

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Jim Pillen, Governor

July 15, 2024

Mr. Brandon Metzler
Clerk of the Legislature
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

Subject: YRTC Activities for the Previous Fiscal Year

Dear Mr. Metzler:

Nebraska Revised State Statute § 83-102 requires the Office of Juvenile Services, Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers (YRTC) Hastings, Kearney, and Lincoln to electronically submit a report of its activities for the preceding fiscal year to the Clerk of Legislature on or before July 15 of each year beginning on July 15, 2021. The annual report shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

- Data on the population served, including, but not limited to, admissions, average daily census, average length of stay, race, and ethnicity.
- An overview of programming and services; and
- An overview of any facility issues or facility improvements.

I am submitting this report to fulfill the above requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen M. Stolz".

Kathleen Stolz, JD
Acting Director, Division of Children and Family Services

Attachment

Division of Children and Family Services: Office of Juvenile Services

YRTC Activities for the Previous Fiscal Year

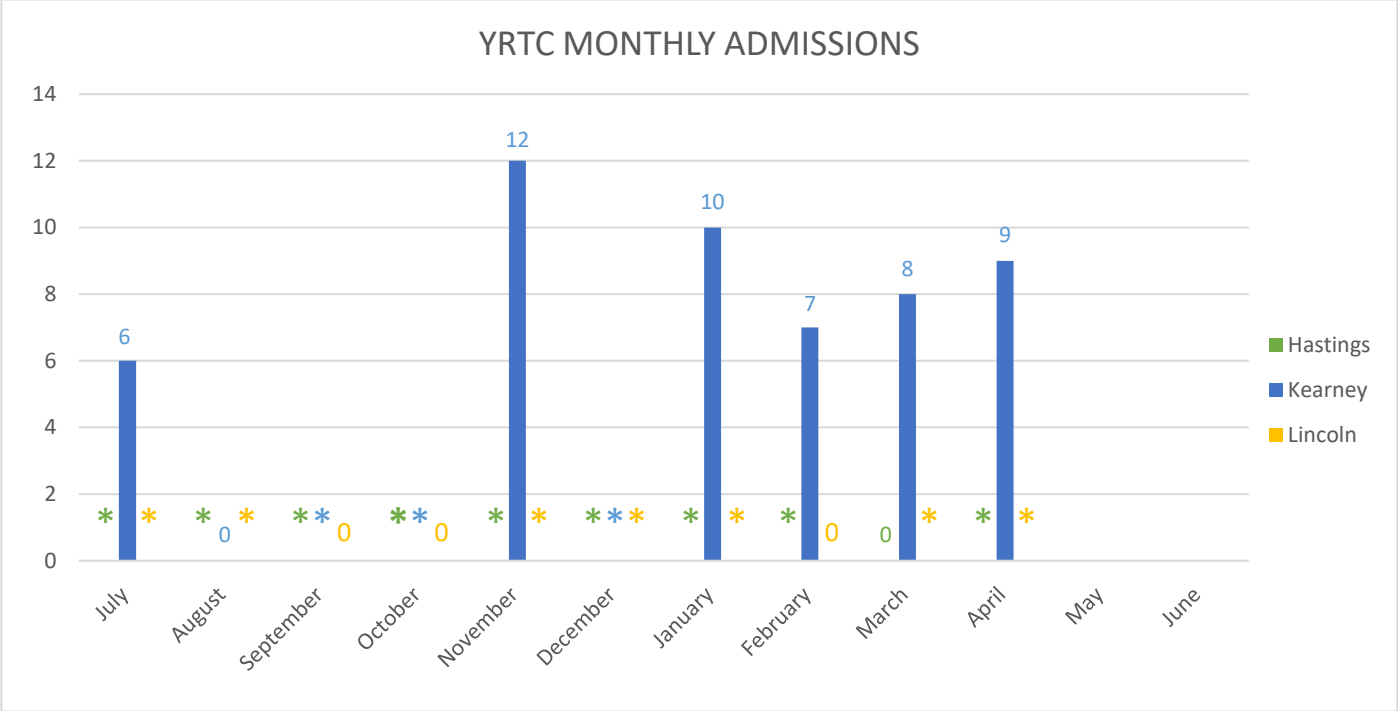
July 2024

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-102

Data of Population Served

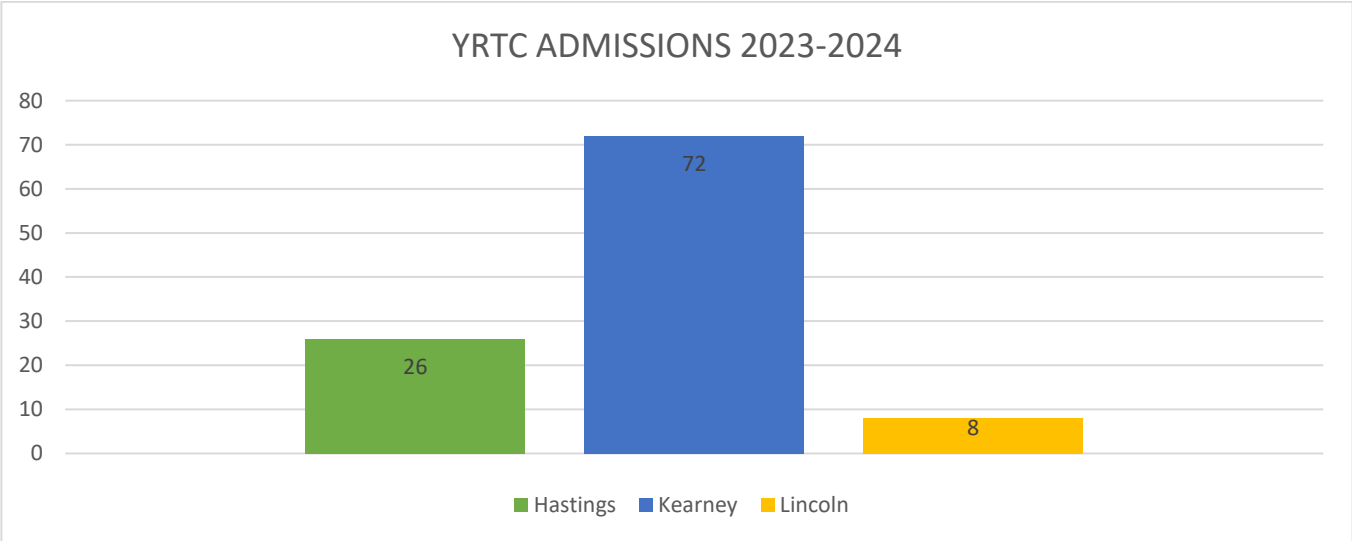
This data is for all three YRTC Facilities: YRTC-Hastings, YRTC-Kearney, and YRTC-Lincoln.

