

Youth Engagement Program

Megan Traficano, MSW, LCSW-Director

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Brief History Of the Youth Engagement Program IGA

- The Youth Engagement Program (formerly the Youth Interventionist Program) started in 1996 as a collaboration between all 11 taxing bodies in Oak Park and River Forest to address youth gang involvement, substance abuse and violence in the communities. Currently 9 taxing bodies support the program (10 if the Village signs on).
- In 2019 the program shifted models and become focused on Youth Mental Health. The program hired Masters Level Social Workers and clinical supervision was provided by the Director (a Licensed Clinical Social Worker: LCSW). Program Manager also a LCSW as of 2021.
- In 2022 the program changed names based on community feedback from partners, youth, and families to the Youth Engagement Program to be more in sync with the services provided, which is FREE MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING for youth.

Youth Engagement Program Services:

- Free Individual Mental Health Counseling to youth:
 - Anxiety/Depression
 - Crisis/Trauma
 - Behavioral Issues
 - Gang Involvement
 - Short Term Mentoring
- Youth Support Groups
- Home visits
- In-school services
- Bilingual services
- Diverse staff of trained Social Workers
- Services provided to Intergovernmental Partners:
 - Community crisis response
 - Data sharing
 - Presentations and educational sessions for staff
 - Consulting around youth needs



Youth Engagement Program Data:

August 2024 Data:

- **42** current youth clients
- Residency:
 - 35 Oak Park
 - 6 River Forest
 - 1 Homeless
- District:
 - 21 District 97
 - 19 OPRFHS
 - 2 District 90
- 5 Program Completions
 - 4 met goals
 - 1 lack of parental contact
- 5 Referrals
 - 3 crisis/trauma
 - 2 anxiety/depression

Total number of clients seen FSY24 (4/1/23-4/1/24):

- 95 total

Referral data **4/1/24-8/31/24**:

- **30** total (23 Oak Park, 7 River Forest)
 - Crisis/trauma- 12
 - Anxiety/depression- 9
 - Behavioral issues- 6
 - Mentoring- 4



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Youth Engagement Program Staff

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Youth Engagement Program Manager

Martika Aranda, MSW, LSW
Youth Engagement Specialist

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Bilingual Youth Engagement
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Questions and Conversation

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