



NC Department of Public Safety
JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

Josh Stein, Governor

Eddie M. Buffaloe Jr., Secretary
William L. Lassiter, Deputy Secretary

MEMORANDUM

To: Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety
Chairs of the Senate Appropriation Subcommittee on Justice and Public Safety
Chairs of the House Appropriation Subcommittee on Justice and Public Safety
Fiscal Research Division

From: Eddie M. Buffaloe, Jr., Secretary
William L. Lassiter, Deputy Secretary

Subject: Youth Development Center Annual Report

Date: October 1, 2025

Pursuant to § 143B- 810 the Department of Public Safety shall report by October 1 of each year to the Chairs of the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Justice and Public Safety, the Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety, and the Fiscal Research Division of the Legislative Services Commission on the Youth Development Center (YDC) population, staffing, and capacity in the preceding fiscal year.

Specifically, the report shall include all of the following:

- (1) The on-campus population of each YDC, including the county the juveniles are from.*
- (2) The housing capacity of each YDC.*
- (3) A breakdown of staffing for each YDC, including number, type of position, position title, and position description.*
- (4) The per-bed and average daily population cost for each facility.*
- (5) The operating cost for each facility, including personnel and nonpersonnel items.*
- (6) A brief summary of the treatment model, education, services, and plans for reintegration into the community offered at each facility.*
- (7) The average length of stay in the YDCs.*
- (8) The number of incidents of assaults and attacks on staff at each facility*

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Youth Development Centers (YDCs) are secure facilities with an overall mission to provide juveniles committed to the Department with a safe, secure environment that fosters healthy decision-making and personal responsibility. YDCs also seek to equip students with the skills necessary to become productive members of society once released.

Youth who are adjudicated delinquent for offenses they committed prior to their 18th birthday may be sent to the Department by the court and assigned to a YDC for treatment. If a juvenile is adjudicated or found responsible for an offense, they can remain in the juvenile justice system until age 18; and in some cases, up to age 21, depending on the offense and age at offense. Since the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1998, commitment to a YDC is reserved for serious and/or violent offenders in addition to chronic offenders.

1) The on-campus population of each YDC, including the county the juveniles are from.

FY 2024-2025

County	Cabarrus YDC	Chatham YDC	Edgecombe YDC	Lenoir YDC	Rockingham YDC	Distinct Juveniles
Alamance	1	1	0	3	0	5
Beaufort	0	1	0	1	0	2
Bertie	0	0	0	1	0	1
Bladen	0	0	0	1	0	1
Brunswick	0	0	0	1	1	2
Buncombe	1	0	0	0	1	2
Burke	3	0	0	0	0	3
Cabarrus	10	1	1	0	1	13
Caldwell	4	0	0	0	0	4
Carteret	1	0	1	4	1	7
Catawba	2	2	0	0	0	4
Chatham	1	0	0	0	0	1
Chowan	0	0	2	0	0	2
Cleveland	2	0	0	0	0	2
Columbus	0	0	1	0	0	1
Craven	0	1	1	1	0	3
Cumberland	11	8	7	4	2	32
Davidson	1	2	0	0	2	5
Durham	0	3	2	0	0	5
Edgecombe	1	0	3	4	0	8
Forsyth	9	2	2	0	2	15
Franklin	1	0	0	0	0	1
Gaston	2	0	1	0	0	3
Granville	1	0	1	0	0	2
Greene	0	1	1	0	0	2
Guilford	12	4	10	8	4	38
Halifax	0	0	4	0	0	4
Harnett	0	0	0	1	0	1
Henderson	2	0	0	0	1	3
Hertford	0	1	2	0	0	3
Iredell	2	0	0	0	0	2
Jackson	0	0	1	0	0	1
Johnston	1	0	1	0	0	2
Jones	0	1	0	0	0	1
Lee	2	1	1	0	1	5
Lenoir	0	1	2	2	0	5
Lincoln	1	0	0	0	1	2
Macon	0	1	0	0	0	1
McDowell	2	0	1	0	0	3
Mecklenburg	10	0	3	4	1	18

Nash	0	1	4	3	0	8
New Hanover	0	0	2	5	1	8
Onslow	3	2	3	4	1	13
Out of State	1	1	1	1	1	5
Orange	1	0	0	1	1	3
Pasquotank	0	0	0	1	0	1
Person	0	0	0	2	0	2
Pitt	4	3	9	6	2	24
Randolph	2	1	0	1	1	5
Richmond	2	1	0	0	1	4
Robeson	1	1	0	1	0	3
Rockingham	1	1	3	1	1	7
Rowan	3	0	0	0	0	3
Rutherford	1	2	0	0	0	3
Sampson	0	0	0	1	0	1
Scotland	1	1	0	0	0	2
Stokes	1	0	0	0	0	1
Surry	2	1	1	0	0	4
Union	0	0	1	1	0	2
Vance	0	0	3	2	0	5
Wake	2	1	3	5	0	11
Wayne	0	4	3	2	1	10
Wilkes	4	0	2	0	0	6
Wilson	2	1	6	6	0	15
Yadkin	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	115	52	89	78	28	362

**Data reflects distinct juveniles served in YDC facilities, reported by current Juvenile County*

2) The housing capacity of each YDC

FY 2024-2025

YDC	Capacity
Cabarrus	64
Chatham	32
Edgecombe	44
Lenoir	44
Rockingham	12
Statewide	196

3) A breakdown of staffing for each YDC, including number, type of position, position title, and position description.

