

## Day Treatment

Day treatment centers (also known as day reporting centers, community resource centers, or day incarceration centers) are highly structured, community-based, postadjudication, nonresidential programs for serious juvenile offenders. The goal of day treatment is to provide intensive supervision to ensure community safety and a wide range of services to the offender to prevent future delinquent behavior. The intensive supervision is fulfilled by requiring the offender to report to the facility on a daily basis at specified times for a specified length of time. Generally, programs are provided at the facility during the day and/or evening at least 5 days a week. Special weekend activities may also be conducted. The services provided by day treatment programs include a plethora of correctional treatment methods similar to those used in halfway houses, but day treatment facilities allow program participants to return home at night and therefore do not have the costs associated with residential facilities.

Day treatment centers originated in Great Britain in the 1970s and are currently being widely implemented in the United States. A 1990 study by the National Institute of Justice found only 13 facilities in the United States. By 1995 there were at least 114 in 22 States (Parent et al. 1995).

### Variations in Day Treatment Centers

Day treatment centers differ in a number of ways, including the target population, eligibility criteria, services offered, goals of treatment, caseload, and requirements of completion. For example, eligibility may be determined by a number of factors such as seriousness of the current offense, criminal history, and treatment needs.

In addition, there may be a variety of treatment services available in day treatment facilities, including individual and group counseling, recreation, education, vocational training, employment counseling, education, life skills and cognitive skills training, substance abuse treatment, and community resource referrals.

### Outcome Evidence

Despite the rapid spread of day treatment programs, to date there are very few impact evaluations examining the effectiveness of the day treatment programs on juveniles. Most of the evaluation research conducted so far has examined the effect of day treatment services on adult offenders. Overall, with regards to adult offenders, program evaluations have shown mixed results. While some evaluations found reduced recidivism rates for offenders receiving services through day reporting centers, other evaluations found no significant program effects (Martin, Lurigio, and Olson 2003; Ostermann 2009; Boyle et al. 2011).

**Suggested Reference:** Development Services Group, Inc. 2011. "Day Treatment." Literature review. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. [https://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/litreviews/Day\\_Treatment.pdf](https://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/litreviews/Day_Treatment.pdf)  
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With regards to juvenile offenders, very few evaluations have been conducted. A recent evaluation by Winokur Early, Hand, Blankenship, and Chapman (2010) examined the impact of the AMIkids Community-based Day Treatment Services offered to at-risk and delinquent youth in Florida. Youths are assigned to mental health or substance use treatment services (or to both) that consist of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (to address anger, mental health, behavior, and substance use treatment needs); Motivational Enhancement Therapy (to address substance use treatment needs); Aggression Replacement Training (which concentrates on anger and skills deficits as well as moral reasoning); Skillstreaming (to deal with social skills deficits); and Motivational Interviewing (for rapport building and moving youths toward positive change). The day treatment programs are usually small, typically located near the youth's home, and generally operate from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays. The average length of stay in the program is typically 4 to 6 months. Services provided by program staff address issues in both the home and neighborhood by working with each youth and his or her family together. Services include staff home visits, a small staff-to-student ratio, comprehensive counseling, individualized cognitive-behavioral treatment services, and family integration.

The evaluation found that youth who received services through AMIkids Community-based Day Treatment were significantly less likely to be rearrested, rearrested for a felony offense, adjudicated or convicted for an offense, convicted for a felony offense, and subsequently committed, placed on adult probation, or sentenced to prison within 12 months of release compared with youth who completed residential programming (Winokur Early, Hand, Blankenship, and Chapman 2010).

However, additional research is needed to determine the impact that day treatment services can have on juvenile offenders.

## References

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