

# **CAT Full Assessment Help Guide**

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## **Domain 1: Record of Referrals**

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***Domain 1, General research information related to re-offending:*** Research has shown that youth with extensive criminal histories that started at an early age are more likely to re-offend in the future. Andrews and Bonta (1994) conducted an extensive review of the longitudinal research. They discovered that a small number of offenders appear to account for a large number of officially recorded criminal acts. In addition, the CAT criminal history domain has been shown to be a valid predictor of recidivism.

A youth's criminal history is an indicator of the duration and established persistence of the youth's criminal behavior. Referrals that resulted in diversion, adjudication withheld, adjudication, deferred prosecution, or referral to adult court (regardless of whether successfully completed), rather than offenses, are the unit of criminal history being counted. This reflects the youth's persistence to re-offend even after being processed through the juvenile justice system. For example, youth who have three separate referrals are more persistent in their behavior than youth with three offenses occurring at the same time. (DeLisi, Neppl, Lohman, Vaughn, & Shook, 2013; Moffitt, 2017; Piquero, 2008)

### **General Information**

Even for youth without a lengthy formal criminal history, discussing the youth's contact with law enforcement and/or anti-social behavior will shed light on the youth's attitudes and behaviors.

Referrals (as listed in JJIS) occurring on the same date are counted as one referral for the purposes of CAT.

JJIS will always use the most recent referral information to calculate the answers to the items found in Domain 1: Record of Referrals. Thus, every time a new CAT Pre-screen or Full Assessment is created in JJIS, the Domain 1 items will be re-calculated to match the most recent data entered in the youth's referral history.

### **Specific Item Help:**

#### **1. Age at first offense:**

The age at the time of the offense for which the youth was referred to juvenile court for the first time, on a non-traffic misdemeanor or felony. All dispositional outcomes are included.

## 2. Misdemeanor referrals:

**Items 2 and 3 are mutually exclusive and should equal to the total number of referrals that resulted in diversion, adjudication withheld, adjudication, deferred prosecution or referral to adult court.** Each referral must be counted once as either a misdemeanor or a felony referral.

- If the case involves plea-bargaining, use the final offense(s) to characterize the referral.
- A referral that involved a felony must only be counted as a felony referral.
- A referral that involved a misdemeanor, but no felony, must be counted as a misdemeanor referral.
- A referral that involved a misdemeanor and a felony must be counted as a felony referral.

The total number of referrals where the most serious offense was a non-traffic misdemeanor that resulted in a **diversion, adjudication withheld, adjudication, deferred prosecution or referral to adult court.**

- Each referral which falls under the Domain 1 definitions must be counted once as either a misdemeanor or a felony referral.
- If the case involves a charge reduction or upgrade, use the final offense(s) to characterize the referral.
- A referral that involved a felony must only be counted as a felony referral.
- A referral that involved a misdemeanor, but no felony, must be counted as a misdemeanor referral.
- A referral that involved a misdemeanor and a felony must be counted as a felony referral.

## 3. Felony referrals:

**Items 2 and 3 are mutually exclusive and should equal to the total number of referrals that resulted in diversion, adjudication withheld, adjudication, deferred prosecution or referral to adult court.** Each referral must be counted once as either a misdemeanor or a felony referral.

- If the case involves plea-bargaining, use the final offense(s) to characterize the referral.
- A referral that involved a felony must only be counted as a felony referral.
- A referral that involved a misdemeanor, but no felony, must be counted as a misdemeanor referral.
- A referral that involved a misdemeanor and a felony must be counted as a felony referral.

The total number of referrals for a felony offense that resulted in a **diversion, adjudication withheld, adjudication, deferred prosecution or referral to adult court.**

- Each referral which falls under the Domain 1 definitions must be counted once as either a misdemeanor or a felony referral.
- If the case involves a charge reduction or upgrade, use the final offense(s) to characterize the referral.
- A referral that involved a felony must only be counted as a felony referral.

- A referral that involved a misdemeanor, but no felony, must be counted as a misdemeanor referral.
- A referral that involved a misdemeanor and a felony must be counted as a felony referral.

