



DATA SOURCES AND METHODS

In August 2006, the Department's quality assurance, research and data, and technical assistance units were assigned to the Office of Program Accountability in the Office of the Secretary. This action was taken to ensure that program evaluation is independent and not influenced by the staff directly responsible for the day-to-day operations of programs and services. Independent assessment is furthered by the Department's contract with the Justice Research Center, the independent evaluation firm responsible for producing recidivism and cost effectiveness analyses for the annual Program Accountability Measures (PAM) Report, the Outcome Evaluation Report, and Performance-Based Budgeting (PB2). This chapter outlines the data sources and methods used in the Quality Assurance, Outcome Evaluation and Program Accountability Measures (PAM) analyses presented in this report.

Quality Assurance (QA) Methodology

The Department's quality assurance system was funded and implemented as part of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1994. This is a system that is recognized as a national model for quality assurance systems and representatives from states such as Texas, Ohio, and Georgia, have sent staff to Florida to be trained in the Florida QA Model. In addition, representatives from Australia, England, and Germany have either come to Florida or participated in conference calls to learn about the process and discuss ways to implement similar processes in their respective countries. Programs are evaluated by a team of professionals who have experience working in the program type being assessed. The team approach provides a broad and balanced perspective for program evaluation and allows programs to be evaluated, in part, by a "peer" who has operational experience in the program type being reviewed. In the Florida QA system, the QA reviewer not only seeks to determine if a program is meeting the minimum standard, but also seeks to determine the quality of services being provided. Quality assurance review teams are comprised of a Department employee who serves as the team leader, peer reviewers, and, in some cases, an employee representing the Florida Department of Education. The following data sources are used to determine the programs performance:

- Interviews with management
- Interviews with treatment staff
- Interviews with supervisors
- Interviews with youth
- Staff surveys
- Youth surveys
- Review of performance plans and related documents
- Review of treatment plans and related documents
- Review of fire safety reports, health inspection reports, etc.
- Observations of daily programming activities and staff-to-youth interactions.

The Quality Assurance Performance Rating

Juvenile justice programs and services are evaluated based on their performance on a given set of standards. Standards are the general program components on which programs and services are assessed to determine their overall level of quality. Each program model is reviewed using a distinct evaluation instrument which contains only those standards which are generally applicable to the program model. The quality assurance evaluation process incorporates multiple data sources to ensure the validity of the review.

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

- Program Management,
- The Residential Community (includes daily activities, recreation, visitation, etc.),
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services,
- Health Care,
- Case Management,
- Food, and
- Program Safety.

Within each program component there is a set of key indicators that are used to rate the overall performance of the program component. The rating instrument utilizes an 8-point scale, with 10 representing the highest level of performance possible. The numbers are not sequential; therefore, no conversion factor needs to be used to transform the resulting percentage score into a normally recognized grading system. Reviewers use the following definitions as a guide when scoring a key indicator:

- **Superior Performance:** The program consistently exceeds all policy requirements with either an innovative approach or an exceptional, program wide dedication to performance that is efficient, effective, and readily apparent. There is evidence of very few, if any, exceptions to this. The rating will be a 9 or a 10.
- **Satisfactory Performance:** The program consistently accomplishes all policy requirements in an effective manner. The items, elements, or actions necessary to accomplish the policy are prevailing practice, though minor deficiencies occur occasionally. The rating will be 6, 7, or 8.
- **Partial Performance:** The program does not consistently accomplish policy requirements. Frequent deficiencies to the policy occur or the program is ineffective in implementing the policy. The rating will be a 4 or 5.
- **Non-Performance:** The items, elements, or actions necessary to accomplish the indicator are missing or are missing or are done so poorly that they do not contribute to the accomplishment of the indicator or the overall standard. (Note: falsified documentation will be considered as missing and result in a non-performance rating). The rating will be a 0.

