoring slots now at the Youth Center.*

*A recommended departmental **performance measure** would be satisfied if the Department systemically explored the possibility of expanding staffing at other Youth Centers through similar grant programs and outside funding sources that the principal has successfully brought to the her school at IYC Harrisburg.<sup>5</sup> Another **performance measure** would be met if the Department modeled college level programs at other Youth Centers after the program in place at IYC Harrisburg.*

*School staff recommended more classes that focus on the needs of boys as they return to the community. The school reports that a number of boys have IQ's in the 50 - 60 range and a larger number are in the 70's. For these boys, a necessary and realistic goal is to achieve basic functional literacy during their stay at IYC Harrisburg.*

*School administrators struggle to deal with the limitations imposed by the length of stay for boys at IYC Harrisburg, which on average is four months.<sup>6</sup> This is a short period of time in which to correct deficiencies and provide basic skills to boys most of whom have had academic difficulties throughout their life.*

### 2. Library and related educational facilities

*The library at IYC Harrisburg appears fairly well supplied through the efforts of teachers and staff.*

## G. Vocational, Social Skills Training and Group Programming

*IYC Harrisburg has a deficiency in programming, as detailed in this section, below. A contributing factor to this is a lack of an assistant superintendent for programs.*

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<sup>5</sup> We can hope that the recent appointment of a Superintendent for School District 428 which oversees all Youth Center schools might result in a systematic effort to obtain outside support for schools and academic programs; if so, the school and principal at IYC Harrisburg will provide a good model for an aggressive and successful campaign to attract outside support.

<sup>6</sup> Noting that IYC Harrisburg was described as a "feeder" for IYC Murphysboro, one possible solution might be to shorten the delay in transferring boys if they are to go to Murphysboro or to develop a coordinated academic program so that what is commenced at IYC Harrisburg might be continued at a second Youth Center.

1. Job training and vocational programs

*IYC Harrisburg has no true job training program. The school offers college-level programs leading to certificates in computer technology and business skills. It has vocational programs in fast food service, horticulture and commercial custodial. The school also concentrates on literacy and, in that sense, improving job readiness.*

*A **performance measure** for IYC Harrisburg would be satisfied by a review of its current and potential vocational programming and by the establishment of vocational training or programming of sufficient scope to reach as many boys as are in need of, and capable of learning from, the programs that will be established.*

2. Job Placement Programs

*There are no dedicated job placement services, links or programs at IYC Harrisburg. Boys in medium security can work jobs, such as in the kitchen and mess hall. Boys in maximum security are not permitted to work on jobs. Jobs are functional and paid, but are not considered for any value they might have for building skills or preparing for job readiness. There is a general program designed to help boys prepare for release on parole which is described below, in Sec. \_\_\_\_\_.*

*A **performance measure** at IYC Harrisburg would be satisfied by a review of job placement programs linked to vocational training and educational accomplishments and incorporated into an aftercare or “reentry” program.*

3. Anger management, parenting, literacy, violence interruption and other group programming.

*There is little group programming for boys at IYC Harrisburg. However, between the September 2006 and October 2007 visits, the Youth Center installed an anger management program, consisting of two contractual mental health professionals. One is assigned to maximum, the other to medium security units.*

*Between 2006 and 2007 the facility also created a special pre-release unit for youth who are within three months of release. The youth spend one half of each day for two weeks in groups which contain anger management, life skills, self esteem and drug education curricula. With these two exceptions, there is minimal anger management, parenting, literacy or violence prevention counseling or programs at IYC Harrisburg.*

*A **performance measure** at IYC Harrisburg would be satisfied by an administrative review of anger management, parenting, literacy, violence interruption and other group programming needs, followed by an introduction of one or more programs designed to meet needs.*

4. Community Work Projects and other activities outside the security perimeter

*There is no provision for community work projects or other activities outside the security perimeter at IYC Harrisburg.*

*A **performance measure** would be satisfied by a review of the necessity of prohibiting outside work programs or other activities for boys at IYC Harrisburg, or of continuing to prohibit them only for boys who are classified as maximum security risks.*

*The impact of participation in work details on boys in custody is definitely positive. At the few Youth Centers that permit outside work details, youth are reported to participate enthusiastically. Illinois has many parks, roadsides, monuments and historical locations, some near Harrisburg, which could be cleaned up or rebuilt by supervised work details, and it suffers from seasonal storms and storm damage that must be repaired.*

*As a **performance measure** for both IYC Harrisburg and the Department, activities outside the secure perimeter of IYC facilities should be designed, introduced system-wide, expanded, and publicized. These activities should serve vocational training goals when possible, can reflect restorative justice principles, and can be considered a part of reentry or aftercare programming.*

## **H. Health Services**

*As at other Youth Centers, it appears that there have been no professional health services staffing review for IYC Harrisburg. Medical services seem to have been scaled according to past experience minus some reductions, which appears the case at most Youth Facilities. The Center has an adequate infirmary. It sends youth who become severely ill or injured to a local hospital.*

1. Full time nursing coverage and number of hours a physician, psychiatrist or mental health supervisor are on the grounds, and applied policy for mental health treatment or services for youth at this Center.