**4. Confinements in secure detention where youth was held for at least 48 hours:**

***Items 4 and 5 are mutually exclusive. A stay in secure detention which later results in commitment, will only be counted in item 5.***

Number of times the youth was held for at least 48 hours physically confined in a detention facility. Detention includes physical confinement in a county detention facility.

**5. Commitment orders where youth served at least one day confined under residential commitment:**

***Items 4 and 5 are mutually exclusive. A stay in secure detention which later results in commitment, will only be counted in item 5.***

Total number of commitment orders for which the youth served at least one day confined under residential commitment.

**Domain 2: Demographics**

**Specific Item Help:**

**1. Youth’s Gender:**

The system will calculate the youth’s gender automatically as it is entered in JJIS. The user MUST ensure JJIS is correct before completing a CAT.

**2. Youth’s Current Age:**

The system will calculate the youth’s current age automatically as it is entered in JJIS.

**Domain 3: School**

***Domain 3, General research information related to school:*** Research suggests that youth with difficulty staying involved in school, experiencing failure in school, feeling frustrated and isolated from school are at risk for criminal activity. They may seek acceptance with anti-social peers who could lead them into criminal activity.

Youth who are enrolled in school are at a lower risk than youth who are not enrolled or attending school. Not attending school indicates a youth’s detachment from pro-social activities and peers and the possibility that the youth has a lot of free time for getting into trouble.

Research suggests that youth who do not place much value in education are less likely to be successful in school and then later in life. Not believing in school is a marker for isolation from the healthy school pro-social environment and may also be a marker for not believing in pro-social values and conventions in general. Youth who do not see school as an encouraging environment are more likely to do poorly and drop out of school, making them more vulnerable to anti-social influences.

School misconduct provides direct evidence of anti-social behavior and an inability of the youth to successfully function in a school environment. Youth with an extensive number of expulsions and suspensions have established a persistent pattern of anti-social behavior that may continue, or grow into criminal activities.

Unexcused absences may indicate a lack of interest and involvement in school and suggest the youth has difficulties in complying with the rules and expectations of the school.

Protective factor research suggests that youth who have positive relationships with pro-social adult role models, like teachers, are less likely to continue anti-social behaviors. The research also indicates that youth who get good grades in school demonstrate commitment to school and pro-social values. Youth who get poor grades may be at risk because of their lack of commitment to school or learning problems. This may be an indication that a differently oriented learning environment may be more appropriate. The ability of the youth to stay in school and graduate is an indicator of the youth being able to live a pro-social lifestyle, develop the skills for future employment, develop a sense of accomplishment, and avoid legal troubles. (Blomberg, Bales, Mann, Piquero, & Berk, 2011; Christle, Jolivette, & Nelson, 2005; Hirschfield & Gasper, 2011; Payne, 2008)

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### **Specific Item Help:**

#### **1. Youth's current school enrollment status, regardless of attendance:**

- Include all school types: public, private, adult ed, vo-tech, virtual school, home school, dual enrollment, charter, etc.
- Full time will be considered no less than 20 hours of classroom time per week for students enrolled in any schools that operate on a standard 9-month calendar.
- Full time will be considered no less than 15 hours classroom time per week for students enrolled in schools that operate on a 12-month calendar.
- Part time will be considered any hours less than the weekly hours listed above.
- Pursuing further education would indicate that the youth has registered for post high school courses.

#### **2. Youth's conduct in most recent term:**

Examples of the types of problematic conduct included in this item:

- Fighting or threatening students
- Drug/alcohol use at school
- Threatening teachers/staff
- Crimes, e.g., theft, vandalism at school
- Overly disruptive behavior at school
- Lying, cheating, dishonesty at school
- Select "Youth not in school in current term" if the youth has dropped out, been expelled, or already has their diploma or GED.
- If there has been an isolated incident, or bad conduct rarely occurs, select "No problems with school conduct"
- If any of the following things has happened regarding the youth's conduct, select "problems with school conduct"
  - Parents notified of problems at school such as formal calls or notification from the discipline office or dean, etc.

- The youth received a referral that was sent to school administration outside the classroom.
- If the school called the police to intervene/arrest the child.
- Do not count calls for the following types of misconduct: swearing, attendance, grades, and/or non-aggressive disrespectful behavior.

