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## **Delaware Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services**

### **Prison Rape Elimination Act**

### **2025 Annual Report**

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The Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services (DYRS) is the lead juvenile justice agency serving youth ordered to our care through the judicial system. DYRS is responsible for assessing the needs of youth and collaborating with their families, school, and support systems to coordinate services aimed at addressing the factors that contributed to delinquency. DYRS offers supervision and services through Civil Citation, Community Services, Detention Services, Residential Alternatives to Detention, and Secure Care Treatment. The goal of all of our programs is to reduce recidivism and promote positive outcomes.

**Renee Ciconte, Division Director**

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<https://kids.delaware.gov/youth-rehabilitative-services/prea/>

In 2003 the Federal government signed into law the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) to combat the growing problem of sexual abuse and harassment within confinement facilities. On August 20, 2012, a set of standards were adopted that require Federal, State, and local government facilities to prevent, address, and respond to sexual abuse and harassment claims made by residents. The Delaware Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services (DYRS) has a zero-tolerance policy for all acts of sexual abuse and harassment. The Division is committed to maintain full compliance with the requirements of PREA and, most importantly, provide a safe and secure environment for youth.

DYRS has developed policy and procedures for staff to enhance understanding of the PREA standards. All DYRS staff are trained on how to report an incident, coordinate response duties and investigations, and how to access victim services. Youth also receive PREA orientation and training. The training describes the zero-tolerance policy of DYRS and how youth should report a PREA incident. When an incident is reported within a DYRS facility, the report is brought to the director’s office from the superintendent to provide immediate and appropriate administrative responsiveness. The incident is also reported to the child abuse and neglect report line operated by the Division of Family Services. When a youth in a DYRS facility reports an incident that took place in another facility, the administrator of the current facility will notify the appropriate office of the facility where the alleged incident occurred.

**Incidents reported to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) annually are categorized and defined in the following areas:**

<b>Youth on Youth Sexual Victimization</b>	
Sexual abuse is disaggregated into three (3) categories of youth-on-youth sexual victimization. These categories are:	
<b>Nonconsensual Sexual Acts</b>	Sexual contact of any person without his or her consent, or of a person who is unable to consent or refuse; <b>AND</b>  Contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, including penetration, however slight, <b>OR</b>  Contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva, or anus, <b>OR</b>  Penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person, however slight, by a hand finger, object, or other instrument.
<b>Abusive Sexual Contact</b>	Sexual contact of any person without his or her consent, or of a person who is unable to consent or refuse; <b>AND</b>  Intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of any person.  EXCLUDE incidents in which the contact was incidental to a physical altercation.
<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	Repeated and unwelcome sexual advances, requests, for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures, or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature by one youth directed toward another.

<b>Staff on Youth Sexual Abuse</b>	
Sexual abuse is disaggregated into two (2) categories of staff-on-youth sexual abuse. These categories are:	
<b>Staff Sexual Misconduct</b>	<p>Any behavior or act of a sexual nature directed toward a youth by an employee, volunteer, contractor, official visitor, or another agency representative (exclude family, friend, or other visitors).</p> <p>Sexual relationships of a romantic nature between staff and youth are included in this definition. Consensual or nonconsensual sexual acts include:</p> <p>Intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks that is unrelated to official duties or with the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire, <b>OR</b></p> <p>Completed, attempted, threatened, or requested sexual acts, <b>OR</b></p> <p>Occurrences of indecent exposure, invasion of privacy or staff voyeurism for reasons unrelated to official duties or for sexual gratification.</p>
<b>Staff Sexual Harassment</b>	<p>Repeated verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature to a youth by an employee, volunteer, contractor, official visitor, or other agency representative (exclude family, friends, or other visitors). Include:</p> <p>Demeaning references to gender; or sexually suggestive or derogatory comments about body or clothing; <b>OR</b></p> <p>Repeated profane or obscene language or gestures.</p>

The PREA Standards define the following three investigation outcomes:

<b>Substantiated</b>	The event was investigated and determined to have occurred.
<b>Unsubstantiated</b>	The investigation concluded that evidence was insufficient to determine whether or not the event occurred.
<b>Unfounded</b>	The investigation determined that the event did not occur.

## Calendar Year 2025 Reported PREA Incidents

This report analyzed DYRS PREA data for calendar year 2025. This report also compares data from calendar years 2023 and 2024.

