
Missouri DSS Division of Youth Services

*Every young person served by DYS
will become a productive citizen
and lead a fulfilling life.*

Mo. Juvenile Justice 101

- 45 separate juvenile circuits and 24 locally operated juvenile detention centers
- At age 17, a youth is considered an adult for new law violations
- DYS typically retains jurisdiction for juvenile offenders until discharged or until the youth reaches age 18
- Juvenile court can retain jurisdiction until age 21 for abuse/neglect, status offenders, and law violators
- DYS a Division of the Department of Social Services
- Juvenile Court Diversion program administered by DYS for the purposes of strengthening local systems and reducing commitments

Mo.DYS Statistical Overview

- **1,200 youth committed & 2,800 served yearly**
 - 86% Male; 14% Female
 - 85% between 14 - 16 years of age, 8% - 13 and younger
 - 37% minority youth (compared to 17.8% youth ages 10 – 17 in Missouri)
 - 66% from metro areas
- **Committing offenses:**
 - 53% felonies (66% with felony history)
 - 37% misdemeanors
 - 10% juvenile offenses
- **Educational Disability, Mental Health Conditions, Prior System Involvement**
 - 34% educational disability
 - 46% prior mental health; 38% with an active diagnosis
 - 54% involved in prior substance abuse involvement
 - 20% with prior placement in DSS CD alternative care

Missouri DYS Recognitions

- **Hosted visits from over 30 states** focused on humane therapeutic approaches, outcomes, and long-term cost effectiveness
- **Designated *Guiding Light of Reform*** by American Youth Policy Forum finding treatment and least restrictive care as far more successful than incarceration-oriented programs (2001)
- **Named model juvenile justice site** by the Annie E. Casey and Edna McConnell Clark Foundations and National Council on Crime and Delinquency (2003)
- **Annie E. Casey Innovations in American Government Award in Children and Family System Reform** from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Ash Institute (2008)

These articles appeared in the *Columbia Daily Tribune* and the *Jefferson City News Tribune* in 1978 at a time when the systematic de-emphasis of large rural institutions to smaller treatment facilities was taking place.



Changing Systems for Youth and Families

**Changing our end destination often
involves starting from a fundamentally
different place.**

Philosophy/Culture x Practice = Results

Current Challenge of Juvenile Justice Systems

A NEW BALANCE

Prevention Public Safety Treatment



Missouri DYS – Systemic Approach Beliefs Sustainable Practices and Exemplary Results

1. *Leadership*
2. *Organizational culture change*
3. *Highly effective strategy or approach*
4. *Constituency building*

Mo.DYS Leadership Approach

- **Promoting a new vision** for the system
- **Thinking and operating systemically**
 - Understanding and use of system theory
 - Neutrality – accountability vs. blame; avoid “symptom chasing”
 - Broad perspective – structures, people, meaning and purpose, political dynamics and power
- **Leadership and management** – aligning, orchestrating, and engaging (e.g. know names/stories)
- **Accountable/Determined** – “do what it takes” philosophy; proud, hopeful, and dissatisfied

Key State Reforms Supporting Evolution of Mo.DYS

- ❑ Shift in philosophy and practice, cultural change
- ❑ Closing large Training Schools
- ❑ De-centralized administrative structure and continuum of care (5 regions)
- ❑ DYS Advisory Board, Community Liaison Councils
- ❑ Juvenile Court Diversion and TA to communities
- ❑ Legislative (e.g. rehabilitative approach, indeterminate sentencing, dual jurisdiction)
- ❑ Focus on continuous improvement
- ❑ Building and expanding resource base over time

Mo.DYS Beliefs and Philosophies

values driven, view everything through the lens values and what works (practices)

- ❑ ***People desire to do well and succeed*** - even the most resistant youth hunger for approval and acceptance.
- ❑ ***We are more alike than different*** - everyone has fears, insecurities, and basic needs including safety, attention, and belonging.
- ❑ ***All behavior has a purpose*** - behavior is often a symptom of unmet needs.
- ❑ ***People do the best they can with the resources available to them*** – given limited behavioral and emotional options and resources and situations they have experienced, their behavior may seem logical.
- ❑ ***The family is vital in the treatment process*** - family expertise and participation is essential in the youth's treatment process, and can also help facilitate system change within family.