The method used to determine if a program meets the minimum standards set by the Department, adds all the numerical scores and applies them against the total possible score a program could receive. For example, Program A is rated in a program component which has four indicators. The program receives a satisfactory performance rating of '7' for each of the four indicators. The program's raw score would be 28 (the sum of the indicator scores: 7+7+7+7). The program's maximum possible score would be 10 x the number of applicable indicators, which in this case is 4; the maximum possible score is 40 (10 x 4). The program's percentage score for the program component is derived by dividing the raw score (28) by the maximum possible score (40). This percentage, 70%, is Program A's performance for this component falls within the "Acceptable Performance" range.

There are also a number of key indicators that do not provide opportunities for measuring the quality of the service or requirement. For example, background screening of employees and volunteers is either completed or not completed on individual employees. For these key indicators, reviewers use a 3-point, scale according to the guide below:

- **Full Compliance:** The program's policy, procedures and practice are in accordance with DJJ policy nearly all of the time. There may be minor deviations in some areas of documentation (8 points)
- **Substantial Compliance:** The program's policy, procedures and practice are in accordance with DJJ policy. There are some exceptions (5 point).
- **Non-Compliance:** The program's policy, procedures and practice are not in accordance with DJJ policy and/or there are numerous exceptions to the requirements of the indicator (0 points).

Overall Program Scores: To determine a program's overall rating and performance, the same method used for computing the scores for program components is applied with one exception: instead of summing the key indicator scores, the overall score of the program component is totaled. At the overall program performance level, a program receives two scores: a raw score, the

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sum of all standard raw scores, and a maximum possible score, the sum of all standard maximum possible scores. The program's percentage score results from dividing the overall program score by the overall maximum possible score. For compliance indicators the scores of 8, 5 and 0 are used, as this gives fair credit for programs for earning a full compliance (8 of 8 – 100%), minimal credit for a substantial compliance (5 of 8 – 63%), and a zero for a non-compliance (0 of 8 – 0%).

The following grid is an example of a completed performance rating profile for a fictional day treatment program.

Juvenile Day Treatment Program									
Quality Assurance Performance Rating Profile									
Program Type:		Day Treatment			Program Code:		342		
Contract Provider:		Provider Agency			Contract Number:		V3433		
County/Circuit #:		10			Number of Beds:		30		
Review Date:		Feb. 3-5, 2007			Lead Reviewer Code:		32		
Program Performance by Indicator									
Management Accountability					Healthcare Services				
1.01	C	Background Screening	5		4.01	Healthcare Admission Screening	6		
1.02		Risk Management and Incident Reporting	7		4.02	Mental Hlth/Subs Abuse Treatment Planning	7		
1.03		Provision of Abuse Free Environment	7		4.03	Suicide Precautions	8		
1.04		Pre-Service Training Requirements	8		4.04	Emergency Mtd Hlth/Subs Abuse Services	7		
1.05		In-Service Training Requirements	7		4.05	Clinical Documentation	6		
1.06		Comprehensive Safety Program	7		4.06	Medications	7		
1.07		Log Books			4.07	Medical/Mental Health Alert Process	6		
					4.08	Episodic/Emergency Care	7		
			Total	41			Total	54	
Screening, Class, Orientation					Food Services				
2.01		Mental Health/Sub Abuse/Suicide Screen	7		5.01	Nutritionally Balanced Meals	7		
2.02		Risk and Needs Assessment	8		5.02	Meal Quality	8		
2.03		Classification and Orientation	7		5.03	Special Diets	7		
2.04		Daily Programming	7		5.04	C Licenses and Certifications	8		
2.05		Grievance Process	8		5.05	C National School Lunch and Breakfast	5		
2.06		Behavior Management System	7				Total	36	
2.07		Program Attendance	7						
			Total	61					
Treatment Services					Conditional Release				
3.01		Treatment Environment	6		6.01	Field Notes	6		
3.02		Treatment Approaches	7		6.02	Transition Planning	7		
3.03		Treatment Team Responsibilities	7		6.03	Initial Contact Upon Release	7		
3.04		Supervision Plans	8		6.04	Supervision Plan	8		
3.05		Family Involvement	7		6.05	Supervision Plan Modification	7		
3.06		Case Files	7		6.06	Supervision Contact Requirements	5		
3.07		Requirements Specialized Program Models	6		6.07	Services and Linkages	7		
			Total	48	6.08	Juvenile Probation Officer Contacts	8		
					6.09	Absconders	7		
					6.10	Transfers	6		
					6.11	Termination	7		
							Total	75	
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%	
1. Management Accountability	41	58	71%			X			
2. Screening, Class, Orientation	51	70	73%			X			
3. Treatment Services	48	70	69%		X				
4. Healthcare Services	54	80	68%		X				
5. Food Services	35	46	76%			X			
6. Conditional Release	75	110	68%		X				
Overall Score	304	434	70%			X			
Overall Program Performance									
Acceptable Performance						70%			
Scoring legend: Performance Indicators: 0 = Non-Performance, 4 - 5 = Partial, 6 - 7 = Satisfactory, 8 - 10 = Superior Compliance Indicators (noted by C next to indicator): 0 = Non-Compliance, 5 = Substantial Compliance, 8 = Full Compliance									