**3. Youth's school attendance in most recent term:**

- Select "Youth not in school in current term" if the youth has dropped out, been expelled, or already has their diploma or GED.
- If the youth is missing partial days or full days of school on a consistent basis, there may be an attendance problem.

**4. Youth's academic performance in most recent school term:**

- Ask the youth and family about the youth's average academic performance in the most recent term.
- Best case scenario would be to confirm with school records. You may ask the child or parent to supply school report cards, progress reports, etc. You may ask the school directly if possible. Sometimes the use of a consent form signed by the parent may assist you in obtaining school records.
- If you are not able to obtain any school records, you must rely on the information provided by the youth and parent.
- For student who do not receive letter grades, assess based on above average, average, or below average criteria.

**5. Youth believes there is value in getting an education:**

- This item is from the youth's perspective.
- Determine the degree of which the youth understands the outcome of an education.
- This item is asking about the youth's belief, not their actions.

**6. Youth believes school provides an encouraging environment for him or her:**

- This item is from the youth's perspective.
- If the youth believes the school provides an encouraging environment, they feel comfortable and safe attending school. They also believe most of the teachers and staff are helpful and encouraging.
- Determine the degree of which the youth believes the school provides an encouraging environment for him or her.

**7. Teachers, staff, or coaches the youth likes of feels comfortable talking with:**

- To count as a positive relationship there needs to be more than just a simple teacher/student relationship. The youth must feel that the adult provides support. The adult must model pro-social behavior.

## **8. Youth's involvement in SCHOOL activities during most recent term:**

Examples of the types of school activities include:

- School leadership
- Drama, art
- Music, dance programs
- Social service clubs
- Athletics
- Other extracurricular activities based at school

No interest in school activities is evidenced by the youth not participating in any school activities, not considering self to have any involvement with school, not seeing self as a part of the student community, school is not a part of the youth's life.

- School dances are not considered an activity.
- Don't count structured recreational activities not related to school as they are captured in Domain 4.

## **9. Interviewer's assessment of likelihood the youth will stay in and graduate from high school or an equivalent vocational school:**

- The ability of the youth to stay in school and graduate is an indicator of the youth being able to live a pro-social lifestyle, develop the skills for future employment, develop a sense of accomplishment, and avoid future legal troubles.
- Based on your discussion with the youth and from directly asking the youth about graduating, indicate your assessment of the youth's chances for graduating.

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## **Domain 4: Use of Free Time**

**Domain 4, General research information related to use of free time:** Research suggests that involvement in organized/structured activities provides youth with opportunities to develop relationships with pro-social youth and adults. This may serve to facilitate involvement in conventional social networks and promote a global sense of competence, self-efficacy, and pro-social conduct. Research has also shown that youth who spend their free time in pro-social and constructive activities are at a lesser risk for anti-social behaviors. At the same time, youth who do not have an interest in these activities are at a higher risk. The protective factor research suggests that commitment and bonding to the community can reduce anti-social behavior. (Fleming et al., 2008)

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### **Specific Item Help:**

#### **1. Current interest and involvement in structured recreational activities:**

- Indicate how many activities in which the youth has genuine involvement or interest.
- Youth participates in structured and supervised pro-social community activities, such as religious group/church, community group, cultural group, club, athletics, or other community activities.
- Be sure that the youth is actually participating in these activities and not just saying he or she is. You may need to check with the organization sponsoring the activity to confirm that the youth shows up and participates.
- If not interested in any, select "currently not interested in any structured activities"

## 2. Types of structured recreational activities in which youth currently participates:

- Indicate activities in which the youth participates.
- Be sure the youth is actually participating in the activities they report. You may need to check with the parents or the organization to verify the youth is actively involved.
- You may select the youth as a participant in an activity that they are involved in but NOT interested in.
- Extracurricular activities related to school should NOT be counted here.
- Only count structured pro-social activities.
- If the youth is currently not participating in any structured recreational activities, select "none"

## 3. Current active involvement in pro-social unstructured hobbies:

- Youth engages in activities that positively occupy his or her time, such as:
  - Reading
  - Cooking
  - Playing an instrument
  - Fashion
  - Collecting
  - Dancing
- Be sure that the youth actually engages in walking, hobbies, outdoor recreation, activities, and pastimes that occupy the youth's attention and time in a healthy, positive way.

