



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2022.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Category: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_

## **Chesterfield County's Juvenile Detention Home Reimagines Behavior Management**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Behavior management programs are the cornerstone of a secure detention home's efforts to provide a safe environment by maintaining order and compliance, while at the same time offering incentives to residents that can ease their stay in a secure residential setting and encourage pro-social decision-making. A good, well-thought-out behavior management program can truly make the difference between a calm, orderly environment, and an environment where room restriction and physical restraints are the norm and not the exception. Chesterfield Detention had already made programmatic changes in 2013 to reduce the number of physical restraints but the use of room restriction remained high. After much research, surveying, and benchmarking, it was determined we could address this issue by 1) providing more, as well as better, incentives for residents and 2) shift the focus from residents "buying" these incentives with points to being automatically eligible for them based on positive, pro-social behavior. By developing and implementing a new behavior management program that centered around incentives chosen by residents and adopting this change in perspective, we saw the use of room restriction decrease 77% and the use of physical restraints decrease 88% from 2017 to 2021.

## **Chesterfield County's Juvenile Detention Home Reimagines Behavior Management**

Chesterfield County's Juvenile Detention Home recognized disciplinary room restriction was being used at a high rate and sought ways to address this problem. While Chesterfield Detention had already made programmatic changes in 2013 to reduce the number of physical restraints, that result had not translated to the use of room restriction. Behavior management programs are in place to provide a safe environment by maintaining order and compliance, while at the same time offering incentives to residents that can ease their stay in a secure residential setting and encourage pro-social decision-making. Chesterfield Detention's behavior management program had gone mostly unchanged in almost fifteen years.

A process improvement team was put in place to research, survey, and benchmark and then develop a new behavior management program that worked for our facility, our staff, our residents, and that would ultimately curb the high use of room restriction. Over the course of the next fifteen months, a new program was created and implemented to address the high use of room restriction by 1) providing more, as well as better, incentives for residents and 2) shift the focus from residents "buying" these incentives with points to being automatically eligible for them based on positive, pro-social behavior.

Since implementing the new program in January 2018, Chesterfield Detention saw the use of room restriction decrease 77%. The use of physical restraints also decreased by 88%, an unintended yet positive change. These results were accomplished by developing and

implementing a new behavior management program that centered around incentives chosen by residents and adopting an overall change in perspective for the facility and staff. Chesterfield Detention also put in place a mechanism to review the program on at least an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant with the ever-changing population we serve.

## **Chesterfield County's Juvenile Detention Home Reimagines Behavior Management**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Behavior management programs are the cornerstone of a secure detention home's efforts to provide a safe environment by maintaining order and compliance, while at the same time offering incentives to residents that can ease their stay in a secure residential setting and encourage pro-social decision-making. A good, well-thought-out behavior management program can truly make the difference between a calm, orderly environment, and an environment where room restriction and physical restraints are the norm and not the exception. Chesterfield Detention had already made programmatic changes in 2013 to reduce the number of physical restraints but the use of room restriction remained high. After much research, surveying, and benchmarking, it was determined we could address this issue by 1) providing more, as well as better, incentives for residents and 2) shift the focus from residents "buying" these incentives with points to being automatically eligible for them based on positive, pro-social behavior. By developing and implementing a new behavior management program that centered around incentives chosen by residents and adopting this change in perspective, we saw the use of room restriction decrease 77% and the use of physical restraints decrease 88% from 2017 to 2021.

### **PROBLEM/NEED FOR PROGRAM**

Chesterfield Juvenile Detention Home has historically fallen in the middle of the continuum between the use of very little room restriction and excessive use of room restriction

when comparing ourselves to our counterparts. Room restriction is anytime a resident is placed in his/her sleeping room short-term to address negative behaviors. This is also done after a full disciplinary review is conducted by a supervisor and/or administrator. Room restriction should, and is at Chesterfield Detention, used as a last resort to maintain facility security due to disruptive and aggressive behavior. The idea is once a resident's behavior is under control, the room restriction ends. Much work was done in 2013 to become a trauma-informed facility, which led to a drastic decrease in the use of physical restraints. However, we knew more could be done, especially around the use of room restriction. Despite the significant decline in the number of physical restraints over a three-year period, we still experienced what we believed to be high levels of behavioral issues that resulted in room restriction and the perceived belief that such use leads to a safer environment. At the time, our behavior management program was over 15 years old, and we believed designing and implementing a new program was necessary to address this issue. New incentives had not been added in years and thus residents had little to "work for" in terms of their behavior.

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM**

In October 2016, Chesterfield Juvenile Detention Home created a behavior management program process improvement team to study the current program in place, benchmark with other facilities, and design a new program that would best fit our facility and our population. The team was comprised of the training coordinator, three direct-care staff who each worked on a different shift, and the facility's senior mental health clinician.