FY 2024-2025

Cabarrus YDC Staffing

(FIORI June 2025)

Classification	Current FTE
Administrative Associate II	1
Administrative Specialist I	5
Business Officer II	1
Chaplain I	1
Cook	6
Educational Development Assistant	3
Food Service Supervisor I	2
Food Service Supervisor II	1
Housing Unit Supervisor	6
Licensed Mental Health Professional	2
Psychological Program Manager	1
Psychologist	1
School Educator I, II, III	19
School Assistant Principal	1
School Principal	1
Social Worker	8
Social Worker Clinical	2
Social Worker Supervisor	1
Staff Development Specialist I	1
Substance Abuse Counselor	1
Substance Abuse Counselor, Clinical	1
Technical Trainer I (Education)	1
Youth Counselor	51
Youth Counselor Supervisor	14
Youth Counselor Technician	25
Youth Development Center Assistant Unit Administrator	1
Youth Development Center Director	1
Youth Development Center Program Manager	3
Youth Program/Education Assistant	1
Youth Services Behavioral Specialist	32
TOTAL Cabarrus	194

*Note that Cabarrus is a flex use facility, housing both detention and youth development center youth.

FY 2024-2025

Chatham YDC Staffing

(FIORI June 2025)

Classification	Current FTE
Administrative Specialist I	1
Administrative Associate II	1
Business Officer I	1
Chaplain I	1
Cook	3
Food Service Supervisor II	1
Housing Unit Supervisor	2
Licensed Mental Health Professional	1
Psychologist	1
Registered Nurse	2
School Principal	1
School Educator I	5
Social Worker	3
Social Worker Supervisor	1
Staff Development Specialist I	1
Vocational Evaluator I (Education)	1
Youth Counselor	16
Youth Counselor Supervisor	4
Youth Counselor Technician	10
Youth Development Center Director	1
Youth Development Center Program Manager	1
Youth Services Behavioral Specialist	15
TOTAL Chatham	73

FY 2024-2025

Edgecombe YDC Staffing		(FIORI June 2025)
Classification	Current FTE	
Administrative Specialist I	2	
Business Officer II	1	
Chaplain I	1	
Cook	3	
Food Service Supervisor II	1	
Housing Unit Supervisor	2	
Licensed Mental Health Professional	1	
Psychologist	1	
Registered Nurse	2	
School Educator I, II	4	
School Principal	1	
Social Worker	3	
Social Worker Supervisor	1	
Staff Development Specialist I	1	
Vocational Evaluator (Education)	1	
Youth Counselor	7	
Youth Counselor Supervisor	4	
Youth Counselor Technician	10	
You Development Center Director	1	
Youth Development Center Program Manager	1	
Youth Services Behavioral Specialist	23	
TOTAL Edgecombe	71	

FY 2024-2025

Lenoir YDC Staffing

(FIORI June 2025)

Classification	Current FTE
Administrative Specialist I	2
Business Officer II	1
Chaplain I	1
Cook	3
Educational Development Assistant	1
Food Services Supervisor II	1
Housing Unit Supervisor	3
Licensed Mental Health Professional	1
Registered Nurse	2
School Educator I, II	5
School Principal	1
Social Worker	3
Social Worker Supervisor	1
Staff Development Specialist I	1
Vocational Evaluator I (Education)	1
Youth Counselor	10
Youth Counselor Supervisor	4
Youth Counselor Technician	17
Youth Development Center Director	1
Youth Development Center Program Manager	1
Youth Services Behavioral Specialist	19
TOTAL Lenoir	79

Rockingham YDC Staffing*

(FIORI June 2025)

Classification	Current FTE
Administrative Specialist I	1
Administrative Specialist II	1
Business Officer II	1
Chaplain I	1
Cook	3
Educational Development Assistant	3
Food Services Supervisor I	1
Food Services Supervisor II	1
Housing Unit Supervisor	4
Licensed Mental Health Professional	2
Registered Nurse	2
School Educator I	9
School Principal	1
Social Worker	2
Staff Development Specialist I	1
Vocational Evaluator I (Education)	1
Youth Counselor	15
Youth Counselor Supervisor	6
Youth Counselor Technician	14
Youth Development Center Director	1
Youth Development Center Program Manager	1
Youth Services Behavioral Specialist	34
TOTAL Rockingham	105

*Note that Rockingham is a flex use facility, housing both detention and youth development center youth. This staffing total reflects the number of staff who serve all youth housed within the Rockingham facility.

NOTE: State employees engaged in "youth correctional work," as defined by state statute, are subject to and must meet the applicable education, employment and training standards as defined and established by the N.C. Criminal Justice Training Standards Act and administered through the N.C. Criminal Justice Training and Standards Council. Degrees must be from appropriately accredited institutions. Positions denoted with an "*" are Juvenile Justice Officer certified positions.