Our Journey: From Correctional to Therapeutic and Developmental

- Fundamentally changing our view of young people and families, moving beyond behavior and stereotypes (youth and families)
- Values/mission as our foundation - unrelenting compassion, determined to find what works (e.g. hard heads, soft hearts)
- Young people and families in the “center” of everything we do
- Quality and engaged frontline staff (non-custodial); with consistent team assignments, low ratios, team standards/accountability
- Program fits youth (family); not the youth fits the program
- Systemic perspective, beyond programmatic/best practice model
- Results (change versus compliance)

Missouri's Approach

- **Small programs, close to home**
 - *Regionalized approach, geographic distribution*
 - *Least restrictive continuum of care:*
 - *\$4 million invested in juvenile court diversion – 39 circuit courts*
 - *Community care with wraparound services*
 - *11 day treatment and family resource centers*
 - *7 group homes*
 - *18 moderate care programs*
 - *7 hardware secure programs*
 - *Allows for flexible use based on youth and family strengths/needs*
 - **Humane environments** – safety building blocks creating physical and emotional safety
 - *Natural home-like environments; basic needs met*
 - *Structure/facilitation; eyes-on, ears-on, hearts-on supervision*
-

Missouri's Approach

- ❑ **“Group systems”** – *therapeutic intervention, youth development, and social-emotional competence through group “circles”, daily group meetings, and experiential group projects.*
- ❑ **Fully integrated treatment approach** – *trauma informed approach focused on emotional healing, self-awareness and cognitive-behavioral, youth development, family systems.*
- ❑ **Healthy marriage between treatment and education** – *creating a therapeutic one-room schoolhouse.*
- ❑ **Universal case management** – *continuity, youth and family advocacy – start to finish.*
- ❑ **Family and community engagement** – *outreach to homes, responsive visitation policies, family therapy and engagement, interface with community liaison councils.*

Mo.DYS Constituency Building

- Statewide Bi-partisan DYS Advisory Board
- Community Liaison Councils
- Parents/families as constituents and allies
- Accountability through empathy, restoration and reciprocity
- Creating an “open system”
- Relationships, relationships, relationships
- Positive stories – “*whatever you focus on grows*”

These articles appeared in 2008 editions of the *Kansas City Star* and *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reflecting the results of years of innovation and reform by the Division's leaders and partners.



Correctional Vs. Rehabilitative

- External Controls
- Lock-up
- External control
- Positional Power, Autocratic, No Relationship
- Inmates
- Majors, Lieutenants, Sergeants
- Correctional Officers, Security Workers, Security
- Family/Community as problem
- Regiment, rules
- Custodial supervision
- Behavioral Compliance

- Safety 1st
- Continuum of Services
- Facilitation
- Healthy Hierarchy, Boundaries, Relationship
- Young people
- Leaders, Managers, Directors
- Youth Workers, Service Coordinators, Counselors
- Family/Community as partners
- Structure, order
- Engaged interaction
- Internalized Change

