

**OJJDP-PASS Program Description & Schedule 2020**  
**Office**  
**Prevention, Access, Self-Empowerment and Support Program**  
**(PASS Program)**

OJJDP-PASS is a Rochester prevention mentoring program that works with teens who experience challenges in their daily lives, and or whose parents are seriously and persistently mentally ill. Participants have reported having emotional issues revolving around building and maintaining relationships; anger management; feelings of frustration; distraction; lack of self-control; poor decision making; inability to finish tasks or an overall lack of focus. The therapist data indicates that some of the participants have serious challenges with aggressive, suicidal and/or self-destructive behavior and substance abuse.

OJJDP-PASS is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and Monroe County. The program is managed by Coordinated Care Services, Inc., (CCSI) a unique non-profit management services organization. The primary source of funding for this program is OJJDP.

OJJDP-PASS utilizes a strength-based approach to helping individuals, families and communities to develop the resources needed to maintain healthy lifestyles. It focuses on the development of a culturally competent, inclusive system of support that fosters self-help, empowerment, advocacy, support, and education. Junior and adult mentors help the adolescents apply the strategies taught in the program to their unique life situations. Ongoing parent support groups and contacts with schools and other community programs complete the circle of support.

The overall approach to the project and services is based on the philosophy that:

- Adolescents can be taught and empowered to make informed choices
- Adolescents can be assisted in developing and utilizing self-help skills that are “tools” that will improve their probability of success in today’s society.
- Program graduates can serve as effective peer advocates, mentors, or role models for youths experiencing challenges
- Services provided in partnership with both parents/guardians and adolescents, can create an avenue for improved communication between parent and teen
- A culturally competent and culturally supportive approach to working with youth can reach those who typically do not respond to other service approaches
- By strengthening support and increasing families’ knowledge of information, systems and supports within their communities the whole community will benefit

**Key Program Components:**

- A. **The Curriculum:** This dense curriculum, covers a variety of topics and lessons, and is designed to provide participants with tools and skills to cope with the stressors of daily life. The environment is conducive to learning, as the adolescents engage in highly structured immersion weekends and few Saturday workshops over a one-year period. Consultants, junior mentors and adolescent guests from different cultures and educational backgrounds present the core curriculum content. A wide variety of mediums are used. This highly participatory curriculum engages the adolescents in self-expression, public speaking, debates, role-play, focusing on healthy lifestyles, and self-advocacy.
  
- B. **Adult Mentors and Junior Mentors:** Mentors are carefully screened, interviewed and trained prior to participation in the program. The mentor guidelines provide a comprehensive guide for being an effective mentor and advocate. Mentors and program administrators have developed culturally competent knowledge, attitude and skills of the participant's identities, and techniques on how to engage with adolescents within the context of their culture.
  
- C. **Family/Guardian Support Services:** Prior to meeting with the adolescents the mentors meet with the parents to share the fundamentals of the program and the role they play in helping us to guide there adolescent to long term success. This training focuses on the role of the mentor as a friend; expectations of both parents and mentors are reviewed. Parents receive information on family support networks in their localities; professionals from the healthcare field provide a general overview of the delivery system, and symptoms relating to emotional challenges in young people. Parents and are given an overview of the topics in the curriculum and the methods used for delivering the curriculum.
  
- D. **Program Evaluation:** Throughout the program, feedback is sought from participants about their sense of personal improvement; from mentors, parents and other individuals involved in the adolescent's life regarding their perception of participants' growth and development. Individuals usually report dramatic changes seen in the adolescents. As one Psychiatrist puts it, "I have seen more changes in this kid over a three-day weekend than in the past three years we have been working with this child". A school administrator from a New York City High School points to one of his most challenging student is now one of his proudest ally in advocating changes among gang members. A suicidal adolescent from Rochester now proudly speaks of how "I now choose life..." Parents speak of a "D and F" student having a report with mostly "Bs" and some "As".

Since 2002, PASS program participants have completed the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, Second Edition. The data support the fact that the program positively impacts the self-concept of the participants. This is demonstrated along several dimensions of the instrument – intelligence, school status, happiness and satisfaction, and the behavioral adjustment dimension. These results are being seen in adolescents that face extremely difficult emotional and psychological challenges.