YDC = Youth Development Center

Position Title Type of Position	Description of Work
Administrative Specialist I Non-direct Care	The primary purpose of these positions is to perform a variety of program and administrative tasks. Responsibilities include coordinating, planning, and implementing a program component within a service delivery environment that may be a specialized program, profession, or service.
Business Officer I/II Administrative Managerial	The primary purpose of the position is to administer and manage the business and financial affairs of a YDC. Position facilitates and manages financial resources that may be state appropriated, contract and grant, and / or receipt generated. Position performs financial and business-related duties associated with such areas as accounting, budgeting, auditing, and / or grants administration. Position functions may include but are not limited to financial management, personnel administration / management, payroll, purchasing, inventory control, facilities coordination / planning information technology assessment / planning and closely related work.
Chaplain I* Clinical	The primary purpose of the position is to provide, develop, coordinate, and monitor religious and spiritual activities and serve in meeting the spiritual, emotional, clinical, and social needs of the staff, youth and families served by youth development centers. Position is responsible for the development of a wide array of community resources including recruiting, orienting, coordinating, and supervising the various volunteers and religious organizations that provide their services to the youth and families served by the Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
Educational Developmental Assistant Education*	The primary purpose of this position is to support instruction in core subject areas, make instructional materials, assist the EC teachers in planning and coordinating classroom activities, assist the EC teacher in making lesson plans and recording notes on behavior as well as development progress, and work with students on individual programs. The position works collaboratively with other disciplines to provide services to students and provide feedback through progress notes or short narratives which contain standardized information.
Cook Non-direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is to assist the Cook Supervisor and/or Food Service Supervisor position and provide support of the center's Child Nutrition Program and ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.
Food Service Supervisor I/II Non-direct Care / Managerial	The primary purpose of the position is to provide oversight of the center's Child Nutrition Program and ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.
Housing Unit Supervisor* Direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is supervision of a team responsible for implementing treatment plans, counseling, and supervising juvenile offenders committed to the Department. Employees assign cases; coordinate the treatment process; and oversee the delivery of services through the review and evaluation of treatment plans, direct observation, and interaction with juveniles. Work also includes the responsibility for hiring, training, orienting, and developing staff. Employees resolve problems and supervise staff through case review and consultation to ensure compliance with standards, policies, treatment plans, and commitment parameters. Employees are responsible for planning and reviewing program and service needs with staff and formulating goals and objectives for services.

Position Title Type of Position	Description of Work
Licensed Mental Health Professional* Clinical	The position's primary purpose is to provide mental health services for juveniles assigned to a youth development center. These services include mental status examinations, diagnostic evaluations and behavioral assessments, behavioral programming, individual and group psychotherapy, crisis intervention and direct counseling services at an advanced level.
Psychologist* Clinical	The primary purpose of the position is to serve as provider of psychological services to juveniles detained in a YDC. Duties of this position include, as needed, the provision of crisis counseling and monitoring, individual and group psychotherapy, psychological assessment and evaluation, recommendation and referral, and case management functions. Duties of this position also include training of front-line staff on clinically relevant issues including, but not limited to, suicide awareness and prevention, psychiatric diagnosis, basic counseling skills, therapeutic interventions, and clinical policy. This position develops and maintains working relationships with community-based mental health professionals, psychiatric hospitals staff, and other entities/individuals necessary for ensuring the safety and psychological well-being of juveniles served.
Registered Nurse* Medical	The primary purpose of the position is to provide adequate juvenile medical care in the treatment and/or prevention of illnesses and injuries. Maintains and provides accurate health care data and information. Provides age-appropriate health education to juveniles. Provide emergency care for staff seriously injured at YDCs.
School Educator I, II, III Education / Direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is to provide students with direct instruction in a specific knowledge area, utilizing the Common Core State Standards and the North Carolina Essential Standards. Prepares lesson plans, instructional materials, and maintains student progress reports. The position serves as a member of the interdisciplinary team in order to plan for student services and treatment.
School Principal/Assistant Principal Managerial	The primary purpose of the position is to serve as the chief administrator of an education program in developing and implementing policies, programs, curriculum activities, and budgets, for both academic and career-technical/vocational education tracks, in a manner that promotes the educational development of each student and the professional development of each staff member.
Social Worker* Clinical	The primary purpose of the position is to provide case management services for assigned youth in a YDC. The social worker serves as chair of each juvenile's Service Planning Team and coordinates the development, implementation, review, and revisions of a holistic individualized service plan for each youth. Serves as the primary point of contact for Court Services, the family and other community stakeholders. Provides crisis and supportive counseling to juveniles as needed and works with unit staff to provide behavioral interventions to facilitate the acquisition of targeted skills.
Social Worker Clinical* Clinical	The primary purpose of the position is to provide individual psychotherapy and group therapy for juveniles with severe emotional and mental disorders and/or those with histories requiring complex social work services and serves as the primary family therapist on the service team. Individuals complete comprehensive biopsychosocial assessments as warranted and assists in the development and implementation of appropriate intervention strategies for individual juveniles. This position develops and maintains working relationships with community-based mental health professionals, psychiatric hospitals staff, and other entities/individuals necessary for ensuring the safety and psychological well-being of juveniles served.