TRADITIONAL

TREATMENT

Correctional vs. Rehabilitative

Traditional Youth Corrections



Therapeutic & Developmental



Correctional vs. Rehabilitative

Traditional Youth Corrections



Therapeutic & Developmental



Correctional vs. Rehabilitative

Traditional Youth Corrections



Therapeutic & Developmental



Correctional vs. Rehabilitative

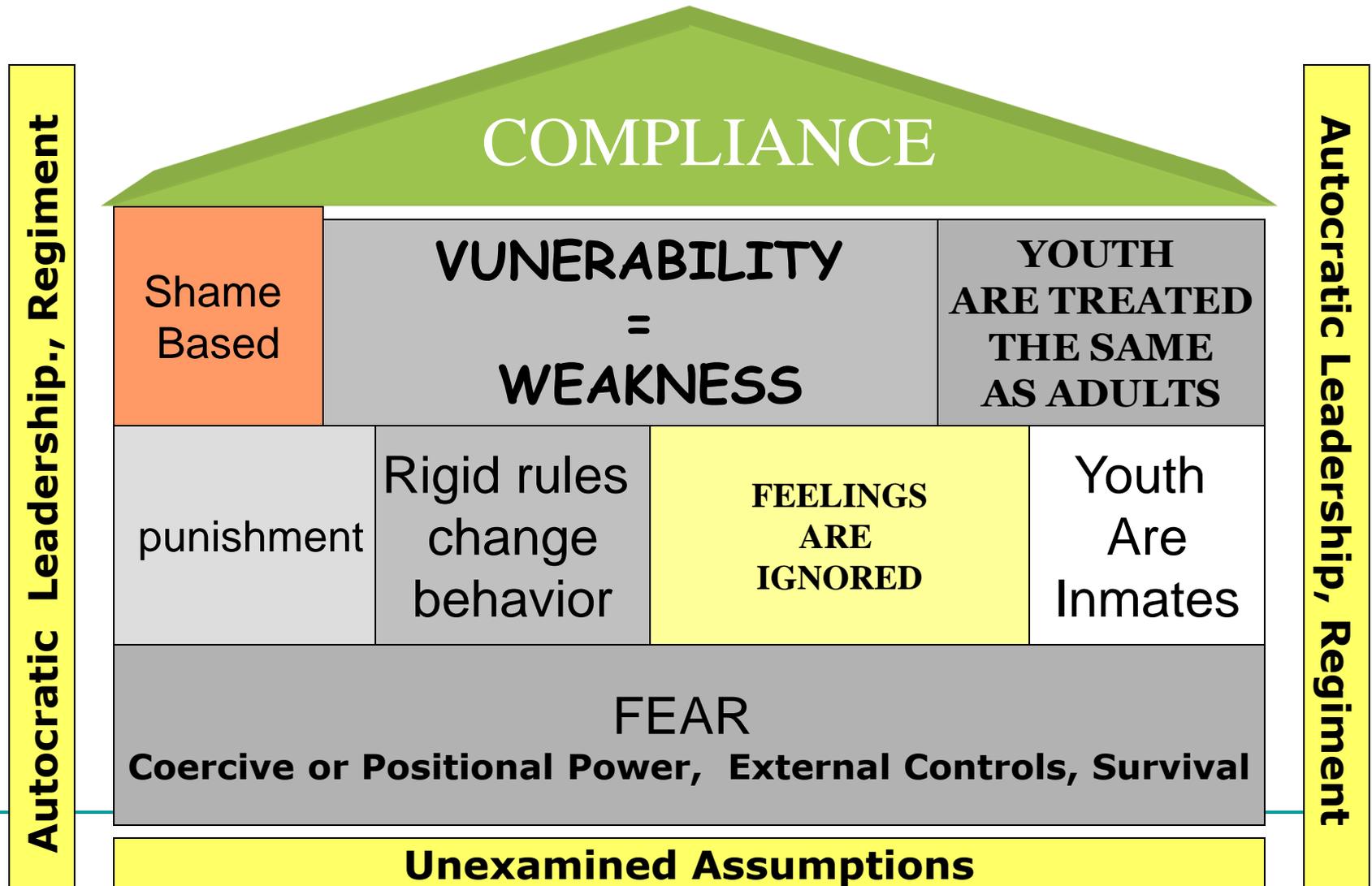
Traditional Youth Corrections



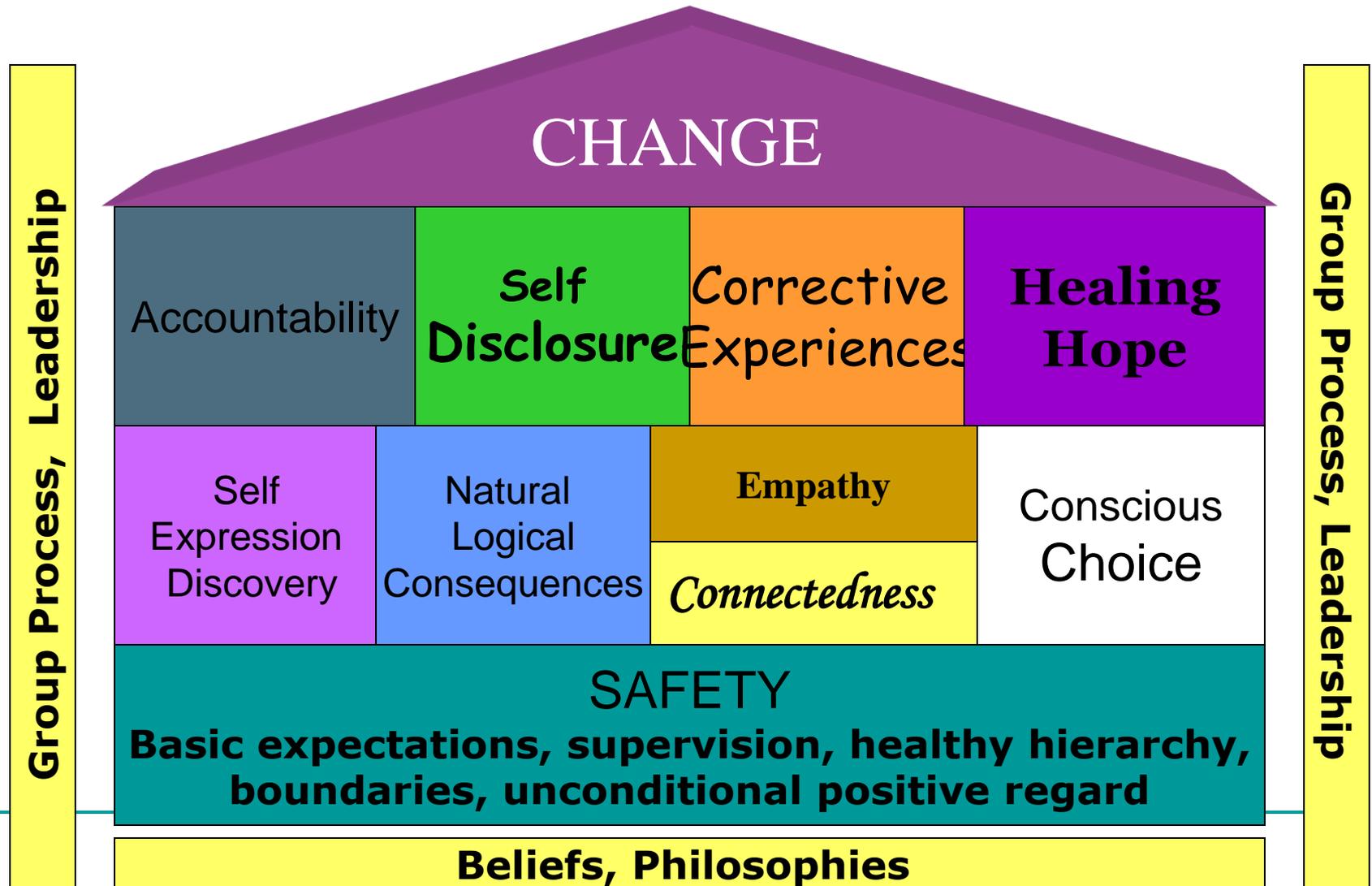
Therapeutic & Developmental



Impact of Traditional Correctional Culture on Practice



Therapeutic/Developmental Culture & Practice



SAFETY BUILDING BLOCKS

Unconditional Positive Regard

Dignity & respect
Strengths-based
Equity, hope

Basic Needs Met

Food, clothing, shelter
Emotional & physical safety
Humane environment
Belonging (you are not alone)
Family involvement

Boundaries & Communication

Clear, caring, firm boundaries
Staff walk the talk