The QA process includes the following elements:

Unannounced Reviews: In 2008, all QA reviews were unannounced.

Identification of External Control Factors: The design of the quality assurance system is intended to hold programs accountable for those elements over which they have control as well as point out problems which affect good practice. Factors that may seriously impair a program's ability to perform, but which are beyond its control, are identified as external control factors. These factors, and the degree to which they influence each program component, are identified in the individual QA report. For example, a program may not have a camera system installed in all areas of the program. This may be a budget issue that cannot be resolved at the program level. The requirement will be rated out of compliance but an external control factor will

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be noted in the report. External control factors are not intended to be used as excuses for program directors.

Identification of Critical Issues: Peer 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, and 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. Evidence of these situations is called a “red flag.”

Provider Ability to Challenge their 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 score 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 that is surfaced, the regional QA manager discusses the findings with the lead reviewer and reviews the documentation. When necessary, other team members are contacted for their input.

Conditional Status: This 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 program components. In addition to corrective action, Conditional Status triggers more intensive monitoring by the contract manager or regional office of the effected 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 Comprehensive Accountability Report (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). The Juvenile Justice Information System 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, Multisystemic Therapy (MST) programs and Early Delinquency Intervention programs (EDIP) were 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.

The source of subsequent delinquency referral data is JJIS. 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 (DC). 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 (FCIC). Information pertaining to dispositions on cases processed in adult court was obtained from DC and is limited to youth convicted of felonies and sentenced to adult probation or prison.

Methods

Each year since 1996, the Department holds a Common Definitions Meeting to determine the methodology for defining variables and calculating outcome measures for departmental reporting. This methodology was carefully considered and 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

At the Common Definitions Meeting, 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 2006-07 are presented. For the Prevention, Probation, and Residential Commitment sections, the focus is on youth success (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 2006-07 are presented.

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 measured on the date the youth's most serious offense occurred during the fiscal year.

Release and Completion Status

Identifying why youth leave a program and the percentage that complete a program, rather than leave for other reasons, are outcome measures reported. 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 includes: 1) completing 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 the same categories in the dataset they provide to the Department.
- **Probation and Community Intervention:** Completions are defined as youth who complete the individualized treatment plan or court ordered sanctions and are released from the custody of the Department; or youth serving the maximum allowable time or who reach the maximum allowable age over which the juvenile court retains jurisdiction. Multisystemic Therapy providers categorized youth as either a "completion" or "other release" in the datasets provided to DJJ.
- **Residential and Correctional Facilities:** Completions are defined as youth who complete the program and are assigned to a conditional release or post-commitment probation program; youth who complete the program and were directly discharged; or youth serving the maximum allowable time or who reach the maximum allowable age over which the juvenile court retains jurisdiction.

