

# Youth Opportunity Foundation Receives DOJ Second Chance Grant to Address Traumatic Brain Injury



NEWS RELEASE BY YOUTH OPPORTUNITY FOUNDATION

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Indianapolis-based Youth Opportunity Foundation (YOF) announced today that in partnership with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (FDJJ) it has been awarded a three year, \$1.5M, Second Chance Act grant from the Department of Justice to reduce recidivism for justice-involved youth impacted by traumatic brain injury (TBI). "The prevalence of traumatic brain injury among justice-involved youth is misunderstood, undiagnosed, and thus untreated", said Denny Armington, YOF President. "We are hopeful that this study will confirm the suspected significant prevalence of TBI among these youth, demonstrate the results of proper brain injury-specific treatment, and provide positive, long term outcomes for the children and the communities in which they live".

Under the supervision of FDJJ, and in concert with the University of South Florida and the Florida Department of Education's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (FLVR), YOF will subcontract with Youth Opportunity Investments (YOI), and prominent neuropsychology and neurorehabilitation experts to create a full range of services committed to youth with TBI. Managed by the YOF Advisory Council, the grant will enable the utilization of evidence-based TBI assessment and treatment modalities for youth during their stay in a residential treatment program, and for up to two years after transition to their communities. "Recidivism is a major issue for all juvenile justice programs", noted Michael Baglivio a criminologist and YOF Advisory Council member. "Without targeted treatment, practitioners run the risk of wasting dollars, negatively impacting public safety, and, most importantly, limiting a youth's future potential".

In order to accomplish the goals suggested by FDJJ to "reduce recidivism" and "create a full range of services focused on youth with traumatic brain injury", YOF grant staff will coordinate with four YOI managed Florida facilities in Brooksville, Broward, Kissimmee, and Ocala, statewide brain injury advocacy and support programs, and vocational counselors from FLVR. The post-discharge, community re-entry program will continue to provide supported resource facilitation techniques while focusing on post-secondary education and training, job acquisition and career development. "We are particularly excited" commented Allison Flanagan, Director of FLVR, "about how this project could contribute to successful competitive work outcomes for youth with brain injury."

## **About Youth Opportunity Foundation (YOF)**

Youth Opportunity Foundation is focused on expanding this work with at-risk and traumatized young people impacted by the "silent epidemic" of traumatic brain injury (CDC). YOF is a 501c3 nonprofit committed to attacking the issues confronting vulnerable kids through improved clinical

treatment and strategies, access to post-secondary education, jobs, and mentored relationships. We focus on those in need of [a second chance](#).

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