

# Reducing Isolation in Youth Facilities

## *Strategies and Lessons Learned from the Field*

February 13, 2018  
1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. EST

# CCAS Partners



# Center for Coordinated Assistance to States (CCAS) Mission

- To assess the need for and coordinate the delivery of TTA designed to build capacity within states, territories, tribal units, and communities to maximize the effectiveness of juvenile justice systems to the benefit of the youth they serve
- Focus is on providing ongoing coaching to achieve individual and/or behavioral changes that positively impact the juvenile justice system

# Today's Learning Objectives

1. Increase knowledge about the impact isolation has on youth facility residents
2. Highlight key steps to reducing or eliminating isolation in detention and correctional facilities
3. Present real-life examples of how agencies and facilities have reduced the use of isolation

# Why Focus on Use of Isolation?

**Isolation:** Any time a youth is physically and/or socially isolated for punishment or for administrative purposes (excludes protective and medical isolation)

Research shows that placing youth in isolation:

- Has negative public safety consequences
- Does not reduce violence within facilities
- Can harm youth psychologically, physically, and developmentally

# CJCA Position on Isolation

“CJCA believes that isolating or confining a youth in his/her room should be used only to protect the youth from harming him/herself or others and if used, should be for a short period and supervised.”

CJCA Toolkit: Reducing the Use of Isolation (March 2015)

# Today's Presenters



Clint McClellan  
Assistant Director Facility Services  
Oregon Youth Authority



Peter Forbes  
Commissioner  
Massachusetts Department of  
Youth Services

# Today's Presenters



Natalie Walker  
Assistant Director  
Indiana Division of  
Youth Services



Marc Kniola  
Program Director  
Indiana Division of  
Youth Services



# The Importance of Culture

“Culture is the set of values, guiding beliefs, understanding, and ways of thinking that is shared by members of an organization and is taught to new members as correct. It represents the unwritten, feeling part of the organization...Culture provides people with a sense of organizational identity and generates in them a commitment to beliefs and values that are larger than themselves.”

*Richard Daft – Organizational Theory and Design (1992)*

# Why Focus on Culture Change?

- Reducing or eliminating isolation requires moving away from the old paradigm within youth detention and corrections
- Policies, procedures and manuals alone are not enough; shift in mindset is necessary to achieve desired outcomes
- Helps align practices with emerging knowledge, research and understanding

# The Important Role of Leadership in Organizational Transformation

- Understand the impetus for change
- Embrace the change
- Be able to explain the change
- Have a strategy for gradual movement from the existing paradigm to the new paradigm

# 5 Specific Roles for Leaders in Managing Change

*Modified from an article by Emily Lawson  
and Colin Price,*

*Psychology of Change Management*

*McKinsey & Company, June 2003*



**CCAS** Center for Coordinated Assistance to States

# Make both a human and business case for change

- Articulate a compelling case for change;
- The human cost of continuing business as usual: The trauma inflicted on youth, and compromising the safety of community;
- Fiscal impact of current practice and the unquantifiable cost of future crimes and future victims;
- Provide a compelling case for “accountability” and “reformation” and clarify/update our working definitions for these terms.

# Engage those who do the work in the transformation process

- Win the hearts and minds of those who do the work;
- Understand the difference between **power and force**;
- Articulate impact to staff;
- Allow staff make the change their own and take pride in improvements.

## Provide staff with tools, training and skills necessary to make the shift to the new culture

- Staff can't just be told to cease the current practices;
- Offer tools, training and action learning to help them see what this new paradigm may look like;
- Expect setbacks and challenges;
- Balance patience with a sense of urgency

# Establish Clear Metrics and Outcomes to Track Progress and Success

- Reward good behavior;
- Celebrate incremental success;
- Focus on outcomes and results;
- Do not use the process to punish staff;
- Use surfacing flaws as opportunities to develop better processes;
- Engage staff in the process.



# Model the Change you Seek to Implement

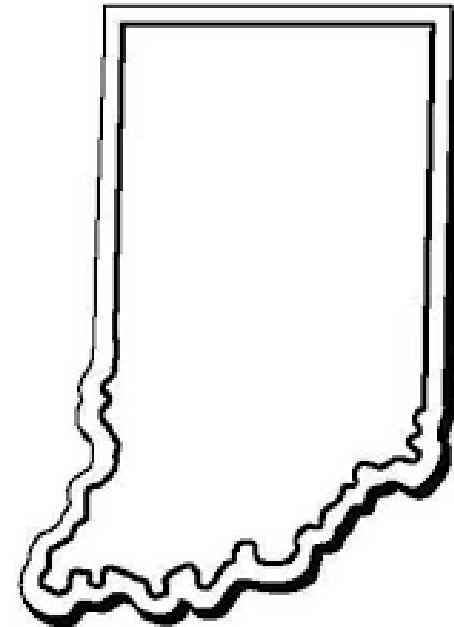
- Executive team members and managers at every level must “walk the talk”;
- How leaders and managers treat staff translates directly or indirectly into how staff exhibit the same behavior with youth in their care and custody.
- Take care of self, take care of staff, take care of youth