Position Title Type of Position	Description of Work
Social Worker Supervisor* Clinical	The primary purpose of the position is to provide specialized supervision, oversight, support, and training to social work positions at the center, including regular face-to-face contacts with each social worker to communicate performance expectations, promote knowledge, encourage professional growth, enhance skills, and to provide accountability for social work services, ensuring that committed youth receive the most effective commitment and transitional services.
Staff Development Specialist I Non-Direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is to provide the delivery of new employee orientation and onboarding for all new employees within the first 30 days of employment and facilitate supplemental coaching sessions to address questions and provide mentoring as needed for newly trained staff, as well as overseeing the delivery and coordination of juvenile justice training requirements for new and current employees, providing professional development training services and serving as the chairperson of the facility's training committee.
Substance Abuse Counselor* Clinical	The primary purpose of the position is to assist clients with substance use disorders with development of cognitive, behavioral, social, and vocational skills through the use of counseling, behavioral and case management interventions. This involves screening clients who are referred for addictive and/or psychological disorders, and using standardized tools to screen clients, conduct intakes and orientations, and complete assessments (social, educational, cultural, psychological, psychological, physical, career, and familial histories). Counselors provide behavioral intervention therapy related to criminal related behaviors and attitudes for those clients involved with the criminal justice system and may serve as an interface between mental health providers while continuing to provide substance use disorder counseling.
Substance Abuse Counselor*, Clinical* Clinical	The primary purpose of this position is to provide a wide range of advanced therapy and counseling skills so that treatment may be provided to clients with complex substance abuse and/or mental health issues. Cases may involve treatment of clients that have addictions to multiple substance(s), chronic mental illness, and/or psycho/social issues (e.g., community-related, family, marital, etc.). Counselors use complex and varied assessment and evaluation tools and in-depth therapeutic treatment methodologies.
Technical Trainer I Education	The primary purpose of this position is to provide training in one or more employable vocational areas to students at a youth development center. This includes planning and implementing structured lessons and curricula and facilitating and supervising student testing and certification processes.
Vocational Evaluator Education	The primary purpose of this position is to facilitate education and career transition preparation and planning for students who are housed in juvenile justice facilities to which the position is assigned. This includes developing and implementing instruction to increase career-readiness skills, attending service planning meetings; facilitating the development of individualized student transition plan; establishing and maintaining partnerships with community-based businesses and agencies; following up on student progress after release; collecting data to be submitted for reporting purposes, and the management of student database.
Youth Counselor* Direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is a direct care position involving shift work and will serve as a professional-level member of a therapeutic treatment team. Youth counselors meet in weekly treatment team and monthly service planning team meetings to discuss progress on service plans and adjust as warranted. They provide training in pro-social skills following a highly structured cognitive-behavioral treatment protocol involving behavioral rehearsal, feedback, and contingency management, provide counseling and juvenile supervision, and monitor the youth's behavior in order to promote habilitation and successful community reintegration. They also facilitate daily psycho-educational groups targeting issues that are associated with risk for involvement in criminal activity. Position oversees off-campus community and home visits.

Position Title Type of Position	Description of Work
Youth Counselor* Direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is a direct care position involving shift work and will serve as a professional-level member of a therapeutic treatment team. Youth counselors meet in weekly treatment team and monthly service planning team meetings to discuss progress on service plans and make adjustments as warranted. They provide training in pro-social skills following a highly structured cognitive-behavioral treatment protocol involving behavioral rehearsal, feedback, and contingency management, provide counseling and juvenile supervision, and monitor the youth's behavior in order to promote habilitation and successful community reintegration. They also facilitate daily psycho-educational groups targeting issues that are associated with risk for involvement in criminal activity. Position oversees off-campus community and home visits. The juvenile population served has a variety of mental health and psychosocial needs.
Youth Counselor* Direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is a direct care position involving shift work and will serve as a professional-level member of a therapeutic treatment team. Youth counselors meet in weekly treatment team and monthly service planning team meetings to discuss progress on service plans and make adjustments as warranted. They provide training in pro-social skills following a highly structured cognitive-behavioral treatment protocol involving behavioral rehearsal, feedback, and contingency management, provide counseling and juvenile supervision, and monitor the youth's behavior in order to promote habilitation and successful community reintegration. They also facilitate daily psycho-educational groups targeting issues that are associated with risk for involvement in criminal activity. Position oversees off-campus community and home visits. The juvenile population served has a variety of mental health and psychosocial needs.
Youth Counselor Supervisor* Direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is to provide supervision to a group of Youth Counselors and Youth Counselor Associates responsible for implementing treatment plans, counseling, and supervising juvenile offenders. In addition, the position serves as case manager for juveniles with responsibility for ensuring the delivery of services and coordinating the treatment process.
Youth Counselor Technician* Direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is to provide supervision, care, counseling, safety, and support to youth who are in the physical custody of the department of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention. A person employed as a youth counselor technician shall maintain written and electronic records related to the behavior of youth under his or her supervision, assess the progress of the youth in their assigned programs, and communicate information to co-workers on other shifts. In addition to safety checks and monitoring of youth, this position is responsible for inspections and cleanliness of the living unit.
Youth Development Center Assistant Unit Administrator* Direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is to provide management of personnel and operations and ensure the safety and security of juveniles and staff. This position monitors activities assigned to the shift assuring that all duties are performed as required; visits individual living units regularly; provides staff support and coverage; and crisis intervention if necessary. Position conducts shift reviews, updates staff about problems, and policies and procedures, provides mini training sessions, reviews, and approves all written assignments completed by supervised staff, prepares written reports and updates incoming supervisors and staff of shift events.
Youth Development Center Director* Managerial	The primary purpose of the position is to provide executive management and leadership by making policy decisions, establishing goals and objectives, implementing strategies, and setting work plans through personnel responsible for the management of secure youth development centers. The position is responsible for the oversight and supervision of the center management team members. It serves as the chief administrator for the operation and oversight of youth development centers and routinely assesses the needs for youth development centers statewide.

Position Title Type of Position	Description of Work
Youth Development Center Program Manager* (Assistant Facility Director) Administrative / Managerial	The primary purpose of the position is to perform administrative and managerial work in directing and coordinating the delivery of residential, facilitative, rehabilitative and treatment programming for the Juvenile Justice Section. Employee coordinates direct care activities and programs with other major departments within the institution. Employees assume total responsibility of the center in the absence of the Facility Director.
Youth Services Behavior Specialist* Direct Care	The primary purpose of the position is to ensure the safety and security of juveniles and staff at all times while serving as a member of a treatment team. Youth Services Behavior Specialists provide skills training by following a highly structured protocol and provide counseling and juvenile supervision to monitor juvenile behavior in order to promote rehabilitation and successful community reintegration. The juveniles that the position works with present complex, co-occurring disorders requiring high levels of clinical skill and cognitive and behavioral intervention.

