



April 4, 2018

YSB Directors;

The State Department of Education (CSDE) and the Connecticut Youth Services Association (CYSA) would like to start by thanking the Youth Service Bureau (YSB) system for being a critical partner in working toward the implementation of the Community-Based Diversion system. We appreciate that the YSB system has been leading the effort to increase diversion. YSBs have for years, been asked to do a tremendous amount of work and have always shown success in outcomes for youth. This is no different with the recent effort to support the Community-Based Diversion system, with YSBs as the coordinating hub.

The Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) and its Diversion Workgroup have identified the YSBs as the key element in making the Diversion system successful. The work of the YSBs is demonstrating their importance in this process. As a result of your work and on-going improvements, more children in Connecticut are receiving services in their community and are not touching the juvenile justice system. There is a great deal to be proud of!

Many improvements have been implemented in the YSB system over the years. A data collection tool is being used to help tell the story of the YSBs' success and to leverage more funding; trainings have occurred at multiple conferences and staff are learning more about how to better serve our youth; and additional Juvenile Review Boards (JRBs) are being created on a regular basis to divert youth from court; and there has been some additional funding in the last few years to help support and enhance JRBs.

The next important initiative is the implementation and use of a universal screening tool across all YSBs. This screening tool, the Ohio Scales for Youth, was researched and selected by the JJPOC's Diversion Workgroup as a part of their mandate to create and implement the Diversion system. The Ohio Scales is used for children ages 5-18, can be administered by a variety of staff, is available in multiple languages, and has separate versions for parents, youth and staff (when appropriate). It assesses internalizing behaviors, externalizing behaviors and the child's conduct (Functionality and Problem Behaviors). This tool is currently being used by many other agencies including mental health clinics, contracted agencies through the Department of Children and Families (DCF), EMPS providers, Yale University, the Wheeler Clinic and more.

Following many discussions, the CSDE and the CYSA have enlisted the developer of the Ohio Scales tool to come to Connecticut to provide in-depth training to our YSB system! The training will help YSB staff understand the implementation and use of the tool, provide case studies to practice using the tool in an interactive session, and ask questions of the man who knows the tool best!

In order for YSBs to continue to demonstrate effectiveness in meeting the needs of Connecticut youth, universal implementation of the Ohio Scales tool is critical and this training is required to ensure uniform

use of the tool across regions. The tool will be used in the first year for referrals for JRB cases, Truancy and Defiance of School Rules cases, and specific mental health referrals. In the second year, YSBs will transition to using the tool for all Tier 2 participants. In addition, a new template for an intake/interview document will be released and discussed at this training. Each YSB can personalize this intake form, but the use of this form will give the opportunity for all YSBs to use a similar process when doing an intake with a participant.

The training will be available to **two participants per YSB**....an administrator and a direct service worker, in one of three sessions to help fit your schedules. The following are the times for each of the 3 ½ hour training options: (you only need to attend one)

Thursday, May 10th, 8:30am-12pm (Ohio Scales 101 Training)

Thursday, May 10th, 1pm – 4:30 pm (Ohio Scales 101 Training)

Friday, May 11th, 8:30am- 12pm (Ohio Scales 101 Training)

We are also offering the opportunity for up to 25 people to attend a second (shorter) training to become an Ohio Scales Trainer. The hope is to create a network of folks who can train other YSB staff members who need training moving forward. We would like to have at least 1-2 people from each region so no one has to travel far to train staff at other YSBs. In order to participate in this **Train-the-Trainer session**, you must have participated in the 101 training being offered May 10th or May 11th. This Train-the-Trainer session is being offered on:

Friday, May 11th, 2pm- 4:30 pm (Train-the Trainer)- * Please note: Anyone who participates in the Train-the-Trainer session on May 11th will be provided lunch at no charge from 12:30-2pm and the group will have a chance to network, discuss the 101 training and hear from someone currently using the tool who can answer questions prior to the next training. (This lunch is not mandatory.)

Please register for the training through CYSA at www.ctyouthservices.org.

There are a maximum of 75 seats for each 101 training and each YSB will be limited to 2 slots (with a waitlist for additional slots). There are a maximum of 25 slots for the Train-the-Trainer and lunch on May 11th.

The trainings will be held at The Lyceum, at 227 Lawrence Street, Hartford. Parking is available in the lot adjacent to the Lyceum and in the vicinity for overflow. Participants will need to check in with security and will be directed to the meeting room.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Erica Bromley at ebromley@ctyouthservices.org or email cysa@ctyouthservices.org.

Sincerely,

John Frassinelli

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