### DYRS Operated Facilities:

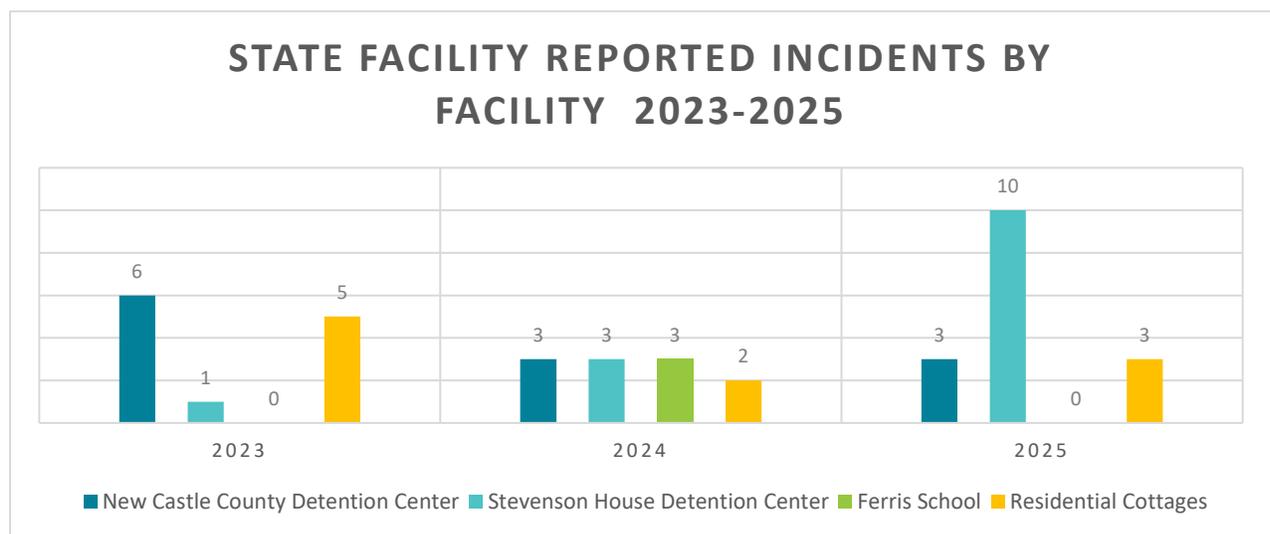
Every reportable event, whether PREA related or not, is reviewed by the facility superintendent, professional standards manager, management analyst, division deputy director and division director. If the incident involves alleged child abuse in the facility, the department’s Institutional Abuse Unit (IAU) investigates the incident. If criminal behavior is not indicated, or when no formal investigations are necessary, the facility superintendent will review the incident to ensure compliance to policy, procedure and training. In CY-2025, there were sixteen (16) incidents reported from Delaware’s state-run facilities out of 436 unduplicated youth who were served:

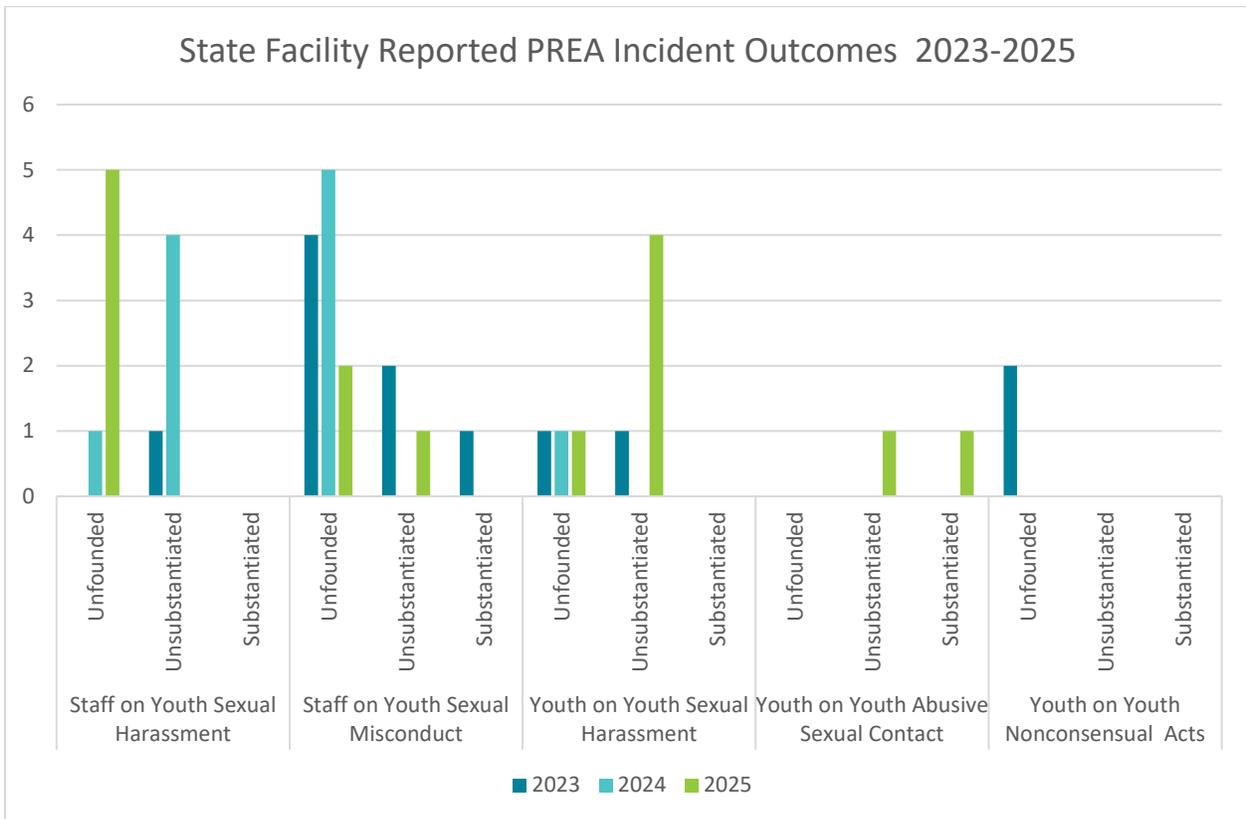
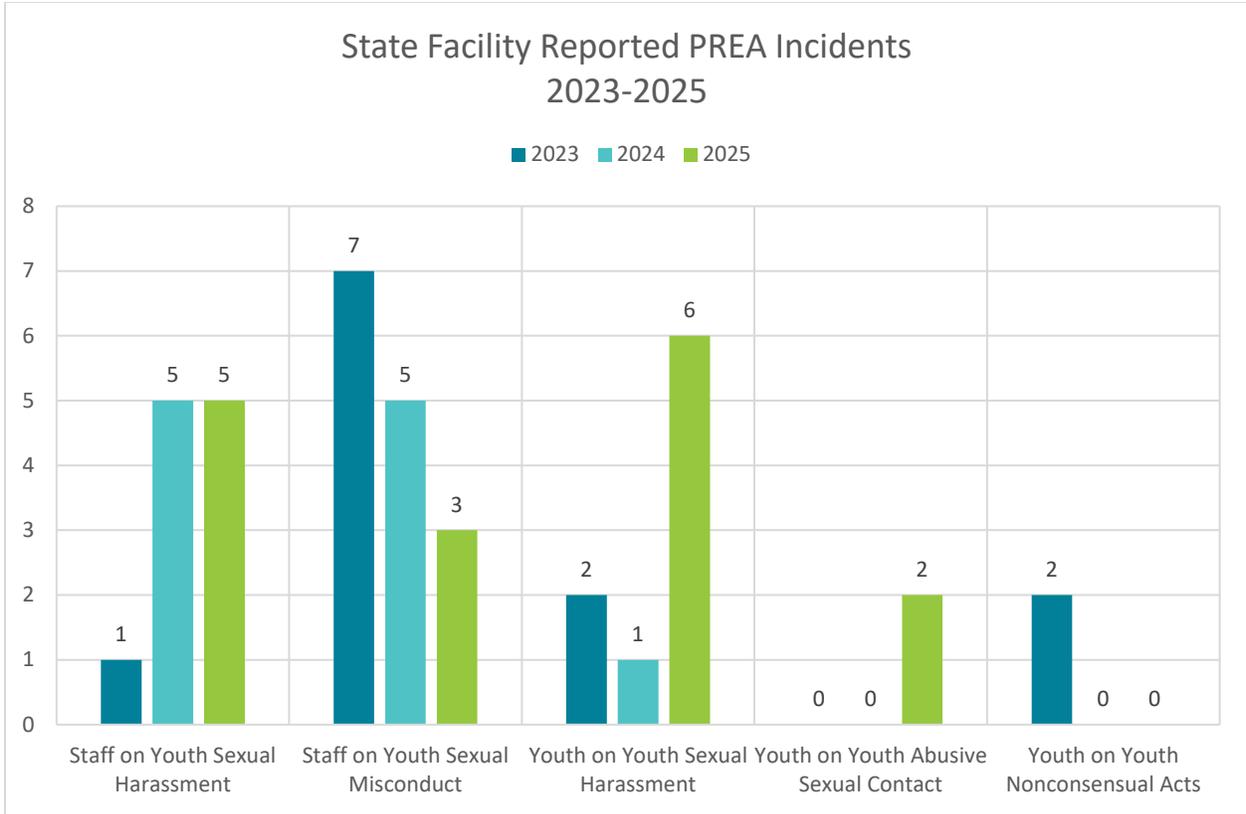
- Five (5) Staff on Youth Sexual Harassment
- Three (3) Staff on Youth Sexual Misconduct
- Six (6) Youth on Youth Sexual Harassment
- Two (2) Youth on Youth Abusive Sexual Contact