*Medical staff included, in 2007: four nurses on two shifts, with one nurse on call for overnight needs; one medical doctor on contract 10 hours a week; a dentist and a dental assistant under contract for 20 hour a week each; a psychiatrist under contract for 12 hours per week and a second expected to start to work an additional 6 - 7 hours, and a newly started “telepsychiatry” program which allows a video conference arrangement between a psychiatrist and a youth. The latter innovation is not favored by medical personnel or administrative staff. There are four Social Workers to work with boys and four psychologists, one of whom works part time. Overall, medical and mental health staff seem small compared to the size of the population, there is no full 24 hour on-sight medical presence, and some medical staff were, at the time of our visit, more promised than present.*

*A **performance measure** for IYC Harrisburg will be to promptly assess the need for additional or differently-skilled medical and mental health staff, including the advisability of 24 hour medical presence at the Youth Center.*

2. Number of hours a dentist and dental technician are on the grounds, and the applied policy for prophylactic cleaning and dental care for youth at this Center.

*IYC Harrisburg has the services of both a dentist and dental assistant for 20 hours each week. All boys see a dentist for cleaning and an examination while in Reception and Classification. Those who remain get dental cleanings twice each year and such other dental care as they need. There appears to be sufficient services to meet the requirements of providing this service.*

*A **performance measure** for IYC Harrisburg will be to promptly assess the need for dental care including prophylaxis, given the length of stay and the dental needs of boys who are placed at IYC Harrisburg.*

3. Family participation in mental health, counseling or treatment sessions with boys.

*As at other Youth Centers, there has been no formal effort to consistently involve families in counseling or treatment that is provided boys at IYC Harrisburg. A **performance measure** would be satisfied by preparation of a plan to systematically engage families in therapy, counseling or the youth's drug treatment, including efforts to accommodate schedules and the demands of travel that participation entails for many families. It needs to be said that for some boys at this and other Youth Centers, families or even a responsible adult are not available.*

4. Continuation of counseling and treatment for youth once they have left the Youth Center.

*As at other Youth Centers, there has been almost no formal follow through with the counseling or treatment that is provided boys at IYC Harrisburg once they are released from the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. Staff at the Youth Center recognize that the absence of follow-through is likely responsible for boys' failure on parole.*

*A **performance measure** for both IYC Harrisburg and the Department will be establishment of an integrated pre-release program that coordinates the youth's post-release needs with community services and placement as a necessary component of aftercare.*

## I. Recreation

*Recreation and sports at IYC Harrisburg are, at best, limited and circumscribed.*

1. Leisure Time Activity Specialists

*IYC Harrisburg has only one Leisure Time Activity Specialist. The consequences of this staffing deficiency are significant. Recreational activities for boys at IYC Harrisburg are extremely limited. Asked about the role that more LTA's would play, visitors were told that, following union interpretation of the collective bargaining agreements in force, security staff will take boys to play basketball in the gym or baseball on the outside field, but they won't set up for a softball tournament or work to implement a recreational schedule. They won't set up the table for pool. They take boys out for sports on a "when they can" basis.*

*There is legitimacy to the division of labor. Planning tournaments and arranging athletic events at a facility with 300 boys is a significant responsibility. When Youth Centers have Leisure Time Activity Specialists who can arrange and supervise recreational activities, the security staff can use some of the time for paperwork, consultation, or simply a break in routine. The shortage of Leisure Time Activity Specialists at IYC Harrisburg short changes boys and security staff.*

*IYC Harrisburg will satisfy a **performance measure** when it has at least 2-3 more Leisure Time Activity Specialists on staff in both LTA-2 and LTA-4 grades.*

## 2. Competitive athletics and activities

*Due in part to the shortage of recreational staff, boys at IYC Harrisburg are engaged in “informal” recreational activities only about three times a week.*

