

Daily Alternatives

Daily Alternatives is a newsletter created to inform the public of the positive outcomes of Alternatives to Detention and other Quality Improvement work in the Bernalillo County Juvenile Justice system.

Reception and Assessment Center (RAC) Services

What is it?

RAC Services are housed at New Day shelter and Life Skills Academy. The RAC works with youth and families to intervene in a difficult situation and to find resources to support the youth in their transition back home. If parents fail to pick up their kids they can stay for a short time at the safe home. The recidivism rate for kids who use the RAC services is low. 2% of the youth are detained again within a year.

Why choose this program rather than detention?

RAC exists for kids who have committed low level offenses or misdemeanors to prevent them from being detained. RAC provides immediate crisis intervention and helps guide them off the road of further engagement in the justice system. RAC services focus on helping these youth to attend school or continue working, and stay at home with their families.

What are the requirements for a youth to enter this program?

RAC only accepts kids with low level offenses or misdemeanors. Probation and law enforcement can also refer kids to the program. Kids can also self refer.

What does this program offer youth?

RAC offers crisis intervention. Staff does not focus on exploiting the issue, rather they focus on the youth to tap into their strengths and understand their needs. New Day strongly believes that to be effective in positively affecting the trajectory of the lives of at-risk youth, the following needs must be met:

- Safety- Youth must have a safe foundation from which to move forward.
- Vision- Youth must have a personal dream of a future.
- Success- Youth must experience progressive success toward their dream.
- Skills- Youth must have the skills to pursue their dream.
- Adult Allies- Youth must have healthy support that will encourage them through difficult times toward a positive and self-reliant lifestyle.

They highlight each youth's individual value and help youth to gain confidence. RAC staff pride themselves on focusing on the positive aspects of the youth rather their mistakes.

A Success Story

A youth who used the RAC in April 2017, stayed at the shelter less than a month. She was discharged and ended up in a residential treatment center in Santa Fe that dealt with youth being human trafficked. In June she came back to the safe home and she able to open up about her situation. She disclosed her addictions and family issues. This time the staff was able to provide service specifically for her needs. She received counseling and a social detox. Through the proper services and programs, she has been 7 months sober since RAC Services and continues to progress.