



**TRIBAL YOUTH
RESOURCE CENTER**

Planning for a Tribal Youth Healing to Wellness Court

Date: January 29, 2026

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WELCOME!

Opening in a good way

OJJDP

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Tech Support

Here are some friendly housekeeping reminders

Use the Chat box to submit a comment to “All Presenters” or “Presenters & Everyone”



Closed Captioning is available during the session. Please let us know if it is not available to you by sending a message in the chat box to “All Presenters.”



This Online Learning Event will be recorded and a copy will be emailed to all participants.



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Before We Get Started...

This project was supported by Grant #15PJDP-24-GK-02602-MUMU awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice.

Tribal Law & Policy Institute

A Native American Operated Non-Profit:

www.Home.TLPI.org



Dedicated to providing free publication resources, comprehensive training, and technical assistance for Native nations and tribal justice systems in pursuit of our vision to empower Native communities to create and control their own institutions for the benefit of all community members, now, and for future generations.



Tribal Youth Resource Center

www.TribalYouth.org



OUR VISION

Envisioning a future where Indigenous youth thrive through traditional life ways

OUR PURPOSE

Enhancing the opportunities for Indigenous communities to expand their potential in protecting and nurturing their most sacred asset – the youth.

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Presenters



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Learning Objectives

Participants knowledge on the following will be increased:

1. The purpose, key components, and therapeutic court process of a Youth Healing to Wellness Court (YHWC) for court-involved youth experiencing alcohol and/or substance use
2. The YHWC outcome goals, selected population, and eligibility criteria
3. YHWC planning map, team member roles and responsibilities and the role of the YHWC steering committee
4. How each of the above is relevant to data and proposed staffing, contracts, partners, and deliverables

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Colville Tribal member Thomas Lezard completed the Colville Tribal Healing to Wellness Court

What is a YHWC?

Purpose

Tribal Key Components

Therapeutic Court Process

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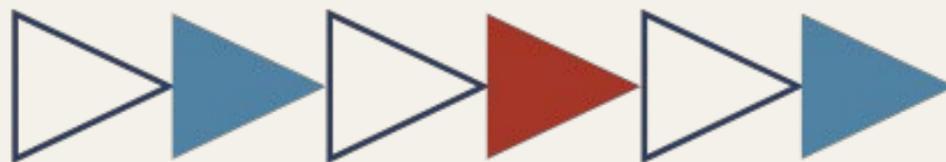


Polling Questions



Polling #1

Your answers are anonymous and we'd simply like to know your knowledge base.



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Key Component 1 of a Tribal Healing to Wellness Court (THWC)

Key Component # 1 – Individual and Community Healing Focus

Tribal Healing to Wellness Court brings together alcohol and drug treatment, community healing resources, and the tribal justice process by using a team approach to achieve the physical and spiritual healing of the individual participant, and to promote Native nation building and the well-being of the community.

- Not simply a Tribal judge ordering a youth to treatment or to cultural activities
- A team-based approach (court-treatment-community)
- Uses a therapeutic court docket with a trauma-informed, strength-based process – looks different than usual adversarial hearing or trial process
- Incorporates culture

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The Tribal Key Components for Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts

Key Component 2

Reporting, Referral,
Diversion, or Transfer

Key Component 3

Screening
& Assessment

Key Components 6 & 7 — OR —

GRADUATION
free to go, no record

**TERMINATION
FROM PROGRAM**
*back to Tribal Court
or state justice
system*

YHWC
DOCKET

YHWC Status
Hearings

YHWC
Team Meetings

Key Components
1, 6, 9, & 10

Key Component 5

Case
Management

Key Component 5

Random
Testing

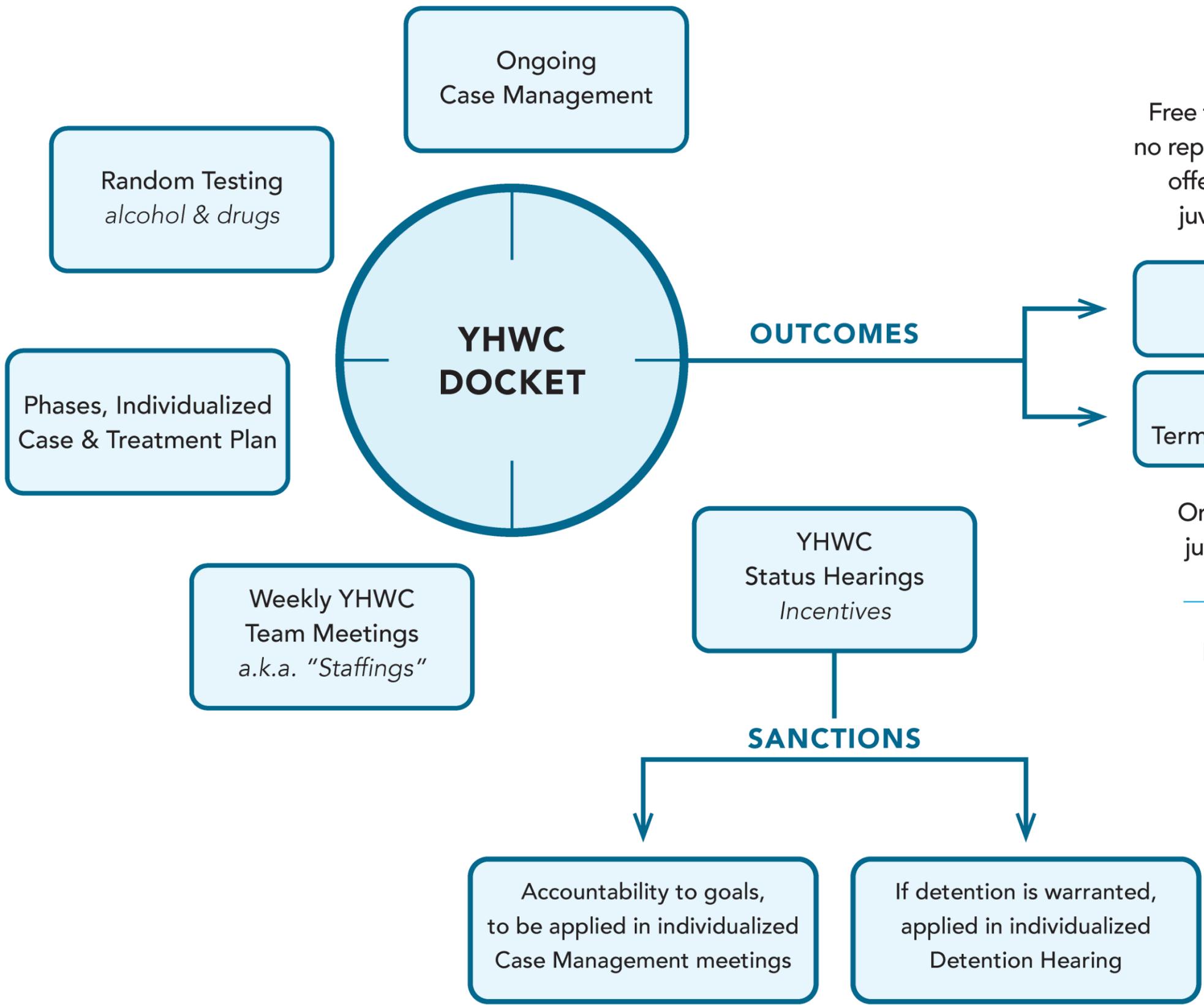
Key Components 1,
4, & 5

Phases and
Treatment Plan

Tribal tailoring may
be undertaken
throughout.

TRIBAL TAILORING

- Restorative Practices
- Elders & Mentors
- Tribal History
- Tribal Education
- Tribal Activities & Skills Building
- Support Groups
e.g. Red Road, White Bison, Wellbriety
- Tribally Adapted EBTs
e.g. in counseling, groups, & workbooks



Random Testing
alcohol & drugs

Ongoing Case Management

Phases, Individualized Case & Treatment Plan

Weekly YHWC Team Meetings
a.k.a. "Staffings"

YHWC Status Hearings
Incentives

Free to go; no court record; no reporting of any underlying offense to tribal or state juvenile justice system