One (1) event was found to be substantiated, seven (7) were unsubstantiated, and eight (8) events were Unfounded.

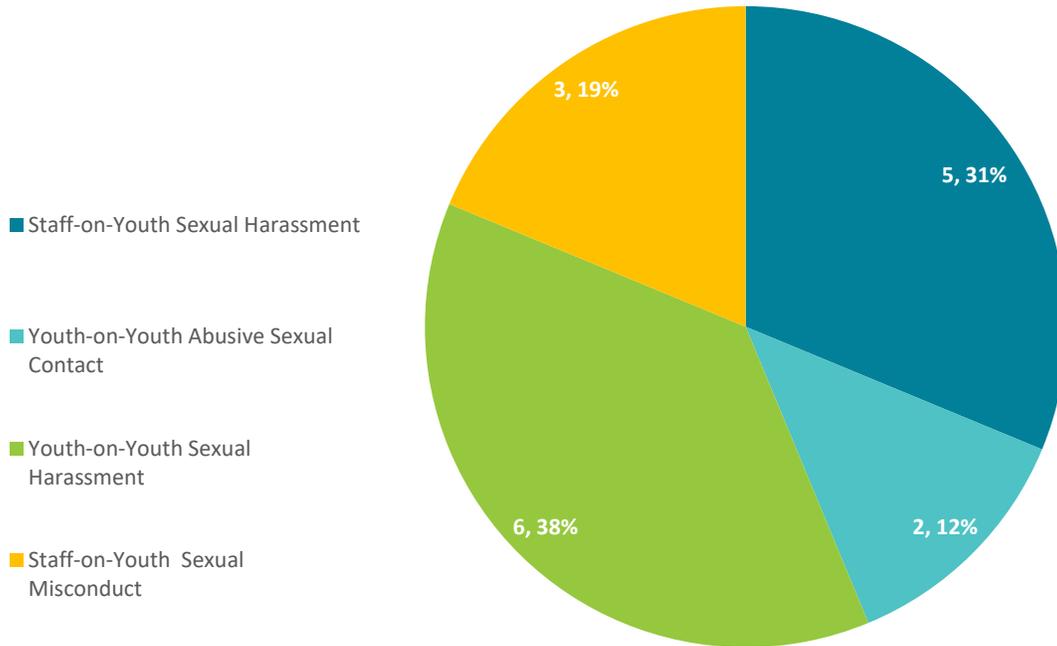
### List of DYRS Operated Facilities and Incident Location with Number of Incidents:

New Castle County Detention Center (NCCDC)	3
Stevenson House Detention Center (SHDC)	10
Ferris School	0
Residential Cottages (Grace Cottage & Snowden Cottage)	3

