

# **Report to the Legislature**

## **Data and Quality Assurance Integration**

2012 Legislature, 3 ESHB 2127.SL Sec. 203 (9)

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# **Data and Quality Assurance Integration Report**

## **Executive Summary**

### **Legislative Proviso Objectives**

The 2012 Legislature, through 3 ESHB 2127.SL Sec. 203 (9), required “the Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators (WAJCA) and the Department of Social and Health Services’ Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) to analyze and review data elements available from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) for possible integration into the statewide evidence-based program quality assurance plans and processes. The WAJCA and JRA shall report the findings of their review and analysis, as well as any recommendations to the Legislature”.

### **Summary of Findings**

It is time for Washington State to expand its evidence-based programs in the juvenile justice system beyond implementation, maintenance and quality assurance monitoring. The next phase of our commitment includes the desire to evaluate in detail the effectiveness of our current menu of evidence-based programs and make data driven decisions regarding possible new programs that could meet the needs of those children with which we have yet to succeed. Much of the research on juvenile justice programs in Washington State, whether it was conducted by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) or the Washington Center for Court Research (WSCCR), the research arm for AOC, has been provided within existing resources. Those resources are becoming more and more unavailable. Additional resources are needed to create a strong research foundation that will help lawmakers determine if Washington State is maximizing its tax dollars to reduce crime.

### **Recommendations for Data and Quality Assurance Integration**

The funds currently allocated for juvenile justice evidence-based programs are dedicated to program delivery and its quality assurance structure. The Washington State Center for Court Research (WSCCR) would be poised to take on data analysis to support quality assurance as they already maintain the database that stores information from Washington State’s juvenile courts. However, existing resources are too limited to conduct work with all juvenile justice agencies given the growing need for this system’s data collection and research.

While this proposal addresses the current need for responsive research in juvenile justice, it is only wise to see this as part of a long-term strategy that should be able to serve not only legislators and juvenile justice professionals but also those other systems of care now starting down the path of providing evidence-based programs to their consumers.

## Data and Quality Assurance Integration

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### Background

In 1997 the Legislature began the shift to direct funding towards juvenile court programs that showed evidence of being effective at reducing crime. As a result, state funding for research-based programs in Washington State were allocated through the newly enacted Community Juvenile Accountability Act (CJAA).

The CJAA was included in Chapter 338, Laws of 1997, as an incentive to local communities to implement interventions proven by research to cost-effectively reduce recidivism among juvenile offenders. The Act's primary purpose is to:

*“Provide a continuum of community-based programs that emphasize a juvenile offender’s accountability for his or her actions while assisting him or her in the development of skills necessary to function effectively and positively in the community in a manner consistent with public safety.” (RCW 13.40.500)*

Drawing on program evaluations and meta-analysis, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP), in collaboration with WAJCA and JRA, identified a range of effective approaches (programs) that could cost-effectively reduce juvenile offender recidivism. Four programs were chosen for implementation in Washington State:

- Aggression Replacement Training (ART)
- Coordination of Services (COS)
- Functional Family Therapy (FFT)
- Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)

### CJAA Advisory Committee

When CJAA began, it was determined that a steering committee was critical for the ongoing successful implementation of the project. A multi-agency steering committee was charged with providing direction to the project (referred to as the CJAA Advisory Committee). This group has been comprised of juvenile justice experts from the juvenile courts, representatives from WAJCA, and representatives from JRA, researchers from both WSIPP and the Washington State Center for Court Research (WSCCR)<sup>1</sup>, and various other consultant and/or stakeholder groups.

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<sup>1</sup> The WSCCR is the research arm of the Administrative Office of the Courts. It was established in 2004 by order of the Washington State Supreme Court. The WSCCR is tasked with oversight of the risk assessment database for the juvenile courts to include collection and distribution of information related to program outcomes. This is an unfunded responsibility.

The CJAA Advisory Committee, among other things, guides processes associated with quality assurance of juvenile court evidence-based programs. Included as members of this committee are the Statewide Quality Assurance Specialists for ART, COS, and FFT. Additionally, the University of Washington, the entity responsible for the quality assurance for MST and the Family Integrated Transitions (FIT) program, has a staff member participate on this committee.