# Reducing Isolation in Indiana

Indiana Department of Correction



**Division  
of Youth  
Services**



# Recruiting the Right Staff

- Aimed to hire staff who want to make a difference
- Aligned hiring practices with mission
  - Amended job titles and descriptions
  - Tried to achieve the “right fit” (e.g., job shadowing; superintendents’ pre-offer meetings with all candidates)

# Training Staff

Eliminated focus on “adult correctional concepts” and added one week of juvenile-specific training called “Making a Change”

- Adolescent Development
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Motivational Interviewing
- Conflict Resolution
- Joint Understanding and Cooperation Program

# Utilizing Data to Drive Practices

- Incorporated Performance-Based Standards (PbS) into the foundation and culture of facilities
  - Shared data with all staff which helped them understand the reasons behind change
- Conducted daily incident monitoring meetings
- Focused on continual improvement process
  - Tracked data monthly, celebrated success, strategized change

# Engaging Families

- Opened up visitation hours
- Implemented conference calls with families to discuss reasons for isolation
- Coordinated increased family sessions with facility counselors and juvenile reintegration specialists
- Created family councils and facility events

# Committing to Culture Change

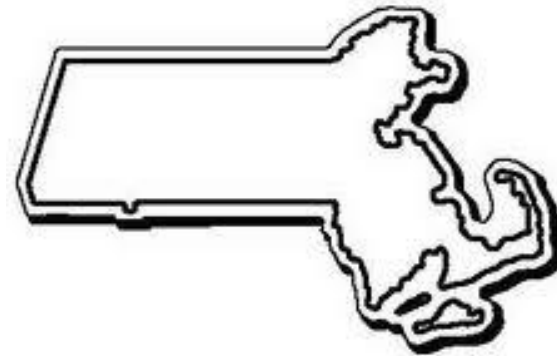
- Unit Team concept
- Conflict resolution with youth and staff
- CARE Team used as ‘first responders’ with purpose to de-escalate, rather than QRT first responders who respond to “resolve with force”
- Staff Shadowing Program
- Student Councils

# Review Practices

- Evaluate current practices and their effectiveness
- Field driven
- Change to adapt to rising issues and needs



# Reducing Isolation in Massachusetts



# Crafting Our Mission Statement and Philosophy

Our message with staff:

1. We have to keep kids safe.
2. In order to help youth gain skills, maturity and insight, they have to “program.”

# Developing and Implementing a Restrictive Isolation Policy

## Policy Development

- Great “table” for input, insight and support

## Policy Implementation

- Requires planning and senior level presence; memo or email directive is not enough
- Consider training audience (e.g., regional/program level staff, labor, residential providers, licensing authorities and other stakeholders)
- Find an effective training forum (e.g., shift change)

