



Reentry Measurement Standards

Project Overview and Field Testing Information

Goals and Objectives

Recognizing the need to measure and better understand what works to keep youths on the path to successful adulthood when involved in the juvenile justice system, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) launched the Juvenile Reentry Measurement Standards project in October 2015. The project's goal is to provide the field with a set of national standards and outcome measures aligned with adolescent development research that monitor the effectiveness of reentry services and promote practices that result in positive youth outcomes.

OJJDP selected the Performance-based Standards Learning Institute (PbS), the developers of the successful PbS standards continuous improvement model for facilities and residential programs, to lead the project. PbS and its partners, the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA) and the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera), are combining their expertise to develop a set of national measurement standards grounded in research and existing reentry best practices provided from the time a youth is confined through transition and post-release supervision.

The standards will establish the highest expectations for the delivery of reentry services and will be monitored by outcome measures reflecting the impacts on youths, families and communities. The final product for OJJDP will guide the field to implement practices supported by research, implementation science and adolescent development.

Project Activities

The first 18 months of the project were spent conducting an extensive review of the reentry literature and research and a field scan of existing reentry services, practices, tools and positive youth outcome measures. Juvenile justice and reentry experts, practitioners and researchers were consulted to verify and contextualize the findings and help translate them into the first draft set of standards.

Based on the preliminary work, the draft standards are organized by eight domains:

- Fairness and Accountability;
- Assessment;
- Case Management;
- Education and Employment;
- Well-being and Health;
- Family;
- Community Connection and Contribution; and
- Implementation.

The draft was formally presented in March 2017 to the project's Technical Working Group, a panel of researchers, agency leaders and reentry experts. The group provided feedback on and discussed the domains, specific standards' content and strategies for field testing. PbS incorporated the feedback and revised the standards to field test in at least five different jurisdictions and 20 individual programs over the next 12 months.

Deliverables

A set of national standards and outcome measures aligned with adolescent development research that monitor the effectiveness of reentry services and promote practices that result in positive youth outcomes.

For more information please email: reentry@pbstandards.org





Domains and Goals

The domain areas were created early in the project to coordinate the literature review and field scan and revised following the first year's feedback. The domains serve as an organizing structure to ensure the reentry standards provide a holistic method to implementing the developmental approach in juvenile reentry programs. Each domain area has a goal or purpose statement that further frames the standards and outcome measures.

Fairness and Accountability

Goal: To treat youths fairly and ensure that they perceive that they have been treated fairly.

Based on the research included in the National Academies of Sciences' publication *Reforming Juvenile Justice: A Developmental Approach*, PbS will pilot test standards that focus on youths' perceptions and experiences of fairness and accountability and measure youths' access to family and attorneys.

Assessment

Goal: To identify youths' risks and needs to reduce reoffending and determine appropriate placements, levels of supervision and services.

Research shows use of empirically-validated assessments reduce the likelihood a youth will continue offending post-system supervision. The assessment standards promote the use of appropriate tools guided by the principles of risk/ need/ responsivity to match youths with the appropriate level of supervision and services.

Case Management

Goal: To provide consistent support and services that promote positive youth development and reentry.

Case management is at the heart of reentry work. The standards promote a healthy, nurturing relationship between case manager and youth and a comprehensive, multi-system plan that incorporates assessment results to connect the youth with services.

Education and Employment

Goal: To develop a long-term employment or career pathway with primary input from the youths that lays out the sequence of education, training and workforce skills they need to obtain and retain employment.

Education and employment originally were two separate domain areas but after more research and feedback, PbS will field test them as a single domain to promote the need for youths to focus on long-term employability and sustainability.

Well-being and Health

Goal: To address all mental, emotional, physical and social issues and help youths establish life-long healthy habits and psychosocial well-being.

PbS will field test a well-being and health domain knowing it is a newer concept for juvenile justice that should be promoted given the evidence programs exist currently that align with the developmental approach. The standards look at youths' resilience, safety, physical and mental health needs as well as creating healthy habits.

Family

Goal: To treat families as valued partners and key contributors to youths' well-being and success.

Research shows that youths have better outcomes when families, broadly defined to include positive social supports, are involved in the reentry process. The standards expand family standards PbS and Vera developed in 2012 for placement facilities that have successfully improved connections between facilities and families.

Community Connection and Contribution

Goal: To ensure youths develop a sense of belonging in the community.

