



Oregon Youth Authority

Preventing and Responding to Sexual Abuse | Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility

Overview

- We regularly train youth on OYA's zero tolerance policy for sexual abuse, and how to report such incidents. Youth are encouraged to report incidents to our Professional Standards Office via a hotline – the number is posted in the facility and shared with youth regularly. PSO investigates all allegations and turns over investigations to the Oregon State Police when it appears a crime has occurred.
- OYA employs a full-time PREA coordinator who oversees the agency's work to comply with PREA across all nine close custody facilities; we also have designated PREA compliance managers at each facility. The PREA coordinator checks in with the local compliance managers monthly to review any issues, make sure documentation is completed, and to follow-up on identified issues. We compile annual PREA reports on sexual abuse reports and the number of substantiated reports, if any, from all of our facilities. In 2017 – the year covered by the federal survey -- six incidents were reported at Oak Creek, five of them youth-to-youth.
- We also survey youth twice a year as part of our participation in [Performance-Based Standards \(PbS\)](#), a national improvement model grounded in research that holds juvenile justice agencies, facilities and residential care providers to the highest standards for operations, programs and services. As with the federal survey, youth input their answers on tablets. For the past five years, PbS results place Oak Creek at or below the national average in terms of incidence of sexual victimization. Over the same time period, youth reported they felt increasingly safe – very safe – at the facility.
- The entire Oak Creek facility, except the bathrooms, is under 24/7 video surveillance. Since the 2018 PREA audit, we have installed 19 new security cameras at Oak Creek, and upgraded 58 existing cameras. (All other OYA facilities are similarly equipped with video cameras.)
- In the wake of our 2018 PREA audit at Oak Creek, we provided additional training to staff and youth on preventing sexual abuse. We also improved our procedures for screening incoming youth that might be sexually vulnerable or sexually aggressive and updated our process for monitoring youth for potential retaliation for reporting sexual abuse.
- The PREA coordinator conducts regularly monthly check-ins with the facility-level PREA compliance managers regarding any issues with sexual abuse or harassment, and how OYA can better meet and exceed the PREA standards. This means making sure documentation is being completed, reports are followed-up, and so on.
- Because the young women in custody at Oak Creek report very high rates of sexual trauma upon intake, we have a higher ratio of mental health staffing vs. non-clinical staff there, compared to our boys' facilities.