Participant Graduates

Participant is Terminated from Program

Ordered back to tribal juvenile court docket

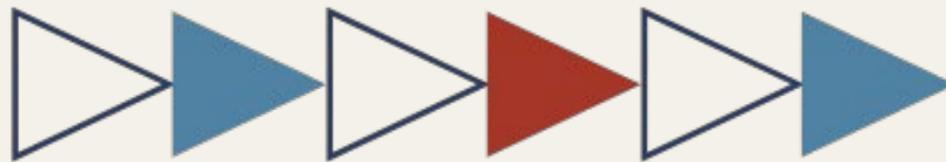
OR

Reported to state justice system

Polling Questions



Polling #2
Your answers will remain anonymous



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Planning for the establishment or enhancement of a YHWC

Discuss what you need:

Data

Staffing

Contracts (or staffing)

Core Team Members & Partners

Deliverables

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Planning for the establishment or enhancement of a YHWC (cont.)

	Moderate to High Risk	Low Risk
High Need	Track 1 Phases Moderate to High-Risk/High-Need <i>Supervision, wellness (case) management, services for criminogenic needs, & SUD/MH treatment</i> 14 months Court, School, & Treatment Data	Track 2 Phases Low-Risk/High-Need <i>SUD/MH treatment</i> 13 months School & Treatment Data
Low Need	Track 3 Phases High-Risk/Low-Need <i>Supervision, wellness (case) management, services for criminogenic needs</i> 12 months Court & School Data	Track 4 Phases Low-Risk/Low-Need <i>Diversion from any court process</i> 6-9 months N/A (Not Funded by CTAS Purpose Area 8)

Discuss the different baskets of data needed and for what purpose:

Data

- To apply for CTAS Purpose Area 8
- To inform YHWC design
- To inform incentives, adjustments, and sanctions for participants
- To report once funded (OJJDP Performance Measures)

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Planning for the establishment or enhancement of a YHWC (cont.)

Discuss critical staff:	Role of YHWC Judge	Role of YHWC Coordinator (w/YHWC Core Team under leadership of YHWC Judge)	Role of Wellness (Case) Manager or Juvenile Probation Counselor
<p>Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YHWC Judge • YHWC Coordinator • Wellness (Case) Manager or Juvenile Probation Counselor 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Serve as team and steering committee leader 2. Hold team accountable to each other, participants/families, community, funders 3. Serve as adult role model for youth 4. Recognize and build on strengths of youth, families, and community 5. Engage youth and hold them accountable through clear expectations and incentives 6. Promote and attend activities and functions 7. Educate, empower, support, and communicate with families 8. Engage parents and hold them accountable for supervising youth and following court guidelines 9. Identify resources for funding, activities, and community service 10. Involve community in graduation 11. Garner support from law enforcement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruit and organize a team of interdisciplinary professionals and community members to undertake and complete the YHWC strategic plan 2. Draft the YHWC policies and procedures manual, handbook, flow-chart, and forms 3. Establish a process for strength-based, trauma-informed team meetings (staffing) and reporting 4. Establish a process for strengths-based, trauma-informed status hearings 5. Establish partnerships to refer youth and for service provision 6. Market the YHWC and educate stakeholders 7. Develop an information sharing protocol 8. Develop an incentives, adjustment, and sanctions protocol 9. Develop an alcohol and drug testing protocol 10. Develop a data management system and process 11. Assist in negotiations and the drafting of inter-departmental agreements 12. Assist in negotiations and the drafting of inter-governmental agreements 13. Screen youth for YHWC participation (or work with other professionals to do so) 14. Orient new participants and their families 15. Schedule and organize YHWC team staffings, meetings and YHWC status hearings 16. Ensure that internal data collection and internal reporting requirements are met for each participant 17. Ensure the team receives comprehensive training 18. Undertake OJJDP programmatic and performance reporting 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Screen youth for substance use and trauma 2. Assess youth for criminogenic risk and need 3. Wellness (case) planning and management 4. Review with youth progress toward goals and the incentives, adjustments, and sanctions 5. Make home, school, and office visits 6. Conduct curfew checks 7. Report observations to the team 8. Refer youth and family to services 9. Monitor referral compliance (attendance) and progress 10. Conduct periodic random alcohol and drug tests, in a trauma-informed manner 11. Manage referral to services and activities process 12. Serve as a liaison between the team, the court, probation, and school staff 13. Educate probation staff about the YHWC

Planning for the establishment or enhancement of a YHWC (cont.)