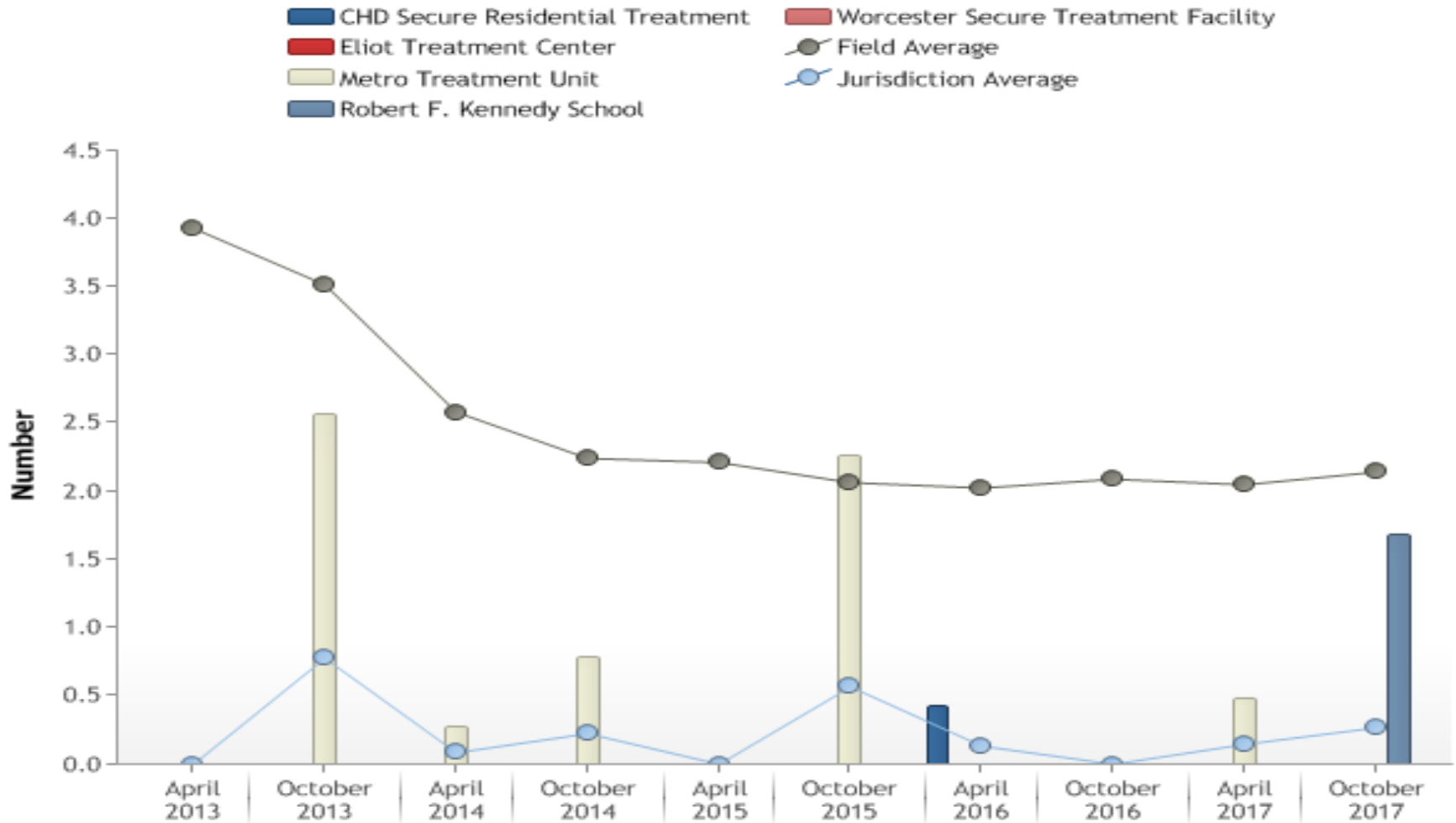
# MA DYS Policy: No Room Confinement as a Sanction

“It is the policy of the Department of Youth Services (“DYS”) that during non-sleep hours, youth may be kept involuntarily in a room for the following reasons: to calm a youth who is exhibiting seriously disruptive or dangerous behavior; ...for the safety and security of a youth;...**A youth may not be confined in a room for the following purposes: as a consequence for non-compliance; punishment;** harassment; or in retaliation for any youth conduct...Room confinement may only be used when less restrictive interventions have failed and for the least amount of time required for the youth to regain self-control.”

