

# *Academy Programs*

## *Annual Report*

*2022*



*Youth Academy*

*Yore Academy*

*YALE Academy*

2022 has likely been the most difficult year the Academy has experienced since its expansion in 2009. In addition to the difficulty in maintaining program fidelity while only maintaining a minimum number of veteran staff up to the challenge, programming strategies that were created out of necessity during the pandemic proved harder to eradicate than previously thought. The continued inability to recruit a full staffing pattern is proving to be a challenge that has taken a seemingly insurmountable toll on our most committed and veteran staff, as well as caused excessive attrition among the direct-care ranks.

As we have done during times of struggle and challenge throughout our history, we looked to our beacon treatment philosophy, Re-ED, for guidance on how to succeed in our work with the kids in our care without regard to the challenges we were facing. Throughout the course of 2021, we were only able to effectively maintain the highest possible standard of care for our students solely due to the resolve and flexibility of our management, leadership, and adjunct staff with a strong commitment to the ideals of Re-ED and commitment to the kids in our care,

Nicholas Hobbs, the founder of Project Re-ED, referred to the Teacher/Counselor as the “heart of Re-ED”. He would go on to explain that “most if not all the full-time professional workers in a Re-ED school are teacher-counselors. They may perform special functions, as that of school principal, but they are teacher-counselors by profession.” (Hobbs, 1982, p. 92). By embracing the tenets of this philosophy, we were able to engage staff at all levels to fill in the gaps created by the lack of a full staffing pattern. The Director of Operations worked as Teacher/Counselor in one of our most difficult groups for four weeks during the summer of 2022 and additionally assumed Team Leader shifts multiple times per week throughout the course of the year. Our Director of Quality Assurance worked as a Teacher/Counselor, Night Attendant and Team Leader on many occasions. Our Director of Admissions worked Team Leader and Teacher/Counselor shifts frequently throughout the course of the year. Our Deputy Director of Operations continues to cover both Team Leader and Teacher/Counselor duties in addition to her role and responsibilities for leading the program. Program Directors work consistently in roles outside of their routine job duties. Team Leaders, Case Managers, therapists, cooks, maintenance personnel, medical transporters and the Nurse have all routinely assumed whatever duties that have been necessary to ensure the Academy continues to maintain a safe and therapeutic environment for the kids placed in our charge.

Although it has been the high degrees of flexibility and commitment among our staff that has allowed us to continue to meet the challenges we have faced over the course of the past year, the struggle has been extremely taxing on our staff. While we all have risen to the challenges of an absence of available staff, and have an appreciation for the value in having veteran staff working more closely with our student body in accordance with Hobbs’ notion that we are all Teacher/Counselors, time away from our full-time positions has created new deficits in other areas of our work. Adjustments, and balance in our adjustment, will be essential in the successful planning to address the challenges we will be facing as we move into 2023.

In his efforts to create and define the new professional position of Teacher/Counselor during the early days of Project Re-ED, Nicholas Hobbs stated that he “wanted to be able to use staff with maximum flexibility; thus, day teacher-counselors, night teacher-counselors, liaison teacher-counselors, and administrators should be interchangeable, having had the same professional preparation.” (Hobbs, 1982, p. 88). In this regard, we have been able to experience the benefit of the Academy’s preference for hiring and promoting from the ranks of the Teacher/Counselor. As a result, all leadership and management staff possessed the experience necessary as the need arose for them to return to their roots and pick up their clip boards once again. In so doing, the Academy has been effectively able to maintain the level of service we offer to our communities without much interruption as other providers in our state have been required to scale back services in response to logistical difficulties.

## **The 2022 Academy Programs Annual Report:**

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- Average Daily Census and Occupancy Rate
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## Academics

This year was one of growth and renewal as we made the adjustments necessary to provide our students the best possible education in an ever changing environment. In response to successful global efforts to understand and control the spread of Covid-19 contamination, our students were no longer contained to a designated classroom throughout the day. Instead, we were able to revert to a traditional rotation in which students travel to each class according to the group's schedule. Students and teachers remained vigilant and sanitized appropriately throughout the school day.

The school welcomed Principal Mike Ferguson after our former principal's retirement in early 2022.

Despite the changes, our school continues to be the highest academic performing school among all WVDE residential on-grounds schools since we completed our first year in 2008-2009.

This year, nearly 500 credits were earned towards high school graduation. Despite a statewide change in the High School Equivalency testing platform which temporarily halted all HSE testing, we still had 5 high school graduates via the Option Pathway. We also had 3 students who graduated traditionally, bringing our total to 8 graduates in 2022.

Eight credits are available to be earned during the traditional school year.

- Five core subjects of PE, Math, English, Science, and Social Studies
- Special Education and Option Pathway
- Electives include but are not limited to the following: Automotive Technology (Students are able to earn a National certification as a student ASE Certified Mechanics), Facilities Maintenance, Career Integrated Experiential Learning, Communications, Geography, Piano, Art, Music Appreciation, Health, Fitness, Computer Applications, Psychology, Sociology, Medical Terminology, Parenting, Child Development, Criminal Justice, Test Strategies, Journalism, and Virtual School programming.

A full college- and career-based summer school is offered in which students can earn up to two credits towards high school graduation (the majority of public-school systems do not offer summer school). Our summer curriculum is designed to be "hands on learning," and our teachers cover all 16 career clusters as outlined by CFWV. Students are also provided opportunities to meet a variety of speakers from nearby colleges and industries.

All student grades, transcripts, etc. are kept on the statewide public school computer system, "WVEIS," (West Virginia Education Information System) which makes the transfer of student data for transition back to public schools immediate and seamless.

We are a Federal "Title I" school which enables us to receive federal funding to run academic programs for at-risk children. This includes the following: two tutors, a full-time Reading Intervention Specialist, a full-time Math Intervention Specialist, and a full-time Transition Specialist who provides discharge transition services for up to 12 months.