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## Domain 5: Employment

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**Domain 5, General research information related to employment:** The protective factor research indicates that youth who have been successfully employed and have developed good relationships with their employers and co-workers are at a lower risk for criminal behavior. Participation in a supervised work environment can provide the youth with essential job-related skills and social skills that will facilitate the transition to adulthood. (Apel et al., 2007; Staff, Osgood, Schulenberg, Bachman, & Messersmith, 2010)

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### General Instructions

Consider the youth's global involvement as an employee to get a general impression of adaptability and performance. Consider only voluntary employment that is not a court-ordered obligation or a condition of supervision, and not a family chore or expectation. The youth must be expected to show up at work at a certain time, on a regular basis, and get paid.

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### Specific Item Help:

#### 1. Youth's employment history:

- Employment is considered any type of job (paid or unpaid) in a legal profession where the youth has a set schedule, responsibilities, and consequences to not fulfilling them (i.e. fired or reprimanded).
- Family chores or expected responsibilities should not be counted.

**2. Youth understands what is required to maintain a job:**

- Can the youth articulate the general knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to maintain a job? This includes having basic reading, writing, and math skills.
- Someone who has never been employed could have the knowledge of the abilities necessary to maintain a job.

**3. Youth's employment status:**

- Consider only voluntary employment that is not a family chore or expectation. The youth must be expected to follow a regular schedule and have consequences for not showing up. Receiving a standard paycheck is not necessarily required.

**4. Current positive personal relationship(s) with employer(s) or adult co-worker(s):**

- To count as a positive relationship there needs to be more than just a simple employer/employee relationship. The youth must feel that the adult provides support and the adult must model pro-social behavior.

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**Domain 6: Relationships**

***Domain 6, Relationship to re-offending:*** Youth are influenced by their peers, family, and other adult role models. The weaker the bond between the youth and family, the greater the influence that peers may have upon the youth. Youth who spend a lot of time with peers who are a negative influence, particularly if there are weak family and adult attachments, are at higher risk for re-offending. The protective factor research suggests that youth with weak family attachments can be influenced by other positive adult role models. According to some research literature, improving the youth's relationships with pro-social adults and peers and weakening the relationship with anti-social peers should reduce the risk for re-offending.

Research has repeatedly shown that peers have a potentially large influence over youth. Whom the youth associates with, whom the youth emulates, and what role the youth plays among his or her peers are indicators whether the youth's friends are a positive or negative influence. Romantic partners may have more of an influence than other peers.

Because peer relationships have such a potentially large influence over the youth and because measuring peer relationships is subjective, researchers suggest having several ways to measure the strength of the various relationships. The sum of these items should form a more reliable scale of the influence that negative peers have over the youth. (Lilly, Cullen, & Ball, 2010; Monahan, Steinberg, & Cauffman, 2009)

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**General Instructions**

This section requires the interviewer to conduct a thorough examination of individuals in the youth's life. It is critical to identify all individuals with whom the youth is in contact and then to determine if these individuals provide pro-social modeling and support. Start by asking the youth about adults who they are in contact with and then focus on peer relationships.

Exclude school, employment, and family relationships as those relationships are captured in other domains.

## **Specific Item Help:**

### **1. History of anti-social friends/companions:**

- Anti-social peers are youths hostile to or disruptive of the legal social order; youths who violate the law and/or the rights of others.
- Anti-social youth are those who adults consider a "bad influence" or who participate in socially unacceptable behaviors.
- Select "gang member/associate" if the youth is in a gang, or associates with others who are in a gang.
- If gang involvement is selected, anti-social should also be selected.

### **2. Current friends/companions youth actually spends time with:**

- These are friends whom the youth actually spends time with.
- Anti-social peers are defined as youth who are hostile to, or disruptive of, the legal social order; who violate the law and/or the rights of others.
- Anti-social youth are those who adults consider a "bad influence" or who participate in socially unacceptable behaviors.
- Select "gang member/associate" if the youth is in a gang, or associates with others who are in a gang.
- If gang involvement is selected, anti-social should also be selected.

