



## Andrus Center for Learning & Innovation Pennsylvania DPW Sanctuary Consortium

### Summary of the DPW Sanctuary Implementation Project

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*"A traumatic experience impacts the entire person – the way we think, the way we learn, the way we remember things, the way we feel about ourselves, the way we feel about other people, and the way we make sense of the world..." - Sandra Bloom, M.D.*

In implementing the Sanctuary Model, the Andrus Children's Center has experienced:

- Decreases in critical incidents
- Decreases in restraints

In January 2007, the Department of Public Welfare in PA embarked on an exciting and arduous undertaking. Over the course of three months, twenty nine residential programs across the state of PA began the process of implementing the Sanctuary Model with the expectation that this treatment and organizational intervention would create more effective and more trauma sensitive care to the children in residential treatment across PA. These twenty nine sites were divided into three cohorts, each of which attended an intensive five day didactic and experiential training in preparation for bringing the concepts and tools of the Sanctuary Model back to their home sites.

Over the course of the last two years, these twenty nine sites have had extensive coaching and consultation from the faculty of the Sanctuary Institute, using a time structured implementation guide as well as a staff training manual and a psychoeducation curriculum for clients. Although two of the original sites are no longer part of the project due to closure, DPW has extended the opportunity for two new sites, both of which were recently trained and have been moving forward with extra support. The Sanctuary Institute looks forward to many of the PA DPW Sanctuary Implementation Sites meeting the certification standards in the coming year.

### Highlights

- **Incidents and restraints** – Most sites have seen a decrease in critical incidents and prone restraints since adopting the Sanctuary Model.
- **Children's comments** – Children at some of the sites have been reporting to PA State Core Team Members that they are familiar with the Sanctuary Model Commitments and feel that the process is making a difference in their care.
- **Tools** – Most of the sites have implemented all of the tools in some area of their programs and are finding that community meetings and safety plans are helping staff and clients better manage emotions and behaviors.
- **Moving from punitive to positive experiences** – Some sites have changed their more punitive "time-out" rooms into "Sanctuary rooms", moving away from blaming and isolative responses to acting out behavior by clients and toward a therapeutic and effective intervention in which the child gains control over his/her own emotions rather than relying on an external locus of control in a punitive adult.
- **Expansion** – Sites are using the Sanctuary Model to inform development of a variety of child focused programming, including nutrition and fitness as well as youth and media and youth and trade programs.
- **Staff attitudes** – Sites are reporting that their staff are more engaged in the treatment of the children rather than engaging in power struggles that recreate negative dynamics.
- **Relationships among providers** – State Core Team members are reporting that sites are happy to have the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with other providers using the model and feel like these opportunities are helpful.
- **Outreach to other stakeholders** – Sites are reporting that they are inviting and including Parole Officers, school representatives and other community resources and stakeholders to use the Sanctuary Model tenets and tools in order to facilitate continuity for the children in their care.
- **Loss and grief** – Sites are managing losses (layoffs, deaths, terminations of staff, graduations of clients, etc.) by using the SELF model, a drastic change from communication policies of the past, and one that offers a shared language and a forum for the whole community to work through these losses.

### Future Plans

- Sites are working toward meeting the Sanctuary Implementation Standards and achieving Sanctuary Certification.
- Sites are excited to expand their use of Sanctuary to other parts of their program and are thinking of creative ways to use the model in areas of their service delivery.
- Sites are looking forward to continued familiarity in the larger community, and are working with the Sanctuary Institute and their own communities to create opportunities for outreach and education about Sanctuary.