

Thunderbird Regimented Training Program (TRTP)



Thunderbird Regimented Training Program
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The mission of the Thunderbird Regimented Training Program (TRTP) began in February 1998. TRTP provides a structured environment promoting discipline, education, responsibility and accountability in life skills, physical fitness and community involvement. TRTP ensures the safety and dignity of all Cadets and building self-esteem and respect, not only to themselves, but to others as well. A military style of training is used to teach life and social skills to these youth. The youth, called Cadets, are placed in an environment that is structured and over time, are taught to develop structure for themselves.

TRTP provides a socialization process through which participants can develop the positive self-image, discipline, motivation and identification with the community necessary to function as contributing members of society. Enhancing education skills, instill a desire to continue self-improvement and teach those values and life skills required to succeed on the job and within the family.

TRTP is a co-ed facility and is a sixteen-week program for 12-18 year olds. Bravo Company serves Cadets that are in the Office of Juvenile Affairs' (OJA) custody while attending. Bravo Company is a state funded program provided by the Oklahoma Military Department with an interagency agreement with the Office of Juvenile Affairs.

The TRTP Program provides a safe and healthy environment for Cadets. TRTP is licensed by the Department of Human Services, the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and has been accredited by the American Correctional Association.

The Education Department is responsible for the execution of the Phillip Roy Life Skills curriculum. Cadets attend Education classes 5 days per week. 12 – 18 year olds are on the PASS Objective Track to return to their community school upon completion of the program. 16 – 18 year olds have the opportunity to study and take the GED test while attending the program.

The Counseling Department provides the character, moral and emotional guidance required to assist cadets in maintaining focus on the operations and education learning processes and help ensure their ultimate effectiveness. The counseling staff is specifically trained and certified to identify inappropriate behavior patterns, remedial counseling, testing services, AA/NA groups, Character Development, Anger Management and “making the right decision” classes.

Health Services provides on-going twenty-four hour medical services for cadets, sick call and medical appointments when necessary.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The following information includes the guidelines for the Oklahoma National Guard Bravo Company, Thunderbird Regimented Training Program (“TRTP” or the “Program”).

The mission of the Program is to provide a structured environment promoting discipline, education, responsibility, and accountability in life skills, physical fitness and community involvement. The Program also ensures the safety and dignity of all cadets and builds Esprit de Corps, self-esteem and respect, not only in the cadets but towards others as well.

The philosophy of Bravo Company is to mimic the Youth Challenge Program as much as possible. The Program uses a quasi-military approach to accomplish its mission. All decisions made are in the best interest of the Cadet and Program.

To support mission accomplishment, the Program objectives are:

- 1) To provide intervention.
- 2) To provide a socialization process through which participants can develop the positive self-image, discipline, motivation and identification with the community necessary to function as contributing members of society.
- 3) To enhance participants’ education skills, instill a desire to continue self-improvement, and teach those values and life skills required to succeed on the job and within the family.
- 4) To re-integrate Program graduates into the community.
- 5) To provide mentoring services after graduation through the State Transition and Re-integration System (STARS).

The Program goals are:

- 1) Selection and Retention of Cadets:
 - a) Applicants are representative of the State’s base population, including minority groups and **not** targeted to any particular geographical area(s) of the State.
 - i) Special emphasis is directed to these applicants by the interviewing/selection committee.
 - ii) A statewide public information/awareness campaign is conducted on a continuing basis to promote Bravo Company within the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA) community.
 - iii) A balanced group is accepted into the Program as referred by the Placement Office of OJA.
 - b) 100% of Cadet selectees meet the eligibility criteria established by the contract between OJA and the Oklahoma Military Department.
 - c) The mission for graduation of cadets from the residential phase is 100% selected for placement into Bravo Company, Thunderbird Regimented Training Program.
 - i) Course requirements consider individual needs.
 - ii) 100% of Cadets selected are provided counseling services.
 - iii) Remedial training and education activities are available.
 - iv) Crisis intervention and disciplinary policies focus on intervention and behavior modification.
 - v) Every graduate not selected to be discharged from OJA Custody is subject to STARS goals and objectives.
 - vi) All parties (staff and cadets) are assigned responsibility for the success of each individual cadet.

