

# DATA SOURCES AND METHODS

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In August 2006, the Department of Juvenile Justice's (DJJ) Quality Assurance, Technical Assistance and Research and Planning units were assigned to the Office of Program Accountability. This chapter outlines the data sources and methods used in the Quality Assurance and Outcome Evaluation analyses presented in this report.

## **Quality Assurance (QA) Methodology**

The Department's QA system was funded and implemented as part of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1994. This system is recognized as a national model for quality assurance systems. Representatives from Texas, Ohio, and Georgia sent staff to Florida to be trained in the DJJ QA model. In addition, representatives from Australia, England, and Germany either came to Florida or participated in conference calls to learn about the system and discuss ways to implement similar systems in their respective countries.

Programs are evaluated by a team of professionals who have juvenile justice experience. The team approach provides a broad and balanced perspective for program evaluation and allows programs to be evaluated, in part, by a "certified reviewer" who has operational experience in the program type being reviewed. In the DJJ QA system, the QA team not only seeks to determine if a program is meeting the minimum standard, but also to determine the quality of services provided. On-site program reviews generally take between one and three days to complete. While on-site, QA reviewers and certified reviewers evaluate the program's policies, procedures, and practices as part of a comprehensive process. This process includes reviewing records and files, making observations, and interviewing management, staff, and youth.

## **The Quality Assurance Performance Rating**

Juvenile justice programs and services are evaluated based on their performance of a specific set of standards. These standards are a collection of requirements from Florida Statute, Florida Administrative Code, Department policy, and provider contracts, grouped by general categories. Each program model is reviewed using the set of standards that is applicable to that program model. The quality assurance evaluation process incorporates multiple data sources to ensure the validity of the review.

For example, in a juvenile justice residential program, the program components include:

- Management accountability
- Case management and delinquency intervention
- Mental health and substance abuse services
- Healthcare services
- Security and safety

Within each program component there is a set of key indicators that are used to rate the overall performance of the program component. Indicators are rated based on how well a program is performing in a certain area using the guidelines below, with 10 representing the highest level of performance possible. Reviewers use the following definitions as a guide when scoring a key indicator:

**Exceptional Performance**

The program consistently meets all requirements, and a majority of the time exceeds most of the requirements, using either an innovative approach or exceptional performance that is efficient, effective, and readily apparent. Numerical value: 10.

**Commendable Performance**

The program consistently meets all requirements without exception, or the program has not performed the activity being rated during the review period, and exceeds procedural requirements and demonstrates the capacity to fulfill those requirements. Numerical value: 8.

**Acceptable Performance**

The program consistently meets requirements, although a limited number of exceptions occur that are unrelated to the safety, security, or health of youth, or the program has not performed the activity being rated during the review period, and meets all procedural requirements and demonstrates the capacity to fulfill those requirements. Numerical value: 7.

**Minimal Performance**

The program does not meet requirements, including at least one of the following: an exception that jeopardizes the safety, security, or health of youth; frequent exceptions unrelated to the safety, security, or health of youth; or ineffective completion of the items, documents, or actions necessary to meet requirements. Numerical value: 5.

**Failing Performance**

The items, documentation, or actions necessary to accomplish requirements are missing or are done so poorly that they do not constitute compliance with requirements, or there are frequent exceptions that jeopardize the safety, security, or health of youth. Numerical value: 0.

Programs receive one of five possible performance ratings at the standard level: failed to meet standards, minimum performance, acceptable performance, commendable performance, or exceptional performance. Standard ratings are derived from indicator ratings. A standard receives two scores: a raw score (the sum total of that standard's indicator ratings) and a maximum possible score (the number of applicable indicators in that standard multiplied by 10, which is the highest possible indicator score). A percentage rating is then calculated by dividing the raw score by the maximum possible score.

For example, program A is rated for Standard One which has four indicators. The program receives an acceptable performance rating of '7' for each of the four indicators. The program's *raw score* would be 28 (the sum of the indicator ratings: 7+7+7+7). The program's *maximum possible score* would be 10 times the number of applicable indicators, which in this case is 4. The maximum possible score is 40 (10 x 4). The program's percentage rating for Standard One is derived by dividing the raw score (28) by the maximum possible score (40). The resulting percentage, 70%, is Program A's rating for Standard One, "Acceptable Performance."

**Overall Program Ratings:** To determine a program’s overall performance rating, the same method used for computing the ratings for standards is applied with one exception: instead of summing the indicator ratings, the overall ratings of the standards are totaled. At the overall program performance level, a program receives two scores: a raw score (the sum of all standards’ raw scores) and a maximum possible score (the sum of all standards’ maximum possible scores). The program’s percentage rating results from dividing the overall program raw score by the overall maximum possible score. The following grid is an example of a completed performance rating profile for a fictional residential program.