**Lessons learned and implications for program design:**

- One obvious lesson learned from our interaction with participants in the program is that when adolescents are prepared to make informed choices and are supported in implementing their positive choices, their chances of accomplishing their goals are greatly improved and the impact of the challenges they face can be diminished.
- Culture is essential to the process of providing care. The program staff is cognizant of their own cultural identity and attitudes and the impact that it has in their relationship with participants, especially when the youth has a different cultural or ethnic background.
- One must be constantly aware of the “power” that we as caregivers bring to the encounter process and how it hampers the development of true partnership.
- Staff needs to be passionately committed to their work with youth and believe in the “can do” philosophy of the program.
- It is important the program embraces a recovery philosophy that entails respect for each individual's ability to make informed choices and have the opportunity to learn from failures.
- Parental involvement is critical and must have a focus on using the family's strengths in partnership with the professional team.
- The power of peer support is fostered by using primarily Junior Mentors who have already experienced the program. Their role is to conduct youth-to-youth sessions (without adult involvement), serve as role models and become a part of the adolescent's support system.
- The focus on teamwork helps build self-confidence and the necessary self-help and advocacy skills.
- The program's holistic approach includes experiential activities that engage youth on a physical, emotional, and inter-personal level as well as integrates tutoring and a focus on the value of individual learning. Basic etiquette is taught and practiced. Self-awareness is fostered to help youth learn to manage their behavior, get out of their comfort zone and discover their personal power in an emotionally safe environment.

OJJDP-PASS facilitates a process that encourages adolescents to “change” themselves. One of the mantra to the adolescents is “We will show you the door; but only you can walk

through it.” Most of the adolescents entering the program have been labeled a “problem child” by society and have internalized that negative self-image. The anecdotal stories make it clear that most failed to recognize the power they had, to not only influence their own sense of self (behavior, attitude, actions) but the world around them as well. The program’s curriculum and the adolescents’ experiences with supportive individuals have created positive internal changes and a renewed sense that they too can enjoy positive outcomes.

## OJJDP-PASS 2020 VIRTUAL SCHEDULE

	<u>PARENT WORKSHOPS</u>	<u>TIMES</u>
07/25 Sat	Parents & Mentors	10-12 & 1-3pm
07/29 Wed	Parents & Mentors	6-8pm
08/01 Sat	Parents & Mentors	10-12pm
10/15-Thur	Parents	6:30 - 8:30pm
11/19-Thur	Parents	6:30 - 8:30pm
12/17-Thur	Parents	6:30 - 8:30pm
	<u>ADOLESCENT WORKSHOPS</u>	<u>TIMES</u>
08/14 Fri	Adolescent & Mentors	10-12 & 1-3pm
08/19 Wed	Adolescent & Mentors	10-12
09/19-Sat	1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday Workshop	10-12 & 1-3pm
10/10-Sat	2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday Workshop	10-12 & 1-3pm
11/14-Sat	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday Workshop	10-12 & 1-3pm
12/11-Fri	Adolescent & Mentors	10-12 & 1-3pm
12/12-Sat	Adolescent & Mentors	10-12 & 1-3pm
	<u>MENTOR WORKSHOPS</u>	<u>TIMES</u>
07/18-Sat	Mentors Only	10-12 & 1-3pm
07/22-Wed	Mentors Only	6-8pm

Due to the uncertainty and limitations of the pandemic, the primary means of communication in the program will be virtual.

- Parents/Guardians of selected applicants are expected to participate virtually in the July Parent Orientation Workshop
- Selected applicants usually do much better when parents are active participants in the parent workshop and support meetings.

**Please mail or fax application by May 15<sup>th</sup> 2020.**

### **MAIL or FAX APPLICATION**

**Coordinated Care Services Inc.  
Cultural Competency & Diversity  
Initiatives Attn: OJJDP – PASS  
Program Application  
1099 Jay St. Building J, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Rochester, NY 14611  
Or FAX: (585) 328-5211**

### **CONTACT:**

**Neville Morris at (585) 690-6260 work,  
(607) 765-5656 cell,  
Email: [Nmorris@ccsi.org](mailto:Nmorris@ccsi.org)**