

The ARISE Foundation, a non-profit organization created in 1986, provides a rich collection of time-tested, evidence-based skills curricula for at-risk youth. The foundation also implements staff training that enhances the effectiveness of those who care for troubled youth and adolescents.

Since 2008, the ARISE Foundation has worked in Florida to create a more positive culture in juvenile justice facilities for staff and youthful offenders at the Adolescent Residential Campus (ARC) program. Program staff received training in *ARISE: Drop it at the Door* to improve communication and interpersonal skills, and provide them with tools designed to reduce stress and manage anger. Staff were also trained to facilitate *ARISE Life Skills* interactive group sessions with the youth in their charge.

In an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of these ARISE interventions, an independent study was conducted by the Justice Research Center. The primary objective of the evaluation was to assess recidivism outcomes for ARC youth compared to a matched group of youth who did not receive the interventions. Pre- and post-test surveys were given to staff and youth at ARC to assess differences in attitudes and reported behaviors of the youth, as well as to examine changes in knowledge, attitudes, communication and satisfaction of the staff.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- More than 6,810 hours of Life Skills sessions were provided to 174 youth during the most recent evaluation period (January 4 - August 30, 2010).
- The ARC treatment youth group performed significantly better than the ARC comparison youth group on measures of subsequent re-adjudication, felony re-adjudication, and re-commitment to residential programming.



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- Analysis of youth survey outcomes indicated significant improvement in three scales including 1) violence related aggressive behavior, 2) approval of retaliation aggression and, 3) empathy among youth at ARC who received ARISE services.
- Youth at ARC who received some ARISE services, not only significantly improved in regard to their empathy, but the improvement was more substantial than that found with the ARC comparison group.
- The mean change between pre and post test scores for the three aggression scales for the ARC youth treatment group was found to be positively correlated with various outcome indicators including re-arrest, felony re-arrest, recidivism, felony re-adjudication and subsequent commitment.
- The final post test scores for the three aggression scales and the deviant beliefs scale for the ARC youth treatment group was found to be positively correlated with offenses during services (ODS) and recidivism, felony re-adjudication and subsequent commitment.
- Analysis of staff surveys from the ARC treatment group revealed that mean scores on all but four scales increased; two of the scales, *Attitudes Toward Youth Scale* and the *Documented Altercations Question*, had a mean change that was statistically significant.
- In 2009 ARC staff worked 14,152 hours of overtime. In the following year, overtime at the facility dropped by almost a third (31%) to 9,806 hours, or the equivalent of 543 fewer days of overtime. Reducing the number of overtime hours in the facility not only encourages a safer workplace but also helps the provider manage the program's budget more efficiently.
- In 2009, ARC staff took 385 days off for sick leave but the program reported a 20% drop in sick leave days for 2010 at 309 days. Additionally, the program reported a 52% drop in medical leave from 415 days in 2009, to 200 in 2010. Four staff took leave without pay in 2009, for a total of 17 days but only two took leave without pay in 2010 for a total of 6 days.