## Residential Juvenile Correctional Facility

### Quality Assurance Performance Rating Profile

|                           |                    |                            |      |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|------|
| <b>Program Type:</b>      | High/Max Risk      | <b>Program Code:</b>       | 4235 |
| <b>Contract Provider:</b> | Provider, Inc.     | <b>Contract Number:</b>    | R2D2 |
| <b>County/Circuit #:</b>  | Citrus/5th Circuit | <b>Number of Beds:</b>     | 96   |
| <b>Review Date:</b>       | August 4-6, 2009   | <b>Lead Reviewer Code:</b> | 78   |

| Program Performance by Indicator                               |  |              |           |
|--|--|--------------|-----------|
| <b>Management Accountability</b>                               |  |              |           |
| 1.01   | P Background Screening                     | 10           |           |
| 1.02   | Risk Management and Incident Reporting     | 10           |           |
| 1.03   | P Provision of Abuse Free Environment      | 7            |           |
| 1.04   | Escapes                                    | 10           |           |
| 1.05   | Pre-Service Training Requirements          | 10           |           |
| 1.06   | In-Service Training Requirements           | 10           |           |
| 1.07   | Special Diets                              | 10           |           |
| 1.08   | National School Lunch and Breakfast        | NA           |           |
|  |  | <b>Total</b> | <b>67</b> |
| <b>Case Management &amp; Delinquency Intervention Services</b> |  |              |           |
| 2.01   | Classification                             | 10           |           |
| 2.02   | Assessment                                 | 10           |           |
| 2.03   | Multidisciplinary Intervention             | 10           |           |
| 2.04   | Performance Planning                       | 10           |           |
| 2.05   | Performance Reporting                      | 8            |           |
| 2.06   | Parent or Guardian Involvement             | 10           |           |
| 2.07   | Transition Planning                        | 8            |           |
| 2.08   | Grievance Process                          | 10           |           |
| 2.09   | Behavior Management                        | 8            |           |
| 2.10   | Room Restriction                           | NA           |           |
| 2.11   | Controlled Observation                     | 8            |           |
| 2.12   | Behavior Management Unit                   | NA           |           |
|  |  | <b>Total</b> | <b>92</b> |
| <b>Mental Health and Substance Abuse</b>                       |  |              |           |
| 3.01   | Coordination of Services                   | 10           |           |
| 3.02   | P Suicide Risk Screening                   | 10           |           |
| 3.03   | Mental Health Evaluation/Assessment        | 8            |           |
| 3.04   | Substance Abuse Assessment                 | 8            |           |
| 3.05   | Planning and Delivery of Services          | 8            |           |
| 3.06   | Suicide Precautions                        | 10           |           |
| 3.07   | Crisis Intervention and Implementation     | 8            |           |
| 3.08   | Emergency Services                         | 8            |           |
| 3.09   | Requirements for Specialized Models        | 7            |           |
|  |  | <b>Total</b> | <b>77</b> |
|  |  |              |           |
| <b>HEALTHCARE SERVICES</b>                                     |  |              |           |
| 4.01   | Designated Health Authority                |              | 8         |
| 4.02   | Healthcare Admission Screening             |              | 10        |
| 4.03   | Comprehensive Physical Assessment          |              | 8         |
| 4.04   | Screening, Evaluation, Treatment for STDs  |              | 8         |
| 4.05   | Sick Call                                  |              | 8         |
| 4.06   | Medication Administration                  |              | 8         |
| 4.07   | Pharmaceuticals: Storage, Security, Access |              | 8         |
| 4.08   | Infection Control                          |              | 8         |
| 4.09   | Chronic Illness Treatment Process          |              | 8         |
| 4.10   | Episodic/Emergency Care                    |              | 8         |
| 4.11   | Authority for Evaluation and Treatment     |              | 8         |
| 4.12   | Pregnant Girls and their Neonates          |              | NA        |
|  |  | <b>Total</b> | <b>90</b> |
|  |  |              |           |
| <b>Security and Safety Services</b>                            |  |              |           |
| 5.01   | P Supervision of Youth                     |              | 7         |
| 5.02   | Room Checks                                |              | 7         |
| 5.03   | Key Control                                |              | 7         |
| 5.04   | Internal Alert System                      |              | 10        |
| 5.05   | Log Books                                  |              | 10        |
| 5.06   | Gang Prevention and Intervention           |              | 10        |
| 5.07   | Contraband and Searches                    |              | 10        |
| 5.08   | Transportation                             |              | 10        |
| 5.09   | Tool and Sensitive Item Control            |              | 8         |
| 5.10   | Disaster and Continuity of Operations      |              | 10        |
| 5.11   | Flammable, Toxic, and Poisonous Control    |              | 7         |
| 5.12   | Water Safety                               |              | NA        |
|  |  | <b>Total</b> | <b>96</b> |