Discuss critical providers:

Contracts (or staffing)

- Treatment Provider for Substance Use Disorders
- Treatment Provider for Mental Health Disorders
- Treatment Provider for Trauma Disorders

?

Which youth are best served by a YHWC?

YHWC Outcome Goals

YHWC Selected (Target) Population

YHWC Eligibility Criteria

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What are the YHWC outcome goals?

Examples of YHWC outcome goals:

1. Increase the number of Tribal youths who remain alcohol and drug-free
2. Reduce the number of alcohol and/or drug-involved Tribal youths in the state and Tribal juvenile and criminal justice systems
3. Increase the number of Tribal youths graduating from high-school or receiving GEDs
4. Increase the number of Tribal youths living in stable living conditions
5. Increase the number of Tribal youths engaged in alcohol and/or drug-free pro-social activity, including cultural activities
6. Increase the number of Tribal youths participating in job training or employed
7. Increase Tribal youth and family functioning

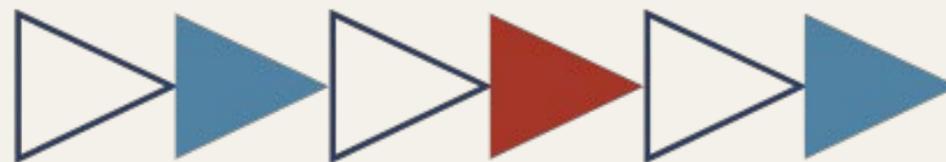
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Polling Questions



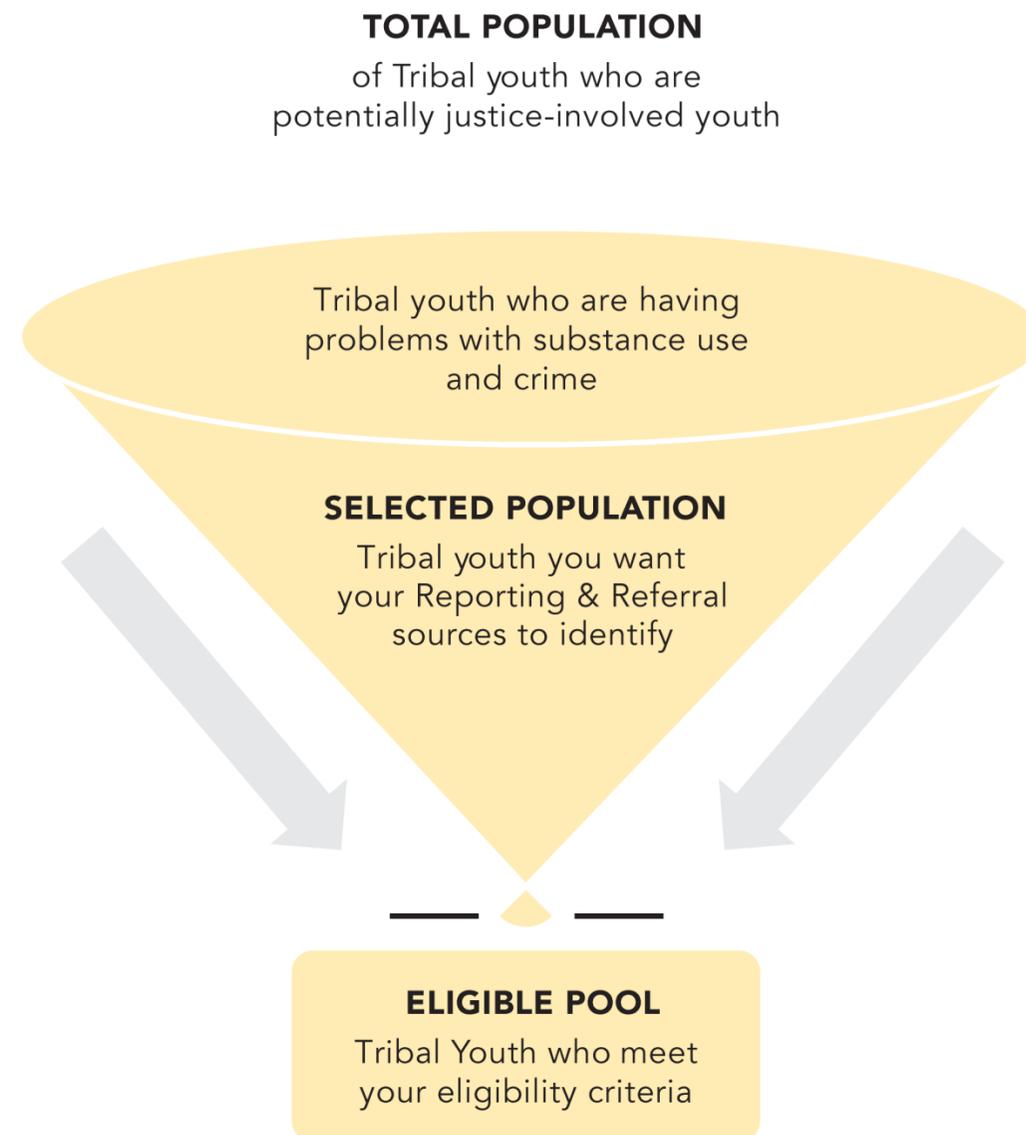
Polling #3
Let's see what you know!
Answers will remain anonymous



