

Rehabilitation Programs Division

Champions Youth Program (CYP)

The mission of the Champions Youth Program is to provide a vehicle of positive change for youthful offenders through targeted programs, supervision, and management in a safe, restorative environment.

Program Overview:

The Champions Youth Program utilizes interventions such as education, life skills, creative expression, and positive communication skills to focus on the problem behaviors and developmental aspects of the youthful population. The program serves both male (Ellis Unit and Travis County State Jail) and female (Hilltop Unit) offenders between 14 and 17 years of age and includes a minimum of 10 hours of structured treatment services per week.

Youthful offenders are assigned to this program until their eighteenth birthday. The length of time in the program varies, and is determined by age rather than completion of prescribed goals, and the issues presented in the population are complex and varied. There are multiple levels in the program and each has its own set of responsibilities and privileges. To progress from one level to the next, a youthful offender must complete a minimum number of weeks, mastering tasks at that level while demonstrating positive behavior. Once these requirements are met, the youthful offender may petition staff for advancement. As the youthful offender advances, the level of responsibilities and privileges increase.

The Champions Youth Program is structured according to a two-track programming system. This system has a focus on basic skills and values building and incorporates an individual strategy for each youthful offender. Assignment to one of the two tracks is determined by the transition needs of the participant (i.e., release to TDCJ general population or from TDCJ custody) and track placement influences the focus of treatment planning. Comprehensive, interdisciplinary programming is established on a weekly schedule, which includes: education, social skills training, anger management, values development, goal setting, cognitive restructuring, substance abuse education, conflict resolution, aggression replacement and life skills.

Youthful offenders identified with special needs will be assigned to an appropriate facility designed to meet their needs (e.g., Mentally Retarded Offenders Program (MROP), Physically Handicapped Offenders Program (PHOP), inpatient psychiatric care, special security needs).

In addition to structured programming, offenders may attend religious service and volunteer facilitated activities such as substance abuse awareness groups and Epiphany meetings.

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