## Residential Juvenile Correctional Facility

| Program Performance by Standard  |               |            |            |        |         |            |             |             |
|--|---------------|------------|------------|--------|---------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Standard   | Program Score | Max Score  | Rating     | Failed | Minimal | Acceptable | Commendable | Exceptional |
|  |               |            |            | 0-59%  | 60-69%  | 70-79%     | 80-89%      | 90-100%     |
| <b>1. Management Accountability</b>  | 67            | 70         | 96%        |        |         |            |             | X           |
| <b>2. CM &amp; Delinquency Intervention</b>  | 92            | 100        | 92%        |        |         |            |             | X           |
| <b>3. Mental Hlth/Substance Abuse</b>  | 77            | 90         | 86%        |        |         |            | X           |             |
| <b>4. Healthcare Services</b>  | 90            | 110        | 82%        |        |         |            | X           |             |
| <b>5. Security and Safety</b>  | 96            | 110        | 87%        |        |         |            | X           |             |
| <b>Overall Score</b>   | <b>422</b>    | <b>480</b> | <b>88%</b> |        |         |            | <b>X</b>    |             |
| <b>Overall Program Performance</b>   |               |            |            |        |         |            |             |             |
| <b>Commendable Performance 88%</b>   |               |            |            |        |         |            |             |             |
| <b>Scoring legend:</b> Performance Indicators: 0 = Failing, 5 = Minimal, 7 = Acceptable, 8 = Commendable, 10 = Exceptional |               |            |            |        |         |            |             |             |

The QA process includes the following elements:

**Identification of Critical Issues:** Certified review teams are trained to be aware of situations in programs which may or may not be a part of the quality assurance review. Reviewers are instructed to contact the lead reviewer immediately when illegal, fraudulent, unethical, or other serious situations are suspected. The lead reviewer will contact the QA Bureau Chief, who will advise the Director of Program Accountability, the Office of the Inspector General and appropriate Assistant Secretary of the circumstances so that an investigation/audit may be initiated or immediate corrective action can commence.

**Provider Ability to Challenge the QA Report:** The Department has implemented an internal challenge process to offer providers a mechanism to review draft reports and offer additional information that may impact their rating or provide edits when errors are identified. Each draft report is emailed to the program director and the regional office of the appropriate Department program area. The program director has five working days to contact the QA office and challenge the findings or advise the Department of errors in the report. For any issue discovered, the QA program administrator for that area discusses the findings with the lead reviewer and reviews the documentation. When necessary, other team members are contacted for their input.

**Conditional Status:** This status is an alert system for management to ensure programs are placed on corrective action to address issues of concern. A program is placed on Conditional Status when they achieve at least a minimal level of performance overall but fail to meet minimal performance level in one or more standard. In addition to corrective action, Conditional Status triggers more intensive monitoring by the contract manager or regional office of the affected program area. Programs that are not able to bring the standard(s) up to acceptable levels of quality within six months are subject to contract or administrative action.

## Outcome Evaluation Methodology

### Data Sources

The annual DJJ CAR provides program outputs and outcomes for the continuum of juvenile justice services provided by the Department including: prevention, intake, detention, probation and community intervention, and residential commitment. There are methodological differences in the analyses of the various juvenile justice services due to variations in data sources and outcome measures. These differences are outlined below.

The primary source of data for the CAR outcome evaluation analyses is DJJ's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS). JJIS contains demographic and delinquency referral information, admission and release dates, and release reasons for most youth receiving DJJ services. There are a few exceptions. Demographic and release data for youth released by the Florida Network prevention programs and redirection programs are provided to DJJ by the providers. To match this data to additional offense-related data in the JJIS system, a matching protocol was developed based on youth names, social security numbers, and dates of birth.

Additional recidivism outcome data are compiled from the adult system using information from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and Florida Department of Corrections (DOC). Arrest and disposition information for youth who reached the age of 18 years or who had cases transferred to adult court was obtained from FDLE's Florida Crime Information Center. Information pertaining to dispositions on cases processed in adult court was obtained from DOC and is limited to youth convicted of felonies and sentenced to adult probation or prison.

