

A Toolkit for Utah Juvenile Justice Practitioners

Utah Case Planning Toolkit



Abbreviated Electronic Edition

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Overview of the Toolkit

Introduction

Since 1998, the [Utah Juvenile Court](#) and the [Utah Division of Juvenile Justice Services](#) (JJS) have collaborated to improve practices in working with delinquent youth by implementing [evidence-based practices](#) (EBP). The goal of this continuing process is to incorporate evidence-based practices into each component of the system and into each step of working with delinquent youth.

Utah began this transformation by creating and validating risk and needs assessments specific to the Utah juvenile population, such as the [Pre-Screen Risk Assessment](#) (PSRA) and the [Protective and Risk Assessment](#) (PRA). The next step was to develop a [Case Planning Model](#) incorporating the [“What Works” principles](#) of effective interventions.¹ Utah built upon these changes by training and certifying probation officers and managers in the Case Planning Model, and including the model into the [career track for probation officers](#). To sustain the model, Utah has developed internal capacity by recruiting and training internal case planning experts to provide ongoing training to probation officers and JJS case workers. Utah’s Juvenile Court has also collaborated with researchers in creating and implementing a continuous quality improvement process to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and interventions, and to provide feedback on outcomes to management and probation officers.

Purpose of the Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to be a quick reference guide and provide an overview of the case planning approach used by Utah juvenile probation and Utah Division of Juvenile Justice Services. The toolkit is divided into six sections. The first section provides a brief overview of the Utah Juvenile Justice system and explains the relationship between evidence-based practices² and the “What Works” principles³, and how Utah’s Case Planning Model incorporates those principles. The next four sections briefly outline each stage of the Case Planning Model by defining steps and processes within each stage, describing the caseworker’s duties, and explaining the importance of each step. The last section of the toolkit includes information on other EBP resources and references.

The purpose of this abbreviated edition of the toolkit is to assist individuals to better understand Utah’s Case Planning Model. The toolkit can be used by caseworkers, management, judges, community partners, and other interested individuals.



Understanding Utah Juvenile Justice

Overview of the Juvenile Justice Process

The [Utah Juvenile Court](#) and [Juvenile Justice Services](#) are focused on providing appropriate consequences and interventions for offenders that will decrease the likelihood of future reoffending and provide restitution to victims without pushing juveniles further into the Juvenile Justice System. Many youth are diverted and held accountable or receive services prior to interaction with the juvenile court through such interventions as Youth Courts, Peer Courts, [Receiving Centers](#), or [Youth Services](#). Youth Courts and Peer Courts provide sanctions for minor offenses and are implemented and administered by local entities, which are not a part of the Utah Juvenile Court or Utah Division of Juvenile Justice Services. Receiving Centers provide a location for law enforcement to take youth after arrest for status offenses or minor delinquent acts, where Receiving Center staff work to locate parents/guardians, evaluate the youth's immediate needs for care, and provide referrals services. Youth Services provides assistance such as counseling, educational groups, and community referrals to youth who are experiencing family problems, have run away, are beyond the control of parents, or have committed other status offenses. These types of diversion interventions seek to address needs or provide consequences without further involving youth and families in the juvenile justice system.

Diversion may also occur after a referral to juvenile court. A youth may be referred to the Utah Juvenile Court by a variety of sources including law enforcement, schools, parents, or other concerned parties. A [youth may be held in detention](#) prior to his or her first contact with the court, or remain in the community. If a youth is held in detention, he or she has a hearing before a judge within two business days of intake and the youth is not usually eligible for diversion in the form of [a non-judicial closure](#).

If a youth is not in detention, he or she meets with a probation officer for a [preliminary inquiry](#). At this meeting, the probation officer determines whether the severity of the offense, prior criminal history, and other factors make the case appropriate to be handled by a judge or handled as a non-judicial closure by a probation officer. If the case receives a non-judicial closure, the youth receives sanctions through an agreement with probation. If the youth denies the allegations to the probation officer, [the case is handled in court by a judge](#). In court, a youth may admit or deny the allegations. If a youth admits to the offense or is found to have committed the offense, he or she receives sanctions from the court. If a youth denies the allegations, he or she has a right to a trial.