### **Washington State Evidence-Based Program (EBP) Evaluation History**

In 1997, the Legislature directed WSIPP to determine whether the funded programs reduced recidivism. The evaluation relied on the following schedule:

#### ***Evaluation Schedule***

January 1999	CJAA program implementation.
July 1999	Program evaluation begins.
September 2000	Study samples include sufficient numbers of youth.
September 2002	Preliminary 12-month recidivism measurement period ends.
March 2003	Final 18-month recidivism measurement period ends.
January 2004	Final report

The final report can be found at the link below, or it may be found at the WSIPP website listed under Outcome Evaluation of Washington State's Research-Based Programs for Juvenile Offenders 2004 January. Robert Barnoski. #04-01-1201.

<http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=04-01-1201>

### **Need for Further Program Evaluation**

Washington State's investment in juvenile courts aims to reduce juvenile, and later adult, criminal behavior to the greatest extent possible.

An important finding from the 2004 evaluation was that the programs were effective only when the therapist or trainer competently delivered the program with adherence to the model. Given this finding, the juvenile courts and JRA developed a rigorous quality assurance program. The CJAA Advisory Committee facilitates the statewide oversight of quality assurance. The juvenile courts provided quality assurance development and oversight at each individual program site. Through the combined efforts of these and other stakeholders involved in the juvenile justice system, the juvenile courts have continued to implement and expand evidence-based programs. In their 2003 report, WSIPP recommended that there be ongoing monitoring and evaluation of these programs. Although

WAJCA, the CJAA Advisory Committee, WSCCR and JRA all support this concept, the CJAA programs have not been evaluated since the quality assurance programs were implemented. Ongoing evaluation of EBPs has not been accomplished. The data are available, but no funding has been established to provide for evaluation. Without ongoing evaluation of youth recidivism outcomes, it is unknown whether or not the state of Washington is receiving maximum benefit from this investment of tax dollars.

The 2003 report can be found at the link below, or it may be found at the WSIPP website listed under Recommended Quality Control Standards: Washington State Research-Based Juvenile Offender Programs 2003 December. Robert Barnoski, Steve Aos, Roxanne Lieb. #03-12-1203.

<http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=03-12-1203>

### **Youth Assessment**

The CJAA specified that local juvenile courts target both diverted and adjudicated juvenile offenders for the programs and use a risk assessment to identify appropriate youth. The WSIPP worked with WAJCA to develop the Washington State Juvenile Court Assessment (WSJCA).

This comprehensive assessment measures risk and protective factors<sup>2</sup> identified by research as associated with juvenile criminality. The WSJCA classifies youth as low-, moderate-, or high-risk for re-offense. Using the assessment, a case management plan is developed for each youth that focuses on intervention strategies that aim to reduce risk factors.

The areas, identified in the research literature as being related to juvenile delinquency and continued criminal activity by youth, were separated into major domains. The 12 domains are:

- Domain 1: Criminal History
- Domain 2: Demographics
- Domain 3: School
- Domain 4: Use of Free Time
- Domain 5: Employment
- Domain 6: Relationships
- Domain 7: Family
- Domain 8: Alcohol and Drugs
- Domain 9: Mental Health
- Domain 10: Attitudes and Behaviors
- Domain 11: Aggression
- Domain 12: Social Skills

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<sup>2</sup> Risk factors increase the likelihood that a youth will become involved in criminal activity. Protective factors buffer youth from the risks of becoming involved in criminal activity.

Of the 12 domains, six are directly related to EBP eligibility and EBP criminogenic risk factors. The six domains are:

- Domain 7B: Family – Current Living Arrangement
- Domain 8: Alcohol and Drugs
- Domain 9: Mental Health
- Domain 10: Attitudes and Behaviors
- Domain 11: Aggression
- Domain 12: Social Skills

Within each of these domains there are items measuring static (historic, unchanging) and dynamic (potential for change) risk and protective factors. The goal of EBPs is to reduce dynamic risk factors and increase dynamic protective factors. One quality assurance check is to measure if these anticipated changes are occurring. Risk is assessed prior to the start of a program. When risk is measured at the end of a program it can be compared to the initial risk information. Decreases in youth risk factors and increases in youth protective factors indicate progress. Comparing these changes in risk and protective factors to similar youth who did not receive the EBP allows for a clearer understanding of the benefits of the program.

The validity of the WSJCA was tested by WSIPP in 2003. The Evaluation Report can be found at the link below, or it may be found at the WSIPP website listed under: Washington State Juvenile Court Assessment Manual Version 2.1 2003 October. Robert Barnoski. #04-03-1203.