YRTC MONTHLY ADMISSIONS 2023-2024

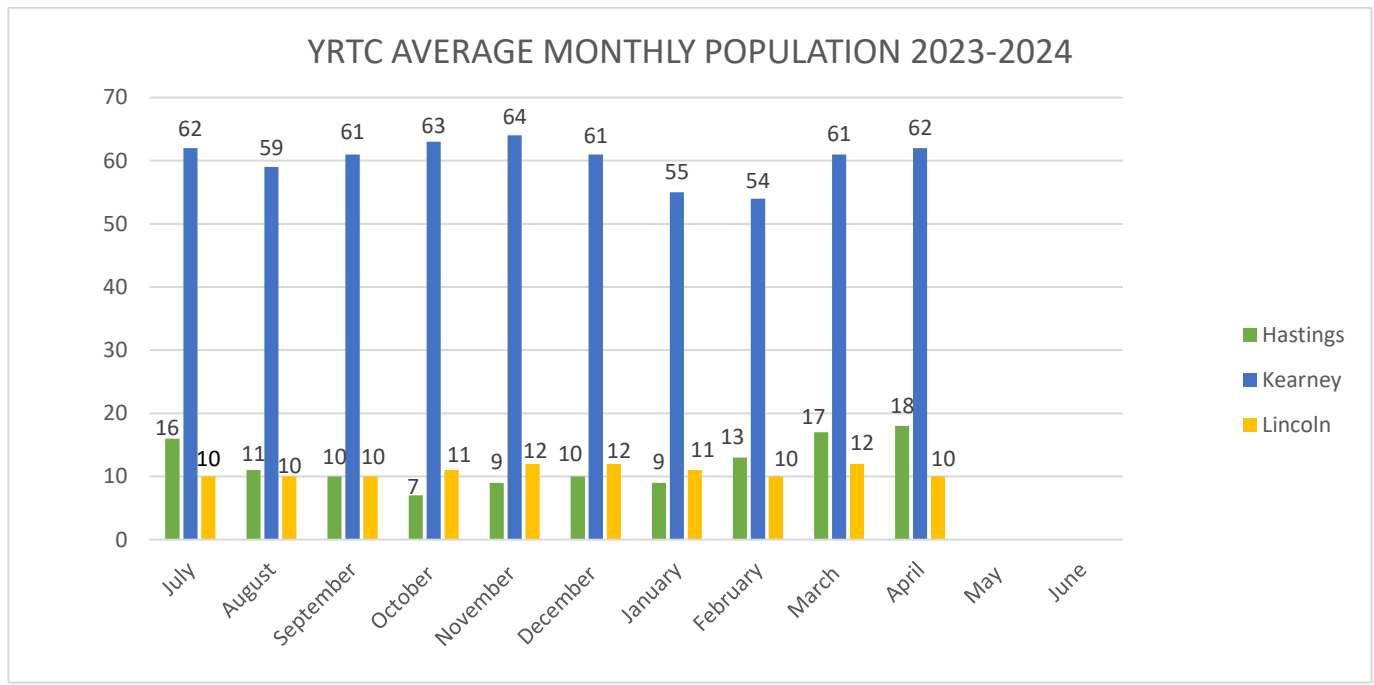


* Values 1-5 are suppressed for privacy protection

YRTC ADMISSIONS 2023-2024

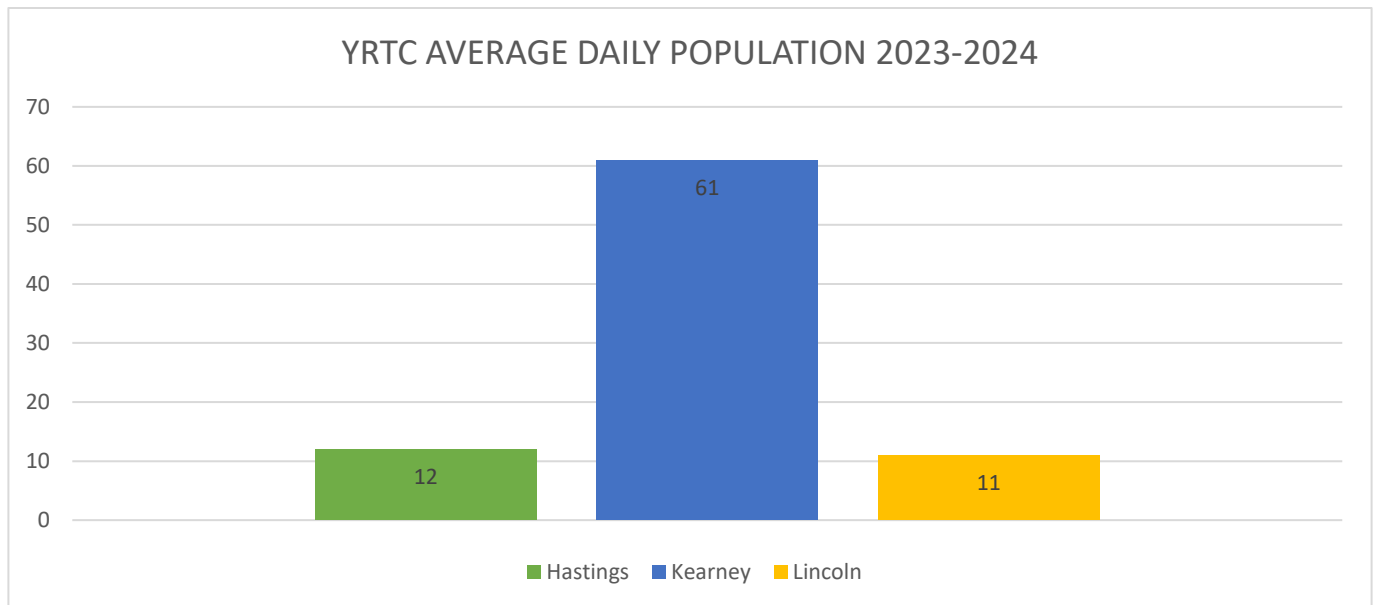