Services Provided by Probation

Utah juvenile probation provides case planning, case management, and supervision services for youth placed on formal probation. In addition, Utah probation manages intake cases, supervises work crews, handles non-judicial closures, and conducts classes and programs.

Services Provided by JJS

The Utah Division of Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) provides a wide variety of interventions for youth and families including such services and placements as case management, diversion, observation & assessment, home detention, Receiving Centers, Youth Services, community placements, secure facilities, and secure detention.

Using Effective Approaches

What are Evidence-Based Practices?

Evidence-based practices (EBP) are practices and approaches that have been empirically shown to improve offender outcomes and reduce recidivism through an emphasis on meta-analysis research, control of confounding variables through random assignment, and cross-site replication of results.⁴

What Are the “What Works” Principles?

The “What Works” principles are a set of evidence-based practices for reducing recidivism when working with delinquent youth. The “What Works” principles were developed based on more than thirty years of research, which suggested that programs and services had a higher success of reducing offender recidivism if four basic principles were implemented.⁵ These four principles are: **Risk**⁶, **Need**⁷, **Responsivity**⁸, and **Program Integrity**⁹, and they are often collectively referred to as the “What Works” principles of effective intervention.

Risk Principle

Interventions and services should be focused on moderate and high risk offenders and provide little intervention to low risk offenders. The intensity of services provided should match the youth’s risk to reoffend level, with the most intense services tailored to the youth with the highest risk to reoffend. Research shows that delivering high intensity services to low risk youth has the unintended consequence of increasing recidivism. Additionally, low risk youth should not be mixed with higher risk youth as it can result in peer contagion with low risk youth learning negative behaviors from higher risk youth.

Need Principle

The services provided should address criminogenic needs, which are dynamic, changeable factors most directly associated with delinquent behavior. Some examples of criminogenic needs are: pro-criminal peers, antisocial attitudes, substance abuse, and educational problems. Programs that reduce criminogenic needs are more likely to reduce recidivism.

Responsivity Principle

The services provided and the worker’s style should match the learning style of the youth. Additionally, treatment should vary according to the relevant characteristics of youth such as gender, culture, developmental stages, comprehension and reading levels, mental health diagnosis, motivation, etc.

Program Integrity Principle

Programs should be monitored for implementation quality and treatment fidelity to ensure programs are delivered as designed and intended. This is necessary in order to maximize program success and recidivism reduction. Services should employ evidence-based treatment approaches such as cognitive behavioral theoretical foundations and reinforcement of pro-social behaviors. The programs should also be structured and focused on developing skills.

Understanding the Case Planning Model

What is the Case Planning Model?

The Case Planning Model is the approach workers use to assist delinquent youth in reducing delinquent behavior. The model consists of four major stages: Mapping, Find the Hook, Moving Forward, and Review and Support. Through **Mapping**, the worker gathers the information necessary to complete assessments and develop a **case plan**. In **Finding the Hook**, the worker engages the youth and family in creating an effective case plan. During **Moving Forward**, the worker assists the youth and family in receiving the appropriate services needed to develop competencies that reduce recidivism. Finally, in **Review and Support**, a continuous process of reviewing the youth's progress towards the behavior change is applied.



Utah's Case Planning Model applies evidence-based practices by incorporating the **"What Works" principles**¹⁰ into case work approach. Each core principle of this system suggests strategies that workers should consider regarding their respective roles in supporting the application of **evidence-based principles**. The Case Planning Model represents how the theoretical "What Works" principles¹¹ are integrated into every day practice.

Case Planning Model and BARJ

Why Does This Matter?

The juvenile justice system is more effective in reducing recidivism when evidence-based practices are implemented into the [Case Planning Model](#) and the needs of the victim, the community, and the offender are considered. [Evidence-based practices](#), such as the [“What Works” principles](#), and BARJ help workers identify effective approaches, and the Case Planning Model explains how these approaches should be translated into practice. Using this system enables workers to assist youth to successfully and permanently leave the juvenile justice system.

Balanced and Restorative Justice Model (BARJ)

The [Balanced and Restorative Justice Model \(BARJ\)](#) is a philosophical approach that focuses on the offender repairing the harm or damage that has been done to the victim and the community. The components of BARJ include competency development, offender accountability, and community safety. BARJ uses restorative justice principles to balance the needs of three parties:

1. Those identified as an offender or law violator
2. The crime victim
3. The affected community¹²

Are BARJ and EBP Compatible?