*IYC Harrisburg will satisfy a **performance measure** when it is sufficiently staffed and equipped to provide boys in both medium and maximum security organized indoor and outdoor recreation at least five days a week for at least two hours a day. This is less time for recreation than is provided at IYC Murphysboro, where boys living in open dormitories and otherwise engaged socially for most of their day. Boys at IYC Harrisburg are, of course, held in their double cells as much as a half-day or more, with far less opportunity for social engagement.*

## 3. Outdoor and indoor recreational areas

*The grounds within the perimeter wire at IYC Harrisburg are open but partially sloping. There is one softball field, 2 outdoor basketball courts and a volleyball court. There is a roadway around the wire perimeter which could be used as a track or running course. There is an indoor gym just detached from the school.*

*IYC Harrisburg would satisfy a **performance measure** by reviewing the number of outdoor areas and the quantity of indoor equipment required to provide an organized, scheduled recreational program for boys, by surveying land outside and inside the perimeter wire for potential playing fields, by constructing needed playing fields, and by purchasing equipment sufficient to provide a full year-round recreational program for all boys at the facility.*

*Another **performance measure** would require a full review of recreational and athletic policies at IYC Harrisburg. As visitors understand it, the facility does not hold even occasional warm-weather “cook outs,” competitive sports events are infrequent, there seem not to be a lot of board games, there certainly could be more popular video games, and access to movies seems less frequent or less a part of the program than at other Youth Centers. Security staff and officers do not talk about the advantages of recreational and social programs in the way that some of their counterparts at other Youth Centers do. One result of shortages of recreational and social activities is that at IYC Harrisburg there are few positive rewards available for boys or for living units which behave well or accomplish academic or program goals. There are few benefits that attach to boys who are classified as medium rather than maximum security.*

## J. Substance Abuse Treatment

### 1. Number of youth in need of treatment

*There are two substance abuse treatment programs at IYC Harrisburg -- “RSAT,” a federally-funded program, and a state-funded program in Unit 3. Boys in each program live in two specially-designated living units each with a capacity of 32 beds. Because of requirements from state funding sources, boys in the two programs are apparently not allowed to co-mingle at*

*school or in other activities, for the reason that they are required to be in their own “therapeutic community” while in treatment.*

*The two substance abuse treatment programs are open only to boys classified as medium security. The staff state that the program cannot meet demand. According to staff, there are a number of maximum security boys who, clinically, need substance abuse treatment.*

*In an attempt to meet needs, Counselors are called upon to help boys with substance abuse-related problems.*

*One consequence of the bar against co-mingling and the restrictions against enrolling maximum security boys in substance abuse treatment is that maximum security boys can only attend classes at school for half the normal school day.*

*Substance abuse treatment programming at IYC Harrisburg merits serious review.*

*One **performance measure** will be met by an assessment of estimated need for substance abuse treatment programming, in terms of numbers of boys and types of treatment modalities that are indicated.*

*Another **performance measure** will be met by a review of policies and practices which segregate or bar “co-mingling” boys in differently-funded but similarly-operated substance abuse treatment programs, which results in increased demands on security and teaching staff, and possibly other inefficiencies. It seems at the least that an exemption from government-imposed restrictions could be requested.*

*Another **performance measure** will be met by establishing sufficient and sufficiently-intense substance abuse treatment programs to meet assessed needs. In addition to formal substance abuse treatment, the administration at IYC Harrisburg should consider implementing substance abuse counseling along the lines established at IYC Murphysboro. Meeting this performance measure will no doubt require significant increases in staff and/ or contracted services.*

2. Continuation of substance abuse counseling for youth once they have left the Youth Center.

*As at other Youth Centers, there has been no formal effort to consistently follow through with the substance abuse counseling that is provided boys at IYC Harrisburg once they are released from the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. There is no tracking of success, relapse or rearrest unless, of course, a boy is returned to IYC Harrisburg.*

#### **K. Reentry and Aftercare**

*In the sense that outside its school IYC Harrisburg is relatively deficient in programs and services that are intended to reorient boys, to help them assume responsibility, to instill work habits, give them some basic skills or at least, and perhaps more important, allow them to experience academic accomplishment and achievement in well-directed vocational programs, and improve their physical well being, it is somewhat ironic that the Youth Center is somewhat*

*in the forefront of developing a reentry program. It is located, for all that, on Unit 6, former home of the deconstructed “Resocialization” program and metal recreational “cages.”*

*Between the John Howard Association visit in September 2006 and the visit in October 2007 the leadership at IYC Harrisburg installed a new “pre-release” program on Unit 6. The program is staffed principally by one Counselor, Peggy Garrett LCSW who has seven year’s experience at Harrisburg. Ms. Garrett has been given leave to create a two week program for boys who are about to be approved for release on parole.*

