

**Scott Walker**  
Governor

**Edward F. Wall**  
Secretary



**State of Wisconsin**  
**Department of Corrections**

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**Cari J. Taylor**  
Administrator

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**ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO TO COUNTIES**

**MEMO # 14-04**

**DATE:** May 2, 2014  
**TO:** County Departments of Human/Social Services Directors  
**FROM:** Cari J. Taylor, Administrator   
**SUBJECT:** New Juvenile Placement Option: The Grow Academy

I am pleased to announce that the Division of Juvenile Corrections will be offering a new community program option for delinquent male youth ages 14 through 18 years old. The Grow Academy is a 120-day residential program, located in the former SPRITE House in Oregon, WI. We will be accepting referrals on an ongoing basis, with the first residents beginning the program on June 16, 2014. The daily rate charged to counties for the Grow Academy is the same as the statutory rate for Type 1 secured correctional facility placements.

The Grow Academy uses an agri-science curriculum and an experiential education approach to assist youth in achieving important educational, developmental and restorative justice goals, including:

- Attaining knowledge and credits towards high school or HSED completion;
- Incorporating pro-social attitudes and beliefs into relationships with other people and the broader community;
- Learning real-life skills that have meaning for future academic and career pursuits along with healthy independent living; and
- Giving back to the community by providing tangible resources for people in need.

Youth participating in the Grow Academy will:

- Earn high school credits both in classroom and experiential settings, with accredited teachers and HSED programming.

- Participate in cognitive intervention programming, including a family component, provided by Division staff and other needed treatment services with community-based providers.
- Be active participants in an agri-science curriculum that may include organic vegetable farming, growing seedlings in an aqua-ponic environment, raising small farm animals and composting, along with Horticulture Therapy.
- Give back to their community by donating time and resources to local food pantries, community centers and other sites.
- Learn independent living skills related to food preparation, nutrition, meal planning; and have the opportunity to develop those skills as they relate to careers in food service (including certification under the nationally-recognized ServSafe® program for food handling).
- Cultivate financial literacy, learn how to put together a business plan, and develop marketing and sales skills.
- Apply for career internships with local employers and scholarships for continuing education.

We are very excited to have numerous partners in the Dane County area that have agreed to provide a variety of services for the Grow Academy youth, from horticulture therapy to gardening and farming assistance, community service opportunities, counseling and special education, and career internships.

The attachment to this memo describes the various ways that a youth may become enrolled in the Grow Academy. We ask at this time that all interested county agency staff initiate Grow Academy referrals by accessing the following website: <http://doc.wi.gov/families-visitors/juvenile-services>, and clicking The Grow Academy link. If you have questions regarding the referral procedure please contact Grow Academy Supervisor Jeb Searls at 608-288-3353, or [jeb.searls@wi.gov](mailto:jeb.searls@wi.gov). We would appreciate an advance notice of at least ten business days to allow time to review documents, meet with the family and prepare the reports.

Also attached is a brochure detailing the Grow Academy that we invite you to share within your agency and with external partners such as prosecutors and courts.

Thank you for your interest! We are confident that the Grow Academy can be an effective option for delinquent youth served by your agency.

cc: Edward F. Wall, Secretary, DOC  
Deirdre Morgan, Deputy Secretary, DOC

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Scott Legwold, Assistant Deputy Secretary, DOC  
Freda-Ellen Bove, Administrator, DCF/DSP  
Emily Tofte, Section Chief, Child Welfare Licensing Section, DCF/DSP  
John Tuohy, Director, Bureau of Regional Operations, DCF/DES  
Bill Hanna, DHS Area Administrator  
Greg Van Rybroek, Director, DHS/MJTC  
DHS/DCF Area Administrators  
DHS/DCF Human Service Area Coordinators  
DOC/DJC Management staff  
County Youth Aids contacts  
Court-attached juvenile court intake offices  
County Judges  
District Attorney's Offices  
State Public Defender's Office

ATTACHMENT

**Enrollment Options for the Grow Academy**

At this time, the Division of Juvenile Corrections anticipates that youth will be enrolled in the Grow Academy (Grow) under one of the four options below. A Grow Academy youth must be under formal court supervision under Ch. 938, Wis. Stats., and have a court order that provides sufficient time both for Grow Academy participation and appropriate post-program supervision in the community. Note: Pre-screening approval is required for all enrollments.

**County supervision with participation in Grow Academy as an Experiential Education Program per 938.34(7g)**

The county court orders participation in Grow as a condition of the dispositional order, with placement at home and an appropriate period of post-release supervision by the county human/social services agency. The order may specify “Grow Academy” with or without reference to the Experiential Education disposition in s. 938.34 (7g). Youth already under county supervision may be referred to Grow via a Petition for Revision (938.363) and Change of Placement (938.357), if the youth is not in a home placement at the time of his referral. In the event a participating youth fails to meet program expectations, Grow staff will coordinate with the human/social services agency to arrange for the youth’s return to his home county.

**Stayed Correctional Order with Participation in Grow Academy as a condition of supervision per 938.34(16)**

The county court orders participation in Grow as a condition of the dispositional order (938.34(7g)), with placement at home and an appropriate period of post-release supervision by the county human/social services agency. The order would include up to one year of correctional placement, stayed pending successful completion of the Grow Academy program. In the event a participating youth fails to meet program expectations, Grow staff will coordinate with the human/social services agency to arrange for the youth’s return to his home county for a hearing to lift the stay and commit the youth to reception at Lincoln Hills School.

**“Direct” correctional commitment with Corrective Sanctions post-release supervision per 938.34(4n)**

The county court orders placement at Lincoln Hills School and requests that the youth be released to participate in the Grow Academy no later than 21 days after commitment. The court order would typically be for 9 to 12 months. Youth would be in “Type 2” correctional status while at the Grow Academy, and would transition to Corrective Sanctions supervision by a state field agent after successful program completion. Youth who fail to meet program expectations may be sanctioned or returned to Lincoln Hills School.

<b>Step-down placement from Lincoln Hills School</b>
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Youth may be identified via the JPRC (Joint Planning and Review) process to participate in the Grow Academy as a transitional or step-down placement from Lincoln Hills School. While at the Grow Academy, the youth would be in Type 1 institution status. Their post-release supervision would be provided by either the state or county, as determined by the aftercare arrangement under s. 938.57(4) for the remaining duration of the court order.

### **Enrollment Exclusions**

While all referrals are considered on a case-by-case basis, exclusionary criteria normally will include:

- Youth with significant mental health needs;
- Youth with a history of animal abuse; and
- Youth whose safety- and treatment-related needs cannot be met in a non-secure setting.