

Assessing Risk and Protective Factors

OJJDP Tribal Consultation, Training
and Technical Assistance

June 5, 2007

Juliette Mackin

Senior Research Associate

NPC Research

Portland, Oregon

503-243-2436 x114

Mackin@npcresearch.com

Risk and Protection

- Risks: contribute to negative outcomes
- Needs: must be addressed/fulfilled to achieve optimal/avoid negative outcomes
- Protective factors: buffers impact of risks
- Strengths: promote positive outcomes

Examples of risks

- Aggressive, disruptive behavior at school
- Chronic truancy
- Friends who engage in acting out behavior
- Serious family conflicts
- Early substance use

Why do we care about risks?

- **Selection criteria:** how we identify people who are likely to have a negative outcome
- **Intended outcomes:** what we do to intervene or help prevent the negative outcome (focused intervention)

Examples of protective factors

- School attachment/commitment
- Friends disapprove of unlawful behavior
- Involved in constructive extra-curricular activities
- Communicates effectively with family members

Reaching intended outcomes by using risk and protective factors

- Reduce dynamic risk factors
- Build on protective factors or strengths

Principles of Effective Intervention

- Risk Principle – target higher risk offenders with most intensive treatment (WHO)
- Need Principle – target criminogenic risk/need factors (WHAT)
- Treatment Principle – use behavioral approaches (HOW)

Source: Edward J. Latessa, Ph.D., “What Works and What Doesn’t in Reducing Recidivism: The Principles of Effective Intervention”

Importance of Assessment

- Identify youth with risk factors
- Systematic approach (consistency)
- Assist in triage system
- Avoid mislabeling (accuracy)
- Directs toward appropriate intervention

Importance of Assessment

- Leads to early treatment of potential problems
- Leads to additional services if needed
- Cost savings to intervene early

Oregon JCP Assessment

Oregon's Juvenile Crime Prevention Strategy called for a consistent, statewide method for identifying youth most at risk of committing crimes.

Domains

- School issues
- Peer relationships
- Behavior issues
- Family functioning
- Substance use
- Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

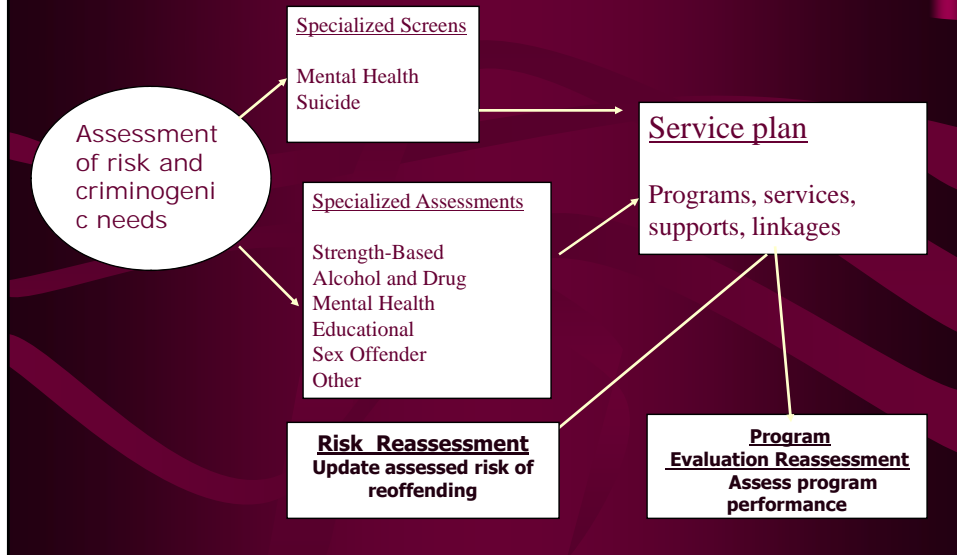
Risk Classification Model

- Categories
 - LOW = 0 - 5**
 - MEDIUM = 6 - 13**
 - HIGH = 14 or more**
- Permit and record overrides (up or down)

JCP Risk Re-assessment

- Updates Initial Assessment
- Maintains accurate risk level
- Takes into account response to supervision and interventions for youth on supervision

RISK ASSESSMENT, CASE CLASSIFICATION AND CASE MANAGEMENT



Violence Indicators

“Yes” checked in one or more of the items marked #:

Ages 6-11:

- Early substance abuse (6.3)

All ages

- Involvement with antisocial peers (3.2)
- Criminal offense at age 13 or younger (4.4)
- Behavior hurts others past month (4.9)
- Social isolation (8.5)

High Risk Indicators

Likely to be present only for high-risk youth

- 4.13 Harms or injures animals
- 4.14 Preoccupation with or use of weapons
- 4.6 Chronic runaway history
- 2.4 School drop out
- 4.7 Recent runaway
- 6.4 High or drunk at school
- 3.6 There is (not) an adult the youth can talk to

Tribal use of the tool

- Staff from prevention and treatment programs reviewed tool, consents, supplemental materials, and processes
- Changed some language and procedures
- Tested tool
- Use data for grant proposals, gaining community support, demonstrating results

Resources available at www.npcresearch.com

- JCP Assessment Tool
- Parent and Youth Questionnaires
- Sample Consent Forms
- Sample Brochure

Training Materials

- Sample interview questions
- Supplemental information and instruments for additional screening, assessment and referral
- Self-training and Inter-rater Reliability Exercises