BARJ is a theoretical systems approach and the Case Planning Model is a set of practices. The EBP Case Planning Model transforms BARJ theories into practice. EBP and BARJ work in unison. Changing negative behaviors increases competency development and reduces recidivism, which increases community safety. By addressing risk factors and behavior change, the youth increases his or her accountability for negative behavior and accountability to victims and the community.



MAPPING:

Pre-Orientation and Orientation

What is Mapping?

Mapping is the process of gathering information necessary to complete assessments and develop a [case plan](#). Mapping involves Pre-orientation, Orientation, Assessment, and Conceptualization.

Pre-Orientation

Prior to meeting with the family, the worker reviews case information.

What do you do?

The worker begins pre-orientation by reviewing all documentation in the [C.A.R.E.](#) (Courts and Agencies Records Exchange) electronic file prior to the preliminary inquiry, probation, or JJS appointment. This includes a review of police referrals, evaluations, school information, case notes, prior case reports, court orders, and other documents.

Why is it important?

Effectively conducting pre-orientation increases the likelihood of accurate assessments, valid case plans, and referrals to appropriate interventions. The accuracy of these practices is critical in reducing recidivism.

Orientation

The worker introduces the youth and family to the system and describes the purpose of the meeting.

What do you do?

The worker begins orientation by preparing the youth and family for the court process. This typically happens at the initial meeting. The worker explains the youth's legal rights, the role of intake/probation/JJS, the purpose of the meeting, and general expectations. Additionally, the worker engages the youth and family by using effective interviewing skills in preparation to gather information during an assessment interview.

Why is it important?

The family is better prepared to participate in the court process. The worker starts developing a relationship with the youth and family, thereby reducing resistance.



MAPPING:

Assessment and Conceptualization

Assessment

The worker gathers information from the youth and family, which may include other professional assessments and information from collateral contacts. Two of the assessment tools used in the Utah juvenile justice system are the [Pre-Screen Risk Assessment](#) (PSRA) and the [Protective and Risk Assessment](#) (PRA). The PSRA is used to determine the youth's risk to recidivate. The PRA is then used with moderate or high risk youth to identify protective factors and further determine intervention needs.

What do you do?

The worker uses a "behavior cycle" style of interview along with effective interviewing skills such as OARS¹³, to gather information needed to complete assessments. A Behavior Cycle includes the youth's underlying attitudes and behaviors, and how the sequence of events led to the Presenting Offense Episode (POE). The Behavior Cycle is often referred to as "the story."

Why is it important?

Understanding a youth's risk level guides case planning. Completing accurate assessments is critical to the effectiveness of the [case plan](#) and selecting appropriate interventions.

Conceptualization

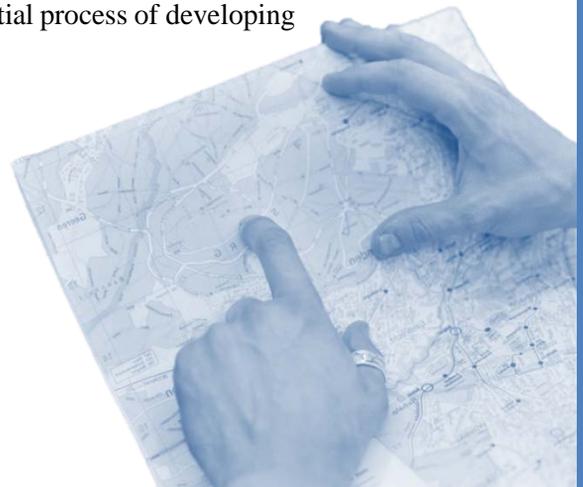
The process by which the worker takes the gathered assessment information, focuses it, and integrates the results into a vision of a [case plan](#).

What do you do?

After conducting the PRA, but before meeting again with the youth and family, the worker processes the information strategically by following the steps to conceptualize a case. Part of this process includes gathering information from the youth about incentives (what is important to the youth), which can be used to develop motivational strategies.

Why is it important?

Conceptualizing a case guides the worker in developing the [case plan](#) while incorporating evidence-based practices. Determining attitudes and behaviors that are connected to the offense and learning the youth's incentives and protective factors shape the initial process of developing a case plan.