### **3. Current positive adult non-family relationships not connected to school or employment:**

Adults, who are not teachers, not employers, not co-workers, and not part of the youth's family, who provide support and model pro-social behavior and help the youth live a positive life, such as

- religious leader
- club member
- community person
- parents/guardians of friends

\*Do not include the youth's parents or immediate family as they are captured in Domain 7.

### **4. Current pro-social community ties:**

- The youth feels attached to a pro-social community (excluding school).
- The youth feels there are community supports and resources to which the youth can turn for help and belonging.
- The youth has a sense of attachment and does not feel socially isolated.
- Youth feels there are people in his or her community who discourage him or her from getting into trouble or are willing to help the youth

### **5. Currently in a 'romantic,' intimate, or sexual relationship:**

- Youth is involved with a person whom they consider a boyfriend or girlfriend. It is not necessary to know whether the relationship is sexual or not.
- Determine whether the relationship is with a pro- or anti-social person.

### **6. Currently admires/imitates anti-social peers:**

- Base the response of what the youth says about peers who get into trouble.
- Does he or she seem to admire and want to imitate their behavior?
- Using more probing questions and collateral information is likely necessary to answer this item accurately. If either admiration or emulation are present, include this in your response.

## 7. Current resistance to anti-social peer influence:

- This item directly measures the degree to which the youth is influenced by the peer group.
- It may be helpful to ask the youth about their own involvement in a group's anti-social activities and who makes decisions on what to do within their peer group.
- Don't base this response on the youth's anti-social behavior alone; base the response on the youth's resistance to their anti-social peers.

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## Domain 7: Family

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**Domain 7, Relationship to re-offending:** The family environment in which the youth is raised has a large influence over the youth's attitudes and behaviors. The two major areas addressed in Domain 7 include parent characteristics and family management practices.

Research has consistently identified factors, such as parental criminality, substance abuse problems, mental health etc., that are related to juvenile delinquency.

Family management practices also play an important role in the child's development.

Researchers have found four aspects of family management practices that contribute to problematic behavior.

- First, minimal parental supervision (lack of knowledge of the child's whereabouts, activities engaged in outside of the home, and peers) place youth at risk for anti-social behavior.
- Second, youth who receive little support, encouragement and affection are more likely to experience difficulties in adolescence.
- Third, poorly defined and poorly communicated rules and expectations for behavior appear to play a major role in child problematic behavior. Discipline for inappropriate behavior that is inconsistent or excessively severe further contributes to difficulties for the youth.
- Finally, youth who witness or experience abuse are at greater risk for behavioral and emotional problems.

There is significant evidence to suggest that parents who condone or ignore anti-social acts exhibited by their children may actually reinforce and promote their child's criminal behavior. (Fagan, Van Horn, Antaramian, & Hawkins, 2011; Ingram, Patchin, Huebner, McCluskey, & Bynum, 2007; Leiber, Mack, & Featherstone, 2008; Lilly et al., 2010)

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## General Instructions

Parents in this assessment include the youth's mother and father or any individuals who are legally responsible for raising the youth. A mother includes the youth's primary female adult caretaker. A father includes the youth's primary male adult caretaker. Domain 7 concerns family history and current family/living arrangements.

It is important to examine who is present in the youth's environment to provide support and encouragement and to discourage anti-social behavior. A thorough assessment of how the youth is supervised, disciplined, and reinforced is critical. Other sources of information are school counselors, law enforcement, and/or mental health providers who know the youth or the youth's family.

## **Specific Item Help:**

### **1. History of running away or getting kicked out of home:**

- Include times the youth did not voluntarily return within 24 hours, and include incidents not reported by or to law enforcement. Include any such history with residential or foster care, etc.
- Determine the number of times the youth has run away from home, been kicked out of home, or had any placement where the youth did not voluntarily return within 24 hours.

### **2. Youth lost a biological parent to separation, divorce, abandonment, or death:**

- Select "yes" if the youth's biological mother or father are separated or divorced and the youth no longer sees one of their biological parents.
- Select "yes" if the youth's biological parents have abandoned the youth for any reason. This could be due to drugs, alcohol, or homelessness.
- If one or both of the youth's biological parents have died, select "yes."

