YOUTH LEVEL OF SERVICE/CASE MANAGEMENT INVENTORY (YLS/CMI) IN PA
JCJC CONFERENCE 2009

GINA M. VINCENT, PH.D. UNIV OF MASS MEDICAL SCHOOL
SAM MILLER, CHIEF PROBATION, CUMBERLAND COUNTY
BETH FRITZ, CHIEF PROBATION, LEHIGH COUNTY
BEN REA, PROBATION, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
A juvenile justice systems reform initiative

- Pennsylvania – Washington
- Louisiana – Illinois

Assisted by a “national resource bank” of technical assistance centers

**National Youth Screening and Assessment Project** is a funded member of the NRB to provide assistance on

- Evidence-based screening and assessment
- Legislative efforts to clarify juveniles’ competence to stand trial
Outline

- Potential usefulness of Risk/Needs Assessments in Probation
- Description of the YLS/CMI
- Making the Decision to Adopt the Tool (A Chief’s Perspective) – Sam Miller
- Implementation in Pennsylvania – Northampton County Example – Ben Rea
Emerging consensus on the characteristics of effective programming for young offenders. What we know:

- Incarceration does not have a significant effect on re-offending (Gatti, Tremblay et al., 2009)
- Mixing more antisocial youth with lower risk youth can turn lower risk youth into better criminals
- When community services are matched to youths’ crime-producing (criminogenic) needs – the lower the chance of repeat offending
- In other words, the right services for the right youths
RESULTS OF COST/BENEFIT RESEARCH
BENEFITS PER DOLLAR INVESTED

- For every $1.00 spent on the following services, you save ---
  - Functional Family Therapy - $28.34
  - Multisystemic Family Therapy - $28.81
  - Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care - $43.70
  - Adolescent Diversion Project - $24.92
  - Juvenile Boot Camps - $0.81
  - Scared Straight - $-477.75 (NET LOSS)
Matching the Right Youth to the Right Disposition/Services

Risk/Needs Assessment → Diversion → Family Service

Probation → Substance Abuse treatment

Confine → Mental Health

Life Skills

Reduce Re-Arrest?
YLS/CMI: Effects of Matching the Right Youth to the Right Services (Vieira et al., 2009)

Match based on # of Services Given in Response to a Youths’ Risk/Need Factor

% Re-Offended

- Poor Match
- Med Match
- Good Match

Match based on # of Services Given in Response to a Youths’ Risk/Need Factor
How Risk/Needs Assessment can Help

- Identify youth at highest risk for re-offending and guide intervention efforts that could
  - Prevent later violence and reoffending
  - Reduce risk of future harm among youths who have recently engaged in harmful aggressive behavior
  - Reduce costs to: victims, service providers, JJ system

- **Intervention efforts** include:
  - Placement/disposition decisions
  - Referral to appropriate services/programs
  - Monitoring/supervision level
Cost-Savings

- Proper implementation of a risk/needs assessment can save costs by...
  - Reducing the number of more costly assessments when these aren’t warranted,
  - Not recommending services for youth who do not need them,
  - Reducing costly out-of-home placement when it is unnecessary for addressing the risks and needs of the youth, and
  - Guiding case plans to reduce chances of re-offending
Four-Step Process

Assessment

Supervision Level/Disposition

Case Management (Services)

On-going Reassess & Monitoring
YLS/CMI Assessment Point

- R/N Assessment
- Intake
- Adjudication
- Disposition Hearing
  - Dismissed
  - Probation
  - Placement
  - Consent Decree
  - Informal Adjustment
YOUTH LEVEL OF SERVICE/
CASE MANAGEMENT INVENTORY
(YLS/CMI)
Components of YLS/CMI Assessment

Evidence-Based Assessment

- Static Risk Factors
- Criminogenic Need Factors
- Responsivity Factors
Some Terms

- **Risk** – likelihood of future offending
- A **risk factor** is anything that increases the probability that a person will cause harm or will re-offend.
  - Static Risk Factors – do not change
  - Dynamic Risk Factors (criminogenic needs) – changeable, targets for services & intervention
- A **Responsivity factor** - something that affects the way a youth will respond to services/treatment (can include **Strengths/protective** factors)
YLS/CMI Domains

- Produces a Score and an Overall Risk Categorization: Low, Moderate, High or Very High risk for re-offending
- Also produces a Level of Risk or Need categorization in each of the following areas:
  - Education/Employment
  - Attitudes/Orientation
  - Peer Relations
  - Leisure Activities
  - Substance Abuse Treatment
  - Personality/Behavior
  - Family Circumstances/Parenting
EXAMPLE OF PREDICTIVE VALIDITY DATA: % CASES WITH SERIOUS NEW OFFENSE BY YLS RISK LEVEL
Connecting youth to the most appropriate disposition and services that target ONLY specific needs at the proper intensity may lead to:

- Improved chance of reducing risk = reducing recidivism
- Cost-Savings

Data gathering and reporting

- Service provider & JJ accountability
- Resource allocation
MAKING THE DECISION TO ADOPT THE YLS/CMI
IMPLEMENTING THE YLS/CMI IN PENNSYLVANIA
Embracing the Future

- Getting all on board
  - Training of all members of the department for a smooth transition
    - Historical overview
    - Statistics of evidence based assessment tools
    - Acknowledging change is easier for some than others
Development of Department

- Getting all on board
  - Understanding the language of the YLS/CMI
    - Appendix A
    - PA definitions
    - Developing a department-wide understanding of what it all means
COMPONENTS OF THE YLS/CMI

- PART I  ASSESSMENT OF RISK AND NEEDS
- PART II  SUMMARY OF RISK/NEEDS
- PART III  ASSESSMENT OF OTHER NEEDS/
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS
- PART IV  CASE MANAGER ASSESSMENT
- PART V  CONTACT LEVEL
- PART VI  CASE MANAGEMENT PLAN
Purpose:
The instrument is designed to assist the professional worker in the collection and synthesis of risk, need, and responsivity information and the linking of that information with case planning. It is not designed to replace professional judgments or to dictate decisions.
Pieces of Development

- Supervision Plan
- Service Matrix
- County Protocol/Policy
Supervision Plan

- Open to other county’s plans
- Acknowledge what will work for your county

Benefits
- Many plans are circulating throughout state
- A shell is ready to be melded into what makes sense to each county
- Easy to make additions/corrections
- Northampton County Example
Developing a comprehensive document that adheres to the services that are being provided in your county

Benefits

- If the appropriate treatment services are being delivered with integrity, this can be effective in reducing juvenile delinquency
- Individuals delivering treatment are selected with care and provide meaningful support
Service Matrix

- Benefits
  - Probation Department has a clear guideline regarding treatment of clients
  - Provides a working document that can be provided to other agencies for combined case management
  - Aftercare services can be sought out following a treatment setting
  - Program delivery & impact can be closely monitored
  - Northampton County Example
Set standard from county to county for implementation purposes

Determines supervision level – minimums set by county

- **Low** – One (1) face-to-face contact every three (3) weeks.
- **Moderate** – One (1) face-to-face contact every two (2) weeks.
- **High/Very High** – One or more (1+) face-to-face contact per week.
Final Goals

- Facilitate communication among professionals across the state/country
- Ensure we are all speaking the same language across the Juvenile Justice System
- Synergy