YRTC AVERAGE MONTHLY POPULATION 2023-2024

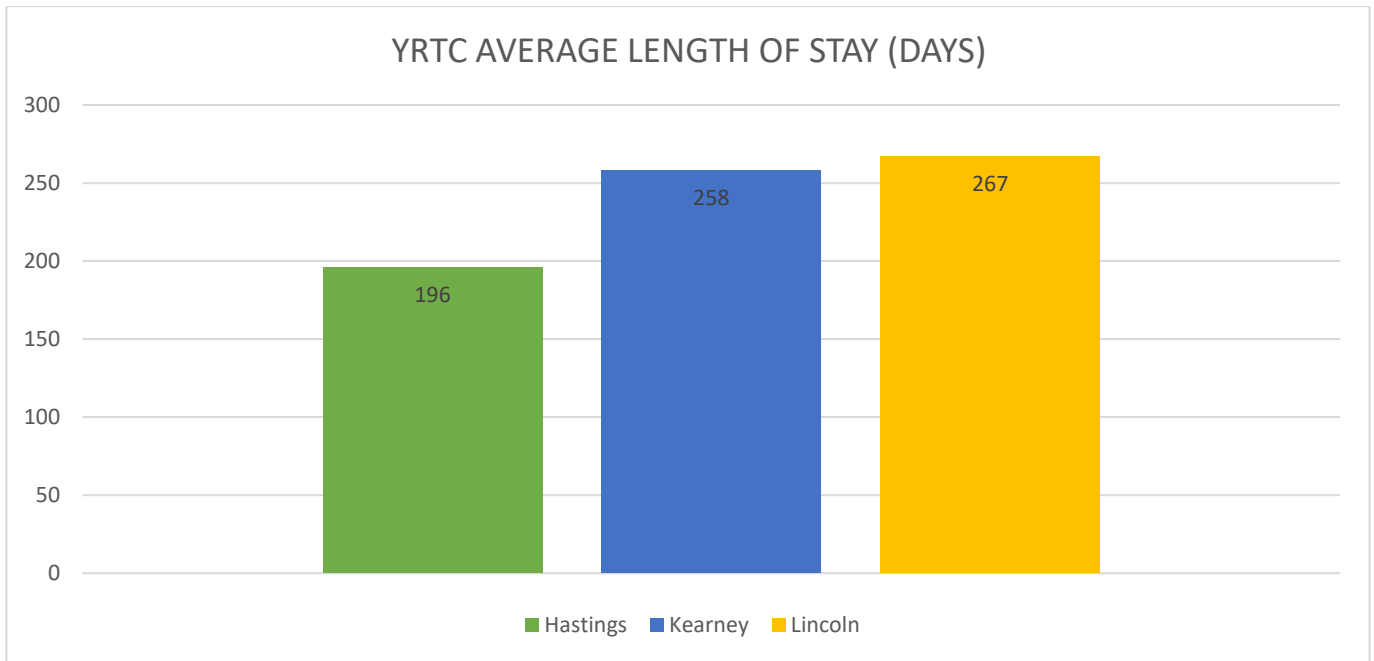


*YRTC Monthly Average Daily Population values 1-5 are suppressed for privacy protection.

