

Agency Name	Sununu Youth Services Center
Audit Name	Performance Audit
Audit Period	SFY 2016 -2020
Status Report Date	April 07, 2021

Summary of Audit Observations/Findings					
Number	Observation Title	Status [place X in status column]			
		Unresolved	Partially Resolved	Substantially Resolved	Fully Resolved
1	Reevaluate Criteria For Release From The SYSC	X			
2	Provide Evidence-based Treatment Programming	X			
3	Mental Health Assessment Should Be Evidence-based		X		
4	Define Individual Therapy and Family Counseling and the Requirements to Provide Them	X			
5	Define Objectives and Develop a Strategic Plan	X			
6	Institute Comprehensive Performance Measurement	X			
7	Organizational Structure Should Be Reviewed	X			
8	Conduct a Formal Staffing Analysis and Develop a Written Staffing Plan	X			
9	Make Efforts to Minimize Staff Turnover	X			
10	Keep Parent and Youth Handbook Update-to-date			X	

Observation 1: Reevaluate Criteria For Release From The

Summary of Finding: We recommend the Legislature consider amending and harmonizing statutes regarding release of juveniles from the SYSC to eliminate contradiction; and allowing the JPB to consider factors such as participation in the SYSC Programming, progress towards treatment goals, a decreased likelihood that the juvenile will reoffend, and the best interests of the juvenile and the public.

Current Status: This observation is unresolved and is directed toward the legislature.

Observation 2: Provide Evidence-based Treatment Programming

Summary of Finding: We recommend that SYSC continue with the review of clinical programming, ensure programming selected is evidence-based, review programming annually, and review the use of trained psychological associates and Youth Counselors to administer clinical treatment programs. With an annual review of programming in accordance with policy.

Current Status: This observation is unresolved. SYSC management in collaboration with the SYSC Psychologist have researched various evidence-based treatment programs and the cost of the programs to support positive outcomes for youth. Final decisions on these programs cannot be made until certain key decisions are made by the legislature. Specifically, resolution is required regarding: 1) the plan for continued operations of SYSC and/or a subsequent facility for detained and committed youth as the implementation process of new evidence based models takes significant time to implement; 2) clarity as to whether any action will be taken by the legislature regarding observation number one, as the standards for parole impact the length of stay for committed youth, which informs what evidence based models, if any, can be implemented with fidelity during a youth's stay at SYSC; and 3) whether an appropriation will be made to secure and implement new evidence based treatment models.

Observation 3: Mental Health Assessment Should Be Evidenced-based

Summary of Finding: We recommend SYSC replace the *Mental Health Assessment* form with an assessment that is evidence-based and supported by research establishing its reliability and validity for use in a juvenile corrections setting.

Current Status: This observation is Partially Resolved. SYSC has determined to move forward with the MAYSI-2 as the selected mental health assessment tool. The MAYSI-2 is a brief behavioral health screening tool designed especially for juvenile justice programs and facilities. It will identify 12 through 17 year old who may have important, pressing behavioral health/mental health needs. Its primary use is in juvenile probation, diversion programs and intake in juvenile detention and corrections. Because it is relatively inexpensive, SYSC can implement the tool without any additional appropriations.

Observation 4: Define Individual Therapy and Family Counseling and the Requirements To Provide Them

Summary of Finding: We recommend SYSC clarify the policy on individual therapy and family counseling by stating whether the policy establishes a requirement to provide a minimum number of services to committed juveniles; define services and contacts between juveniles, families, and clinical staff that satisfy the provision of individual therapy and family counseling; and define all services identified in the clinical notes.

Current Status: This observation is unresolved. A workgroup has begun to meet to review and update the relevant policies.

Observation 5: Define Objectives and Develop a Strategic Plan

Summary of Finding: We recommend SYSC management engage in a strategic planning process to define the SYSC's objectives and to detail how those objectives will be achieved and measured. The Department of Health and Human Services and SYSC management may wish to work with stakeholders and the Legislature to clarify the SYSC's mission and purpose in response to the changes to the SYSC population and release requirements.

Current Status: This observation is unresolved. DCYF has a process to develop division-wide strategic priorities on a biannual basis. These are developed in consideration of multiple factors, including importantly, implementation of the activities funded in the biannual budget. DCYF will specifically include strategic priorities for SYSC within this plan. Completion is anticipated in September 2021.

Observation 6: Institute Comprehensive Performance Measurement

Summary of Finding: We recommend once SYSC complete a comprehensive strategic plan that identifies goals and objectives, SYSC choose performance measures based on attainable data which can be used to determine the organization's achievement of its goals and objectives.

Current Status: This observation is unresolved. As referenced in the response to Observation 5, the biannual DCYF Strategic Priorities contain performance measures. As with the other strategic priorities, the SYSC components in the DCYF Strategic Priorities will have performance measures will be identified. Completion is anticipated in September 2021.

Observation 7: Organizational Structure Should Be Reviewed

Summary of Finding: We recommend SYSC Management conduct a formal organizational review of the SYSC structure and its span of control. If the review identifies needs, the SYSC should request the necessary resources and statutory changes from the Legislature.

Current Status: This observation is unresolved. See response in Observation #9

Observation 8: Conduct a Formal Staffing Analysis and Develop a Written Staffing Plan

Summary of Finding: We recommend SYSC conduct a staffing analysis; develop, document, and implement a staffing plan in accordance with PREA and its staffing policy and review on at least an annual basis.

Current Status: This observation is unresolved. See response in Observation #9

Observation 9: Make Efforts to Minimize Staff Turnover

Summary of Finding: We recommend the SYSC administration as part of its strategic planning process, consider the need for a structured, strategic workforce plan, to include retention programs with quantifiable goals and objectives, determine the reasons staff leave the SYSC, and design tools to meet retention goals and objectives. The SYSC should consider and investigate the extent to which issues such as job satisfaction, staff perceptions of supervision, inadequate training, high stress and low morale contribute to the staff turn-over.

Current Status: This observation is unresolved. The DHHS Division of Program Quality and Integrity has met with the DHHS Office of Human Resources to discuss the audit findings. The Office of Human Resources is now identifying resources who will be responsible for creating a work plan to address findings 7, 8, and 9 in collaboration with the Division of Program Quality and Integrity and the SYSC. As referenced in the audit report, the SYSC has already begun efforts to improve staff morale, including a partnership with the EAP program and increasing utilization of the DCYF EPIC Peer Support Program. The entire leadership team at SYSC has just completed the leadership training referenced in the audit report and has identified goals and objectives to support the transformation of juvenile justice and the treatment needs of youth served, as well as a mission statement.

Observation 10: Keep Parent and Youth Handbook Update-to-date

Summary of Finding: We recommend SYSC management update the *Parent and Youth Handbook* to reflect current services and institute procedures to continuously keep it up-to-date.

Current Status: This observation is substantially resolved. SYSC has completed the required revisions to both the Parent and Youth Handbook and the Youth Handbook. These have been submitted for final editing and publication.