### **Methods**

Every year since 1996, the Department holds the Common Definitions Meeting to determine the methodology for defining variables and calculating outcome measures. This methodology was carefully considered and originally developed by key juvenile justice policymakers and providers including DJJ, the Justice Research Center, the Legislature, the Governor's Office, the Office of Program Planning and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), the Office of Economic and Demographic Research, contracted providers and other juvenile justice stakeholders.

### **Time Periods Covered**

Fiscal years were selected as the reporting period, as they correspond with the Department's budgetary calendar. The particular fiscal year (FY) covered in each section of this report is based upon the primary focus of the data presented. For the Intake and Detention sections, the primary focus is on youth processed through intake and those placed in detention facilities. In those sections, data for FY 2008-09 are presented. For the Prevention, Probation, and Residential Commitment sections, the focus is on youth success (defined as not adjudicated/convicted for an offense during the follow-up period) after completion. In order to allow a suitable follow-up period to track subsequent offending, data for youth completing services in FY 2008-09 are presented in this year's CAR.

### **Demographic Variables**

The report provides information for youth by gender, race, ethnicity, and age. Categorizations of race and ethnicity are derived from DJJ staff interviews with youth. Race is measured as black, white, or other. Ethnicity is categorized as Hispanic or non-Hispanic. Age is defined as the youth's age at the time of admission in each of the sections except Intake. In the Intake section, age is based on the date the youth's most serious offense occurred during the fiscal year. In analysis that compares white, black, other and Hispanic, youth with a Hispanic ethnicity are reported as "Hispanic" regardless of race. Those youths are counted as Hispanic and not duplicated as white, black, or other.

### **Release and Completion Status**

Identifying why youth leave a program and the percentage that *complete* a program, rather than leaving for other reasons, are outcome measures reported in the CAR. There are a variety of reasons why youth are released from a program other than the completion of services. Identifying the reason for a release is dependent on DJJ staff's categorization from a list of release reasons in JJIS. To ensure the reliability of these release reasons, their accuracy is assessed in relation to subsequent placements. The definition of program completion differs slightly across program areas as described below.

- Prevention and Victim Services: The release reasons in JJIS for prevention programs include (1)

completed all services, (2) expelled from the program, (3) dropped out, (4) changed schools, (5) referred to another program/agency, (6) moved, or (7) other release. Youth are categorized in this chapter as either a "completion" (item 1 above) or an "other release" (items 2-7 above). The Florida Network uses "completion" or "non-completion" in the dataset they provide to the Department.

- **Probation and Community Intervention:** Completions are defined as youth who completed the individualized treatment plan or court ordered sanctions and were released from the supervision or custody of the Department, or youth who served the maximum allowable time or who reached the maximum allowable age that the juvenile court retains jurisdiction. Multisystemic Therapy providers categorize youth as either a "completion" or "other release" in the datasets provided to DJJ.
- **Residential and Correctional Facilities:** Completions are defined as youth who completed the program and were assigned to a conditional release or post-commitment probation program, youth who completed the program and were directly discharged, or youth who served the maximum allowable time or who reached the maximum allowable age that the juvenile court retains jurisdiction.

### **Offenses During Service, Supervision or Placement**

During the time period a youth is under DJJ supervision or custody it is possible for the youth to commit a crime. The number of youth who committed an offense during service (ODS), supervision (ODS) or placement (ODP) is a measure used to gauge how effectively a program is monitoring and guiding the behavior of the youth in its care. The ODS/ODP rate is calculated as the percentage of youth who offended during the time they were receiving services, were under supervision, or were in a placement. Only offenses that result in adjudication are counted. ODS/ODP is used as an outcome measure for all youth released from a program regardless of their completion status.

### **Prior Delinquency Measures**

Information on the offense histories of youth who completed prevention, probation, and residential commitment programs are presented in their respective sections. Differences in prior offending by gender, race, and ethnicity are discussed. Measures of prior offending include:

- **Percentage of Youth with Prior Charges:** Used in the Prevention section since many prevention youth have little or no prior delinquency history. As such, the percentage of youth with prior delinquency charges is presented, rather than the average number of prior charges for every youth completing the program.
- **Percentage of Youth with Prior Adjudicated Charges:** Used in the Prevention section since some prevention youth have little or no prior delinquency history. As such, the percentage of youth with prior delinquency charges is presented, rather than the average number of prior adjudicated charges for every youth completing the program.
- **Average Number of Prior Charges Per Youth:** Used in the Probation and Community Intervention and Residential Services sections since most youth receiving these services were previously referred to DJJ and adjudicated delinquent. The average number of prior charges provides a measure of the extent of the youth's involvement in delinquency. The measure is calculated by summing the total number of charges received by all youth prior to program admission and dividing by the total number of youth

completing the program during the fiscal year.