*Her program covers a number of topics: anger management and control, life skills, substance abuse and “life planning.” Specific skills that are taught include: budgeting money; opening and using a checking account; preparing for the written drivers test; basic math skills; grocery shopping; and practical problem solving skills.*

*There are obstacles. Many of the boys arrive unable to read. (See comments about the school, Sec. F 1, above.) Many boys cannot write, which makes it hard to complete the paperwork and to fill out the forms Ms. Garrett introduces them to. Their numbers include a high portion of boys who have attention deficit disorders, learning disabilities, and are not culturally adjusted. They include boys who attempt to cover up their own lack of self esteem by bluffing, professing pride, and claiming more accomplishments than they have achieved. Other boys act out, preferring being placed in confinement, where they are not required to read and perform difficult tasks, than to be put into a program where their failure to be able to read confronts them. Ms. Garrett’s approach is to reward positive behavior and to minimize attention to negative behavior, but she sees her objective not to change boys but to give them the skills to change “if they want to.” Her approach sharply departs from the historical norm for security staff at IYC Harrisburg, but she reports changes among staff on an almost daily basis.*

*Two weeks seems an insufficient time in which to address this range of issues. Ms. Garrett tries to target boys three months before parole and to keep them in the program as long as possible. She tries to focus her attention most on boys who have special needs .*

*Ms. Garrett links her efforts and those in the school to a boy’s prospects for release: “If what we are doing [in the prerelease program] and what is being done in the school works for a kid, there is no reason to keep them here.”*

*IYC Harrisburg’s pre-release program might be thought of as a model upon which the Department might build.*

*One **performance measure** will be met if the pre-release program is quickly, informally assessed and reviewed. Issues to be considered include: boy’s length of time in the program, including starting some elements of the program closer to a boy’s admission to the Department; coordination with the school, which also identifies illiteracy and skill inadequacies in boys and attempts to improve them; incorporating elements of the pre-release’s approach to discipline and behavior modification into the overall operation of the Youth Center.*

*A second **performance measure** will be satisfied if the program is provided additional resources, including a second Counselor, in part to meet what should be expanded numbers of youth who are enrolled, for longer periods of time.*

*A third **performance measure** will be accomplished when there is an aftercare program with which the pre-release program is integrated and coordinated. The possibilities are many. The pre-release program might take on a role finding community-based placements and services, helping boys and their families adjust, or tracking a boy's entry into substance abuse treatment or counseling, and providing state and local agencies, schools, treatment programs and social services with information developed about a boy while he is with the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice.*

*For the Department, a **performance measure** will be met if the pre-release program model being developed at IYC Harrisburg is introduced to and considered for adaptation at several other Youth Centers. Consideration should also be given to incorporating the best practices being used in the Parole Revocation program at IYC Joliet and the Half-Way Back program at IYC Chicago.*

**Table 1: Staffing Levels IYC Harrisburg**

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Superintendents	1	1
Assistant Superintendents	2	1
Security Staff	160	148
Security Staff Supervisors	12	11
Educators	18	18
Leisure Time Activity Specialists	1	1
Counselors	10	8
Case Work Supervisors	1	1
Psychologists	0	0
Social Workers	1	1
Medical	4	4
Chaplain	1	1
Other Administrative*	41	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>**</b>

\*This category includes maintenance, secretarial, business management, and food service.

\*\*The total number of staff at IYC Harrisburg cannot be accurately calculated from these figures because the facility has medical, mental health, and substance abuse treatment program staff who are employed contractually and are not included in these figures.

At the time of our October 2007 visit, IYC Harrisburg has close to an adequate if not full compliment of security line staff (Youth Officers). There is some mandatory overtime, but the situation here is not nearly as bad as it is at most other Youth Centers. On the other hand, there is a shortage of kitchen staff and of Leisure Time Specialists. There is also a critical shortage of Counselors, only seven being in place where at least 15 are needed. Counselor caseloads are about 40 boys per counselor in maximum security and 48-61 in the general population. The Counselor who directs the Re-entry Program also has boys in therapy sessions. Two Counselors are designated to work in Reception and Classification.

The shortages of Counselor and Leisure Time Activity Specialists places more of a burden on line security staff. The Counselors and Leisure Time Activity Specialists support programs and activities which would, if in place, do much to transform IYC Harrisburg from a facility that incorporates an adult corrections model of discipline and behavior modification into one that is directed toward meeting the needs of boys and returning boys to society better equipped to act responsibly and within legal requirements.