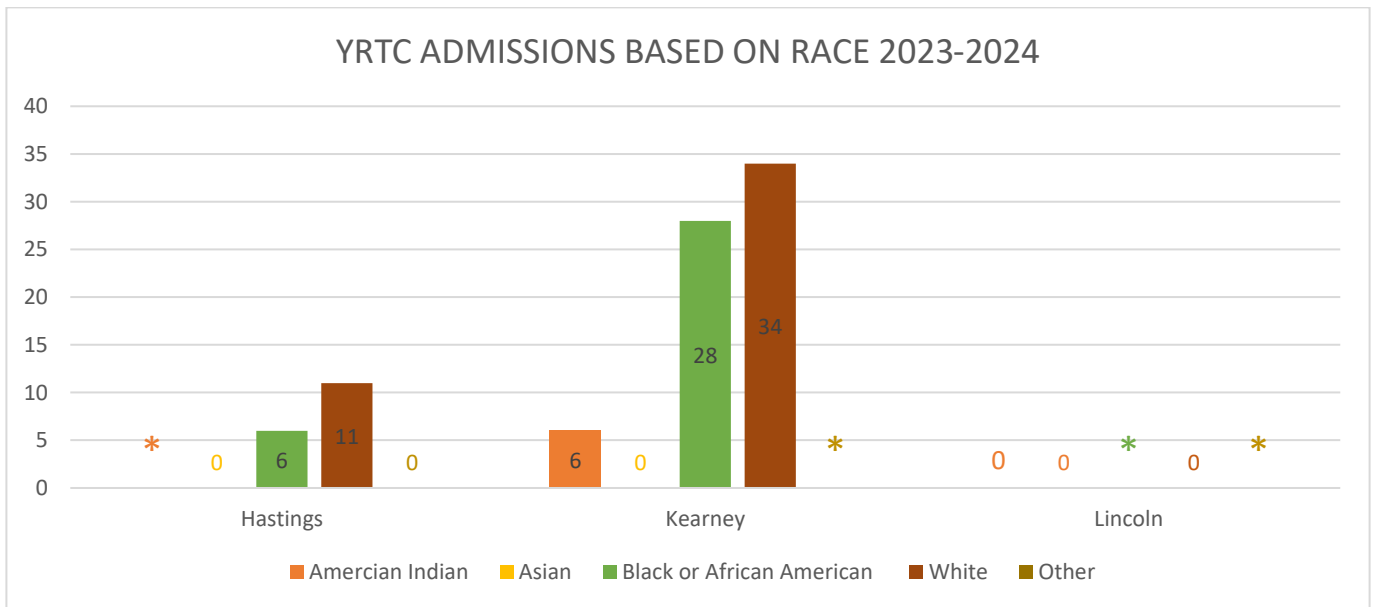
YRTC AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION 2023-2024