Our Automotive Technology CTE program and our Facilities Maintenance CTE program enable our school to participate in the Option Pathway program which increases opportunities to earn a high school

diploma through alternative methods. Our Automotive Technology program has received commendations for the effective implementation of Simulated Workplace initiatives.

Auto Tech students earn national ASE Student Certification in multiple areas of auto technology. This year we had two students earn ASE certifications. This certification is recognized as the industry standard for mechanic competency in the automotive repair industry.

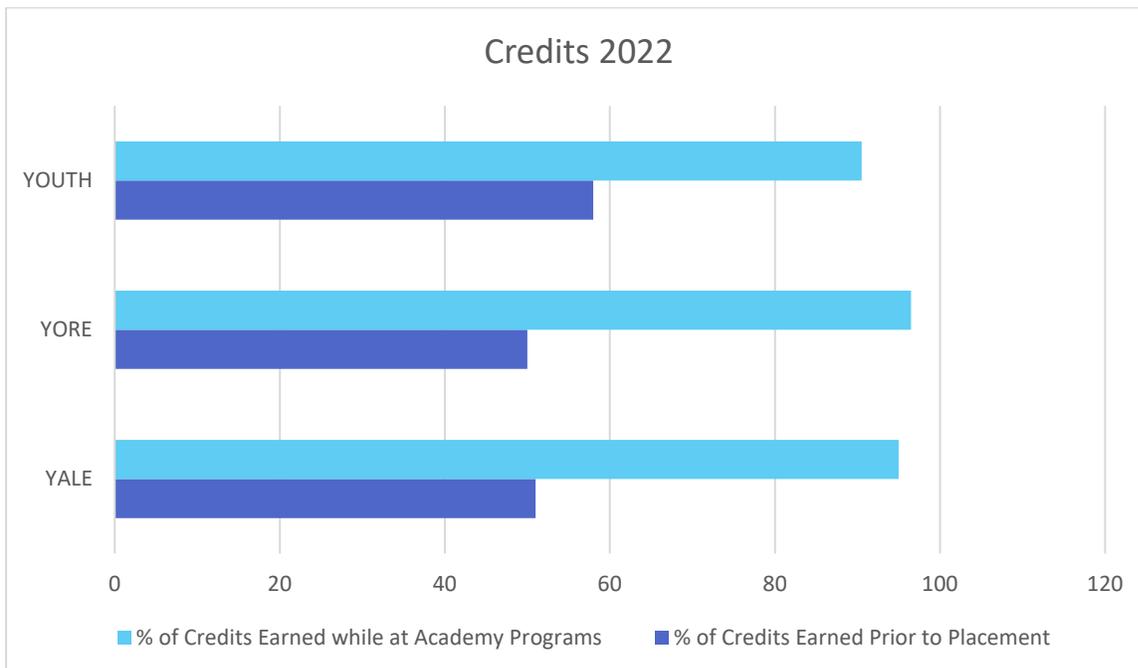
Additional certifications achieved include:

- 35 ServSafe Food Handlers cards
- 46 ProTrainings CPR Certifications
- 25 OSHA 10-hr Cards
- 205 Everfi Personal Finance Certifications
- 65 Everfi Digital Citizenship Certifications

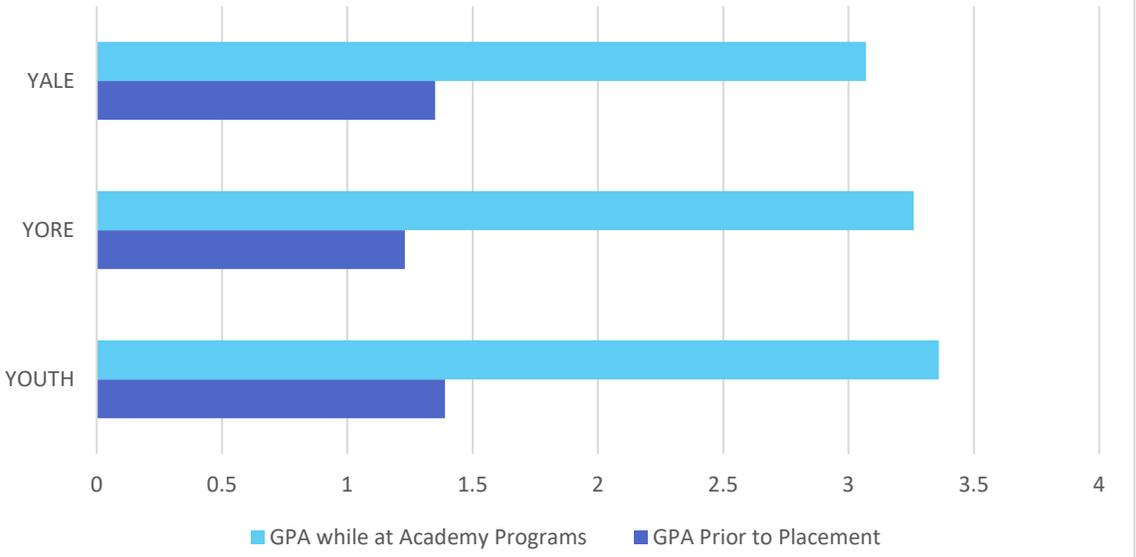
Students may be enrolled in distance learning classes to supplement our direct delivery:

- “Credit Recovery” classes for students that have previously failed a class and need to retake that class for a credit
- “Virtual School” for students who need a particular class our school either can’t offer or can’t fit into our course offering schedule
- College classes
- Career Technical Education coursework

Two measures of academic success, credits earned and GPA, are illustrated below:

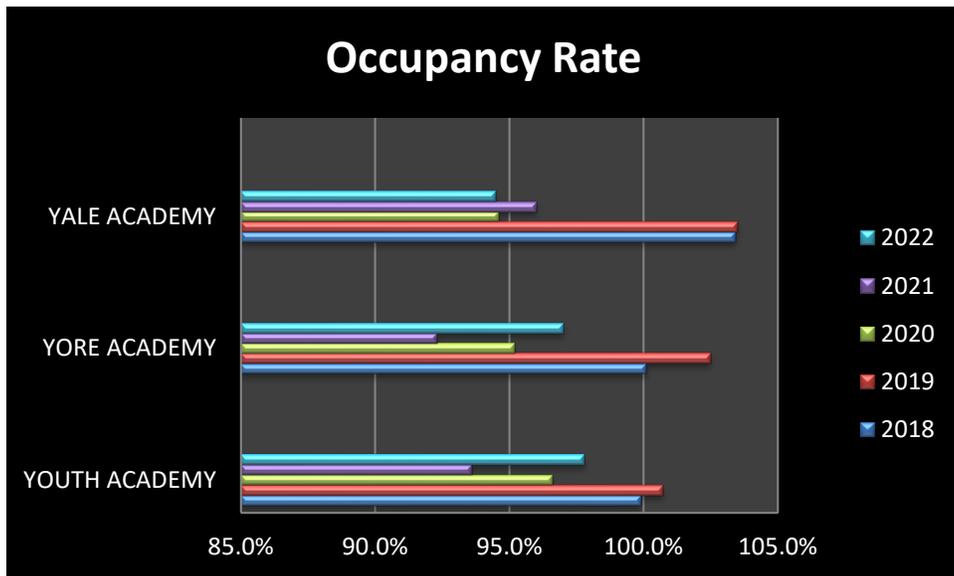


### GPA 2022



**Average Daily Census and Occupancy Rate**

Academy Programs served 144 at-risk children in 2022. More males received services than females. This year the average daily census for Youth Academy was 22 (full), while Yore and YALE Academy remained at an average of 23 (capacity is 24 in those programs). While the average census and occupancy are not back to pre-Covid numbers, they are rising.



## Average Length of Stay

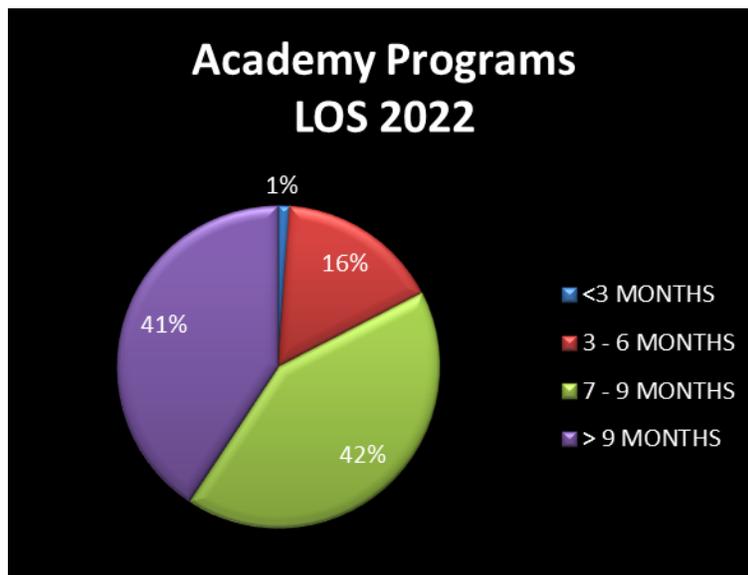
A variety of factors contribute to the length of stay for children in residential treatment programs. Presenting problems, diagnoses, trauma, and even gender can influence the amount of time that is needed to reconcile issues within our troubled youth. Add substance abuse to that, often generational substance abuse, and additional days and weeks are necessary to achieve the optimal outcome.

Academy Programs provides accountable and effective treatment services which are delivered in the least restrictive and most efficient manner. Our goal is to make each student's stay in congregate care as meaningful as possible, while ensuring they do not leave without the necessary skills to be successful. The intended length of stay, modeled on the stages of change, is approximately six months. During that time, each student has the ability to influence their own destiny based on their involvement in the treatment process. They have independent control over the amount of effort they choose to apply to modifying/changing their behavior.

Students will work through these six stages – Honeymoon; Limit Testing and Active Resistance; Beginning Trust / Program Acceptance; Clear Improvement; Separation Anxiety / Regression; and Discharge.

“Students who are able to overcome the challenges to reach each of these milestones will be able to return home and live in a manner more satisfying to themselves and more satisfying to those around them.” *Nicholas Hobbs*

In 2022, the overall average length of stay increased, largely due to some of the most challenging male students that we've experienced in recent years. As illustrated in the chart below, a slight majority of the students completed the program in 7 – 9 months.