4) The per-bed and average daily population cost for each facility.

FY 2024-2025

Facility	Capacity	Personnel-Related Expenses	Non-Personnel Related Expenses	Total Expenses	Cost-Per-Bed
Cabarrus	64	\$6,452,183	\$2,252,181	\$8,704,364	\$136,006
Chatham	32	\$5,164,343	\$626,442	\$5,790,785	\$180,962
Edgecombe	44	\$4,261,510	\$1,213,875	\$5,475,386	\$124,441
Lenoir	44	\$5,071,472	\$1,458,895	\$6,530,367	\$148,417
Rockingham*	12	\$610,513	\$393,185	\$1,003,698	\$83,642
Total*	196	\$21,560,021	\$5,944,578	\$27,504,600	\$135,209

**12 of Rockingham's 60 beds are assigned to committed youth. The remainder are used for detention.*

FY 2024-2025

Facility	Average Daily Population	Personnel-Related Expenses	Non-Personnel Related Expenses	Total Expenses	Cost-Per-ADP
Cabarrus	67	\$6,452,183	\$2,252,181	\$8,704,364	\$129,916
Chatham	32	\$5,164,343	\$626,442	\$5,790,785	\$180,962
Edgecombe	45	\$4,261,510	\$1,213,875	\$5,475,386	\$121,675
Lenoir	44	\$5,071,472	\$1,458,895	\$6,530,367	\$148,417
Rockingham*	12	\$610,513	\$393,185	\$1,003,698	\$83,642
Total*	200	\$21,560,021	\$5,944,578	\$27,504,600	\$132,505

**12 of Rockingham's 60 beds are assigned to committed youth. The remainder are used for detention.*

5) The operating cost for each facility, including personnel and non-personnel items.

See above table.

6) A brief summary of the treatment model, education, services, and plan for reintegration into the community offered at each facility.

During fiscal year 2025, youth continued to receive core treatment and programming services that were uniformly delivered across all YDCs. Youth at each YDC were assigned to a service planning team consisting at a minimum of a social worker, a licensed mental health clinician (a staff psychologist or a licensed clinical social worker), a court counselor, the youth, their parent or legal guardian, and an educator. Each team conducted a service planning conference within 30 days of admission to craft an individualized service plan for each youth that identified goals, means of achieving them, and ways to measure progress toward goal attainment. Service planning teams at all YDCs subsequently met with each youth at least every 30 days to review progress on service planning goals, and to make adjustments to plans as needed.

Core Treatment and Programming Services

Treatment Programming

Direct care staff at YDC's are trained to create and maintain a therapeutic environment in the centers and to provide therapeutic interactions and programming designed to promote youth's development and demonstration of pro-social skills and behavior. Staff are trained in a systematic approach to care and treatment based on research-supported principles that address both criminogenic risk factors and protective factors that will further support desistance from criminal behavior. Training support and monitoring of the fidelity of implementation were provided by a central office-based psychologist who also identified and coordinated internal and external resources in an ongoing effort to enhance staff effectiveness as agents of change.

Due to the variety of the youth population in the five YDCs, differential programming has been developed to meet the varied needs of different ages and different needs based upon maturity/developmental appropriateness. Each of the programming models utilize evidence-based treatment principles and are supported by education provided to meet the juvenile's identified needs, individual and group therapy and (when indicated) substance use treatment. To help adolescents reduce aggressive and criminogenic behavior, tailored cognitive-behavioral intervention programming designed to help adolescents develop social skills is a consistent element in all YDCs. Programming is designed to increase interaction with staff through either individual interactions or groups and focused on teaching positive, pro-social behaviors and aims to decrease the risk for continued involvement in criminal behavior.

Lenoir YDC implemented Aggression Replacement Training (ART). ART is designed to help youth reduce aggressive and violent behavior by developing social skills, anger control, and moral reasoning. Social Skills Streaming groups teach how to interact effectively with others in various situations through role-playing and modeling. Anger Control Training helps individuals recognize the triggers of their anger and learn techniques to manage it. Youth work in a group format to understand their anger cycle and learn to intervene before aggression escalates.



In April 2025, Cabarrus YDC launched *The Change Up*, a newly designed, research-informed treatment program focused on helping youth build the skills and mindset needed for long-term success. The program blends cognitive-behavioral strategies with practical, daily skill-building to enhance moral reasoning, decision-making, empathy, and community engagement. It is specifically designed to address the thinking errors and behaviors that contribute to criminal activity, substance abuse, and other high-risk actions. At the heart of *The Change Up* is a structured, four-level system that uses daily goal setting, consistent feedback, and a clear point system to encourage personal responsibility, positive behavior, and pro-social growth. Each level contains three targeted goals that focus on areas such as problem-solving, self-control, respectful communication, empathy, and contributing to the community.

At Rockingham YDC, the *Rise and Fly* program shares these same core principles to guide youth through progressive skill development, mastery, and community reintegration based on Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) and prosocial skill building. Youth work on individualized life skills such as accepting feedback, managing emotions, cooperating with others, and resolving conflicts, with progress tracked through daily point cards. Like other YDCs, advancement in *Rise and Fly* is based on consistent demonstration of skills, progress in identified treatment goals, and positive engagement in a behavior management system.