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The eligibility criteria that research shows works



Eligibility criteria include the following:

1. Youth with substance use [disorder]*
2. Youth who are 14 years old or older
3. Youth who have a moderate to high risk of reoffending*
4. Not a Violent Offender**

*identified through valid assessment instruments

**CTAS Purpose Area 8 Requirement

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Planning for the establishment or enhancement of a YHWC (cont.)

Discuss critical deliverables:	Establishing a YHWC	Enhancing a YHWC
<p>Deliverables</p>	<p>Deliverables for planning and establishing a YHWC, may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A community strength and needs assessment • YHWC Strategic Plan • YHWC Policies and Procedures • YHWC Participant Handbook • Identify screening and assessment tools • YHWC Incentives, Adjustments, & Sanctions Protocol • YHWC Testing Protocol • YHWC Data Collection and Information Sharing Protocol • Tribal juvenile & wellness code adoption or revision • Inter-agency &/or inter-governmental agreements (MOUs & MOAs) 	<p>Deliverables for enhancing a YHWC, may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing services to YHWC youth participants and families • Develop multi-tracks for different cohorts of youth participants • Update YHWC Strategic Plan • Update YHWC Policies and Procedures • Update YHWC Participant Handbook • Revisit screening and assessment tools • Update YHWC Incentives, Adjustments, & Sanctions Protocol • Update YHWC Testing Protocol • Update YHWC Data Collection and Information Sharing Protocol • Update agreements (MOUs & MOAs) • Data collection system • Process evaluation





The Cherokee Nation Department of Juvenile Justice, Juvenile Tribal Healing to Wellness Court program in Muskogee, OK, consists of four-phases with each phase consisting of treatment and six to eight weeks of activities, including cultural activities