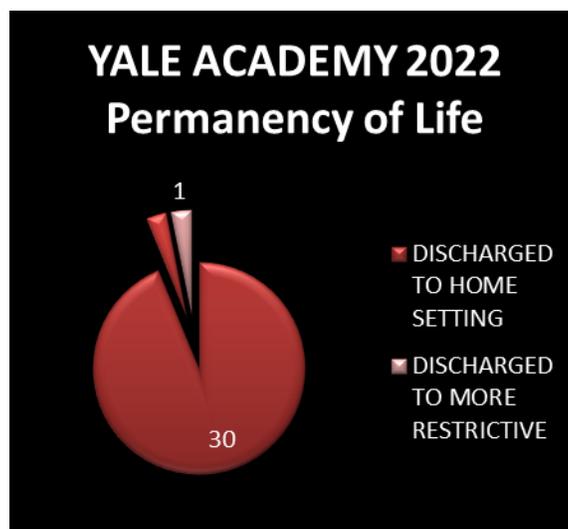
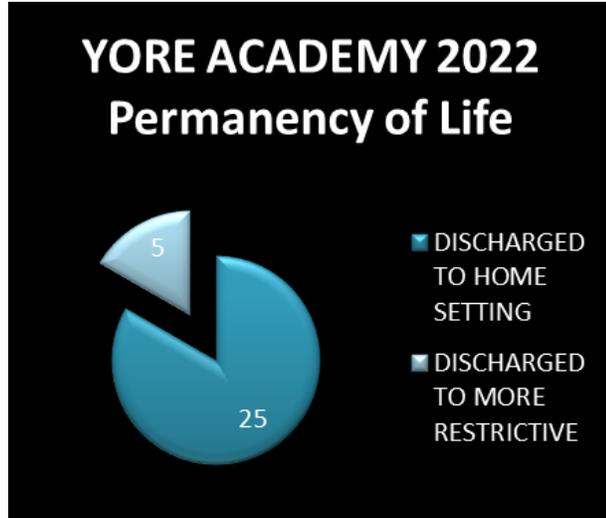
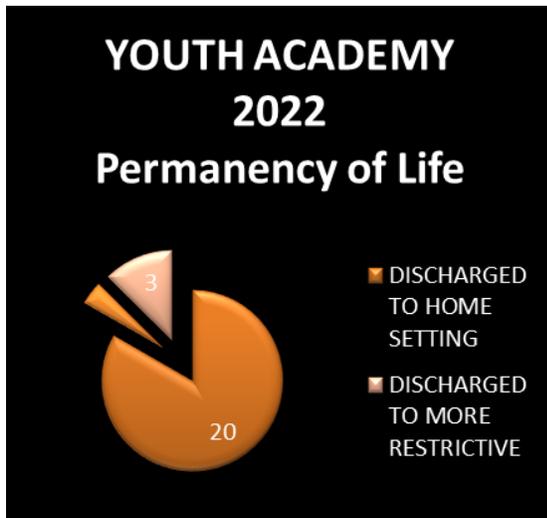


## Permanency of Life

Permanency often means family. It means having positive, healthy, nurturing relationships with adults who provide emotional, financial, moral, educational, and other kinds of support as youth mature into adults. Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangements is the ultimate goal.

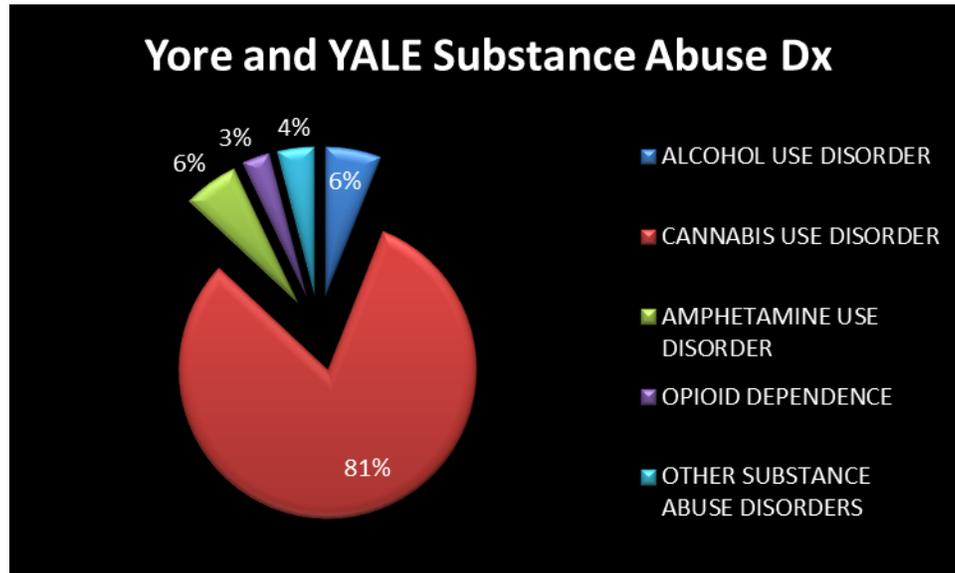
Positive outcome measures stipulate that 70% of all kids receiving services for 90 days or longer will be discharged to a home setting (foster home, birth family, adoptive, kinship care, lesser restrictive, or independence). Less restrictive care is often used as a step-down on the way to a permanent home. Infrequently, the youth in our care have issues that require more intensive treatment and are referred to more restrictive placement.

In 2022, Academy Programs achieved 90% success rate in achieving a positive permanency of life for the children discharging from care. 77 of the 86 children discharged went to a home setting.

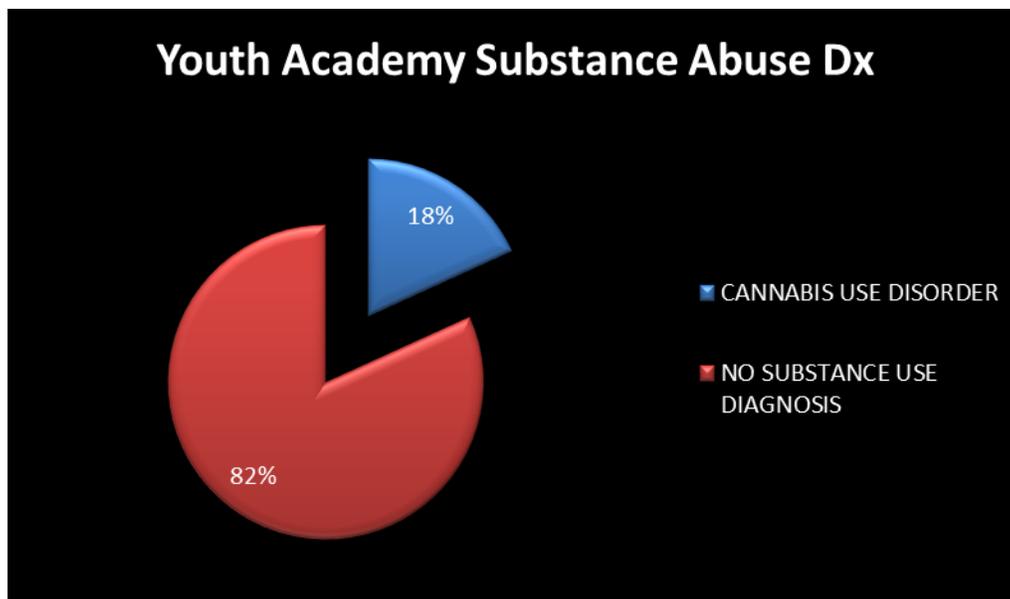


## *Presenting Diagnosis (Substance Abuse)*

All of the students in Yore Academy and YALE Academy have co-occurring issues that are treated through cognitive-behavioral methods of behavioral change. This approach is designed to teach them coping skills which will help them remain substance free after discharge from the program. The diagnoses below were primary at intake.