Offenses During Services, 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 services (ODS), supervision (ODS) or placement (ODP) is a measure used to gauge the effectiveness of the programs in monitoring and guiding the behavior of the youth. The ODS/ODP rate is calculated as the percentage of youth who offended during the time they were receiving services, or were under supervision or placement. Only offenses that resulted 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 for youth who completed prevention, probation, and residential commitment programs are presented in the respective sections. Differences in prior offending by gender, race and ethnicity are discussed. Measures of prior offending include:

- Percent of youth with prior charges: This measure is used in the Prevention section as many prevention youth have little to no prior delinquency history. As such, the percentage of youth with prior delinquency charges is presented, rather than the average number of prior charges per youth completing the program (which would often be less than zero).
- Percent of youth with prior adjudicated charges: This measure is used in the Prevention section as some prevention youth have little to no prior delinquency history. As such, the percentage of youth with prior delinquency charges is presented, rather than the average number of prior charges per youth completing the program (which would often be less than zero).
- Average number of prior charges per youth: This measure is used in the Probation and Community Intervention and Residential Commitment sections as most youth receiving these services have previously been 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: This measure is used in the Probation and Community Intervention and Residential Commitment sections as most youth receiving these services have previously been referred to DJJ and adjudicated delinquent. This is calculated only for those charges that ultimately result in an adjudication or an 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.
- Seriousness index of prior adjudications: The seriousness indices are designed to provide an indication of the extent and seriousness of a youths' delinquency history. A seriousness score is calculated for each youth by assigning point values to prior charges based upon the seriousness of the charged offenses. One of the following values is assigned for each charge:
 - Violent felony – 8 points
 - Property or other felony – 5 points
 - Misdemeanor – 2 points
 - Any other charged offense – 1 point

The average seriousness index is calculated by dividing the seriousness score for all youth by the total number of youth completing the program during the fiscal year. Within the sections this measure is referred to as the Average Prior Seriousness Index.

In addition, prior adjudications are further classified by type (violent felony, property felony, other felony, misdemeanor, or unclassified offense) of the most serious prior adjudicated charge.

Recidivism Outcome Methodology

Delinquency prevention, probation and residential commitment programs are designed to provide treatment and curb youths' 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. This is done 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. This necessitates that youth in the study complete services during the prior fiscal year, so that sufficient time may elapse to allow for the collection of recidivism data. Therefore, youth included in the CAR recidivism analyses are those who completed a program between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007. Recidivism is then tracked for the period beginning on July 1, 2007 and ending June 30, 2008 (i.e., one-year follow-up period).

Recidivism Measures

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

- Subsequent referral/arrest and felony referral/arrest: This indicates a youth has been charged with another offense. An arrest does not necessarily mean that the released youth committed the offense charged, 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): This provides a more substantive measure of subsequent criminal involvement. Such a disposition indicates that the youth was found to have committed the offense. The offense must have occurred within one year of release. This is the Department's official definition of recidivism used throughout the CAR and PAM analyses.
- Subsequent felony adjudication or conviction: This examines whether youth are 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 re-offending.

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 Commitment sections for four groups of youth:

- All youth released including those youth who did not complete the program
- Youth who completed the program
- Recidivists
- Non-Recidivists

Intake Measures

The Intake chapter presents data on youth referred to DJJ in FY 2007-08. A referral is defined as all the charges received by DJJ for a youth on a given day. 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 is 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 2007-08. 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 are defined as each entry into a secure detention center. These figures may include multiple admissions for a single youth.

Operating capacity is defined as the facility's number of beds.

Total service days is measured as 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 is calculated by dividing total service days by the 365 days in the year.

Average utilization rate is 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 is calculated by examining total service days for each day of the year relative to the operating capacity and determining the lowest and highest population for a given secure detention center.

Transfers in to detentions are those youth transferred from one detention center into another.

Program Accountability Measures (PAM) Methodology

The Program Accountability Measures (PAM) analysis is an annual assessment and ranking of Florida’s residential juvenile justice programs based on both recidivism and cost effectiveness. The PAM methodology has been highlighted as a best practice in the use of juvenile justice data by the National Center for Juvenile Justice and selected as a semifinalist in the prestigious Innovations in American Government Awards, sponsored by the Harvard University, Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation. The nationally recognized model employs the data sources and methods set forth below.