YRTC AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY 2023-2024

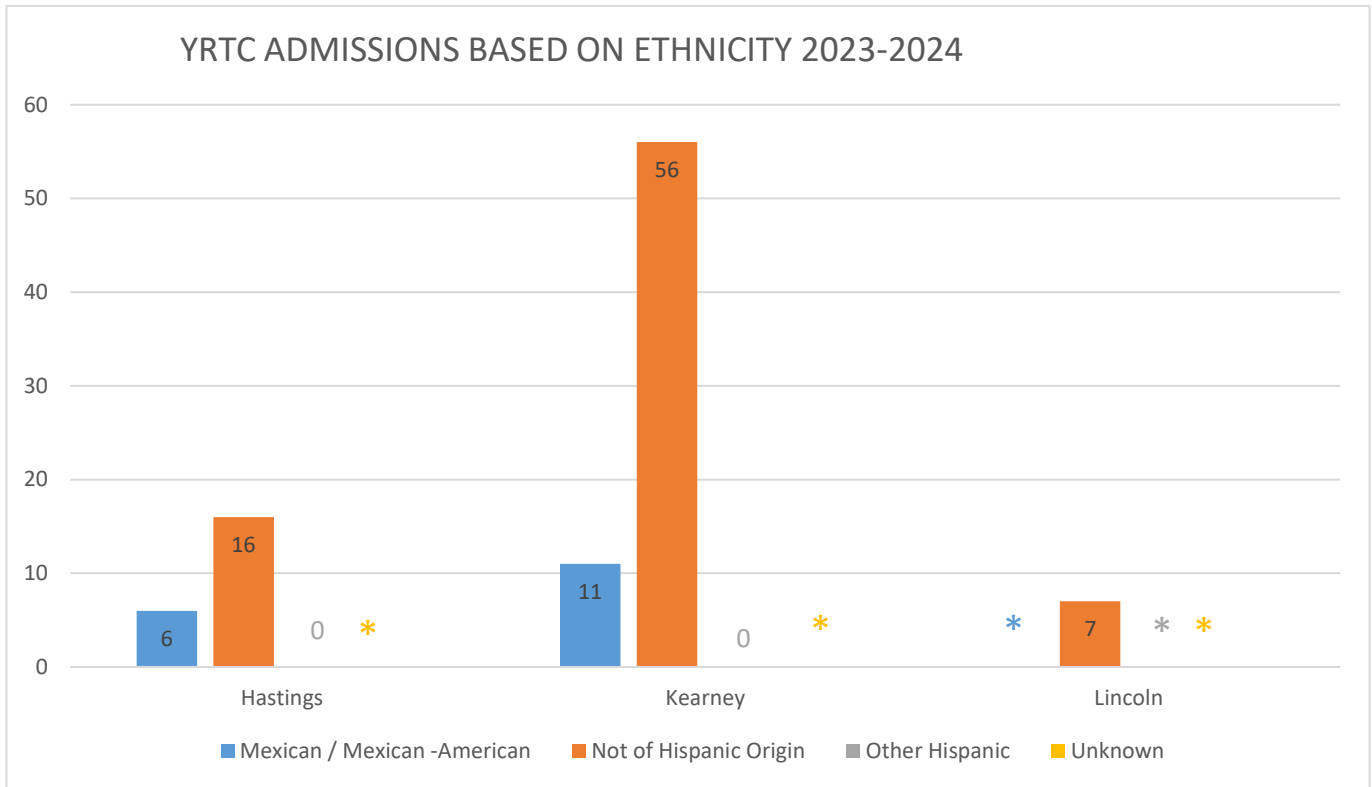


YRTC ADMISSIONS BASED ON RACE 2023-2024



*Values 1-5 are suppressed for privacy protection.

YRTC ADMISSIONS BASED ON ETHNICITY 2023-2024



*Values 1-5 are suppressed for privacy protection.

Overview of Programming and Services

Programming

The Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (ACRA), utilized by YRTC-Kearney mental health practitioners, is an evidence-based treatment approach with positive research findings that work within the framework and structure of the facility. ACRA is a skills-based approach to treating substance use disorders by increasing family, social, and educational reinforcements that support recovery from substance use. ACRA involves three types of sessions: individual sessions with the youth, individual sessions with the parent or caregiver, and joint sessions with the youth and parent or caregiver. ACRA is utilized in more than 270 organizations across the country and is on the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices.

Aggression Replacement Training (ART) is utilized at YRTC-Kearney. This program has been shown to reduce recidivism in the adolescent population. ART is a 10-week cognitive behavioral treatment protocol that addresses three interrelated components: Social Skills Training, Anger Control Training, and Moral Reasoning. Each component focuses on a specific prosocial behavioral strategy learned through repetitive exposure to the material.

Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) is utilized at YRTC-Lincoln. ABA programming includes the evaluation of the youth by a Board-Certified Behavioral Analyst who develops an individualized Behavioral Support Plan based on the youth's strengths and areas of need. The youth is provided hourly feedback and ratings on the goals related to their individual target behaviors, receiving hourly incentive points, which the youth can use to "purchase" desired items, snacks, or activities.