Establishing a YHWC Core Team and Steering Committee

YHWC Planning Map

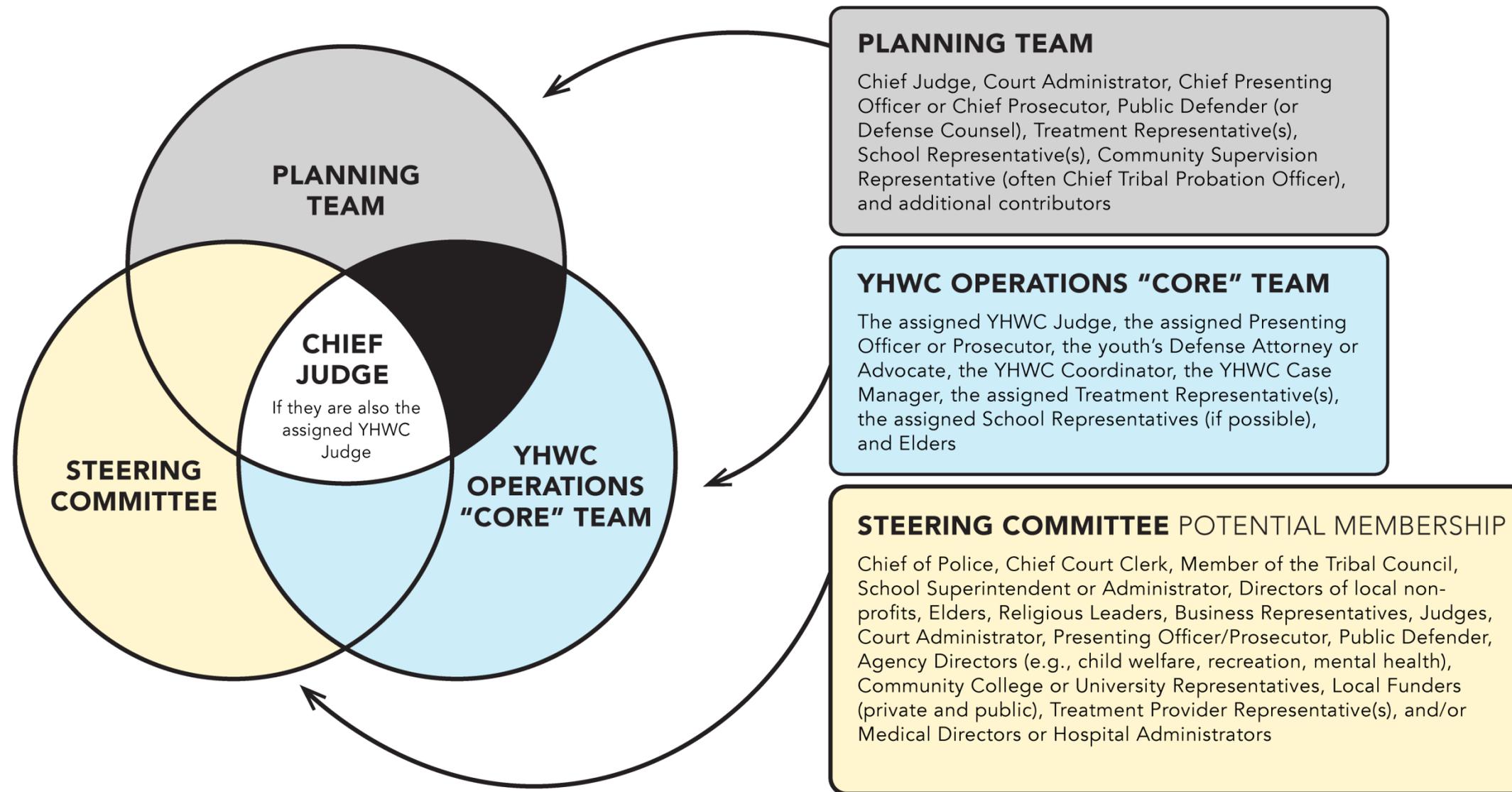
Roles and responsibilities of YHWC Core Team members

Role of the YHWC Steering Committee

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YHWC Teams and Steering Committee



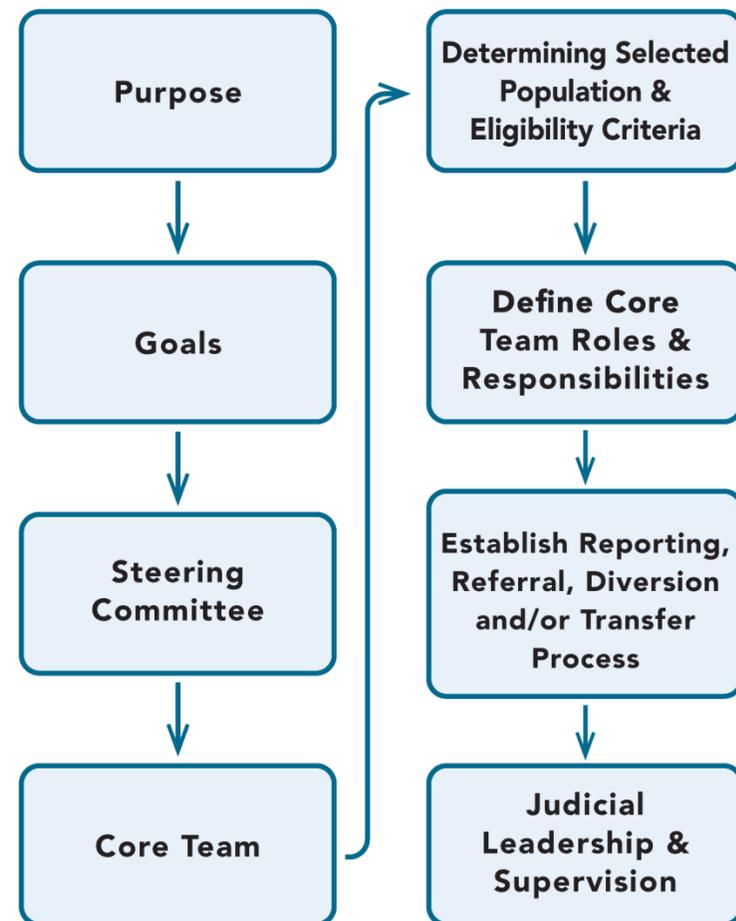
Planning for the establishment or enhancement of a YHWC (cont.)

