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CASE MANAGEMENT OFFICES SERVING DETAINED YOUTH CLOSING

The Nábináhaazláago Initiative Case Management Offices in Tohatchi and Tuba City will be closed as of December 30, 2011. Case management services are no longer being offered by Nábináhaazláago Initiative for youth in detention sites as of December 16, 2011. Case management staff are conducting close-out activities from December 19, 2011, to December 30, 2011.

The Judicial Branch's Probation and Parole Services will now be assigned pending case management cases.

The Nábináhaazláago Initiative has been funded through a \$1,362,906 grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Assistance to Rural Law Enforcement to Combat Crime and Drugs Program. The grant was obtained by the Judicial Branch in 2009 and case management services began in January 2010. Eleven positions were created within the Judicial Branch through the grant including an operations analyst, judicial liaison officer, two case management supervisors, four case management officers and three office technicians.

Case management offices have been located at the Tohatchi Youth Correction Center and at the Western Navajo Juvenile Detention Center in Tuba City. The case management officers provided case management services, conducted intake assessments and provided case plans, case staffings and referrals for detained youth upon consent. From January 2010 to the end of December 2011, the program served 886 youth.

The goals of the program were to provide case management services to youth in detention, reduce recidivism, establish partnerships and collect data on detained youth. Partnerships were established with public and private organizations, including the signing of memoranda of understanding with partner organizations and collaborations that resulted in public education. Data on youth has also been collected, including information regarding education, primary caretaker, alcohol and substance abuse and thoughts on suicide and depression.

While in operation, case management officers were able to help youth with referrals that included placement into treatment centers, getting them back into school and placement into temporary employment. The case management officers interviewed and assessed individuals when they were brought into the youth detention centers at Tuba City or Tohatchi – allowing them to express themselves freely – and worked with other service providers to get them the help they requested. All services were provided based on consent by youth.

Among the data collected on detained youth, the following were found:

- Nearly 59 percent of those served were ages 16-17. (January 2010 to December 2011)
- About 31 percent were from Tuba City Judicial District, 20 percent were from Window Rock Judicial District, 18 percent were from Crownpoint Judicial District and 11 percent were from Chinle Judicial District. (January 2010 to December 2011)
- 61 percent were being raised by single parents. (January 2010 to December 2011)
- 17 percent were detained for public intoxication, 16 percent for disorderly conduct, 11 percent for criminal nuisance and 10 percent for curfew violations. (January 2010 to December 2011)
- About 35 percent were referred to Department of Behavioral Health Services and 32 percent were referred to Indian Health Services. (January 2010 to June 2011)
- 53 percent of youth served experienced physical altercations with peers; 30 percent experienced bullying and 17 percent participated in gang activities. (January 2010 to June 2011)

From 2006 to 2010, according to Navajo Department of Law Enforcement data, there was an average of 249,533 calls for service to the dispatcher. About 15 percent of the calls resulted in arrests with 30 percent of those alcohol related. Juvenile arrests accounted for about 6 percent of all arrests. In 2010, there were 2,412 juveniles arrested. Of those, 1,554 were arrested and released and 858 were detained. Of those arrested, about 558 had cases filed in the district courts and 421 short- and long-term cases were assigned to Probation and Parole Services.

Many programs supported the need for case management with letters that were addressed to tribal leaders. Parents and grandparents also expressed support and appreciation for the services given to their loved ones. One parent said that the Tohatchi case management office was very crucial in the remote community. “We have been helped by the staff with counseling and to get help with local teens that get in trouble,” she said.

Another grandparent said that he knew that without the case management program his grandson would still be drinking. “There are many programs out there, but this is one program that is needed for our children and I would sure hate to see the doors close,” he said.

The Nábináhaazláago Initiative staff would like to thank all partner organizations and staff for assistance in case management services.

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