<http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=04-03-1203>

### **Quality Assurance Committee**

In 1998, WAJCA created a Quality Assurance Committee responsible for developing an effective process for ensuring adherence to the Risk/Need/Responsivity Principles (RNR) and establishing quality assurance standards for the Washington State Juvenile Court Assessment (WSJCA). In 2000, this committee proposed to WAJCA the “Case Management Assessment Process” (CMAP) as the model for community supervision of juvenile offenders statewide. The WAJCA adopted and implemented the four-step CMAP model (Appendix A).

### **Data Review and Analysis Committee**

A committee of juvenile justice professionals met in September 2012 to analyze and review data elements for possible integration into the evidence-based program quality assurance plans and process. The members of the committee are as follows:

### **WAJCA**

- Barbara Carr, Juvenile Court Administrator and Chair of the CJAA Advisory Committee
- Shelly Maluo, Juvenile Court Administrator and Chair of the Case Management Assessment Process (CMAP) Quality Assurance Committee
- Bonnie Bush, Juvenile Court Administrator and Former WAJCA President
- Pat Escamilla, Juvenile Court Administrator and Current WAJCA President

### **JRA**

- Dana Phelps, Executive Assistant to the Assistant Secretary's Office
- Cory Redman, Juvenile Court Programs Administrator

### **AOC**

- Sarah Veele, Researcher for the Washington State Center for Court Research (WSCCR)

### **CJAA Advisory Committee**

- Christopher Hayes, Washington State Aggression Replacement Training (WSART) Quality Assurance Specialist
- Lisa McAllister, Functional Family Therapy (FFT) Quality Assurance Specialist

## **Committee Findings of the Data Review and Analysis**

The Data Analysis and Review Committee identified the following data elements for possible integration into the EBP quality assurance plans and processes.

### ***Moderate or High Risk Youth***

The data elements to be analyzed for juvenile court EBPs designed for moderate or high youth include:

- Ethnicity;
- Gender;
- Age;
- Race;
- Risk level profile.

These elements should be reported for program starters, completers and drop-outs (by reason).

The domains specifically informing the risk level profile should be Domain 1 (Record of Referrals), Domain 7B (Family – Current Living Arrangements), Domain 8A and 8B (Alcohol and Drugs), Domain 10 (Attitudes and Behaviors), Domain 11 (Aggression) and Domain 12 (Social Skills). An additional data element for further exploration would be “type of crime” for all programs.



### ***Low Risk Youth***

Data elements identified for court EBPs designed for low risk youth should include a pre-screen review for profile and an examination of whether youth receiving low-risk interventions move up the risk level trajectory at the same rate as youth who are not receiving a low-risk intervention. There is also a need to know the number of youth eligible and how many start the intervention and the number of youth who complete the intervention.

### ***Future Data and Quality Assurance Integration***

For the future, it will be possible to track by court and program provider whether the anticipated impacts of the EBP on juvenile offenders' dynamic risk and protective factors (short term outcome) are being met. Additionally, tracking how individual treatment providers vary in terms of youth completing and responding to treatment will also be shown in the changes in dynamic risk and protective factors. The long term outcome of criminal recidivism will be an additional quality assurance measure.

## **Program Specific Data Review and Analysis**

### ***Coordination of Services (COS)***

Coordination of Services is a program designed for low risk youth without significant family problems. As identified above, through the risk assessment data, a risk profile will be identified through a pre-screen assessment. This will allow a comparison of risk and needs of the different youth that enter the program. However, any additional elements for COS will require a software change. Such a change will require funding, which is not currently budgeted.

### ***Functional Family Therapy (FFT)***

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is a program designed for moderate and high risk youth with significant family problems. To better enhance the FFT quality assurance process, and in addition to the data elements identified above, specific data elements that inform eligibility contained in Domain 7B (Family – Current Living Arrangements) will be reviewed and compared for all participants.

### ***Washington State Aggression Replacement Training (WSART)***

Washington State Aggression Replacement Training (WSART) is a program designed for moderate and high risk youth who have problems with aggression, their attitude, or their skills. To better enhance the WSART quality assurance process, and in addition to the elements identified above, specific data elements that inform eligibility contained in Domain 10 (Attitudes and Behaviors), Domain 11 (Aggression), and Domain 12 (Social Skills) will be reviewed and compared for all participants.

### ***Family Integrated Transitions (FIT)***

Family Integrated Transitions (FIT) is a program designed for high risk youth with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse issues and significant family

problems. To better enhance the FIT quality assurance process, and in addition to the elements identified above, specific data elements that inform eligibility contained in Domain 7B (Family – Current Living Arrangements), Domain 8 (Alcohol and Drugs), Domain 9A (Mental Health History), and Domain 9B (Current Mental Health) will be reviewed and compared for all participants.