Discuss critical team members & partners:	YHWC Core Team: (in addition to YHWC Coordinator)	Others: (may be on Core Team)
Core Team Members & Partners	YHWC Core Team (in addition to YHWC Coordinator): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YHWC Judge • Wellness (Case) Manager OR Juvenile Probation Counselor • Treatment Provider(s) • Tribal Prosecutor • Defense Attorneys & Lay Advocates 	Others (may be on Core Team): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Representatives • Elders and Culture-Bearers • Law Enforcement • Others

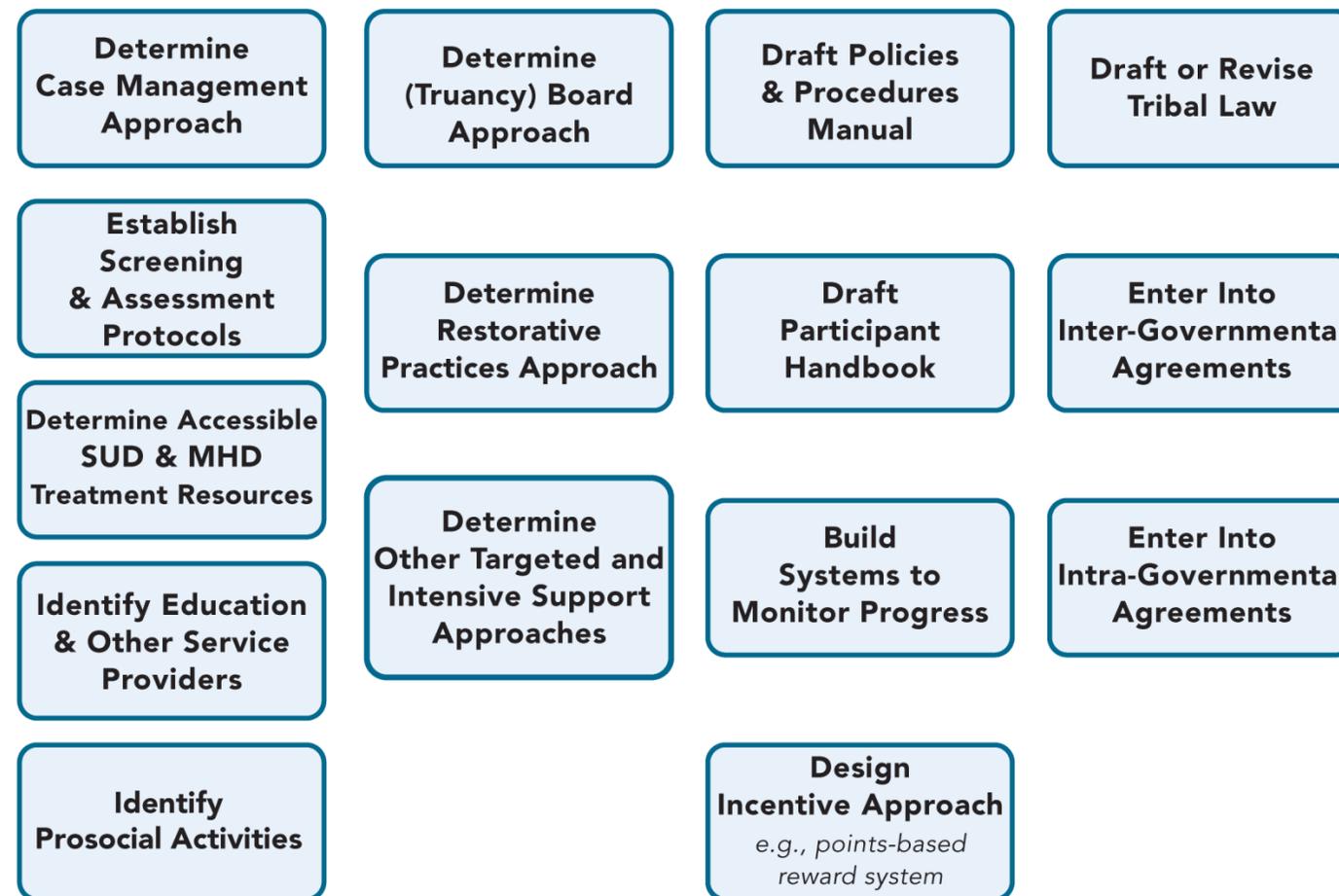


YHWC Planning Map

Preliminary Planning Steps



Other Planning Steps *In No Particular Order*



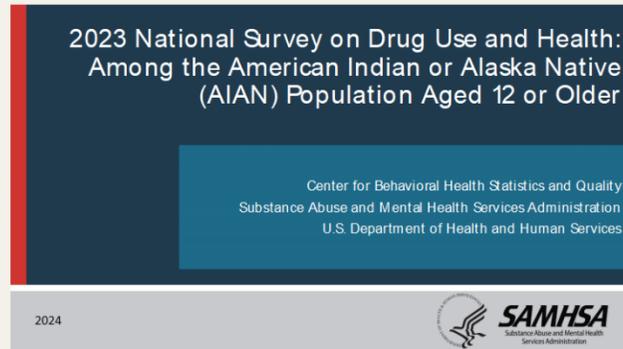
What We Hope You Take Away From This Presentation...

1. The Youth Healing to Wellness Court (YHWC) model was originally designed to serve court-involved youths with assessed substance use disorders, but you may design multiple tracks for youths with varying needs if you identify the tracks (Tracks 1, 2, and/or 3)
2. Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts follow the Tribal Key Components which are for therapeutic court dockets that are team-based and that incorporate culture
3. In order to establish or enhance a YHWC, your planning team will need to consider what data to collect, what staffing and contracts to propose, and which individuals and entities will serve as team members, partners, and steering committee members
4. It is critical to staff a YHWC with a YHWC Judge, a YHWC Coordinator, and a Wellness (Case) Manager or Probation Counselor