- d) 100% of the selected Cadets are notified in advance of the course start date by both TRTP staff and their respective caseworker. Reference admission guidelines.
- 2) Staff Requirements:
- a) 100% of staff and administration meet the minimum education, experience, and certification requirements of the State.
 - i) Job Announcements clearly indicate the requirements.
 - ii) Applications are screened for accuracy, completeness, and minimum qualifications.
 - b) Staff is racially and gender diverse.
 - i) Minorities and females are encouraged to apply.
- 3) Cadet Education:
- a) 100% of the cadets between the ages of 16-18 are enrolled in either GED preparation or core academic classes for continuing education.
 - b) 100% of the cadet between the ages of 13-15 are enrolled in the PASS objective track (core academic classes) for continuing education.
 - c) Basic skills are taught as identified and outlined in the contract between OJA and OMD.
- 4) Cadet Development:
- a) Age appropriate Cadets develop a personal long-range plan for education and employment (developed at The Post Residential Placement Staffing).
 - i) Cadets participate in career exploration and opportunity sessions
 - ii) Cadets attend guest lectures on all career/education issues
 - b) 100% of the cadets demonstrate growth in self-discipline, responsibility, and human relation skills.
 - i) Improved self-esteem.
 - ii) Tolerance of others.
 - iii) Demonstrate social and sexual responsibility.
 - iv) Improved Civic responsibility.
 - v) Improved initiative and self-motivation.
 - vi) Improved decision-making skills.
 - vii) Improved group behavior.
 - viii) Improved leadership skills.
 - ix) Improved followership skills.
 - x) Improved knowledge and use of community resources.
- 5) Community Work and Service Projects:
- a) 100% of the Cadets participate in work and service projects (community service) which improves their work habits, work skills, and sense of community.
 - i) Community Projects are identified and scheduled.
 - ii) Materials and supplies are furnished.
 - iii) Support resources are planned and furnished.
 - b) Community Service projects provide meaningful experiences for the Cadets
 - i) Projects are a mixture of those that provide an opportunity to learn or enhance a skill and labor-intensive types of projects.
 - ii) Provide high visibility.
 - iii) Provide a sense of civic responsibility/satisfaction.

- c) Community Service projects provide a needed service to the community.
 - i) Identified by the Commandant, local group, or advisory council, and approved by the appropriate authority/person(s).
 - ii) Projects improve the value and worth of community property and/or service.

- 6) Other Requirements:
 - a) The Program operates within the parameters of the funds allocated without over-expenditure or audit exception.
 - i) Quarterly expenditures equal to a minimum of 90% but not greater than 100% of quarterly funds allocated.
 - ii) Program budgets are developed.
 - iii) Internal controls are established.
 - iv) Internal and external inspection and/or audit reports.
 - b) The Program provides a safe and healthy environment for staff and Cadets.
 - i) All facilities meet applicable State and federal codes for safety and OSHA requirements.
 - ii) Safety orientations provided to staff and Cadets.
 - iii) Safety SOPs/policies.
 - iv) Safety requirements required by oversight agencies.
 - c) Maintains a drugfree environment.
 - i) Counseling and Education (C & E) activities/lectures for all staff and Cadets is provided.
 - ii) Security procedures for incoming materials are established.
 - iii) Unannounced/unscheduled inspection of staff and Cadet areas occurs.
 - d) Citizen advisory committee and oversight input is generated and integrated into the Program operation.
 - i) Community working groups established.
 - ii) Open house activities are scheduled.
 - iii) State oversight agencies (OJA, DHS, OCCY).
 - e) The Program meets applicable licensing requirements of the jurisdiction in which it is located. The Program complies with applicable federal, state, and local sanitation and health codes.
 - f) The Program, as tenants at the Whitaker Education and Training Center (WETC), adheres to all the Post Regulations.
 - g) The Director formulates and reviews the goals of Bravo Company annually. The Department Heads of Bravo Company participates in the formulation of the policies, procedures, and areas of their department.