### **3. History of jail/imprisonment of persons who were ever involved in the household for at least 3 months:**

- To count a history of jail/imprisonment, a person must have been sentenced to jail or prison because of criminal behavior. This means actually sentenced to jail or prison, not just held pending disposition or sentencing.
- For juvenile family members, DJJ residential commitment is counted.
- Using self-report information from either the youth or family is a valid way to start your search effort. You should also check court records and local law enforcement records.
- Family members do not have to have lived in the home but did have frequent close contact with the home. The youth should have known this person and remembers them.
- This includes time frame before youth was born, if the youth is aware of the incarceration.
- Include non-parental caretakers as well as biological parents.
- If a family member/person involved in the household is currently in jail/prison/commitment, it should be scored as having a history of jail/imprisonment.

### **4. Jail/imprisonment history of persons who are currently involved with the household:**

- To count a history of jail/imprisonment, a person must have been sentenced to jail or prison because of criminal behavior. This means actually sentenced to jail or prison, not just held pending disposition or sentencing.
- For juvenile family members, DJJ residential commitment is counted.
- Using self-report information from either the youth or family is a valid way to start your search effort. You should also check court records and local law enforcement records.
- Family members do not have to live in the home but do have frequent close contact with the home. The youth should know this person.
- This includes time frame before youth was born, if the youth is aware of the incarceration.
- Include non-parental caretakers as well as biological parents.
- If a family member/person involved in the household is currently in jail/prison/commitment, it should be scored as having a history of jail/imprisonment.

**5. Problem history of parents/ guardians who are currently involved with the household:**

- Check all that apply.
- Parents in this item include the youth's mother or father or any individuals who are legally responsible for raising the youth.
- Include any problem(s) the parents/guardians currently involved in the household have ever experienced.
- Interviewing the youth separately from the parents may help provide this information as well as asking the parents directly without the youth being present.
- Other sources of information are school counselors, law enforcement, and treatment providers who know the youth or youth's family.
- Problem history for drug and/or alcohol use involves disrupted function in four life areas: employment, family conflict, health, and legal consequences.
- Problems with mental or physical health must be elevated to the point that they cause a disruption or hardship in the life of the family members, as evidenced by emergency room visits or medical problems that resulted from the health issue.
- Parental employment problem history as evidenced by problems with work, lack of work, absence from work, or poor job performance. This does not include working multiple jobs to make ends meet.

**6. Problem history of siblings who are currently involved with the household:**

- Check all that apply.
- Include all family members (natural sibling, half sibling, step sibling, cousin) being raised in the household with the youth.
- Include any problem(s) the sibling currently involved in the household have ever experienced.
- Sources of information are the youth, the parents, other family members, school counselors, law enforcement, and treatment providers who know the youth or youth's family.
- Problem history for drug and/or alcohol use involves disrupted function in four life areas: employment, family conflict, health, and legal consequences.
- Problems with mental or physical health must be elevated to the point that they cause a disruption or hardship in the life of the family members, as evidenced by emergency room visits or medical problems that resulted from the health issue.
- Employment problem history as evidenced by problems with work, lack of work, absence from work, or poor job performance.

**7. Family willingness to help support youth:**

- Determine if the youth feels loved, supported, and cared for; ask the youth to indicate how the family expresses this.
- Look for signs of affection, such as giving compliments, supportive statements for something well done, increasing time spent together, and other ways of communicating approval and respect.
- Try to get a global feeling of the level of affection, respect, and caring experienced by the youth.

**8. Family member(s) youth feels close to or has good relationship with:**

- Mother or father/ female or male caretaker, refers to a primary caregiver. This can be the youth's biological mother or father, or their guardian who is legally responsible for the youth.

- Female or male sibling can be the youth's natural sibling, half sibling, or step sibling.
- Extended family refers to grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and other relatives

**9. Level of conflict between parents, between youth and parents, among siblings:**

- Take into consideration your average families conflict. Conflict is any type of disagreement among family members.
- Look at all the dynamics in the home, not just those the youth is involved in, but also others' conflicts (i.e. mother and father).
- Since several forms of conflict may be present, check the most severe level of conflict.
- If conflict is present and not well managed, select 'Verbal Intimidation, yelling, heated arguments'.