The first step was to study the current program, which took place beginning in November 2016, and this was done by surveying residents, direct-care staff, and supervisors. Results from surveys and focus groups showed that staff and supervisors believed the current program, which was points-based, was too difficult to track daily. Residents would earn points at different intervals throughout the day and then use those points for various activities throughout the evening and week. Residents believed the program did not provide enough incentives and they also did not like the points system because they were often forced to choose one incentive over another due to not having enough points to cover both.

The second step was to benchmark with other detention homes, which included site visits and an overview of their programs. The first site visit, in January 2017, was to Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Detention Center in Staunton, Virginia. Shenandoah was chosen because they had recently undergone a change in their behavior management program as well. This was a great first stop for our team to get an idea on what the process should look like, as well as what they ultimately ended up with. The second site visit took place in March 2018 and was to James River Juvenile Detention Center in Goochland, Virginia. James River is close to Chesterfield Detention, and we share some staff part-time, who had mentioned things they liked about their behavior management program. The last site visit was conducted in May 2017 to Virginia Beach Detention Home in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Virginia Beach Detention Home is often seen as a sister-facility to Chesterfield Detention based on size and average daily population and thus a great comparison. Additional surveys and focus groups were held in between site visits to get further recommendations based on information obtained during site visits.

Following site visits and feedback, the process improvement team held an all-day work retreat in June 2017 to design a new behavior management program. Based on what was seen at other facilities and the feedback from staff and residents, a behavior management program was created that got rid of the point system and instead implemented a level system. Residents would be afforded all current incentives as well as new incentives based on rule-abiding and demonstrations of pro-social behavior and the amount of time they had been in the facility. Residents no longer needed to “buy” or choose incentives. New daily/weekly incentives included premium hygiene items (i.e., brand name body wash), later bedtimes, increased phone calls, and a canteen program where residents could receive extra snacks throughout the week. Monthly incentives included special activities such as make-your-own salad bar, ice cream bar, special recreation time, and other events for residents on the highest level. Another big change was replacing facility-issued jumpers with khaki pants and t-shirts for our pre-dispositional residents and khaki pants and polo shirts for longer-term residents in our treatment programs. Jumpers gave the appearance of a hardened correctional setting, whereas “regular” clothes gave an appearance of a more trauma-informed facility.

In July 2017 the proposed behavior management program was presented to facility administration for feedback and necessary adjustments. In August, the new program was presented to supervisors, staff, and residents for feedback. Changes were made based on feedback from all parties, and in October staff began training on the new program. Implementation was planned for, and took place in, January 2018. For nine months following implementation, the process improvement team met monthly to review the effectiveness of the program, as well as make changes when necessary. Changes were made to not only correct



some gaps, but also add extra incentives. The biggest such incentive came from a resident focus group facilitated by the Director and allowed residents to have additional family members visit. Historically, only parents and legal guardians were permitted to visit due to safety concerns and staffing limitations. With this addition, residents on the program's highest level were afforded a special visitation monthly that allowed siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and other extended family members to visit. Chesterfield Detention was the first detention home in Virginia to allow such expanded visitation for pre-dispositional residents.

### **COST OF THE PROGRAM**

Time, and salaries associated with time, along with travel to other sites, were the biggest costs of this program. Over the approximately two years this program was developed and reviewed, five staff members met at a minimum monthly. Members of the process improvement team assisted with numerous surveys and focus groups with staff and residents. Three all-day site visits and one all-day work retreat were required to develop the program. Many meetings were held after the work retreat with administration, supervisors, staff members, and residents by various members of the process improvement team to review information and get feedback. Training staff members did not require any additional time as the facility has built-in training days and those were used to prevent overtime needed for additional training.

### **RESULTS AND SUCCESS OF PROGRAM**

Prior to developing a new behavior management program, Chesterfield Detention averaged over 30 instances of room restriction per month as well as approximately 6-7 physical restraints per month. These data were with an average daily population of around 20-25 residents. Since implementation in January 2018, room restriction statistics have been tracked to determine the effectiveness of the new program, and we have seen significant decreases in each calendar year since 2017.

For calendar year 2018, Chesterfield Detention averaged 21 room restrictions per month (34% decrease from 2017) with an average daily population of 22 residents (5% decrease from 2017).