EDUCATION

The education for the Program involves educational programs, academic excellence, performance competency, peer tutoring program, and professional standards. The following provides information about the different components.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The educational programs provided are consistent with the needs of the juvenile population. The curriculum offered was written, standardized, competency-based and supported by appropriate materials and classroom resources. These comprehensive education programs are available to all eligible juveniles at a time when the majority can take advantage of the programs. The following educational tracks are offered:

- 1) 13-15 year old cadets are enrolled in the PASS objective track. Core curricula for the PASS objective courses provided are: Math, Social Studies, English, and Science. The Oklahoma State mandated PASS objectives are used within these core subjects. Elective classes such as Reading & Keyboarding are also provided. Cadets can earn a 0.5 unit of credit for each of these subject areas. Other courses offered include: computer aided instruction, Phillip Roy Life Skills, pre-vocational skills, PE, Archery, Arts & Crafts, Boy Scouts & Explorers, Classbook, Intramural Sports, Living Skills, Newspaper, and Woodworking.
- 2) 16-18 year old cadets are enrolled in one of two educational tracks:
 - a) PASS objective track - Core curricula for the PASS objective courses provided are Math, Social Studies, English, and Science. The Oklahoma State mandated PASS objectives are used within these core subjects. Elective classes such as Reading & Keyboarding are also provided. Cadets can earn a 0.5 unit of credit for each of these subject areas. Other courses offered include; computer aided instruction, Phillip Roy Life Skills, pre-vocational skills, PE, Archery, Arts & Crafts, Boy Scouts & Explorers, Classbook, Intramural Sports, Living Skills, Newspaper, and Woodworking.
 - b) GED track. Classes provided for the GED preparation subjects are Science, Language Arts – Reading, Language Arts - Writing, Social Studies, and Mathematics. Other courses offered include; computer aided instruction, Phillip Roy Life Skills, pre-vocational skills, PE, Archery, Arts & Crafts, Boy Scouts & Explorers, Classbook, Intramural Sports, Living Skills, Newspaper, and Woodworking.

Academic counseling is provided through the Lead Instructor.

Initial screening takes place during the pre-acceptance interviews conducted prior to a cadet's acceptance to Bravo Co.

Initial personal academic assessment is done through the use of two standardized tests: 1) Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and 2) Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT3). The initial TABE is administered during week two of the program and is referred to as the PRE-TABE. The WRAT3 is administered within the first two weeks of the program and is referred to as the PRE-WRAT. Determination of each juvenile's educational needs and initial academic group placement is done by:

- 1) Evaluating the results from the PRE-TABE & PRE-WRAT, scores are used to determine a cadet's initial academic group placement within the educational track he / she is enrolled in.
- 2) A review of previous academic and psychological records, as available.
- 3) Individual academic counseling.

For GED track cadets, a Practice GED test is administered approximately half way the program (week 7 or 8).

In addition to the initial academic assessments (PRE-TABE & PRE-WRAT), the TABE & WRAT assessment is administered one more time during the program; toward the end of the program (week 14 & 15). The final academic assessments are referred to as POST-TABE & POST-WRAT assessments.

In addition to the Practice GED test administered in week 7 or 8; cadets in the GED educational track have the opportunity to take the official GED test, toward the end of the program (week 15) at no cost to them

The educational programs provide instruction to juveniles to develop basic literacy and job skills. Juveniles who have not attained basic literacy skills are required to attend remedial education classes on a daily basis during regular school days.

The Pre-vocational education program is consistent with the needs of the juvenile population. Pre-vocational education is integrated with the academic programs and is relevant to the needs of juveniles and employment opportunities in the community.

Business, industry, and community resources are used in developing academic and pre-vocational education programs for selected juveniles.

Bravo Co. of Thunderbird Youth Academy is recognized as a fully accredited alternative secondary school by the Oklahoma State Board of Education. Accreditation has been granted under the auspices of Pryor Public Schools. Educational programs are available at no costs to juveniles. All Education Department instructors will hold current Teacher Certification by the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Academic awards are given to provide incentives for educational participation, formal recognition of specific educational achievements, and to promote academic excellence.

Awards given:

- TABE Gain Ribbons – awarded to cadets who demonstrate an increase of 1.0 or greater on their Post-TABE scores over their Pre-TABE scores.
- TABE Gain Certificates – awarded to cadets who demonstrate an increase of 1.0 or greater on Post-TABE over Pre-TABE scores.
- Peer Tutor Ribbon – issued to peer tutors.
- Most Improved Academic Award – awarded to the cadet who demonstrates the most improvement on Post TABE scores over Pre-TABE scores and shows significant improvement in the classroom.
- Outstanding Academic Award – awarded to the cadet who scores high on the Post TABE, and shows outstanding academic performance in the classroom.