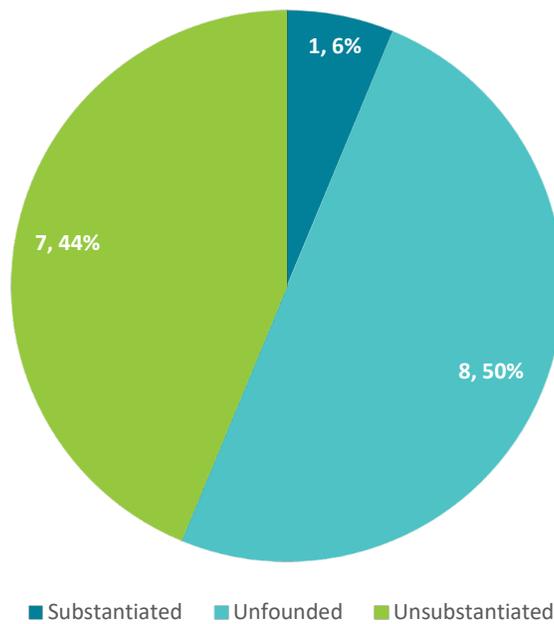




### State Facility Reported Incidents 2025



### STATE FACILITY REPORTED INCIDENT OUTCOMES 2025



## Calendar Year 2025 Reported PREA Incidents in Contracted Residential Facilities

### Contracted Residential Facilities:

Reportable events that involve a Delaware youth are investigated by the provider’s investigative procedures, and if applicable, the governmental agency that would investigate child abuse (county, township, state, etc.). Any event that involves a DYRS youth is documented and communicated to the DYRS probation officer and the department’s Contracts Unit. The listed providers are those who have a population of 51% or more of juvenile justice youth.

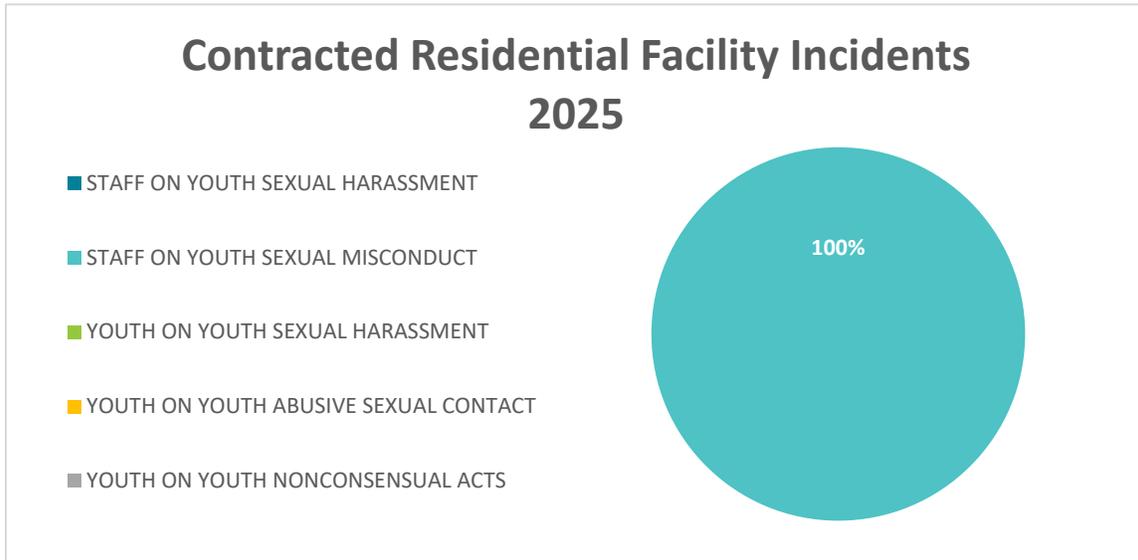
In CY-2025 there was one (1) incident reported out of the 253 unduplicated DYRS youth who were in residential placements with a contracted provider that year.

- One (1) Staff on Youth Sexual Misconduct

The one (1) event was found to be Unsubstantiated.

### List of Contracted Residential Facilities Housing DYRS Youth During CY2025 and Incident Location with Number of Incidents:

White Deer Run, Cove Prep	0
Summit School, Inc.	0
VisionQuest Residential Alternatives to Detention (RAD)	1



DYRS remains committed to provide safety and well-being to all youth served by the division. DYRS will continue to educate youth, train staff, modify operating policies and procedures, and make upgrades to facilities to support the prevention, detection, reporting and investigation of all forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

*Renee Ciconte*

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Renee Ciconte, Director  
Delaware Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services