Warm welcome (orientation)
Trust building
(foundation for safe self disclosure)

Supervision

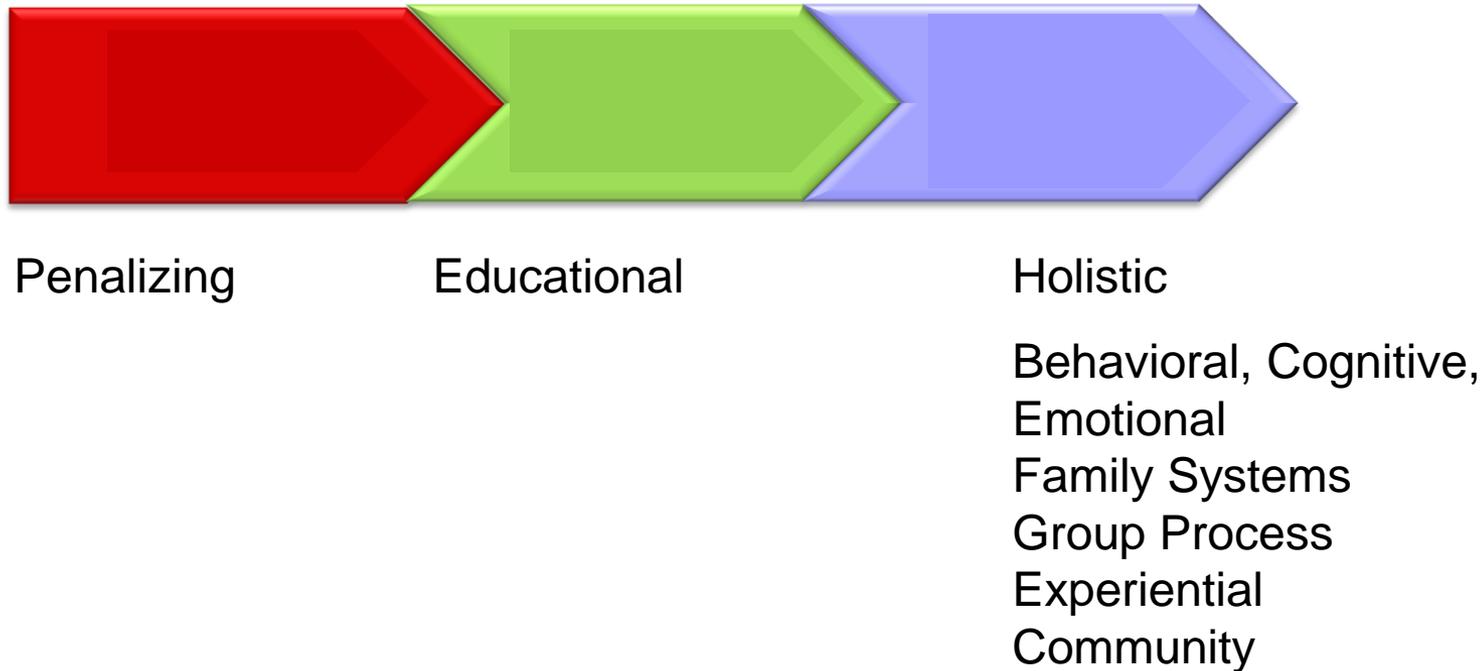
Awareness (Eyes, Ears, Hearts)
Predictability, structure, balance

Basic Expectations

How we treat each other and our environment (no hurting)
Clean, neat, & orderly
Rights & Responsibilities

BELIEFS & PHILOSOPHIES

Approaches to Reshaping Behavior



Punitive Approaches

- Based on the belief that behavior change will occur as a result of punishing the youth's misbehavior
- Interventions have only an arbitrary connections to the youth's behavior and are neither logical, natural, or therapeutic. Implies superiority and control in the adult and inferiority in the youth
- Coerces superficial submission vs changed behavior. Overtime, long-term, sustained punitive approaches have an oppressive quality and which increases tension, anger, hostility, resentment and the occurrence of acting out behaviors.

