

Project Evaluation Update

Winter/Spring 2013



What is Project Kealahou?

This is the first in a series of reports highlighting a new initiative for Hawai'i's youth and their families. Project Kealahou (*kealahou* means a "a new pathway" in Hawaiian) is a federally-funded *System of Care* initiative that supports a cross-agency, collaborative approach for serving girls with complex needs. PK is a family- and youth-centered, collaborative and coordinated, interagency effort to help girls improve their lives by making positive changes and meeting their own goals. And PK is different other programs because we are girl-guided – we understand girls have unique needs.

Project Kealahou enhances existing services and access to services by providing youth and family with engaging, intensified, community-based, outreach and case management, evidence-based treatments, and cultural, self-advocacy and skill-building activities.

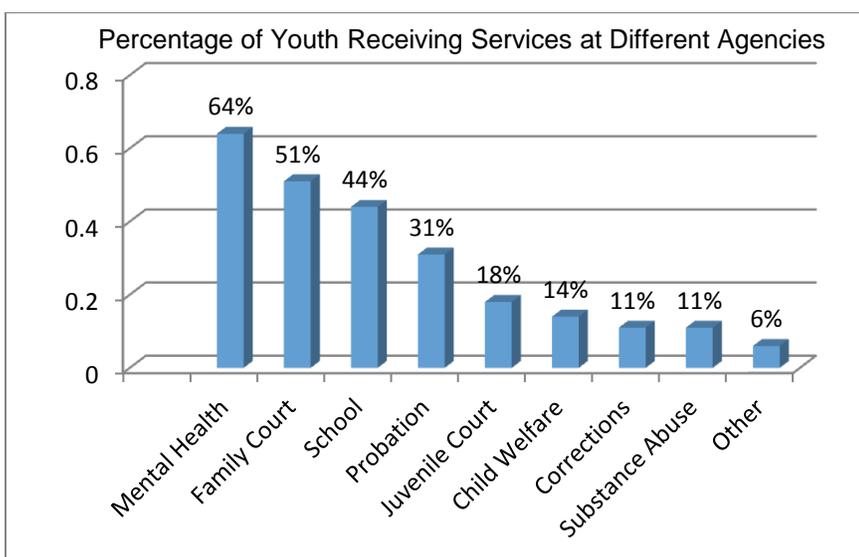
Who does PK serve?

Data on the girls (n=84) served in the first year of Project Kealahou services shows:

- Native Hawaiian ethnicity was reported by 65% of PK youth
- All PK youth identify as female
- Average age of PK girls is 15.8 years

Where do PK girls receive services?

The typical Project Kealahou youth has complex legal, social and personal issues and is thus involved with multiple agencies simultaneously, with an average of about 3 different state agencies providing specialized services to each PK girl. Please see chart below.



About Project Kealahou (PK)

Project Kealahou is a Department of Health (DOH) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD) System of Care initiative funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) from 2009 to 2016.

Locations: Project Kealahou's community-based services are available to youth in Honolulu, Central and Windward Oahu.

Numbers Served: Project Kealahou has served nearly 200 girls and their families since its start in September 2011.

Collaborative Partners: The Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE), the Juvenile Justice programs of the State Judiciary System (such as Family Court, Detention Home, Youth Correctional Facility and Probation Division), and the Department of Human Services' (DHS) Child Welfare Services (CWS) Division.

Target Population: Females ages 11-18, who have experienced significant negative life events.

Data Sources: Data comes from standardized intake and six-month follow up interviews with Project Kealahou girls and their caregivers.

Systems of Care

What is a System of Care?

A *System of Care* is a coordinated network of community-based services and supports that is organized to meet the challenges of children and youth with serious mental health needs and their families. Families and youth work in partnership with public and private organizations so services and supports are effective, build on the strengths of individuals, and address each person's cultural and linguistic needs. A *System of Care* aims to help children, youth and families function better at home, in school, and in the community throughout life.

Why a System of Care?

About two-thirds of children and youth with mental health challenges in the United States do not receive the mental health services they need. In many communities, services for youth with mental health challenges are unavailable, unaffordable, or insufficient, leaving these youth at risk for difficulties in school and/or the community. The *System of Care* recognizes the importance of family, school and community and seeks to promote the potential of every child and youth, regardless of mental health challenge.

Which agencies refer girls to PK?

Thus far, PK has received 40% its referrals from CAMHD and its contracted mental health providers, 25% from Juvenile Justice (including Family Court, Probation and Corrections), 23% from the Department of Education (DOE), 5% from Homeless Shelters and 3% from Child Welfare Services, while 2% referred themselves or were referred by their parents to PK. Please note that PK is still accepting new referrals.

What's special about PK services?

- Focus on the identification and care of girls with trauma issues across child-serving agencies;
- Use of community- and relation-based recruitment, engagement and retention strategies;
- Involvement of families and youth in both project implementation and services via roles in evaluation, governance and *self-advocacy*;
- Integration of peer partner supports for both youth *and* parents.
- Access to gender-responsive, trauma-focused, culturally-informed, evidence-based services and supports;
- Utilization of a *wrap-around* approach for comprehensive coordinated service planning that is family-driven and youth-guided;
- Coordinated intensive case management across all involved agencies and support needs;
- Fostering of culturally informed service approaches, assured through the hiring and utilization of a Cultural Specialist;
- Employment of blended project staffing includes clinicians, intensive case managers, as well as *family and youth partners*, and a full-time, probation-focused, intensive support worker;
- Development and implementation of gender and trauma-informed practices and policies across public agencies and the community;
- Work towards blended/braided funding and shared administrative approaches for sustainability of best service provision and workforce development practices.

How are PK girls doing?

Preliminary results from six-month follow-up interviews (n=12) are promising, with more than a quarter of our youth showing significant improvement in their depression and anxiety scores just six months after enrolling in services. PK is also receiving high marks from its clients on their satisfaction with their level of participation in our services and with the quality of our services overall. These results compare favorably to other Systems of Care, with PK scoring in the top 25% of all System of Care sites around the nation on these key indicators of progress and satisfaction with services.

What can we expect from future project updates?

PK will be providing annual updates for our stakeholders regarding demographics, outcomes, satisfaction, service types and service costs.

For more information, contact Project Director Tia Roberts at 733-9396 (Tia.Roberts@doh.hawaii.gov) or Lead Evaluator Edward Suarez at 733-9344 (Edward.Suarez@doh.hawaii.gov).



Stay connected with Project Kealahou online!

Website: www.projectkealahou.org

Facebook: www.Facebook.com/ProjectKealahou

Twitter: www.twitter.com/projkealahou