



The 8 Evidence-Based Principles

Principle 1: Assessing Actuarial Risk

YASI Is DJJ's Key Tool; Staff Getting Trained

Offender assessments are most reliable and valid when staff are formally trained to administer tools. The first of the eight evidence-based principles we will examine in the next few issues of *CSUnity* lists the following critical elements:

▷ Develop and maintain a complete system of ongoing offender risk screening / triage and needs assessments.

▷ Assess offenders in a reliable and valid manner as a prerequisite for the effective management (i.e.: supervision and treatment) of offenders.

Timely, relevant measures of offender risk and need at the individual and aggregate levels are essential for the implementation of numerous principles of best practice in corrections, (e.g., risk, need, and responsivity). They should also be supported by sufficiently detailed and accurately written procedures.

Virginia uses the Youth Assessment & Screening Instrument (YASI) to assess risk, needs and protective factors. In recognition of the importance of training, as a pre-requisite to Essential Skills for Caseworkers, each new CSU probation officer and Juvenile



Orbis Partners Instructor Diana Wavra teaches a group of 13 students pursuing YASI instructor certification in a recent “train the trainers” class.

QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED

- Does the assessment tool we're using measure for criminogenic risk and need?
- How are officers trained to conduct the assessment interview?
- What quality assurance is in place to ensure that assessments are conducted appropriately?
- How is the assessment information captured and used in the development of case plans?



Correctional Center caseworker is issued a logon to an on-line risk assessment course that includes approximately 12 hours of content divided into nine chapters. New workers are also issued

administrative scoring guides, also known as “tent books” and updated scoring guides are being published.

Between October and December 2016, the agency leveraged grant funds to provide several sessions of

in-person training entitled “Collaborative Casework Part I and II.”

“The most recent round of training targeted primarily supervisors and internal coaches, recognizing that supervisors are uniquely positioned to provide frontline quality assurance,” says Beth Stinnett, Statewide Program Manager.

There also was a “train-the-trainer” component, and 13 CSU and JCC staff are working toward certification. They were required to submit videotaped offender interviews and to deliver YASI Part I and Part II training while being observed by a master trainer.

“Having certified instructors will provide DJJ with the internal capacity to deliver training and sustain staff competencies,” Stinnett says. “We also need to develop a cascading coaching infrastructure to foster peer-to-peer learning and support supervisors in their roles.”

There will be a risk assessment specific workshop during the CSU Summit May 1-2 on the role of the supervisor in ensuring quality assurance. This will be used to launch upcoming learning teams and other quality assurance activities.



Attending the recent YASI “Train the Trainers” class in pursuit of instructor certification, left row, from top: Max Press, CSU 20L-Loudoun; Emily Thomas, Central Office; Jercreta Woodson, CSU 13-Richmond; Amy Darby, CSU 26-Winchester; Shelby Hinkins, CSU 12-Chesterfield. Middle row, from top: Beth Stinnett, Central Office; Kim McCollum, CSU 4-Norfolk; Tambrey Hall, CSU 21-Martinsville; Katherine Farmer, Central Office. Right row, from top: Diana Wavra, Orbis Partners instructor; LeKeisha Henry, Bon Air JCC; Lesley Hull, Central Office; Angela Hiatt, Central Office; Teresa Moore, Central Office.



Back row, from left: Capt. Shawn Martin, Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD); Jamie McCarron, Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court (JDRDC); Elizabeth Jones, JDRDC; Vickie Shoap, FCPD. Front row, from left: Erin Schaible, FCPD; Tracey Chiles, Lori Winter, Matt Thompson, Courtney Porter and Katrina Smith, all of JDRDC. Not pictured: Bill Fulton and Andy Wehrlen of FCPD, Ailsa Burnett, JDRDC, and MaryAnn Panarelli, Fairfax County Public Schools.

CSU 19–Fairfax Team Honored With “Capstone Of Year” Award

The Center for Juvenile Justice and Reform (CJJR) at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy has awarded a Fairfax County team the 2016 Capstone of the Year Award for their efforts and success in redesigning and enhancing the youth diversion and restorative justice program. Together, they reduced the use of formal processing and incarceration, improved public safety, avoided wasteful spending and limited the collateral consequences of youth who find themselves in the criminal justice system.

The Fairfax County team—comprised of several county agencies including CSU 19-Fairfax—participated in CJJR’s three-day 2014 Georgetown University Center for Juvenile Justice Reform’s Diversion Certificate Program Capstone Project. At the conclusion of the program, the team initiated the Fairfax County Alternative Accountability Program (AAP) pilot, led by Capt. Shawn Martin of Fairfax County Police Department’s Mt. Vernon District Station. The goal of the project was to reduce the over-representation of youth of color at the initial point of referral by increasing the number of diversions of minority youth charges with delinquent offenses, consistent with DJJ’s transformation effort.

To learn more about the history of project, the roles each team member played in bringing the project to fruition, and the results of the project, click [HERE](#).