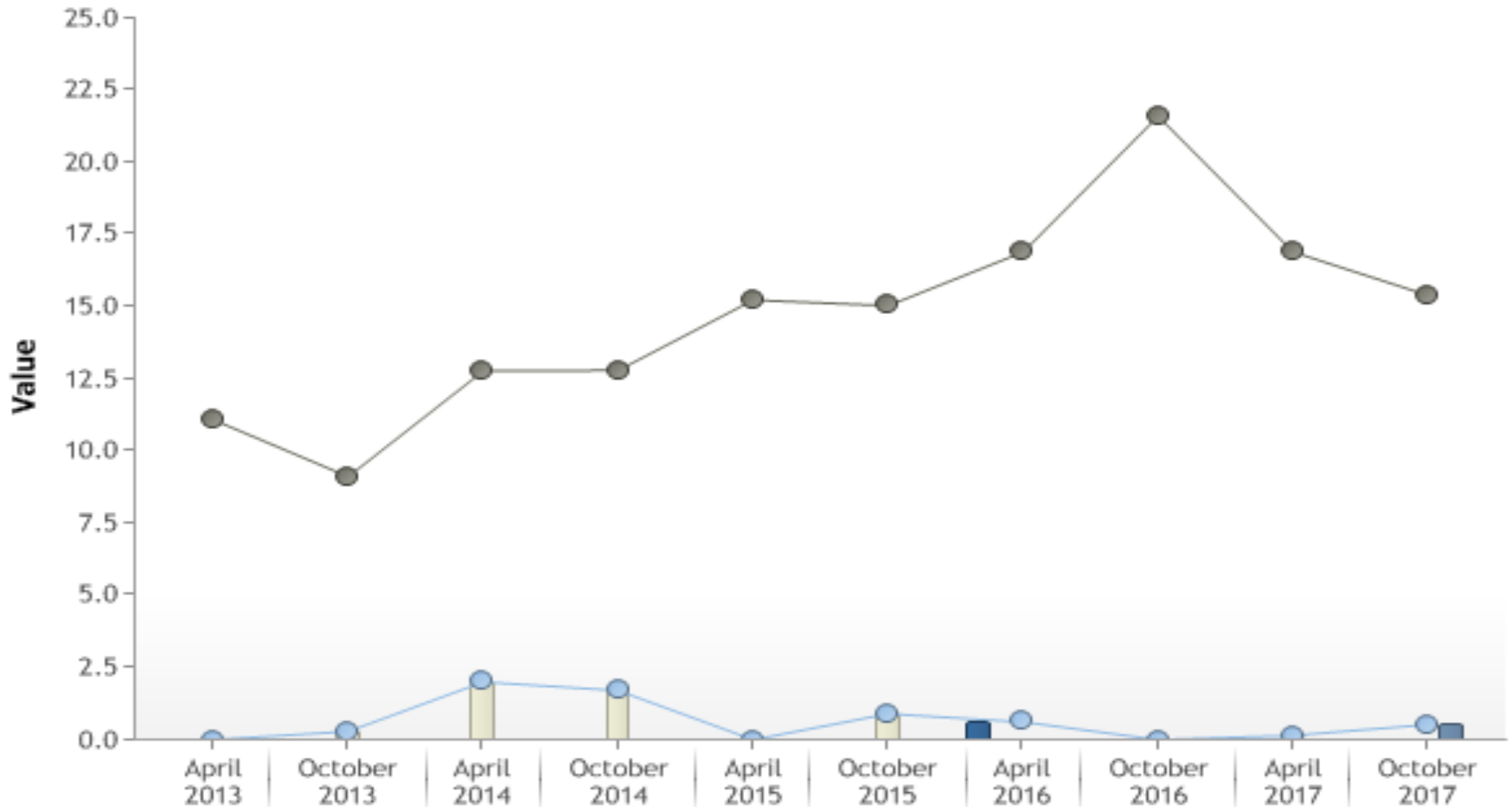
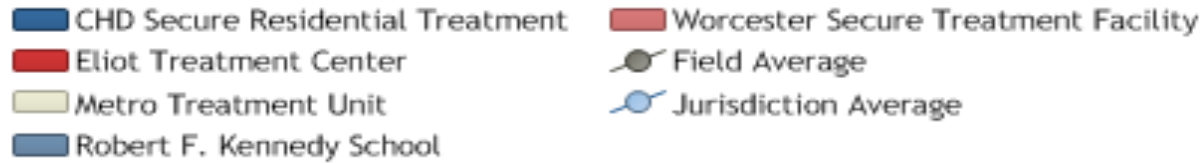
# Collecting Baseline Data

- Built process slowly from scratch
  - Capturing room confinement data:  
Nightly phone calls → Data entry for each event
- Documentation
  - Daily reports (cross referenced with incident reports)
  - Trends reports by program, region, and statewide activity

# Monitoring the Use of Isolation through PbS Isolation, room confinement, segregation/special management unit use per 100 person-days of youth confinement.



# Average duration of isolation, room confinement, and segregation/special management in hours.



# What's Next for DYS

## Providing Alternative Tools

- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)
- Positive incentive-based programming
- Strategies to facilitate getting kids safely out of their rooms once they calm down



# What's Next for DYS

## Training Staff and Sustaining Progress

- Positive Youth Development
- Adolescent Brain Development
- Motivational Interviewing
- Other topics to keep staff energized and equipped to deal with defiant and acting out behavior

# Question and Answer



# Putting It All Together

## Five Steps to Reduce Isolation

1. “Rehabilitative” Mission Statement and Philosophy
2. Restrictive Isolation Policies and Procedures
3. Data to Monitor Practice and Hold Staff Accountable
4. Alternative Behavior Management Tools
5. Staff Training and Support

# CJCA Toolkit

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*The “CJCA Toolkit: Reducing the Use of Isolation” is available at <http://cjca.net>*

## Additional Resources...

- Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA)  
<http://cjca.net/>
- Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR)  
<http://cjjr.georgetown.edu/>
- Stop Solitary for Kids (SSK)  
<http://www.stopsolitaryforkids.org/>

# Thank you...Today's Presenters

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Oregon Youth Authority

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Indiana Division of Youth Services

Marc Kniola, Program Director  
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Peter Forbes, Commissioner  
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