### ***Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)***

Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) is a program designed for high risk youth with significant family problems. To better enhance the MST quality assurance process, and in addition to the data elements identified above, specific data elements that inform eligibility contained in Domain 7B (Family – Current Living Arrangements) will be reviewed and compared for all participants.

Unlike COS, FFT, and WSART, the quality assurance process for FIT and MST is conducted and overseen by the University of Washington. A goal for the CJAA Advisory Committee is to increase the partnership with U of W. Increasing collaboration and strengthening the partnership will only enhance the quality and quantity of FIT and MST services.

### **Summary of Data Review and Analysis**

The existing quality assurance plans and processes, integrated with statewide and juvenile court level data from the risk assessment, will enhance the quality assurance of EBPs by allowing us to better assess implementation issues, identify service delivery barriers, determine if particular youth are being excluded from access to programs, and comparing local program information against statewide trends. This integration will improve the quality of delivery of EBPs in the juvenile court system by making data driven decisions that will inform the strengths, weaknesses and areas where further evaluation needs to occur in Washington State's EBP implementation as a whole.

### **Other Recommendations**

As the work continues to increase the availability of evidence-based and research based programs, it is essential that funding for program expansion include funds necessary to conduct research on those programs that fall into the category of promising or research based. Strong data analysis regarding youth within the juvenile justice system will improve the system's ability to select programs that work.

A broader array of well designed and effective programs is necessary in order to respond to the needs of those youth that are not being reached by the current menu of programs. The juvenile justice system is not yet in a position to fully respond with programs designed to meet the needs of youth based on cultural differences or on differences in the complexity of youth needs.

The recommendations in this report also connect to efforts by the juvenile justice system to respond to the requirements in House Bill 2536. This bill requires a plan to increase spending on the number of youth served with evidence-based and research based programs. Work to implement House Bill 2536 is underway, and the DSHS report recommendations are likely to build on recommendations in this report. Both county juvenile courts and the JRA will be involved in the process of making and implementing recommendations in response to House Bill 2536.

At a minimum, future steps to expand the menu of evidence-based programs must include costs for:

- the direct service to youth and their families;
- program quality assurance and monitoring model fidelity;
- evaluation of the impacts of those programs that have not yet demonstrated, through rigorous research, evidence of their effectiveness.

Costs for these items will vary by program. Choosing which programs to prioritize for implementation will require additional data analysis about the risks and needs of youth in the juvenile justice system. Special consideration should be made for youth that appear to have needs that are not met by the current available programs.

Juvenile justice as a whole will benefit from these recommendations (see attached Juvenile Justice Continuum of Care Flow Chart – Appendix B). Over time the proposed system will create a program improvement process which utilizes a rich data source based on the work of juvenile probation counselors throughout the state.

## **Conclusions**

For nearly 15 years the Washington State Legislature has been committed to the ongoing prioritization of evidence-based programming for the juvenile justice system. More recently, pursuant to House Bill 2536, this effort has been enlarged to include a similar emphasis for different systems of care including children in the mental health and child welfare systems. Because of the legislature's support to date, and the work of juvenile justice agencies, Washington State is perceived as a national leader in the areas of providing evidence-based programs in juvenile justice and for the quality assurance structure created to ensure the programs are implemented and maintained to create positive results for the youth served.

The continued success of this evidence-focused juvenile justice system depends on the willingness of those who govern directional and budgetary decisions that meet the needs of the system so that it can move forward. As is outlined in this report, it is time for Washington State to expand beyond implementation, maintenance and quality assurance monitoring of our programs. The next phase of our commitment includes the ability to evaluate in detail our current menu of evidence-based programs and make data driven decisions regarding possible new

programs that could meet the needs of those children with which we have yet to succeed. Without a commitment to full quality assurance and research support for evidence-based programs in juvenile justice the current system of care will become outdated, unresponsive to important new information, and ultimately less successful. To continue to use funding identified for direct service of programs to support this necessary piece of the overall picture translates into fewer and fewer youth getting into programs, completely defeating the purpose of this evidence-based journey.

Currently, the funds allocated for juvenile justice evidenced-based programs are fully dedicated to program delivery and its quality assurance structure. A strong research foundation is needed that will help lawmakers determine if Washington State is maximizing its tax dollars to reduce crime. State professionals in juvenile justice, both juvenile courts and JRA, identify this as an important priority.

