

Youth Advocate Programs (YAP) specialty is working with kids that would otherwise be in some type of residential placement / prison and who have the most complex needs. They look to serve those kids whose needs are not currently met within the current community resources.

Some of the unique features of their model include:

- No reject / no eject Policy (inclusive intake and unconditional caring);
- individualized and culturally competent wraparound planning;
- 24/7 availability, and;
- A strengths-based approach.

They do not do any residential work. They work deeply with the young person and their families, specializing in youth and family engagement, in the context of their homes and communities.

Examples of evidence of their success- a few examples:

- **The Choose to Change program in Chicago:** This is an anti-violence program that engages high risk young people who have been on probation, missed over 1/3 of the school year, had gun charges and/or have been exposed to violence or lost someone to violence. Through a combination of CBT and YAP's intensive paid mentoring and advocacy, preliminary results show that participation results in a reduction of all arrests by 46% and arrests for violent offenses by 44%. Here is the [NYT Op-ed](#) about the program and its outcomes.
- **John Jay Studies**
  - a. [Orlando](#): This study looked at crossover youth in child welfare and juvenile justice. Key highlight: kids who received Probation + YAP were sent back to placement 5% of the time vs kids who received probation but no YAP who got sent back 21% of the time
  - b. National Cross-section:
    - i. [YAP Helps Keep Youth out of Secure Facilities](#): this study looked at 1,851 YAP Youth aged 14-17 and found that 87% were kept safely in the community six-12 months after discharge from YAP; less than 5% of all YAP kids in this study were in secure placement in the same timeframe
    - ii. [Most High Risk Youth Referred to YAP Remain Arrest Free](#): This study looked at 3,523 young people in YAP ages 11-18. Key finding: 86% remained arrest free while in the program and 93% were living in the community at discharge

In summary:

- YAP works at all points of the system (alternative to detention, placement and re-entry)
- Serve 19,000+ families a year, in 23 states + DC
- Their mission is to improve community capacity so that communities don't have to rely on residential placement

**For more information contact Shaena M. Fazal, Esq.**  
Chief of Public Policy & Advocacy  
Youth Advocate Programs (YAP)  
202.594.6893 (m)  
[sfazal@yapinc.org](mailto:sfazal@yapinc.org) / @shaefaz  
[www.yapinc.org](http://www.yapinc.org)