Cadets are provided with access to comprehensive library services that include, but are not limited to, a reference collection containing general and specialized materials, and planned and continuous acquisition of other materials to meet the needs of the staff and juveniles. A qualified staff person coordinates and supervises library services. The Director of the Pryor Public Library is available as needed, holds a master of library science degree, and assists in coordinating and supervising library services and is also responsible for the training of library staff.

Cadets go to Pryor Public Library weekly and have a library card to check out books. Cadets are provided access to appropriate resource materials while at the library.

Additional enrichment opportunities are provided through computer aided instruction, field trips, physical training, and recreation.

- Additional opportunities to learn are enhanced by computer aided instruction (CAI), which includes core component areas of math, reading, spelling, English, and keyboarding classes. CAI allows students to utilize self-paced instruction at individualized reading and math proficiency levels as assessed by pre-TABE scores. In addition to core curriculum topics, life skills are also available in this format.
- Field trips are encouraged in the beginning and end phases of the program.
- Physical training is conducted by Operations Department with daily training activities to include weight room and gym exercises.
- Electives or Liberal Arts are offered in a variety of topics. Sample topics include Archery, Arts & Crafts, Boy Scouts / Explorers, Classbook, Intramural Sports, Living Skills, Newspaper, and Woodworking. Both Education and Operation staff teach the electives. The incorporation of these free-choice activities into the education week serves as an outlet for stress relief and creative expression in addition to decreasing “institutional” mentality.

All cadets complete Life Skills material as outlined in the Phillip Roy curriculum. Phillip Roy components include Social Skills, Employability, Consumerism, Student Issues, and ESOL/ESL/Special Needs. Additional Life Skills supplemented by TYA customized lessons are Nutrition, Leadership (OPS), Anger Management (Counseling), Sex/Health and AA/NA (Counseling). Employment preparation classes include topics in resume, job application and follow-up letters, as well as mock job interviews.

PERFORMANCE COMPETENCY

The goal of the Program is to provide each cadet with the educational tools needed to survive and compete in the job market. This includes instilling in each cadet a desire to improve through lifelong learning.

To meet this goal the following objectives are followed. Each cadet is required to:

- 1) Enroll in either PASS objective classes **or** ABE/GED track preparatory classes.
- 2) Participate in pre and post-standardized assessments.
- 3) Demonstrate reading comprehension.
- 4) Demonstrate writing skills.

- 5) Demonstrate ability to perform mathematical calculations.
- 6) Demonstrate knowledge of computers and information management.

Life Skills:

- 1) Demonstrate knowledge and skills required to seek and obtain employment.
- 2) Complete job applications.
- 3) Construct a resume.
- 4) Demonstrate an awareness of suitable behavior and appearance during job search.
- 5) Develop knowledge of skills required to maintain successful employment.
- 6) Demonstrate an understanding of setting and achieving employment goals.
- 7) Show an understanding of the effects of substance abuse and physical health and well being.
- 8) Demonstrate an understanding of proper nutrition in the daily diet.
- 9) Develop an awareness of sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS.
- 10) Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of achieving good health through an approach that combines physical well being and proper nutrition.
- 11) Develop an awareness of one's own sexual values.
- 12) Participate in regularly scheduled physical fitness training to the greatest extent.
- 13) Improve levels of fitness.

PEER TUTORING PROGRAM

Opportunities are given for cadets to tutor other cadets in academic areas depending on areas of proficiency and willingness to help fellow cadets. Cadets request to be a peer tutor. This is done by an application. Education staff makes Peer tutor selections based on applicants' proven academic ability and ability to get along with peers. Peer tutors perform their duties in the classroom during scheduled tutoring and assist during individual study time in the evenings. Peer tutor activities are conducted under the supervision of staff.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF STANDARDS

TRTP employees who are employed through the Education Department maintain professional certification or are actively pursuing state conversion certification or licensure.