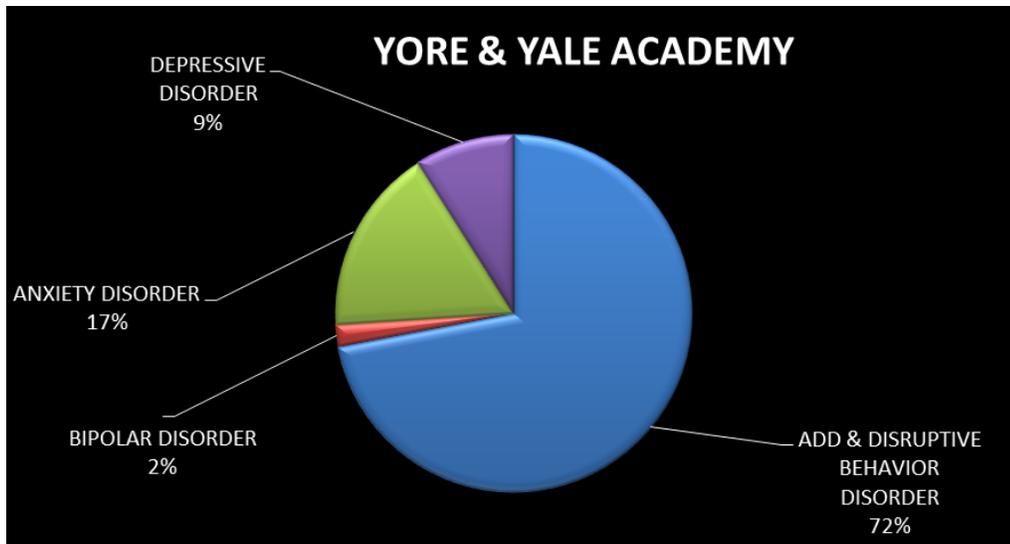
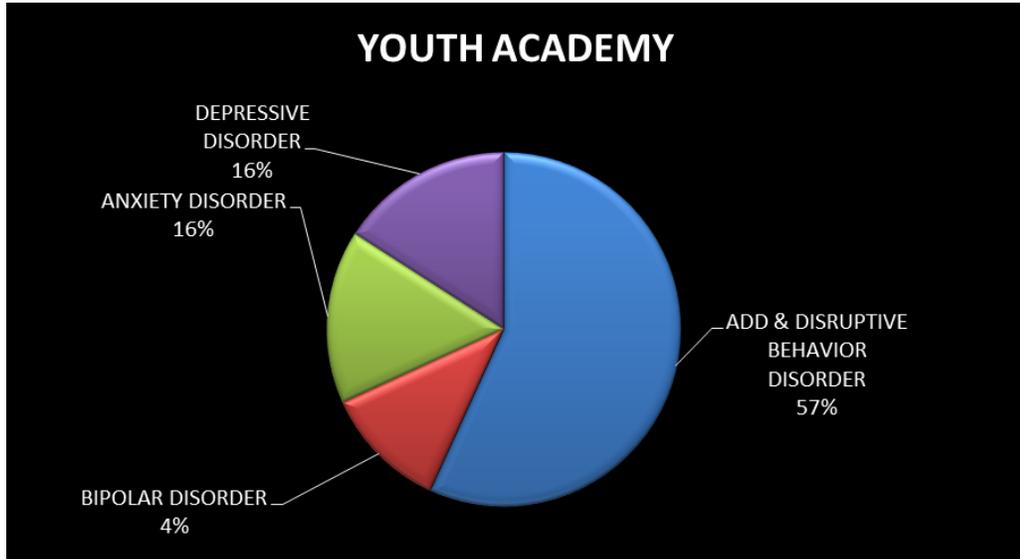


Some Youth Academy students have substance abuse diagnoses upon admission although it is not the norm. Only 18% of students had a substance abuse diagnosis at entry. However, through the course of treatment, substance abuse issues may be uncovered and treated.



*Presenting Diagnosis (Behavioral Health)*

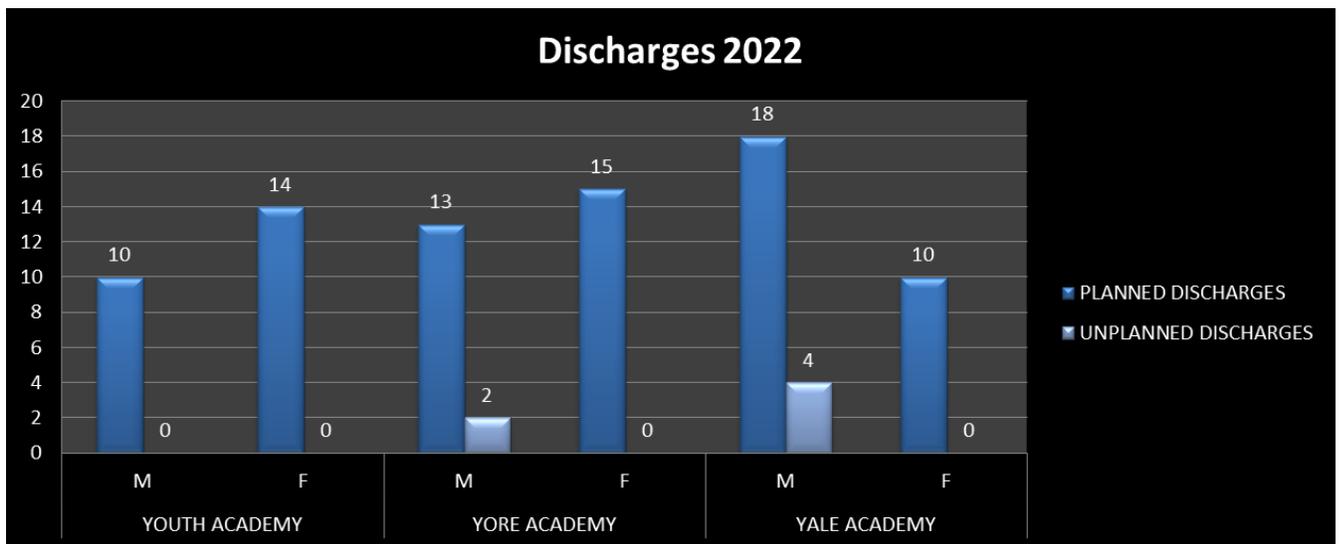
ADHD, anxiety problems, behavior problems, and depression are the most commonly diagnosed mental disorders in children and adolescents. As shown in the charts below, ADHD and behavioral problems are the prevalent diagnoses upon admission.