Data Sources

Data for the PAM analysis were compiled from the DJJ Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS), the Florida Department of Law Enforcement’s Florida Criminal Information Center (FCIC), the Florida Department of Corrections (DC), the DJJ Office of Finance and Accounting, and the DJJ Bureau of Quality Assurance. The JJIS system was used to identify the youth who completed residential commitment programs during the one-year period from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007. Demographic data for these youth, as well as their offense histories, were obtained from JJIS. Youth who subsequently re-offended were identified through both juvenile offense records in JJIS and, for those who reached 18 years of age during the follow-up period or had a case handled in adult court, through adult records in FCIC and DC.

For a number of years, many stakeholders have noted the need to incorporate additional risk factors in controlling for program differences in the relative risk of offenders served. To that end, the Department and the Justice Research Center have been committed to incorporating other variables and determined that such data could be extracted from JJIS risk assessment instruments. Until recently however, these data were not available in JJIS. Now, for the fourth year, risk assessment data were included in the PAM calculations. The Juvenile Justice Information System was used to extract individual youth risk factor data from Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (DRAI) and Supervision Risk Classification Instrument (SRCI) administrations. Data from DRAI and SRCI administrations completed prior to program admission were controlled for in comparing youth recidivism outcomes by program.

Methods

The Department hosts a Common Definitions meeting annually to outline the methodology for calculating outcome measures for departmental reporting. This methodology was carefully considered and 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. In a continual effort to improve measurement and program review, participants at the Common Definition meetings discuss potential additions to analyses and reporting. Under agreement with these major stakeholders, the official measure of recidivism has been defined as: ***a subsequent juvenile adjudication, adjudication withheld, or adult conviction for an offense that occurred within one year of a youth's completion of a Department of Juvenile Justice commitment program and release to the community or a conditional release program.***

While consistency in measurement over time is a primary objective, there are times when changes are introduced in a given year’s PAM report (e.g., availability of data on additional risk factors; reporting changes stemming from the re-classification of non-residential programs as probation facilities). Such changes and improvements to methodology are reported as applicable.

Program PAM results are presented for residential programs that released at least 15 youth during the one-year period. Scores are reported for some programs that have closed because PAM scores are now incorporated in past performance criteria used in contracting for new programs.

Calculating the PAM Score

The PAM Score is comprised of a program recidivism effectiveness measure and a cost effectiveness measure. Program recidivism effectiveness is the standardized difference between the programs' expected recidivism and observed recidivism. Cost effectiveness is measured as the standardized difference between each program's average cost per youth completing the program and the statewide average cost per completion.

Program Recidivism Effectiveness Measure

Rather than merely comparing residential programs on the basis of the observed recidivism rate of youth completing the program, the PAM model accounts for the fact that facilities serve youth whose risk for re-offending varies widely. Failure to control for underlying program differences in youths' risk to re-offend would unfairly penalize those facilities serving more challenging youth. Therefore, the PAM model uses multivariate, multi-level analyses to calculate programs' expected recidivism, given the risk levels of the youth completing services, and compares this to how well the program actually performed in terms of youths' observed recidivism rates. The following risk factors were extracted from JJIS, SRCI and DRAI data and examined in the 2008 PAM analyses:

Demographic Variables

- SEX : Male, female
- RACE: Non-white, white
- AGE AT RELEASE: Age at time of release from PAM program
- REGION: Region of state where youth resides (northwest, northeast, east, west, south)
- LEVEL: Program restrictiveness level (low, moderate, high, maximum)
- TRANSFER : Whether youth was transferred from another residential program
- DAYS SERVED: Youth's length of stay in the program (in days)