5. Employed or contracted treatment providers are trained to treat substance use and mental health disorders, including trauma
6. YHWC team members, their departments or agencies, and other partners may be engaged using inter-agency agreements (MOUs or MOAs)
7. Other critical partners may include neighboring courts, probation departments, and schools, who are engaged using intergovernmental agreements (MOUs or MOAs)
8. Your planning team will also need to set out the deliverables that support YHWC implementation and operations (see the YHWC Planning Map)

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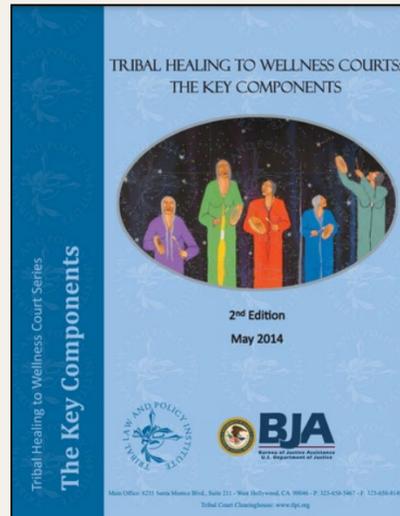


YHWC Resources



2023 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Among the American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN) Population Aged 12 or Older

Drug Overdose Deaths in the United States, 2002–2022 (2024)



The Tribal Healing to Wellness Court Key Components (2014)

U.S. Department of Justice FY25 Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation Notice of Funding Opportunity

<https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-bja-2025-172288>



The National Tribal Health Agenda (2016)



Evaluation

Please let us know what you thought of this training and how we can enhance your experience for the next one!



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THANK YOU!

Closing in a good way.

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Contact Us

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