## Success Rate

One measure of success is discharges that are planned. Discharge planning begins at the onset of treatment with the student's entire treatment team and family. Every area of the youth's ecology is addressed when planning for discharge. At times, a discharge is planned prior to program completion because the student has some clinically significant issues that are best addressed in a more intensive setting. Academy Programs will assist in the transition to a different setting through discharge planning, whether it be to another placement or the student's home.

Academy Programs completed 93% planned discharges in 2022. Unplanned discharges were due to elopement or when a student was abruptly remanded to detention.



## Community Family Intensive Treatment (CFIT)

CFIT (Community Family Intensive Treatment) is designed to provide an array of services to assist at-risk families and children of all ages. After February 2020, all in home services were halted due to the global pandemic. CFIT did not provide any services during 2022.

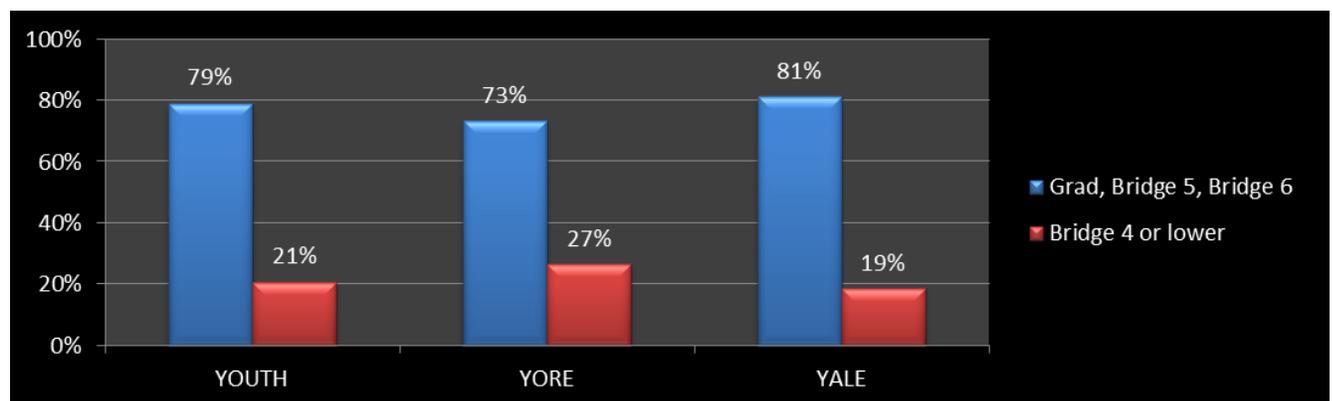
## Graduating Academy Programs

There are many standard assessments that, in one way or another, claim to track and monitor a child's progress through a treatment program. However, they are generally defined by data, charts, and numbers as opposed to a real time, tangible tool for making the child aware of how they have progressed and/or be able to identify what steps they need to take to become completely successful. Assessments are designed to measure ecology, behavior, functioning, and academic performance, but few are available to actually demonstrate success in completing a particular treatment program. For this reason, Academy Programs has developed and employs a six phase program known as Graduating Academy Programs, or GAP, delineating the steps a child must take in order to fully and successfully complete the program and utilize the strategies of this program as an integral part of the treatment planning process.

This program was developed by combining the stages of development that a child goes through in an out-of-home placement with the Stages of Change model in the therapeutic process to identify and target a list of treatment milestones a student must master in order to maximize their opportunities for successful living post completion of our program. The theory in effect here is that a student who is successfully able to overcome challenges to reach each milestone possesses the skills needed to return home and live in a manner more satisfying to themselves, and more satisfying to those around them.

