



Reentry Measurement Standards Executive Summary

In the past decade, the federal government has funded many initiatives to improve juvenile reentry¹ programs, practices and outcomes with the belief that increased reintegrative services would decrease recidivism. Major improvements have been made such as use of assessment tools guided by the principles of risk-need-responsivity, establishment of multi-agency and multi-system teams to ensure youths have access to needed services outside juvenile justice, greater inclusion of families and innovative approaches to prepare youths for employment and career success. However agencies need more guidance to implement the most effective tools. The wide variation in how reentry services are delivered and how youths' experiences, skills, competencies, connections, resources and supports are measured and tracked make assessing performance difficult.

Recognizing the need to measure and better understand what works to prevent youths from reoffending after juvenile justice system involvement and what keeps them on the path to successful adulthood, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice launched the Juvenile Reentry Measurement Standards project (RS) in October 2015. OJJDP called for the development of standards to provide research-based, best practice guidance for assessing and measuring reentry services and outcomes for youths in secure placement through release of post-placement supervision.

The Performance-based Standards Learning Institute, Inc. ([PbS](#)) was selected with its partners the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA) and Vera Institute of Justice to develop the standards and measures. The work was completed in four activities:

- Activity 1 – Synthesize and analyze the current literature in implementation science, juvenile reentry and youth development with current practice in juvenile reentry and data collection across the nation to identify key indicators for measuring the juvenile reentry process.
- Activity 2 – Translate key indicators identified in Activity 1 in a user-friendly and understandable draft juvenile reentry measurement standards to pilot test.
- Activity 3 – Pilot test the measurement standards to learn if they are meaningful, feasible, valuable and understandable to professionals and identify strategies to recommend for broad/national implementation.
- Activity 4 – Revise and provide final recommended measurement standards to OJJDP that incorporate the findings and feedback gathered during the pilot phase and suggest strategies for national implementation.

Research continues to improve our understanding of the need to identify different practices and new strategies to respond to the unique needs and strengths of youths, to hold them accountable, strengthen

¹ Juvenile reentry in this report refers to the services that prepare youths who serve time in out-of-home placements for their return to the community. It includes provision of services before and after release from placement through termination of community supervision.





their relationships with families, increase their skills and competencies and improve their perceptions of the fairness of the juvenile justice system to reduce reoffending. The reentry standards and measures presented in this report were developed by translating the research into a set of standards and measures that identify the reentry practices most likely to result in reduced reoffending and positive outcomes for youths.

The standards are presented within a framework that includes four areas: principles, practices, short-term outcomes and long-term outcomes.

- Principles are overarching beliefs that guide agencies and organizations in all circumstances. The principles include fairness, accountability, family engagement and collaboration.
- Practices describe an agency's reentry services that can be assessed at the program level to determine performance and quality of implementation. The practice domains include assessment, reentry planning, case management and continuous quality improvement.
- Short-term outcomes measure concepts, competencies and resources that research has identified as able to affect long-term outcomes such as reoffending. Short-term outcomes include education and employment, well-being and health and community connection and contribution.
- Long-term outcomes look at the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire juvenile justice system from arrest through reentry. While included in the framework, the outcomes were covered by other complimentary OJJDP projects, including the Juvenile Justice Model Data Project (MDP). The long-term outcomes include reduced reoffending, community safety and cost effectiveness.

The final report documents the project's work and describes the processes and considerations that led to the final 33 reentry standards and 161 measures recommended to OJJDP for implementation. PbS offers the following next steps and specific strategies for national implementation:

1. Develop, field test and implement reentry surveys for families and staff.
2. Launch a Demonstration Project to implement the reentry standards and measures in selected jurisdictions and develop implementation tools, training and case studies to promote integration of the standards and measures in juvenile justice agencies.
3. Continue to support improvements to reentry programs' capacity to collect, analyze and report data.
4. Develop a coaching program to guide leadership at all levels in using the reentry standards and measures.
5. Align existing and new reporting requirements with the reentry standards and measures.