Behavior Modification

- The use of rewards or punishments to reduce or eliminate problematic behavior. Often used with a point system, checklist
- Behavioral Modification can be a good tool in supporting and reinforcing positive behaviors changes and efforts
- Overtime points systems are counter productive to long lasting sustainable change. The focus is on “external” points vs. internalized change. Youth and staff can expend enormous amounts of time and energy “counting” points and not dealing with the real issues.
- There is a tendency in systems for the point system to devolve into a punitive system of behavioral control vs behavior change.
- Over focus on behavior and behavior modification techniques leads to getting “stuck” on symptoms, chasing behaviors, and does not focus on or get to youth’s core issues

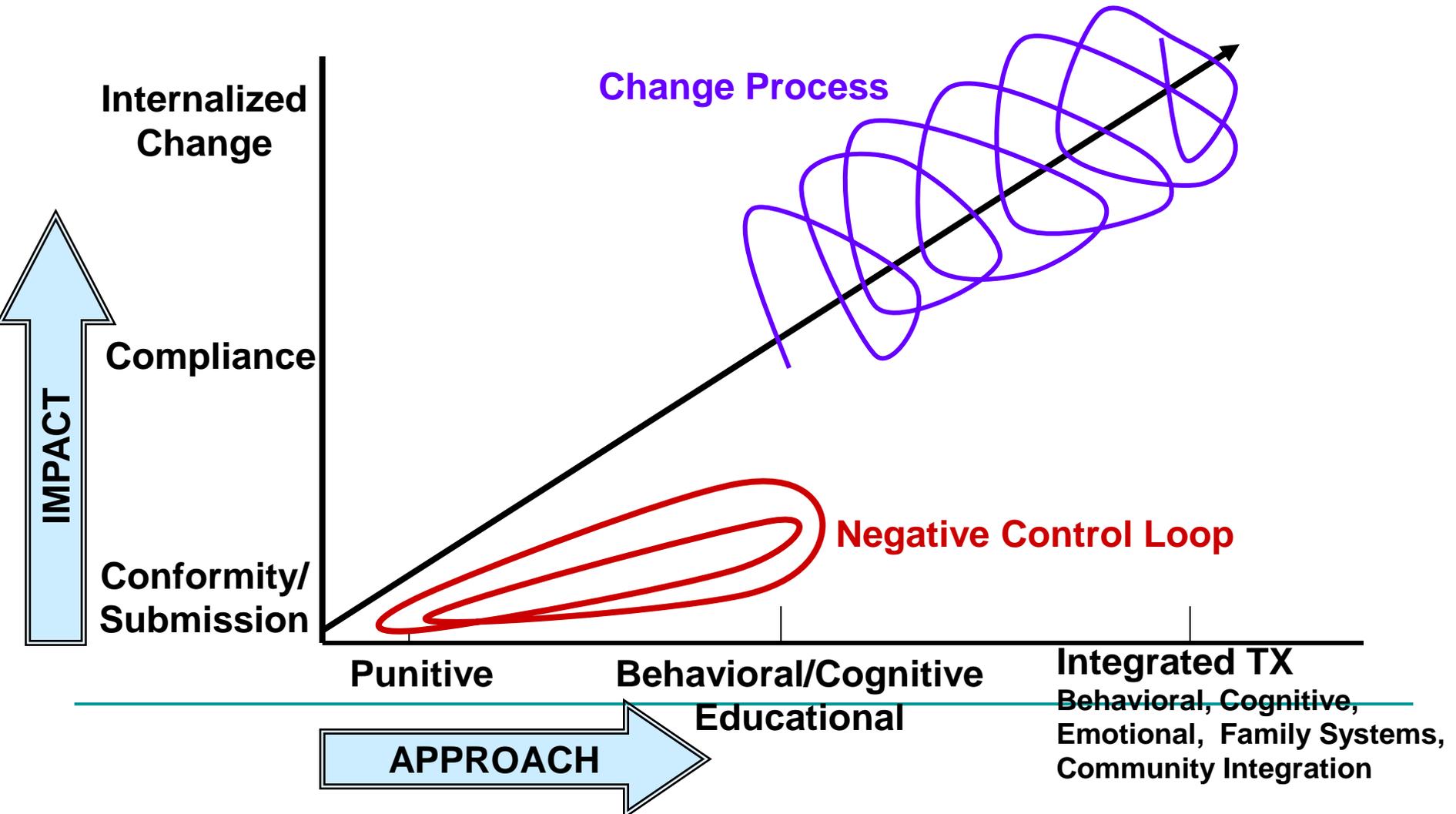
Cognitive Approaches

- **Cognitive therapy**

- Focuses on recognizing unhelpful or destructive patterns of thinking and modifying them with more realistic or helpful ones.