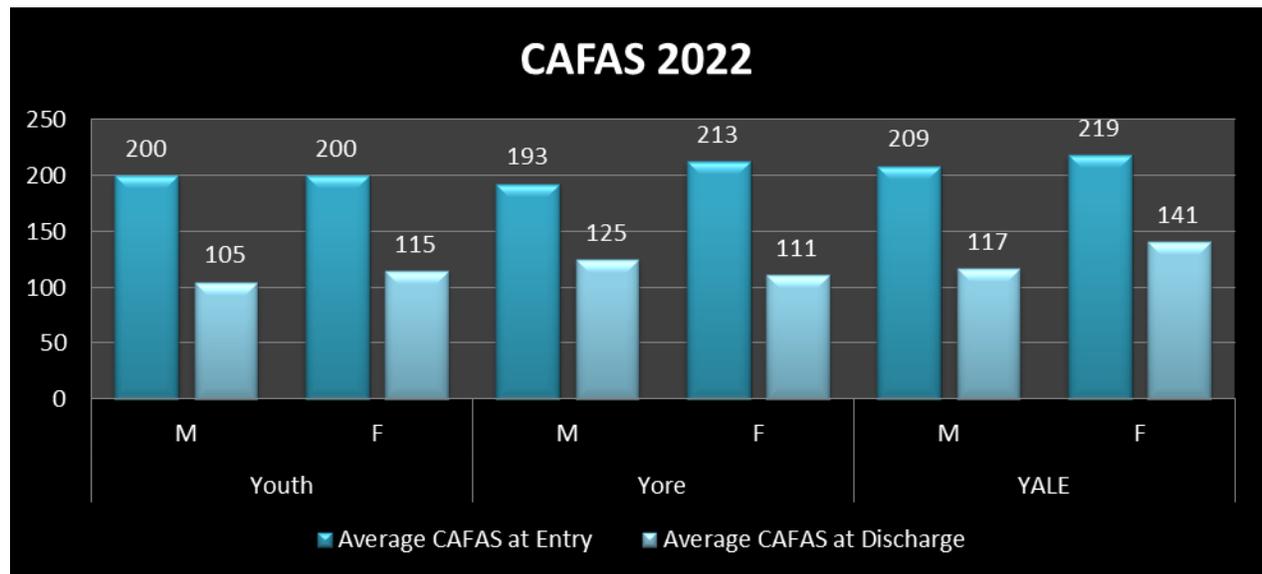
The GAP program creates several other improvements in the ability of Academy Programs to enhance the quality of treatment offered to its student body. First, emotionally disturbed and troubled children require two foundations in order to effectively change their behavior; an understanding that their behavior is a problem that has prevented them from living successfully, and a vested interest in changing that behavior. The GAP program helps to generate investment in the treatment process by allowing the student to identify exactly what is required in order to successfully complete the program. This gives the student an ability to control their destiny and accurately determine how much time they will require to effectively address problems. It is common place for a new student to ask, "What do I need to do to get out of here?" This question is easily answered during intake, where the Director of Admissions and/or Program Director is able to provide the student with application packets and discuss the graduation criteria at length if needed. Time is our ally in allowing students to increase awareness that their behavior is problematic. Acknowledgement and acceptance of responsibility is addressed early on in this program and in a sequence that allows the student the time to generate effective change.

Once a student has completed all six bridges of the GAP program, they are ready for graduation. Students who have graduated or have completed bridge 5 or above are considered an optimal discharge.



## Child and Adolescent Functioning Scale (CAFAS)

The CAFAS is the gold standard for assessing a youth's day-to-day functioning across critical life subscales AND for determining whether a youth's functioning improves over time. The Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS: Hodges, 2000a; 2000b), assesses the degree of impairment in youth with emotional, behavioral, psychiatric, or substance use problems. At intake, the score is often elevated, reflecting a need for intensive services. As the student progresses through treatment and develops the skills they need to stay safe in their home, school and communities, the score decreases. The decrease in score reflects improvement in daily functioning.



## Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART)

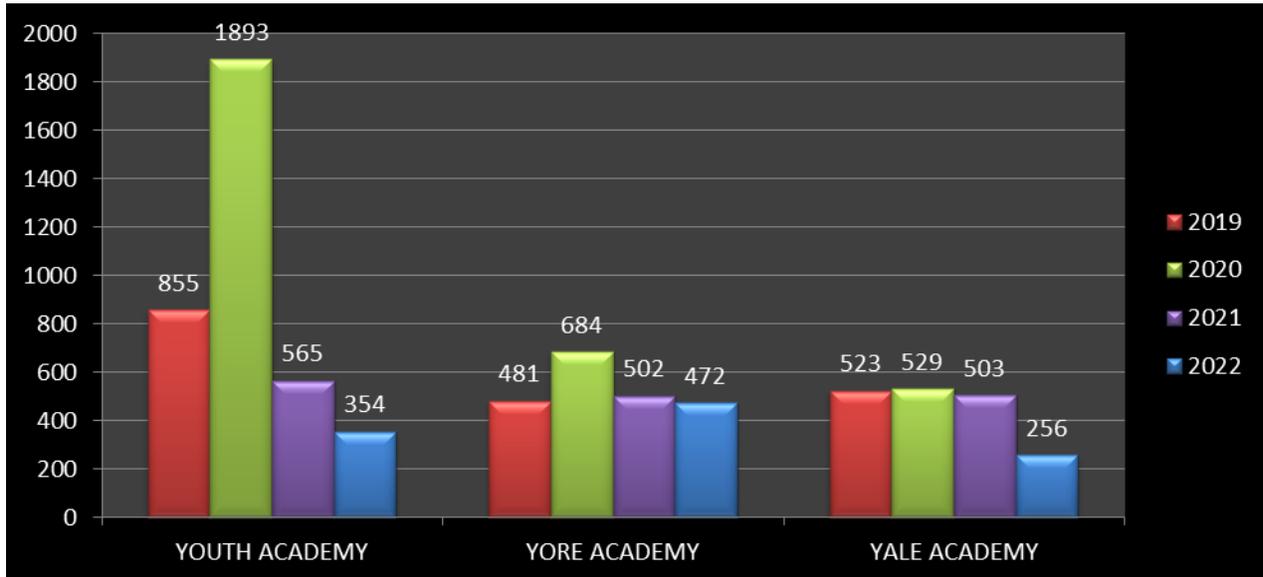
SMART Recovery is the leading evidence-based addiction recovery program. SMART Recovery is an abstinence-oriented method for individuals with addictive problems. SMART Recovery is a fresh approach to addiction recovery. SMART stands for Self-Management and Recovery Training. This is more than an acronym: it is a transformative method of moving from addictive substances and negative behaviors to a life of positive self-regard and willingness to change.

SMART Recovery's approach to behavioral change is built around a 4-Point Program®: (1) Building and maintaining the motivation to change. (2) Coping with urges to use. (3) Managing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in an effective way without addictive behaviors. (4) Living a balanced, positive, and healthy life.

