

## Program Objective

The Niagara County Juvenile Supported Case Management Program is part of REACH (Restorative Environments Allowing Children Hope), a division of Community Missions, Inc. (CMI). The program is designed to link youth and their families with support services and resources to help youth avoid further crime and violence once they have returned to their home communities from out-of-home placement locations. This programming is also available for youth who are in need of Diversion Services, to support efforts to keep youth from entering the Juvenile Justice System any further.

## History

CMI, in cooperation with Niagara County Department of Social Services (NCDSS) and NYS Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS), will work to provide case planning and support services through a 60 day program to reduce youth's risk of re-offending and offer support and encouragement for their transition.

CMI will also work in collaboration with the Niagara County Probation Department and various other local service providers (mental health treatment, alcohol/substance abuse treatment, sexualized behavior treatment, etc.).

## Referral Process

Niagara County DSS, NYS OCFS, or Niagara County Probation staff will refer youth ages 12-21, who have been identified in need of Foster Care Re-Entry, OCFS Re-Entry, or those youth at risk of placement outside their home. Referral documents will include the **Skills Assessment Priorities** sheet which will identify target skill areas and programming priorities. An initial Assessment and Screening Instrument will also be completed with each case, which will help prioritize youth in need of the most urgent support services.

## Culturally Competent Service Planning

We strive to protect, encourage and educate individuals regarding the unique characteristics which exist among all persons. Every interaction will be seen as an opportunity to provide growth and acknowledgement for how these similarities and differences affect our interactions and lives on a daily basis. We believe that different experiences, backgrounds and points of view add perspectives and increase the possibility to enhance our relationships with others.



## Strength Based Treatment

Treatment programs that use strength-based practices view each youth as a unique individual with strengths, capacities, and challenges. CMI and the SCM Program views each youth as a whole person (as opposed to focusing solely on the psychiatric diagnosis or Juvenile Justice System involvement). This model helps staff view youth as the *people that they are* rather than the *problems that they present*. A strength based approach often results in youths' ability to view themselves in a more positive manner and feel more confident due to the result of praise from staff members. Additionally, research has proven that the increased use of sincere praise helps decrease the overall level of problem behaviors in youth.



## Trauma Informed Care

Most of the youth and families in the Supported Case Management program have some degree of trauma in their backgrounds. Traumatic events can range from a one-time event, such as a sexual assault, witnessing a crime or the death of a loved one, to a more complex trauma such as ongoing childhood sexual and/or physical abuse, neglect and emotional abuse over a long period of time, or many deaths and losses over time. We recognize that traumatic events and histories affect how youth and families think, feel and behave. The professionals who work with the SCM Program's youth and families strive to understand how each youth and family are affected by their pasts, and know how important it is to ask "What happened to this youth?" instead of "What is wrong with this youth?"

## Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice is a way of thinking about crime and justice that focuses on repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior.



## Typical Outcomes Associated with Restorative Justice:

- Victim Offender Conferencing and Mediation
- Victim Assistance
- Restitution
- Service by an offender to a victim
- Community service by an offender
- Assistance to offenders

## SCM Program Services

- Case planning services for youth (and their families) returning from out-of-home placements
- Linkage with primary care, counseling, medication management, drug and alcohol services, sexualized behavior counseling services, etc. as needed
- Academic Assistance/Linkage
- Recreation/Pro-Social supports
- Family Support Services
- Daily Living/Independent Living Skills work
- Employment or Volunteer linkages



## Additional Services Provided by Community Missions, Inc.

- Crisis/Emergency Housing
- Community Soup Kitchen
- Food Pantry/Distribution
- Clothes Closet
- Furniture Giveaway
- Residential Housing Services (Youth)
- Residential Housing Services (Adult)
- Mental Health Recovery Services
- Faith Services

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