- **Average Number of Prior Adjudicated Charges:** Used in the Probation and Community Intervention and Residential Services sections since most youth receiving these services were previously referred to DJJ and adjudicated delinquent. This is calculated only for those charges that ultimately result in adjudication or adjudication withheld. The measure is calculated by summing the total number of adjudications received by all youth prior to program admission and dividing by the total number of youth completing the program during the fiscal year.
- **Average Prior Seriousness Index:** Designed to provide an indication of the extent and seriousness of youth's delinquency histories. A seriousness score is calculated for each youth by assigning point values to prior charges based upon the seriousness of the adjudicated charged offenses. One of the following values is assigned to each charge:
  - Violent felony – 8 points
  - Property or other felony – 5 points
  - Misdemeanor – 2 points
  - Any other charged offense – 1 point

The Average Prior Seriousness Index is calculated by dividing the total seriousness scores by the total number of youth completing the program during the fiscal year.

### **Recidivism Outcome Methodology**

Delinquency prevention, probation, and residential commitment programs are designed to provide treatment and curb a youth's further involvement with the juvenile justice system. These programs are expected to effectively mitigate the influence of risk factors and increase the resilience of the youth they serve. An important indicator of outcomes is the percentage of youth who recidivate.

Recidivism rates are calculated only for youth who completed a program in an effort to determine the effectiveness of the program based on youth who actually received the services offered.

### **Follow-up Period**

At the annual Common Definitions Meeting, the duration of one-year was selected as the official follow-up period for recidivism. Therefore, youth included in the CAR recidivism analyses are those who completed a program between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008. Recidivism was then tracked for the period beginning on July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2009 (a one-year follow-up period).

### **Recidivism Measures**

There are numerous methods of measuring reoffending, each of which provides important, yet different, information. Five commonly used measures are presented in this report:

- **Subsequent referral/arrest and felony referral/arrest:** Indicates a youth has been charged with another offense. An arrest does not necessarily mean that the released youth committed the charged offense, but it does provide an indication of the workload generated for the juvenile and adult systems.

- Subsequent juvenile adjudication or adult conviction (including adjudications withheld) : Provides a more substantive measure of subsequent criminal involvement. The offense must have occurred within one year of release. This is the Department's official definition of recidivism used throughout the CAR and Program Accountability Measures (PAM) analyses.
- Subsequent felony adjudication or conviction: Examines whether youth were subsequently adjudicated or convicted for a felony offense that occurred within one year of release from a program.
- Subsequent sanctions: There are three potential subsequent sanctions measured and reported in the CAR analyses: subsequent commitment to DJJ, sentencing to adult probation, and sentencing to adult prison. These measures provide additional information regarding the impact of reoffending.

### Length of Services

The length of time that a youth spends in a program is an indicator of the extent of services provided. An average length of service, supervision, or stay (ALOS) is calculated for each program based on the average number of days a youth was in the program. Days spent in temporary release status are not included. Data on ALOS are presented in the Detention, Prevention, Probation, and Residential Services sections for four groups of youth:

- All youth released including those youth who did not complete the program
- Youth who completed the program
- Successful completers
- Non-successful completers

### Intake Measures

The Intake chapter presents data on youth referred to DJJ in FY 2009-10. Data are categorized by offense seriousness (felony, misdemeanor, or other), as well as by offense type (person, property, etc.). Data in this chapter are presented based on the most serious offense for which a youth was referred during the fiscal year. Therefore, the data can only be used to categorize offenders and are not appropriate for determining the number of offenses that were committed over a fiscal year. A profile of youth referred based on gender, race, ethnicity, and age is also presented.

### Detention Measures

The Detention chapter presents data on secure and home detention services for FY 2009-10. Measures of secure detention utilization, including operating capacity, total service days, average daily population, average utilization rate, minimum and maximum daily population, and transfers into detention, are provided. The definition for each of these measures is as follows:

- **Admissions:** Each entry into a secure detention center. These figures may include multiple admissions for a single youth.
- **Operating capacity:** The facility's total number of beds.



- **Total service days:** The sum of all youths' days in a given detention center during the fiscal year. This value is computed for each secure detention facility.
- **Average daily population:** Calculated by dividing total service days by the 365 days in the year.
- **Average utilization rate:** The detention center's total service days divided by the total possible service days. Total possible service days are calculated by multiplying the center's operating capacity by 365 days in a year.
- **Minimum and maximum daily population:** Total service days for each day of the year relative to the operating capacity. This determines the lowest and highest population for a given secure detention center.
- **Transfers in:** Number of youth transferred from one detention center to another.