The implementation of the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act in December 2019 created a need for the development of a core YDC therapeutic approach to specifically address the unique needs of the older adolescent and emerging adult population (17-21 years old). This resulted in the creation of “RISE-UP” (Repair Harm, Image Change, Strengthen Communities, Enable Healing, Understand Others, Promote Accountability). RISE-UP was designed to utilize Motivational Interviewing, Restorative Justice and Financial Literacy to specifically target psychosocial maturity (i.e. responsibility, emotion regulation and perspective taking). Central to RISE-UP is the emphasis on a restorative approach to address three main goals: accountability, competency development and community safety. The main restorative justice tools that are used in RISE-UP are victim-offender dialogue, restorative justice circles, and restorative practices/actions focused on engaging in prosocial activities with oversight by an assigned restorative team of staff following a major rule violation. In addition, the emphasis on financial literacy offers youth opportunities to learn realistic employment and money management skills. The RISE- UP program has been the foundation of programming at Edgecombe YDC since 2020.

Regardless of the programming model, staff in all YDCs follow the same guidelines for managing youths' behavior. Juvenile Justice internal policy provides guidelines for addressing misbehavior using strength-based rewards and consequences instead of relying exclusively on punishment and sanctions and limits the use of room confinement for disciplinary purposes. The policy also directs staff to develop a Crisis Awareness and Response Plan (CARP) for every youth, detailing youth's individual triggers and preferred de-escalation strategies. Licensed mental health clinicians develop CARPs for all youth on their caseloads within the first 30 days of admission to a YDC.

Education Services

Juvenile Justice Education Services (JJES) provides comprehensive educational programming to a diverse population of students. Our mission is to equip each student with the academic skills, career readiness, and personal development needed for a successful transition back into their communities.

Upon enrollment, all students placed in YDCs or assigned Adult Court Stays (bound-over youth) undergo a diagnostic assessment of reading and mathematics skills using the STAR assessment to determine their

instructional needs. Based on academic standing and personal goals, students may pursue one or more of the following pathways:

- **Standard High School Diploma** – Instruction aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, enabling students to meet NC High School graduation requirements.
- **High School Equivalency (HSE) Preparation** – Targeted instruction to prepare students for the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET), leading to a High School Equivalency diploma. Students pursuing an HSE diploma benefit from partnerships with local community colleges, receiving instruction directly from college faculty.
- **Postsecondary & Career Certifications** – Access to postsecondary courses and industry-recognized credentials delivered through Orijin tablets and partnership with the NC Community College System. Students can earn certifications in multiple fields, including OSHA safety training, SERV Safe food safety, and other workforce-relevant credentials.

All classrooms are led by NC Department of Public Instruction-licensed teachers who provide individualized instruction through a blend of direct teaching and supplemental web-based learning. While the majority of students take core academic courses—English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies—they also have opportunities to explore Career and Technical Education (CTE), including:

- Career Management
- Personal Finance
- Entrepreneurship
- Horticulture
- Principles of Business

JJES is committed to serving all learners, including students with disabilities. Exceptional Children's (EC) teachers and related service providers deliver individualized support in alignment with each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

JJES's primary goal is to meet the educational, vocational, and personal development needs of every student in our care. By fostering academic achievement, career readiness, and personal growth, we work to ensure each youth experiences a meaningful, supportive, and seamless transition back to their local schools, workplaces, and communities.

Nutrition Services

The Juvenile Justice School Nutrition Services section provides oversight and ensures compliance of the School Nutrition Program on behalf of the Division's YDCs for the Department. The section ensures continued federal funding to the Division by providing reimbursable meals that complement and comply with the federal Child Nutrition School Breakfast and the National School Lunch Program. Child Nutrition and center staff work to combat problems associated with poor nutrition and promote healthy eating habits and lifestyle changes for the youth in our care. Our youth are provided with nutritious and healthy K-12 meals daily. Meals are prepared by food service professionals who are certified in a food safety program

approved by the National Restaurant Association, N.C. Department of Public Instruction School Nutrition Services section, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

YDCs receive ongoing support, monitoring, policy updates, food safety/HACCP training, menu planning and recipes from the Juvenile Justice central office nutrition team. Local wellness initiatives and activities to engage our YDC youth are planned and executed quarterly through the center's Local Wellness committees. YDCs involve the youth in local wellness initiatives and events such as cultivating herb and vegetable gardens, designing nutrition education-themed bulletin board displays, inviting guest speakers such as local farmers, holding health/wellness fairs, providing for taste testing and much more to support and resource youth in our care. We also offer opportunities such as our own adaptation of the Jr. Chef Competition so that our youth can express their culinary creativity!

Juvenile Justice food service professionals have been honored with several awards at the local, state and national level through innovative ways to promote local wellness initiatives and activities, fitness/physical education activities and healthy eating habits for the youth. Collaboration of other sections within Juvenile Justice - Facility Operations, Clinical Services and Programs, Education and Health Care Services have been vital to achieve high standards for Nutrition services recognition.

Health Services

Health Care Services deliver comprehensive health assessments and age-appropriate health education to juveniles in the Division's care. Upon admission to a YDC, each youth receives a health assessment and medical history review by a nurse, followed by a physical exam from a licensed medical provider within seven days. Daily sick calls are conducted with a licensed nurse available to address medical concerns and determine the need for further care. Each YDC facility also has access to contracted medical and psychiatric providers who offer weekly on-site and telehealth services. In collaboration with North Carolina Public Health, oral health care (including preventive sealant programs) is also provided to youth in YDC settings.