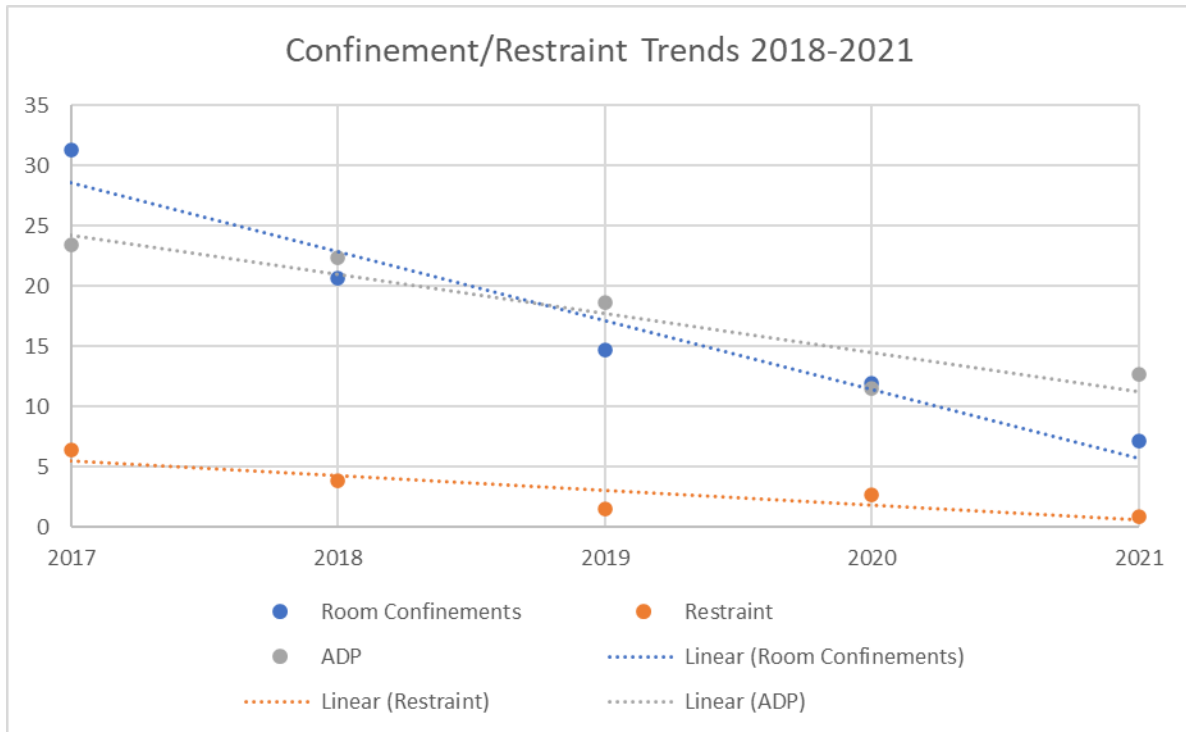
In calendar year 2019, Chesterfield Detention averaged 15 room restrictions per month (29% decrease from 2018) and under 2 physical restraints per month, with an average daily population of 19 residents (16% decrease from 2018).

In calendar year 2020, Chesterfield Detention averaged 12 room restrictions per month (19% decrease from 2019) and just over 2 physical restraints per month, with an average daily population of 12 residents (39% decrease from 2019). It should be noted the severe decrease in average daily population for calendar year 2020 was a result of COVID-19.

In calendar year 2021, Chesterfield Detention averaged 7 room restrictions per month (40% decrease from 2020) and 1 physical restraint per month, with an average daily population of 13 residents (10% increase from 2020).

The following chart shows decreases year over year for room restriction every year since implementing our new behavior management program. We also saw decreases year over year for physical restraints in three of the four years. While we have also seen decreases in average

daily population (ADP), trend lines indicate decreases in room restriction are occurring at a faster rate than decrease in population.



A 77% decrease in room restriction use, as well as an 88% decrease in the use of physical restraints, has shown our new behavior management program to be highly effective. We do recognize the 46% decrease in population; however, decreases in admissions have been tied to juveniles with less serious offenses. The population that remains are juveniles who are in the deep end of the system, often with violent offenses and in some cases being tried as adults. These juveniles also stay a lot longer, so maintaining consistent pro-social behavior in a confinement setting is challenging. Many of the juveniles we serve have significant behavioral health challenges as well and are very difficult to manage in a confinement setting with limited mental health resources. What we found was updating our behavior management program to increase incentives and better address negative behaviors can curb negative behavioral issues

and encourage pro-social behaviors for all residents. For residents to maintain the highest level, they must fully participate in all the programming we have to offer, including school.

Chesterfield Detention continues to evaluate the program and incentives on an on-going basis. Residents and staff are surveyed at least annually to determine if the program is still effective in their eyes and to make sure we are providing incentives that are meaningful to the residents and make them want to follow the rules. Residents feel empowered to make the right decisions and are rewarded appropriately for doing so. What we have learned through this process is that behavior management programs must be fluid and able to change with our changing demographic. This ability to adapt is a great example of how Chesterfield Detention meets its purpose statement “To provide a safe, secure, and supportive environment for court-involved youth with the goal of promoting individual growth through education and empowerment.”