While this proposal addresses the current need for responsive research in juvenile justice, it is only wise to see this as part of a long-term strategy that should be able to serve not only legislators and juvenile justice professionals but also those other systems of care now starting down the path of providing evidence-based programs to their consumers. All systems should be able to take advantage of a learned truth: that evidence-based programs cannot thrive on their own, creating positive outcomes for any target population without the underpinning of skilled professionals, competent providers of programs, quality assurance experts and the science of research.

**Probation  
Case Management Assessment Process (CMAP)  
Washington's Model of Community Supervision**

**Step 1: Mapping**

Assessment: The WAJCA pre-screen quickly indicates a youth's level of re-offending risk as low, moderate or high. The pre or full screen assessment tool is administered by trained probation counselor's that have been certified to deliver the assessment. By using a validated actuarial assessment tool to determine a youth's level of risk for reoffending the court has the ability to target resources at higher risk youth.

Case Analysis/Conceptualization: The second phase of Mapping requires the juvenile probation staff to analyze the results from the assessment to develop an intervention plan based on the youth's criminogenic needs. The process determines a youth's attitudes, values and beliefs. From this analysis, we are able to identify the promising intermediate targets and best fit the intervention to the desired behavior change.

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is used to create an environment where motivation, cooperation, respect and modeling are most likely to occur with juvenile offenders.

**Step 2: Finding the Hook**

The probation staff collaborates with youth and families and prioritizes the criminogenic need of the offender, engage the youth in setting behavior change goals and create a change plan. This process builds motivation for change. The complex process integrates the assessment information into a comprehensive case plan designed to address the offender's risk, need and responsivity considerations, and to change targeted criminogenic behavior.

**Step 3: Moving Forward**

The treatment goal is to impact the youth's behaviors that were targeted in "Finding the Hook". The youth's special responsivity considerations are focused on with strategies and/or approaches to address those issues. The linking of youth's risk profile with the appropriate intervention follows the best practice model of using evidence-based programs (EBP) when available. The probation staff's ability to engage and motivate the offender to value attending, participating and completing the treatment is a crucial component to maximize the effects of an EBP or other treatment programs.

**Step 4: Reviewing and Supporting**

This final phase of the CMAP model integrates re-assessment with intervention outcomes. The re-assessment measures changes in the youth's risk profile. The probation staff record the youth's improvements, deterioration or indicate no

change after attending treatment and/or at the end of community supervision in the assessment software. The probation staff gives support, guidance and reinforcement to the youth for generalizing and integrating the learned concepts into their daily behavior which replaces previous anti-social behaviors. The probation staff helps the youth and their parent(s) identify relapse prevention strategies designed to assist the offender in anticipating and coping with problem situations.

**List of Acronyms and Terms**

- **AOC:** Administrative Office of the Courts
- **CJAA:** Community Juvenile Accountability Act. State-funded program that supports evidence-based treatment for youth on probation in the juvenile courts.
- **COS:** Coordination of Services. An evidence-based program that provides an educational program to low-risk juvenile offenders and their parents.
- **DMC:** Disproportionate Minority Contact
- **DSHS:** Department of Social and Health Services
- **EBP:** Evidence-Based Program. A program that has been rigorously evaluated and has shown effectiveness at addressing particular outcomes such as reduced crime, child abuse and neglect, or substance abuse. These programs often have a cost benefit to taxpayers.
- **FFT:** Functional Family Therapy. A family therapy program that lasts an average of four months. This program has been shown to reduce felony recidivism and focuses on helping families improve youth behavior and reducing family conflict.
- **FIT:** Family Integration Transitions program. A version of Multi-Systemic Therapy that is an evidence-based family intervention model for youth with co-occurring disorders.
- **JRA:** Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration. The Department of Social and Health Services administration responsible for the rehabilitation of court-committed juvenile offenders.
- **ISD:** Information Services Division
- **MST:** Multi-Systemic Therapy. An evidence-based family treatment model that reduces juvenile offender recidivism.
- **WAJCA:** Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators.
- **WSART:** Washington State Aggression Replacement Training. A Cognitive Behavior Therapy program using skill building that has been rigorously evaluated and reduces recidivism with juvenile offenders.

- **WCCR:** The Washington State Center for Court Research is the research arm of the Administrative Office of the Courts. It was established in 2004 by order of the Washington State Supreme Court.
  
- **WSIPP:** Washington State Institute for Public Policy.