- Does not address emotional or systemic aspects of behavior

Reshaping Behavior: *Completing the Puzzle*



Integrated Treatment Approach

- **Youth participate in process and structure**
- **Focused on building**
 - **healthy peer-to-peer and adult-child relationships**
 - **self-awareness and insight**
 - **skill development**
 - **resolution of core issues**
 - **behavioral change**

Integrated Treatment Approach

■ Key Components

- **“Holistic” approach** - perceptions (cognitions), feelings/emotions, decisions and behavioral choices
- **“Group Systems”** – integration of group process, developmental, and family systems
- **Individual Treatment Planning and Level systems_** - that reflect the change process and provide an individualized “roadmap”
- **Purposeful and Intentional Use of Time_** - structured planning including education, treatment, experiential learning, skill building

Integrated Treatment Approach

Purposeful and Intentional Use of Time (Schedules)

- ❑ **Individualized and integrated educational approach** (“therapeutic one-room schoolhouse”)
 - ❑ **Predictable Daily group meetings** (sacred time, emotional safety, trauma work, self acceptance and accountability)
 - ❑ **Ongoing treatment activities** and group “circles” (educational, conflict resolution, problem solving)
 - ❑ **Regular engagement with family and community** (empathy and giving back)
 - ❑ **Leadership (Positive Youth Development)** and recreational opportunities
-

DYS Performance Measures

Law-Abiding Behavior

- 3 years after discharge 93% of DYS youth have avoided further incarceration, and 67% have avoided further involvement with juvenile justice or adult corrections.

Productive Involvement

- Over 86% of DYS youth are productively involved in their communities through school or work.

Source: Missouri Department of Social Service, Center for Management Information

DYS Performance Measures

Educational Progress and Completion -

progressing toward college or a career:

- ❑ 95% earn high school credits, compared to 50% nationally.
- ❑ 30% earn a GED or HS Diploma, compared to 11% nationally.
- ❑ 40% successfully return to their local school district, compared to 21% nationally.
- ❑ 87% improved in reading and math, compared to 72% nationally.
- ❑ 70% improve at a faster rate than their same-age peers in core subjects.

Source: U.S Department of Education, Title I, Part D Annual Program Performance Report, 2007-08 School Year

DYS Performance Measures

Safe and Humane Environments

- Youth are 4 ½ times more likely to be assaulted in other youth correctional programs than in Missouri DYS.
- Staff members are 13 times more likely to be assaulted in other youth correctional programs than in Missouri DYS.

Source: Research by Dick Mendel (2008) comparing Missouri DYS to youth correctional programs participating in the Performance Based Standards (PbS) process.

Creating Sustainable Change



youth



family



school



neighborhood

Chronosystem

**Historical
Times, etc.**

Macrosystem

Exosystem

Mesosystem

Microsystem



Child

National customs
Cultural values
Mass Media
Social conditions
Economic patterns
Political philosophy

**Intimate & Immediate
Effects:** Family, School,
Peers, Religious
Institutions

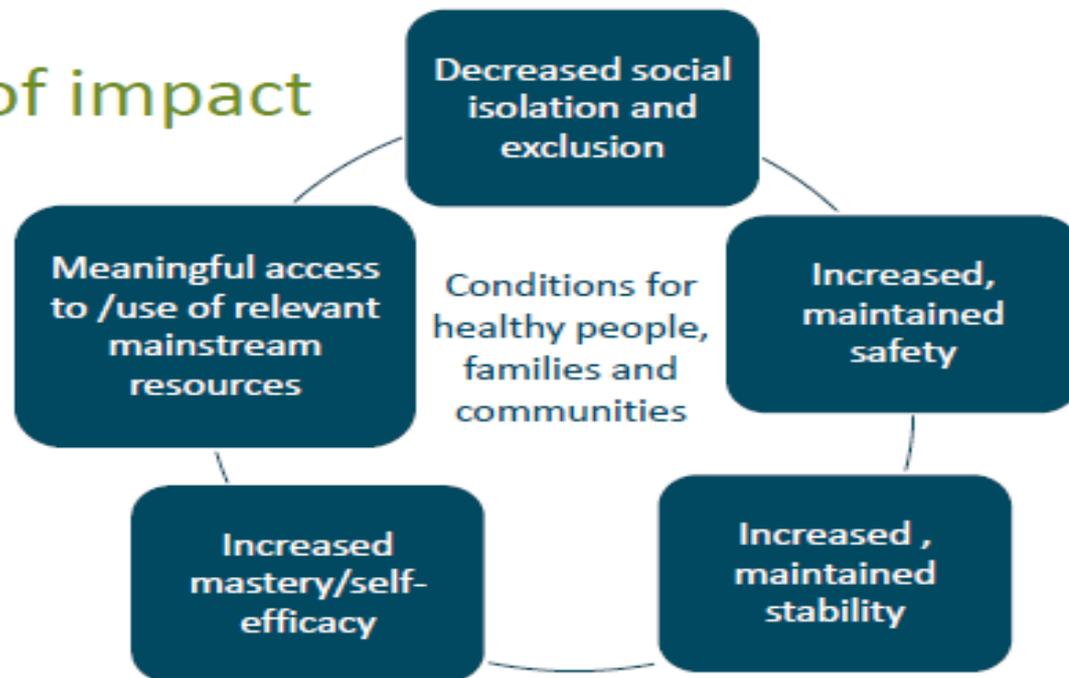
**Extended Family, Work,
Neighbors and Friends
of the Family,
Mental Health and
Social Service
Agencies.**