Strong ties to positive peers and a sense of belonging have been shown to reduce re-offending and improve youths' quality of life. The standards focus on opportunities to connect youths to positive peers, contribute positively to the community and if needed, recognize and repair harm.

Implementation

Goal: To ensure programs and services are delivered as designed and performance data is continually used to guide policy, practice and resource allocation.

Knowing a program must be implemented as intended in order to achieve the desired outcomes, PbS created a domain for quality assurance. The standards address the need for staff training and supervision, a research-based program approach, ongoing data collection and analysis and appropriate re-assessment of youths.



Field Testing

Purpose

Field testing the draft reentry standards and performance indicators by those who collect and use the data as part of their daily work will provide the essential feedback needed to develop a final product that is meaningful and feasible to juvenile justice reentry programs and services.

The field test site visits will collect feedback about:

- Standards and Domains. *(Are they meaningful? Comprehensive? Helpful toward advancing reentry work? Too much or too little?)*
- Data elements to indicate performance. *(Do they indicate performance as intended? Is the data available and/or accessible? Where and how?)*
- Implementing the standards. *(How the proposed standards work/ do not work in real situations.)*
- Ease/ difficulty data collection. *(What data is difficult to collect? What can be modified to make it easier and more effective to use?)*
- Buy-in. *(How do we make it meaningful/ worth collecting to users? What's the best approach to introduce them to the field?)*

Strategy

PbS will use an iterative process to conduct pilot testing of the draft measurements standards at a minimum of 20 individual facilities, programs and reentry services in four agencies or jurisdictions. The field test visits will collect feedback from representatives from correction facilities, community residential programs, community service providers, case managers, aftercare specialists, parole officers and any others who are part of the jurisdiction's reentry continuum helping youths transition from custody and/or supervision to the community.

The field testing will include three phases: preparation, site visit and follow up. Selected volunteer sites can expect the process to take between four and six months. All activities will be concluded before October 2018.

Preparation

1. Selected volunteer field test sites will be asked first to name a Reentry Project Coordinator (RPC) to serve as the liaison between PbS and local reentry representatives, services and programs.
2. The RPC will complete a baseline assessment about the current understanding and implementation of reentry services and programs, adolescent development interventions, collecting data and technology. The assessment also will ask about availability and access to specific data elements, similarities and differences meeting some of the critical definitions and the general level of collaboration among the many youth-serving systems involved with young offenders.
3. Once the assessment is complete, participants will be provided with introductory materials to read before the site visit.



Site Visit

1. Three PbS staff will conduct a four-day site visit to the selected jurisdiction. The RPC will coordinate with PbS to schedule meetings and visits with representatives of correction facilities, community residential programs, community service providers, case managers, aftercare specialists, parole officers and any others who are part of the jurisdiction's reentry continuum helping youths transition from custody and/or supervision to the community and key stakeholders.
2. The site visit will include a presentation of the project and purpose, introduction of the draft standards and questions to collect general feedback on feasibility, effectiveness and dissemination. Following the large group meeting, participants will break into small work groups according to facility/ program type to review the standards and performance indicators. Representatives of different reentry services and programs will be given the most recent draft of the standards and data elements and asked to collect and/or locate some of the data.
3. PbS staff will visit as many services and programs as time allows on days 2 and 3 with the RPC and use the draft standards and data element protocol to identify what data is currently available, who can access it, how much work does accessing it entail and is it meaningful to the service or program. PbS and the RPC will ensure that necessary data sources and systems are available to inform pilot testing the protocols.

Follow-Up

Pilot site participants attending the introductory meeting will be asked to complete an on-line assessment following the site visit for feedback on the standards' content, implementation strategy and questions rating how helpful, meaningful, easy to use and impactful the standards were and any redundancies or gaps and suggestions for modifications.

After each pilot test visit, PbS will incorporate the feedback into a new draft document to test at the next site visit. PbS will maintain all versions of the standards.

Collecting Feedback

The pilot testing will collect feedback in three main areas:

- The content of the standards and related measures and data elements,
- Strategies and barriers to implementing and using the standards and
- The ease and accuracy of the draft tools to collect preliminary data.

PbS staff and the RPC will use the data collection protocols to test and note specific concepts or words causing confusion or needing clarification, suggestions for definitions and data, logistical or technical issues, variability in information, general sense of buy-in and likelihood of implementation and any other qualitative information from the individuals.

To Volunteer

Complete the on-line volunteer application by Sept. 30, 2017 or send an email to: reentry@pbstandards.org