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) is an evidence-based cognitive therapy used to treat many conditions. Staff at all YRTC locations have received DBT training and are incorporating these skill sets into their individual, family, and group therapy interventions.

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) is an evidence-based psychotherapy intervention used to address distress associated with past traumatic experiences. Staff at YRTC-Kearney and YRTC-Hastings include one or more mental health staff who are fully trained in EMDR interventions and are incorporating this into their ongoing therapeutic services for youth determined to be appropriate for this type of intervention.

Love Notes, utilized at the YRTC-Lincoln, is an evidence-based program that focuses on building healthy relationships. The main goal of the program is to establish healthy relationship boundaries and to prevent unplanned pregnancies by providing teens with information to make wise relationship choices. This program teaches skills to be used in all relationships but emphasizes romantic relationships. Love Notes programming is delivered through group discussion, PowerPoints, workbooks, exercises, role-play, and creative activities over 13 sessions. Love Notes groups are facilitated by clinical staff members who have received special training in this curriculum.

Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) is an additional treatment component incorporated into the YRTC-Kearney, YRTC-Hastings, and YRTC-Lincoln facilities. MRT was granted “Promising Practice Status” by the SAMHSA Center for Substance Abuse Treatment in 2015. Treatment is delivered in an open group format, meaning youth can be assigned to the group at any time. MRT is a cognitive behavioral program that seeks to decrease recidivism by increasing moral reasoning.

Trauma Affect Regulation: Guide for Education and Therapy (TARGET) is implemented at the YRTC-Hastings and the YRTC-Lincoln facilities. The U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention endorses the TARGET model. TARGET is a psychosocial intervention that provides education about the impact of complex traumatic stress on the brain’s stress response system and strengths-based practical skills for resetting the trauma-related alarms/survival reactions that occur in complex PTSD.

VOICES is a gender-specific program that has been incorporated into the YRTC-Hastings facility and is also being used with our female youth at the YRTC-Lincoln facility. VOICES is based on the realities of girls’ lives and the principles of gender responsiveness; it is grounded in theory, research, and clinical experience. This program advocates a strengths-based approach and uses a variety of therapeutic approaches, including psychoeducational, cognitive-behavioral, mindfulness, body-oriented, and expressive arts. All activities are designed to be “trauma-sensitive”; the VOICES participant’s journal utilizes a research-based process called Interactive Journaling, which is listed on SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP).

Services:

Education

The YRTCs are comprised of two Rule 10 Special Purpose schools, which have an extension program school at YRTC-Lincoln and one Rule 18 school at the Whitehall facility, each providing a unique platform for youth in grades 9-12 to excel and achieve their educational goals. These four facilities offer a wide range of programs and resources tailored to cater to individual needs. Graduation is a cornerstone of the educational journey at the YRTC, as students are empowered to earn high school credits that seamlessly transfer back to their home schools. The YRTC schools and Whitehall employ a dynamic blended learning approach, combining direct teacher-led instruction with the flexibility of only classes with Acellus and Apex Learning; both are innovative computer programs that enable students to progress at their own pace and level.

With a firm commitment to holistic development, the YRTC schools emphasize both academic and personal growth. Beyond the conventional curriculum, these facilities equip students with essential life skills, offer guidance counseling for college and career pursuits, conduct MAP, ACCUPLACER, and ACT testing, and provide access to vocational rehabilitation and Department of Labor services. Art, physical education, health, and media and technology areas enrich the educational experience.

The YRTC schools understand that each youth’s educational journey is unique. Thus, comprehensive assessments are conducted to determine the most suitable educational path for every student. While pursuing their high school diploma, students can also engage in select college courses, fostering a college-preparatory environment. Importantly, the YRTC schools are attuned to the needs of those

preparing for graduation. The YRTC schools offer GED classes and preparation within a traditional classroom setting for those not in line to graduate and may need another option.