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model of Development

Five Domains of Impact

what full frame work leads to

domains of impact



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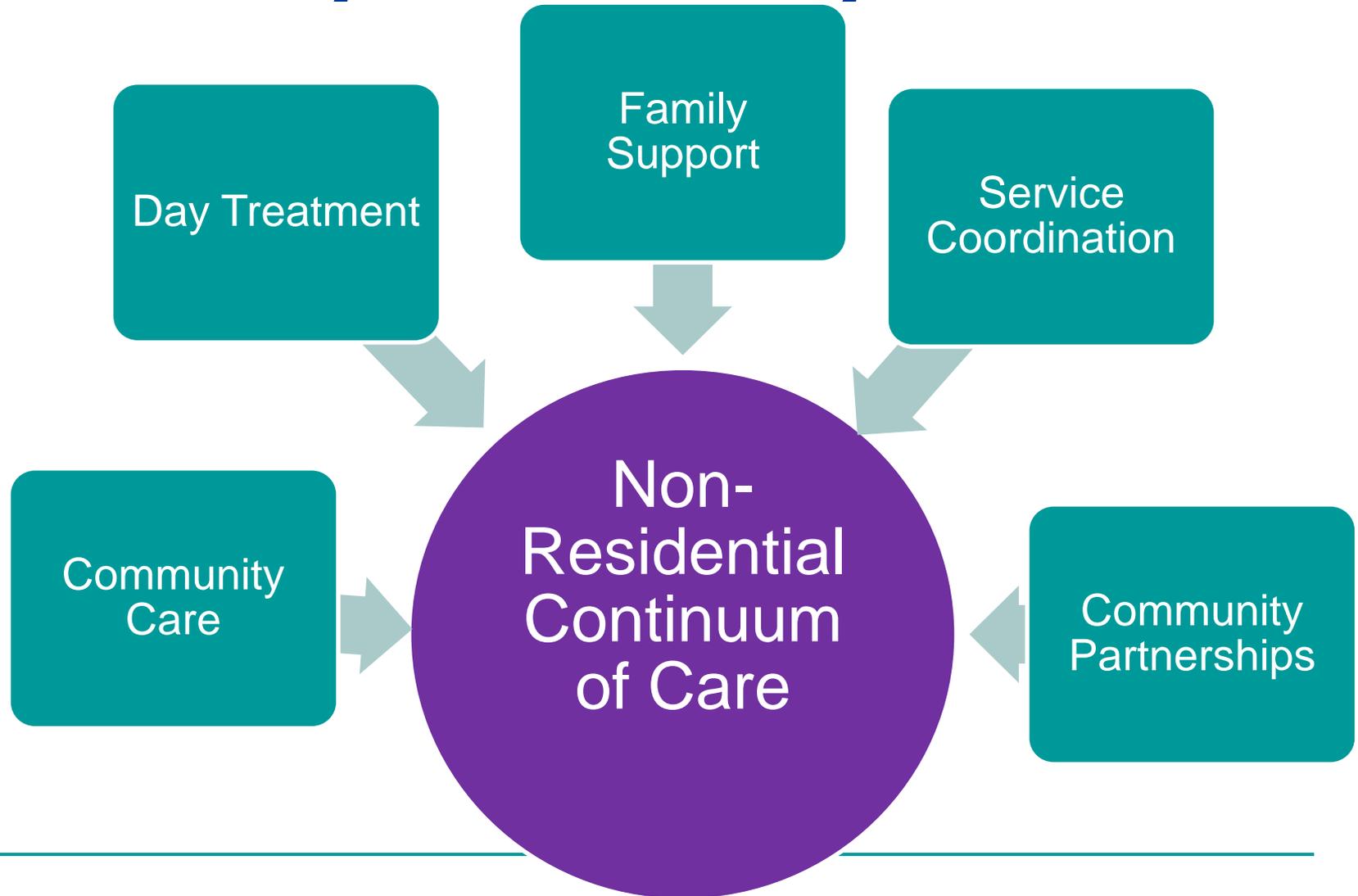
A Broader Vision – Moving from Programs to Systems