FINDING THE HOOK:

Feedback and Prioritize

What is Finding the Hook?

Finding the Hook is the process of engaging the youth and family in creating an effective [case plan](#). Accomplishing case plan goals is difficult without the youth and family's "buy-in" and motivation. The worker uses the information gathered during Conceptualization to foster engagement. Finding the Hook involves the Feedback, Prioritize, and Focus steps.

Feedback

The worker uses strategic steps to review results of the conceptualized case with the youth and family.

What do you do?

Using effective [responsivity](#) skills, the worker reviews the previously conceptualized information with the youth and family, including the youth's incentives and protective factors. While re-telling their story to the youth and family, the worker highlights the identified risk factors and behaviors connected to the offense. Using the C.A.R.E. feedback worksheet may aid in this process.

Why is it important?

Feedback is a critical initial step in influencing the youth to buy into and choose steps towards the behavior change. This process is an opportunity for the worker to strategically guide the youth towards choosing appropriate risk factors during later steps in the Finding the Hook stage. It is also an opportunity for the youth to be heard and understood.

Prioritize

The process by which the worker guides the youth to select the risk item to work on.

What do you do?

Using the youth's words from "the story" (Behavior Cycle) reviewed in Feedback, the worker highlights the three identified dynamic risk factors and guides the youth in choosing one to focus on. The Behavior Cycle documents the sequence of events, thoughts, skills, and attitudes that are linked (before, during, and after) to the POE.

Why is it important?

Moderate and high risk youth present with many dynamic risk items. Prioritizing correctly makes the behavior change manageable and focuses on changing the behavior directly related to criminal offending. The youth's level of motivation and engagement in the behavior change process increases when the youth is allowed an opportunity for input.

FINDING THE HOOK:

Focus

Focus

The process of developing action steps with the youth.

What do you do?

The worker assesses the level of motivation the youth has towards the selected dynamic risk item. This occurs after the youth identifies a dynamic risk item during the [Prioritize](#) step that he or she wants to work on first. The worker matches an appropriate strategy to the identified Stage of Change by using principles and strategies from Prochaska's Stages of Change model.¹⁴ The worker should focus on increasing the level of motivation and work towards developing *small, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely* (SMART) action steps.¹⁵

The worker should document the identified risk item and the action steps in the C.A.R.E. electronic file case notes. Action steps are selected based on barriers toward making the behavior change. Barriers can be identified through the process of completing a situational analysis or a Decisional Balance worksheet with the youth.

Why is it important?

Behavior change occurs when the level of motivation increases and all barriers have been eliminated. It may be necessary to repeat the process and eliminate multiple barriers before any behavior change occurs. Once the youth is successful with the prioritized risk factor, the worker should repeat the process from the beginning with a new risk factor selected from the three factors identified during Conceptualization.



MOVING FORWARD: Interventions and Referrals

What is Moving Forward?

Moving Forward is the process of assisting the youth and family in receiving the appropriate services needed to develop competencies that reduce recidivism. Moving Forward includes Interventions and Referrals.

Interventions

Interventions are evidence-based resources used to target and match the identified risk item. As part of the quality assurance process, programs providing interventions are evaluated using the [Correctional Program Checklist](#) (CPC).

What do you do?

The worker selects an intervention that addresses the specific risk factors identified in the risk assessment. The worker continually assesses the level of motivation and works with youth to eliminate barriers while working towards identifying an appropriate intervention.

Why is it important?

Research has shown that using evidence-based interventions reduces recidivism. Matching interventions with identified risk items is critical to the effectiveness of the intervention. It is also important that the workers have a comprehensive knowledge of resources available in their area.

Referrals

The worker provides information about effective intervention programs, and educates the service providers about the targeted dynamic risk items.

What do you do?

The worker contacts the service provider and shares information from the [risk assessment](#) and/or the [case plan](#).

Why is it important?

Working in collaboration with the youth and the service provider increases the chance of successful behavior change.



MOVING FORWARD: Program Evaluation Process

What is the CPC Evaluation Process?

The Utah Juvenile Court utilizes an integrated program evaluation approach. This approach includes both an evaluation of the program utilizing the Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) and an analysis of outcome measures that examine changes in reoffending, attitudes, and behaviors.