Extent and Seriousness of Prior Offending Variables

- TOTAL REFERRALS: Total number of prior referrals
- TOTAL ADJUDICATIONS: Total number of prior referrals adjudicated
- MOST SERIOUS PRIOR OFFENSE: Specific most serious prior offense (ordinal)
- REFERRAL INDEX: Average seriousness score of all prior referrals
- ADJUDICATION INDEX: Average seriousness score of all prior adjudications
- PERSON OFFENSE: Whether most serious prior referral was a person offense
- PROPERTY OFFENSE: Whether most serious prior referral was a property offense
- DRUG OFFENSE: Whether most serious prior referral was a drug offense
- FELONY REFERRALS: Total prior felony referrals
- FELONY ADJUDICATIONS: Total prior felony referrals adjudicated
- VIOLENT FELONY REFERRALS: Total prior violent felony referrals
- VIOLENT FELONY ADJUDICATIONS: Total prior violent felony referral adjudications
- FELONY PROPERTY ADJUDICATIONS: Total prior felony property adjudications

- PRIOR MISDEMEANOR REFERRALS: Total prior misdemeanor referrals
- PRIOR MISDEMEANOR ADJUDICATIONS: Total prior misdemeanor adjudications
- SEX OFFENDER PROGRAM: Whether program serves juvenile sex offenders.

DRAI and SRCI Variables

- CURRENT ABUSE: Whether youth was abused just prior to the screening (DRAI variable)
- HISTORY OF ABUSE: Whether youth had history of abuse (DRAI variable)
- PHYSICAL ABUSE: Whether youth was physically abused (DRAI variable)
- SEXUAL ABUSE: Whether youth was sexually abused (DRAI variable)
- NEGLECT: Whether youth was neglected (DRAI variable)
- EMOTIONAL ABUSE: Whether youth was emotionally abused (DRAI variable)
- ESCAPE: Whether youth escaped from a program (DRAI variable)
- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENSE: Whether current offense involved domestic violence incident (DRAI variable)
- TOTAL SRCI SCORE: Maximum SRCI score received prior to youth's admission into the PAM residential program (SRCI variable)
- SRCI RISK LEVEL: Youth's classified risk level on SRCI (SRCI variable)
- HIGHEST PLACEMENT LEVEL: Highest level of prior sanction: none, probation, commitment (SRCI variable)
- DRUG USE: Whether youth uses drugs chronically, occasionally, or not at all (SRCI variable)
- SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: Whether youth was regularly attending school, chronically truant or tardy, or dropped out of school or was expelled/suspended (SRCI variable)
- NEGATIVE PEERS: Whether youth associated with primarily negative peers (SRCI variable)
- GANG-INVOLVED PEERS: Whether youth was in a gang or associated with gang members (SRCI variable)
- PARENTAL CONTROL: Whether parents supervised and controlled youth, had limited control and supervision over youth, or had no control or supervision over youth (SRCI variable)
- NEGLECT: Whether youth was neglected (SRCI variable)
- ABUSE: Whether youth was physically or sexually abused (SRCI variable)
- MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT NEEDED: Whether youth was deemed in need of mental health assessment (SRCI variable)
- MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS: Whether youth had been diagnosed with a mental health problem or DSM-4 diagnosis (SRCI variable)
- EMPLOYMENT: Whether youth was 16 or older, not employed and not pursuing education (SRCI variable)

The following factors were statistically significant predictors of re-offending for the youth completing residential commitment programs in Florida between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007: age at first offense, gender, race, number of prior juvenile referrals, prior property adjudications, drug use, school attendance (drop out, suspended, expelled), sex offender program (level 2 variable, whether program serves sex offenders), parental supervision (no supervision and lack of control), and youth risk level (very high-risk on risk assessment instrument).

Program Cost Effectiveness Measure

Program cost per completion is calculated by dividing total expenditures for each program by the number of youth completing the program during FY 2006-07. Program total costs are defined as all DJJ expenditures allocated to the program over the one-year period, plus all other sources of government funding including all state and federal monies, excluding school board funding.

The PAM Score: Combining Program Recidivism and Cost Effectiveness Measures

The PAM score combines the cost and effectiveness measures as defined above. The PAM score is the sum of the program effectiveness measure weighted by a factor of two-thirds and the program cost measure weighted by a factor of one-third. These weights have been used for nearly a decade and were approved during Common Definitions meetings after consultation with members of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board, the Legislature, the Governor's Office, OPPAGA, the Office of Economic and Demographic Research, contracted providers and other juvenile justice stakeholders.