All of the youth on campus attend SMART Recovery groups multiple times per week.

## Incidents

Academy Programs ensures that every incident is documented and tracked so that trends and patterns can be identified and comparisons made over time. The Safety Committee reviews incidents at each meeting to determine if a particular category of incidents is elevated or if further action is necessary. There has been a reduction in incidents again over the past year across all programs. Both the Youth Academy and YALE Academy have seen a marked decrease in overall incidents in the past year.



## Safety Committee Report 2022

### **Monthly Walk Through Report:**

Minor damage and general messiness were the top items reported each month.

### **Fire Drill Report:**

Each fire drill was completed monthly and rotated through shifts as prescribed. No issues.

### **Pending Safety Issues:**

Program Directors selected areas with potential safety concerns to address with their staff. Nothing of major importance occurred in the past year that affected campus safety.

### **Incident Report:**

As in previous years, multiple sports-related injuries occurred in 2022. Students actively participate in games and organized sports. No major injuries were reported. De-escalation techniques have been better utilized when addressing aggressive behaviors. A reduction in physical interventions is noted after implementation of de-escalation. Negative Social Behaviors is a very diverse category and all manner of inappropriate behaviors are being documented there.

### **Grievances:**

No grievances.

## General Staff Patterns and Turnover

Staffing experience remains the most essential element in program success. As a company, the Academy must overcome the obstacles with staffing being experienced in all industries due to the impact of the Covid epidemic on the available workforce. While Academy Programs is not only competing with like companies to retain employees, we must also compete with other industries that provide the same or higher salaries and do not include the level of tension and stress that is commonly associated with this industry.

Our staffing challenges over the past year have not been solely the recruiting, training and retention of quality staff who work directly with children, but the absence of an available work force. In spite of our efforts to market open positions throughout the year, the number of resumes, applications, and interest enquiries has proven to be markedly lower than it has been in any year since the Academy opened in 2002. As a result, recruiting new employees to fill vacant positions has become a more complicated struggle than retaining experienced employees across campus.

In an effort to remain competitive in this industry, the Academy had taken the following steps to address the difficulty with recruiting and retaining staff in 2022:

- Increased entry level salaries for multiple positions
- Continued commitment to recruiting and signing bonuses
- Continued to offer “Hero Bonuses” for professional staff who volunteer to help fill the workload of vacant positions

A total of 15 full-time, direct care staff left their positions at Academy Programs throughout the course of the year. The total turnover rate for direct-care positions in 2022 was 39 percent, up slightly from 2021.

## Satisfaction Surveys

Surveys were distributed to staff in 2022 to gauge their satisfaction in multiple key areas. Gap analysis shows the difference between how important attributes/services are to survey takers and how satisfied they are with those attributes/services. By comparing importance (blue) and satisfaction (red) scores in the charts below, we used gap analysis to identify priorities for improvement. Any area that has a gap of 1.0 or more is considered an opportunity for improvement.



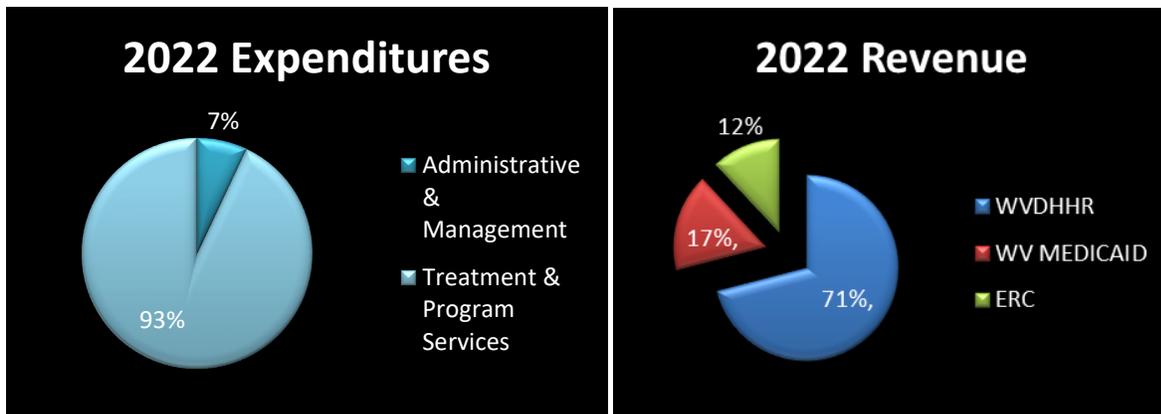
Areas that had a gap in 2022 were:

1. Feeling well informed about the status of the company
2. Training
3. Work Schedule
4. Feeling supported by Team Leaders and Program Directors

The Director of Operations and Director of Quality Assurance conducted meetings with all staff to seek clarification and to allow staff to express any solutions to these issues. Areas for improvement will be addressed through the program development plan.

### Expenditures and Revenue

Expenditures for 2022 are divided between Administrative /Management costs and Treatment/ Program services. Revenue sources are WV DHHR, WV Medicaid and Employee Retention Credit.



#### YOUTH ACADEMY

Sources of Revenue	% of Revenue	Dollar Amount
WVDHHR	68%	\$1,911,408.00
WV Medicaid	20%	\$553,477.00
CFIT	<1%	\$320.00
ERC	12%	\$333,173.00
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$2,798,378.00</b>

#### YORE ACADEMY

Sources of Revenue	% of Revenue	Dollar Amount
WVDHHR	70%	\$2,426,191.00
WV Medicaid	16%	\$547,810.00
ERC	14%	\$484,491.00
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$3,458,492.00</b>

#### YALE ACADEMY

Sources of Revenue	% of Revenue	Dollar Amount
WVDHHR	73%	\$2,370,380.00
WV Medicaid	16%	\$523,071.00
ERC	11%	\$343,160.00
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$3,236,611.00</b>