Program Evaluation Process

The CPC is a program evaluation tool developed from research on [evidence-based practices](#). It contains items correlated with reductions in recidivism and provides a norm and standards across program types. Programs are evaluated annually and receive feedback on areas of success, areas of needed improvement, and guidance on how improvement should be achieved. The Utah Juvenile Court also collaborates with the University of Utah in order to provide ongoing research and technical support to programs to assist with improvement.

Program managers and administrators have access to an interactive website that provides program assessment results and outcome measures across time. The purpose of the Utah Juvenile Court's program evaluation process is to encourage continuous quality improvement and the effective implementation of evidence-based practices by programs.



REVIEW AND SUPPORT: Monitor Progress and Reassess

What is Review and Support?

Review and Support is the continuous process of reviewing the youth's progress towards the behavior change. Review and Support involves Monitoring Progress and Reassessing.

Monitor Progress

The worker reviews the youth's progress specific to the identified goals.

What do you do?

Through ongoing contact, the worker continues to assess the youth's level of motivation, works with the youth to eliminate additional barriers, and reinforces positive behavior changes.

Why is it important?

Monitoring progress enables the worker to determine if the youth is achieving pro-social goals and to make adjustments as needed.

Reassess

The process of updating the [PRA risk assessment](#) and [case plan](#), and reviewing progress.

What do you do?

The worker updates the PRA and case plan as outlined in the risk assessment policy. This process includes reviewing progress on action steps and barriers.

Why is it important?

Reassessing the PRA and the case plan enables the worker to obtain quantifiable data to determine if the youth is achieving desired results. This is also the time to review progress, make adjustments as needed, and establish new goals. Without continuous review and support from the worker, the youth's progress toward behavior change may be slower or stop altogether.



Resources

Listed below is a collection of resources that provide additional information on specific aspects of the case planning model and the use of evidence based practices in probation

The Achilles Heel of Evidence-Based Practices authored by W.D. Burrell. Available at: www.napehome.org.

Cutting Recidivism: What Works and What Doesn't authored by E. Latessa. Available at: <http://www.the-slammer.org/carousel/cutting-recidivism-what-works-what-doesn%E2%80%99t>.

What Works and What Doesn't in Reducing Recidivism: The Principles of Effective Intervention authored by E. Latessa. Available at: http://www.txcorrections.org/PDF/Dr._Latessa_What_works_and_What_Doesn%27t_in_Reducing_Recidivism.pdf

Exploring the Black Box of Community Supervision authored by J. Bonta, T. Ruge, T. Scott, G. Bourgon, & A. Yessine in *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, Vol. 47 (3), 248-270. Available at: <http://www.colorado.gov/ccjdir/Resources/Resources/Ref/OffenderRehabilitation2008.pdf>.

Guide for Implementing the Balanced and Restorative Justice Model from the *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Department of Justice (OJJDP)*. Available at: <http://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/implementing/intro.html>.

Implementing Evidence-Based Practices authored by F. Domurad & M. Carey of *The Carey Group*. Available at: <http://www.cepp.com/documents/Implementing%20Evidence%20Based%20Practices.pdf>.

Interventions for High-Risk Youth: Applying Evidence-Based Theory and Practice to the Work of Roca from the *Crime and Justice Institute at CRJ*. Available at: <http://cjinstitute.org/publications/highriskyouthroca>.

Overview of Motivational Interviewing. Available at: <http://www.motivationalinterview.org/Documents/1%20A%20MI%20Definition%20Principles%20&%20Approach%20V4%20012911.pdf>.

Reducing the Harm: Identifying Appropriate Programming for Low-Risk Offenders authored by C. Lowenkamp, P. Smith, K. & Bechetel in *Corrections Today*, Vol. 69 (No. 6). Available at: <http://www.aca.org/publications/pdf/Lowenkamp.pdf>.

Rehabilitating Criminal Justice Policy & Practice authored by D.A. Andrews & J. Bonta in *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, Vol. 16 (No. 1), 39-55. Available at: [http://www.hsicc.on.ca/Uploads/Rehabilitating%20criminal%20justice%20policy%20and%20practice%20\(Feb%202010\).pdf](http://www.hsicc.on.ca/Uploads/Rehabilitating%20criminal%20justice%20policy%20and%20practice%20(Feb%202010).pdf)

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For more information, please visit www.utcourts.gov/courts/juv/ebp/.

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