

**Ash Institute Summer Fellowship in Innovation
Project Description | 2009**

**Missouri Division of Youth Services
State of Missouri (Jefferson City, MO)
*2008 IAG Winner***

Organization:

The Division of Youth Services (DYS) is the state agency charged with the care and treatment of delinquent youth committed to its custody by one of the 45 Missouri juvenile courts. These services include assessment, care and treatment, and education of all youth committed to its care. Toward this end, DYS operates treatment programs ranging from non-residential day treatment centers through secure residential institutions. <http://www.dss.mo.gov/dys>

Project Description and Fellow Duties:

DYS operates a nationally-recognized system of residential treatment centers, case management, and family and community engagement. Day treatment centers were opened several years ago to provide community-based, non-residential services for low-risk offenders on the front-end of the system, as well as more serious offenders as they transition to law-abiding and productive citizenship. Day treatment center have not received the same attention as other aspects of the DYS continuum of care and are due for a comprehensive review and dialogue to develop a future vision and plan for maximizing their effectiveness. The project includes reviewing current day treatment programming and services provided by the Division of Youth Services and programs provided by other entities to address the needs of at-risk and delinquent youth. Identify best practices in the field of community-based intervention and develop plan for revitalizing DYS' approach. Conceptualize the scope of services and structure that will maximize impact of 1) prevention, 2) intervention, and 3) transition of youth who come to the attention of the juvenile justice system. Completed results of research and recommendations will be presented in written report and presentation to the DYS Planning and Development team.

This is a full-time, 12-week opportunity located in the Division of Youth Service's central office in Jefferson City, Missouri. It is anticipated the Fellow would travel to several sites throughout the state to learn more about the mission and practices of high performing programs.

Qualifications:

Candidate should possess a broad knowledge and interest in juvenile justice systems. Candidate should be able to design and conduct meaningful interviews with administrative and service delivery personnel, as well as youth and families. Candidate should be familiar with and able to design databases and/or spreadsheets. Candidate should be able to research literature, studies, and existing programs in Missouri and throughout the nation. In conclusion, the candidate should be able to synthesize observations, documentation, and anecdotal findings into an identification of promising and evidence-based practices. Further, the candidate should be able to present a work plan to move the existing DYS system toward a more effective approach.