Juveniles have access to community-based medical specialists (e.g., dental, endodontic, orthopedics, cardiology) for treatment as needed. The focus of health services is to provide youth entering a YDC preventive health care and intervention for urgent and emergent health needs. By establishing a baseline and intervening with health education and assessment to identify health issues prior to irreversible negative health outcomes, health care staff strive to mitigate any lifelong impact on quality of life and future productivity.

Health Care Services is dedicated to developing targeted strategies that strengthen health competence and education among youth in YDCs. A key priority is fostering meaningful connections between these young individuals and health care providers to boost their understanding of health, build their trust in medical providers, and encourage positive health behaviors. Health Care Services has a strong commitment to empowering youth with the skills and confidence needed for effective self-care as they prepare to transition into adulthood.

Since enactment of Raise the Age in December of 2019, the health services role has become even more critical in safeguarding the physical and mental well-being of our youth, many of whom enter the system with preexisting health concerns, trauma, or having had limited access to care. Providing necessary medical, dental, and mental health services can not only address immediate needs but also support long-term rehabilitation and reduce recidivism. The older youth population shift places greater responsibility on our facilities to adapt health services for an older adolescent population, who may have more complex health

needs such as chronic illnesses, substance use histories, and mental health challenges. Effective implementation requires well-trained staff, age-appropriate programs, and access to community-based follow-up care to ensure these young people have the best chance of rehabilitation and healthy reintegration into society.

Mental Health Services

Upon arrival at a YDC, all youth undergo suicide and mental health screenings within one hour. Results of the screenings inform comprehensive assessments and dictate initial supervision levels. Within a week, a mental status exam is conducted by a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC), followed by a full psychological evaluation (including semi-structured clinical interview) within 30 days. Assessments for exposure to adverse childhood experiences and trauma-related symptoms are conducted for each youth. The results of these assessments inform the development of individualized mental health treatment plans, outlining specific targets, intervention strategies, and the intensity of care provided.

All youth receive individual counseling or psychotherapy monthly, addressing facility adjustment, mental health issues, and criminogenic risks (e.g., criminal thinking). LMHCs at all YDCs offer several evidence-based treatments, including CBT, Motivational Interviewing (MI), Trauma-Focused CBT (TF-CBT), and Structured Psychotherapy for Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress (SPARCS). Youth also engage in psychoeducational or process groups focusing on psychosocial skills or mental health.

Mental health clinicians provide crisis intervention as needed and consult with unit staff on behavioral interventions (e.g., modeling, role-playing, positive reinforcement) to foster prosocial skills. Virtual platforms have been approved for suicide assessments in the facilities. The addition of virtual suicide assessments allowed facilities to more quickly obtain a clinical response to mental health emergencies as they arise in facilities rather than having to wait for a clinician to physically arrive at a facility.

Substance Use Services

Youth in YDCs identified as in need of further evaluation and/or treatment for substance misuse were seen by a certified substance use counselor, licensed clinical addiction specialist, or licensed mental health clinician who worked at the facility either full-time or on a contractual basis for needed services. These services included assessment of substance use/misuse, individual counseling and group counseling.

Chaplaincy Services

Clinical chaplains serve youth in the YDCs and are uniquely credentialed to provide interventions and support in the spiritual arena, as well as in other specialized areas such as grief and loss counseling. Chaplains ensured that each child underwent a screening regarding their need for spiritual support and services within a week of arrival, and when warranted, a subsequent full spiritual needs assessment. The chaplains served as an integral part of the clinical services array, carrying caseloads of individual youth as well as conducting group sessions and religious services. Another major function of the chaplains was the coordination of volunteer services; dozens of community volunteers support the YDCs. Chaplains screened, trained, coordinated the scheduling, and oversaw the religious services and other activities performed by all YDC volunteers.

Recreation Services

Recreation services are provided in all youth development centers across the state. Students are counseled and encouraged to commit to working towards healthier lifestyles and well-being and toward the opportunity to participate in facility team sports. All youth at all youth development centers are offered at least one hour of large muscle and physical activity on weekdays and two hours on the weekend under the supervision of direct care staff. Organized intramural sports offered over the year include football, basketball and softball.

Together, these recreational services ensure that youth at the YDCs engage in physical activity and are provided with recreation, sports and leisure activities that promote improved overall health and social functioning. These programs are designed to teach our youth how to compete, play as a team, and build character through positive role models and coaching.

The partnership with Camp Willow Run continued in 2025 providing a week-long camp experience for 53 youth from residential placements or in secure custody settings. Youth experienced recreational activities while under continuous direct supervision.

Reintegration and Aftercare

Juvenile Justice (JJ) employs a multifaceted approach to facilitate the successful community reintegration of youth from YDCs. This process is driven by robust collaboration among JJ social workers, youth and their families, court counselors, licensed mental health clinicians, educators (including YDC Transition Services Coordinators), and representatives from partner child- and family-serving organizations within the youth's home community.