- **Layers of support** for youth and families, building social capital
 - **Comprehensive wraparound** services across agencies and systems
 - **Youth and family-driven** services (e.g. youth centered transition planning)
 - **Mobilization of natural helping networks** (e.g. state services comprise no more than 50% of treatment plan)
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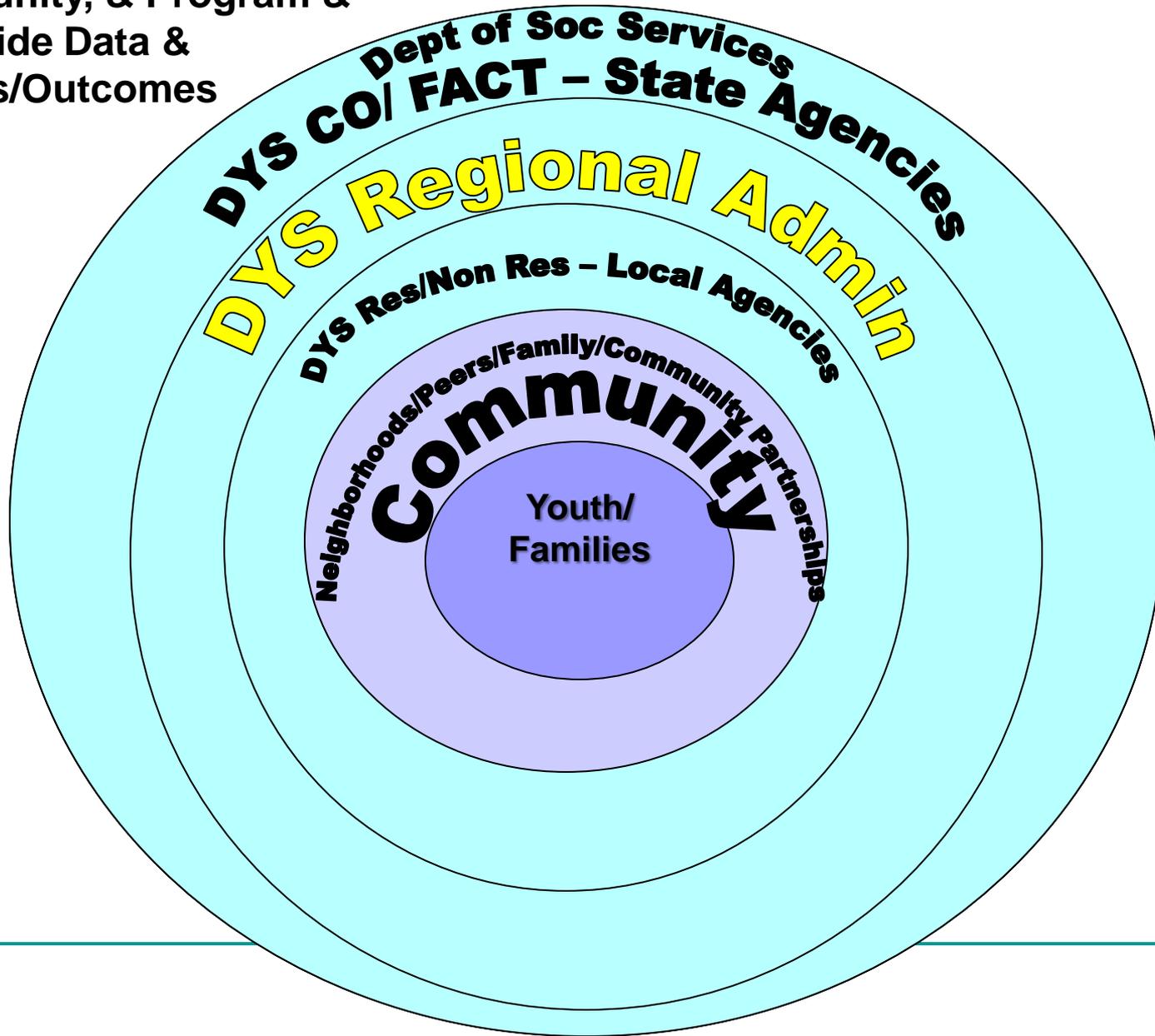
A Broader Vision – Moving from Programs to Systems

- **Comprehensive family engagement** and support (e.g. resource centers, multi-family groups, volunteer opportunities/reciprocity, health/wellness, emergency assistance)
 - **Integration with Family Courts** and Juvenile Court Diversion
 - **Youth development opportunities** (e.g. youth boards/leadership, afterschool activities, productive involvement)
 - **Post-secondary, vocational, and career** services for youth and families
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Service/Program Silos to Community Resource System



The Link Between Teams,
Community, & Program &
Statewide Data &
Results/Outcomes



Coming Soon!



The Missouri Approach



The Division of Youth Services (DYS) is the state agency charged with the care and treatment of delinquent youth committed to its custody by one of the 45 Missouri juvenile courts. The mission of the Division of Youth Services is to enable youth to fulfill their needs in a responsible manner within the context of and with respect for the needs of the family and the community.



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