Transition services are a hallmark of the YRTC school, ensuring a smooth progression from their facilities to the next phase of their life. Whether through direct instruction of the core content, APEX and Acellus Credit Recovery, or the availability of summer school, the YRTC schools stand as pillars of year-round education. These institutions are dedicated to guiding youth toward graduation and a future with promise and potential.

Medical

The medical team provides on-site medical services five days a week with 24-hour on-call coverage. Upon arrival at the facility, health-trained staff perform an intake health screening, which is reviewed by a qualified healthcare professional. A member of the nursing team completes a Comprehensive Nursing Appraisal within the first seven days of a juvenile's arrival at the facility.

All juveniles receive a physical examination by a medical doctor within the first 14 days of arrival at the facility. If a juvenile has a chronic medical diagnosis, it is addressed on-campus through routine assessment and specific treatment plans. Specialty referrals are ordered as indicated by contractual physicians based on individual needs. Based on individual treatment plans, the contractual dentist examines juveniles within 14 days of admission and as needed. Juveniles will also have on-site dental cleanings or at the nearest exam office every six months. The contractual optometrist provides juveniles with eye exams as needed and on an annual basis. Ongoing routine visits or non-emergent illnesses and injuries are seen by one of our primary care providers weekly during a recurrently scheduled clinic visit facilitated by the medical team. Specialty appointments are scheduled on a referral basis, which may include orthopedic care, complicated dental procedures, physical therapy, and diagnostic procedures.

All juveniles may initiate requests for health services on a day-to-day basis using a Health Call Form. Should a juvenile need medical care for urgent or emergency situations when a doctor is not on campus, treatment is provided off-campus. Twenty-four-hour emergency medical, dental, and mental health services are available for each juvenile. Juveniles' medical histories and information are requested through a questionnaire sent to each juvenile's parents/guardians by mail. The medical department welcomes these forms back from the parents and/or guardians so that nursing staff may become aware of any past, current, or ongoing health problems that the juvenile may not have reported during the Nursing Health Appraisal. Juveniles' immunization records are reviewed to ensure they are up to date on immunizations, per regulations. It is also a goal of the medical department to have juveniles up to date on both required and non-required vaccinations, such as vaccines for the Human Papilloma Virus, Hepatitis A, Influenza, COVID-19, and Meningitis. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, through the State of Nebraska, is utilized for youth without private insurance. All immunization records are entered and/or updated in the Nebraska State Immunization Information Systems (NESIIS) to promote continuity of care.

Comprehensive health care services start the moment the juvenile arrives at the facility and are provided throughout their stay by licensed nurses and other health care providers. Upon discharge from the facility, a comprehensive Transfer/Discharge Summary is completed on each juvenile to include items such as current medication list, medical and mental health diagnoses, dates of last medical, dental, and vision exams, and any scheduled medical follow-up needs. This information is also entered into the Nebraska Family Online Client User System (NFOCUS).

Overview of any Facility Issues or Facility Improvements

YRTC-Hastings

- I. A greenhouse was installed and is now fully functional.
- II. A shed was built to protect the heating unit from the elements.
- III. Exterior cleanup is underway, including the removal of dead and dying trees from the property.
- IV. The temporary building that was installed for DHHS offices on the northeast side of campus has been removed, and the DHHS Office has been relocated to a more permanent setting.
- V. An Electronic Medication Administration Record (EMAR) system was implemented.

YRTC-Kearney

- I. A new phone system with ALLO was installed throughout campus.
- II. New internet lines are being installed in the school to improve internet speed and accessibility for educational purposes.
- III. The removal of all dead or dying trees from campus was completed.
- IV. An Electronic Medication Administration Record (EMAR) system was implemented.
- V. The Morton Living Unit has been cleaned out and vacated. Demolition of the building is scheduled to begin in the Fall of this year (2024).

YRTC-Lincoln

- I. An Electronic Medication Administration Record (EMAR) system was implemented.
- II. YRTC-Lincoln is a leased facility from Lancaster County; all facility issues or improvements are addressed by Lancaster County.