Reintegration Process:

- **Early Engagement:** Monthly inter-disciplinary meetings and frequent on-site visits with the youth's family commence upon admission and continue throughout YDC placement. This sustained engagement fosters healthy family relationships and proactive planning for release.
- **Phased Community Exposure:** Following six months of commitment, and contingent on individualized treatment and rehabilitation progress, youth participate in off-campus outings and supervised home visits to their identified placement.
- **Individualized Reintegration Plans:** Specific and detailed community reintegration plans are collaboratively developed with the youth, family, YDC staff, court counselors, and community providers. These plans outline comprehensive support strategies for the youth and family upon their return home.
- **Service Linkage:** Connection and linkage to identified services are meticulously facilitated through close collaboration between JJ Social Work and Court Services staff.
- **Risk and Needs Assessment:** Release planning rigorously considers juvenile risk of reoffending and community safety, alongside treatment and rehabilitation progress and continuing needs.
- **Continuum of Services:** Transition plans address ongoing youth and family needs through a range of services, including residential/step-down placements, appropriate academic/vocational placement, mental health/substance abuse services, mentoring, physical health support, pro-social peer involvement, family/parenting support, and

specialized interventions (e.g., gang intervention, intensive court counselor supervision, electronic monitoring/house arrest).

Recent Strategic Developments:

1. **Increased Post-18 Residential Options:** Developed four new residential placement/supported apartment-living options for youth transitioning from YDCs after turning 18, designed to foster independent living and job/career readiness skills.
2. **Reentry Program:** Continued operation of the reentry support program delivered by Communities in Schools of NC.
3. **Enhanced Family Engagement:** Began system-wide initiatives to enhance family engagement efforts across all juvenile justice services and contracts.
4. **Service Directory Maintenance:** Performed ongoing maintenance of a comprehensive service directory to optimize needs-to-service matching during case planning.
5. **YASI Utilization:** Working towards strategic utilization of the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI) to develop coordinated release plans that comprehensively address juveniles identified risks, needs, and strengths.

2024-2025 Partnership Achievements in Reentry Enhancement:

- **Medicaid Collaboration:** Partnered with the Division of Health Benefits to leverage the Medicaid Consolidated Appropriations Act opportunity. This collaboration enables: a) pre-release medical screenings (30 days prior) for YDC youth, and b) establishment of Medicaid-funded care coordinators in the youth's home community post-release.
- **Performance Measurement & Strategic Planning:** Engaged with the National Center for Juvenile Justice and the Center for Improving Youth Justice for technical assistance. This initiative has resulted in improved annual parent surveys for YDC youth guardians and more targeted data collection for reentry performance measurement. This work has additionally secured a Strategic Re-entry grant with the Council of State Governments to develop a full system strategic plan aimed at maximizing positive outcomes for youth re-entering communities.
- **Secured Grant Funding for the Juvenile Reentry Employment Project (JREP):** Grant funds from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) will support JREP which is designed to identify high-risk transition-age youth (17+) and provide vocational skills training at the Volt Center (a part of Craven Community College) in New Bern, NC. It offers wraparound intensive services including case management from a designated Case Manager and additional support from State-funded Local Reentry Councils (LRCs) located in District 3 (Craven, Pitt, Pamlico and Carteret Counties). These comprehensive supports encompass housing, transportation, employment, basic life skills, substance use referrals, education, and mentoring, all as needed.
- **Grant Funding Secured for NC Juvenile Justice Reentry System Assessment:** Secured grant funding from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). This funding supports a collaborative initiative with the Council of State Governments (CSG) to conduct a comprehensive, statewide, data-driven assessment of North Carolina's juvenile reentry system, alongside enhanced engagement and training opportunities that uplift youth and family voices.

Restorative Justice

Funded by a 2021 OJJDP Systems Reform Grant, our Restorative Justice (RJ) work has significantly expanded within state YDCs and Juvenile Detention Centers (JDCs). The grant initially supported a time-limited RJ Coordinator, whose impactful training of direct care staff in circle processes and facilitated dialogue mediations led to the position becoming full-time in late 2024.

This year, RJ programming has continued consistently, primarily at Edgecombe YDC and Dillon JDC. Through restorative justice circles, we foster accountability, empathy, and connection, grounded in the five core aspects of Restorative Justice: understanding impact, acknowledging choice, recognizing harm, taking steps to repair, and making lasting behavioral changes. These efforts continue to strengthen our youth programming and create pathways toward healing and repair.

7) The average length of stay in the YDCs

FY 2024-2025

The following data is based on exits during FY 2025.

Facility	Juveniles	Average Length of Stay (Mean) (Days)
Cabarrus	49	396.76
Chatham	17	376
Edgecombe	40	366.28
Lenoir	33	436.33
Rockingham	17	156
Total	156	368.81

Notes: The following should be noted regarding the Average Length of Stay.

- The data excludes commitment records where the juvenile spent time on community placement for commitment services.
- The juvenile counts are based on juveniles who exited a YDC during the fiscal year.
- Only the youth's last stay is counted. Last stay is the length of stay by facility using the last facility that the juvenile was placed at during the reporting period.
- The Average Length of Stay is not the same as the Average Length of Commitment. This difference is due to transfers and time spent in detention awaiting placement at a YDC.
- The data reflects the last facility that the juvenile exited from during the reporting period.
- As commitments for placement in a youth development center trend towards youth with more complex needs and offense histories, the length of stay increases.

8) The number of incidents of assaults and attacks on staff at each facility

FY 2024-2025

Facility	Number of Assaults on Staff
Cabarrus	27
Chatham	15
Edgecombe	6
Lenoir	2
Rockingham	0
TOTAL	50

Notes: The assaults included in this report align with internal NCDPS Juvenile Justice policy, as compared to assaults included in other legislative reports that meet the criminal definition of assault. The policy definition of assault is “juvenile intentionally, by force or violence, causing injury/physical harm or attempting to cause physical harm to a person through force and/or violence; or willfully throwing, emitting, or using as a projectile, bodily fluids or excrement at a person.”