- 1) Teach cadets using commonly accepted teaching strategies.
- 2) Fulfill all duties as assigned by department head.
- 3) Maintain control of the learning environment by implementing all academy/departmental policies, and direct/supervise cadets.
- 4) Meet scheduled activities.
- 5) Assess the accomplishments of students on a regular basis and provide reports as needed.
- 6) Comply fully with all academy policies listed in the academy read file (which policies are provided to staff as printed).
- 7) Demonstrate a professional and courteous demeanor to cadets as well as staff.

SUMMARY DATA FOR PROGRAM

During the last 5 1/2 years a total of 600 youth have graduated from the Program. The following is summary of this data.

Total Enrolled for Cycle 1 –16 February 13, 1998 – July 10, 2003

	Referred	Accepted	Enrolled	Graduated	% Graduated
TOTAL	859	736	672	600	89%
Males	619	532	497	441	89%
Females	240	204	175	159	91%
13 yr. old	38	33	31	25	81%
14 yr. old	95	88	82	70	85%
15 yr. old	189	158	142	129	91%
16 yr. old	272	235	216	197	91%
17 yr. old	246	204	185	163	88%
18 yr. old	19	18	16	16	100%
Black	106	77	67	57	85%
Asian	2	2	2	2	100%
Hispanic	31	29	22	21	95%
Native Am.	223	194	171	160	94%
White	495	432	408	359	88%
Other	2	2	2	1	50%
GED Track	534	454	414	373	90%
Pass Objective*	325	282	258	227	88%

* Includes 4 16-18 year olds on the Core Track

Additional Classes Completed:

Anger Management	600
Drug/Alcohol Education	600
Character Development	600
Community Service Hours Total	50,736.50
Community Service Average Hours	84.6 hours each cadet
GED Tested	303
Obtained GED	144
% Tested and obtained GED	48%
Applied to Alpha Company	86

DATA ANALYSIS from a SAMPLE CLASS

Results from a Sample Class

	Enrolled	Graduated	% Graduated
TOTAL	38	36	95%
GED Track	19	21	90%
Pass/Core Curriculum	15	15	100%

Analysis of Test Data from a Sample Class

TEST	Pre-Test	Post-Test	t-stat
TABE-Reading	5.74	8.05	6.24*
TABE-Math	6.60	7.32	1.81*
TABE-Language	4.8	7.13	5.86*
TABE-Battery	5.61	7.60	5.00*
Social Skills	87.17	90.78	3.11*
Employability Skills	80.83	77.53	1.39
Consumerism Skills	75.14	80.69	2.56*

* $p \leq .05$

RESULTS and SUMMARY

The Thunderbird Regimented Training Program (TRTP) provides education to the cadets in a number of different formats. One of the most critical components is the provision of Life Skills education to all cadets. All of the cadets are provided this education through the Phillip Roy, Inc. Life Skills Curriculum. Another component of the education of the cadets is through either the PASS Objective Tract, for 12-18 years returning to the community or the GED Track for 16-18. The success of the Thunderbird Regimented Training Program is due to this combination. Because of the integration of academic skills and life skills the Cadets' knowledge is continuous reinforced and improved. The combination of these curriculums furnishes the cadets with the tools they need to succeed. The high graduation rate and the significant gains in Academic Scores and Life Skills Scores demonstrate the effectiveness of the Thunderbird Regimented Training Program and the curriculums used.

The graduation success rate for the cadets for the last 5 ½ years, is over 85% in all categories with a nearly 90% over all success rate over-all. For the sample set, the cadets had a graduate rate of 95% with a 100% graduate rate for the cadets in the PASS Objective Curriculum track. Cadets also showed a significant improvement in academic skills and life skills.

While the success of the cadets and the Thunderbird Regimented Training Program may vary from group to group due to differences in students, teachers, and other external features the significance of the success cannot be discounted. For over 5 ½ years and with over 600 cadets, the combination of Life Skills Training and Academic Skills Training has been successful and effective in educating the cadets and meeting the goal of the Thunderbird Regimented Training Program.

The Thunderbird Regimented Training Program, the use of the curriculum materials (Phillip Roy, Life Skills Curriculum and the PASS Objective Track or GED Track), and its other components provides the cadets with the educational tools they need to survive and compete in the job market. The high graduate rates and improved test scores provides evidence the cadets develop a desire to improve through lifelong learning. The Thunderbird Regimented Training Program is effective and successful in meeting its goal.