**10. Current parental authority and control:**

- Determine if the family has rules and expectations and how frequently the youth follows through and obeys them. Probe carefully when the youth indicates there are no rules or expectations. Typically, the youth has some type of restriction placed on his or her behavior.
- You can consider what the parents say as a confirming source about what the youth says, although if you suspect the parents are denying this problem, you may need to refer to another source.
- For example, if a youth commits a crime in the middle of the night, or during the school day, the parent may not have adequate authority and control.

**11. History of out-of-home DCF placements:**

- In determining if the youth has had an out-of-home placement, confirm records with DCF.
- All court-ordered and DCF voluntary out-of-home placements and shelter care placements exceeding 30 days should be included. (Include only those voluntary programs that have official agency involvement)
- Also include Children in Need of Services (CINS) and Families in Need of Services (FINS) if placement exceeds 30 days. CINS/FINS are non-delinquent court actions to provide services to children and families.
- Exclude respite care, detention, and shelter care under 30 days. Exclude sending the youth to live with other relatives as out-of-home placement unless officially recognized as an out-of-home placement.

**12. Support network for family:**

- Determine the degree to which extended family and/or family friends provide additional support to the family.
- Support should be pro-social and positive.

**13. Parental supervision:**

- Parents know whom youth is with, when youth will return, where youth is going, and what youth is doing.
- Good supervision includes encouraging and guiding youth to engage in pro-social activities and influences.
- Sporadic supervision may look like a parent who does a great job monitoring their child sometimes; but not always. Sometimes may be too lax in monitoring the youth's whereabouts, activities, and peers.
- Knowledge alone is not good supervision. Knowing that a youth is with gang members is not good supervision. This implies supervision is inadequate. Look for efforts on the parent's part to monitor the youth.

- Don't hold the parent responsible if the youth is doing a good job hiding things from the parent. If the parent is appropriately monitoring the youth, they should get credit.
- Discussion with the youth's parent(s) is important to gain their perspective.
- Think, does the youth know how to reach the parent at all times? Does the parent know where the youth is at all times, even when she or he is at work or out of the house? If parents are at work when the youth returns from school, what efforts have been put into place to ensure the youth is properly supervised?

**14. Consistent appropriate punishment for bad behavior:**

- Consistent refers to timely response (closely follows target behavior).
- Appropriate punishment means clear communication of the undesired behavior, timely response and response or consequence that is proportionate to conduct and that is non-coercive or abusive.
- Overly severe punishment is a very serious, harsh or critical reprimand, possibly physical.
- Insufficient punishment is when the consequence is too minimal considering the situation.
- Inconsistent or erratic punishment is a very irregular punishment, it's never the same for the same bad behavior.

**15. Consistent appropriate rewards for good behavior:**

- Consistent refers to timely response (closely follows target behavior).
- 'Appropriate rewards' means clear communication of the desired behavior and a response that could include affection, praise, or other tangible means.
- Overly indulgent/ overly protective are unreasonable rewards.
- An insufficient reward is when the reward for good behavior is not matched with the level of positive behavior.
- Inconsistent or erratic rewards are rewards that are never consistent with the youth's good behavior. For example, a youth gets \$5 for good grades one time and \$100 for good grades the next time.

**16. Parental characterization of youth's anti-social behavior:**

- Determine if the parent agrees with the youth and/or promotes anti-social behavior by denying the significance of the offense or minimizing the youth's responsibility.

**Domain 8: Alcohol and Drugs**

***Domain 8, Relationship to re-offending:*** Substance use disorders represent the most frequently occurring mental health problem in the general population and are over-represented in the criminal justice population, with estimates ranging from 60% to 85%.

Youth with an early behavioral history of experimentation with drugs are at greater risk for criminal behavior. Drug usage is also linked with academic and conduct problems at school and may involve associations with anti-social youth. (Fagan et al., 2011)

## **Specific Item Help:**

### **1. History of alcohol use:**

- If the youth has never used alcohol in his or her life, select "no history of alcohol use"
- If the youth has used alcohol in the past (more than trying it one time) and is not using during the current time period, select "history of alcohol use"
- If the youth is actively using alcohol within the current time period and the youth is not experiencing any (or very minimal) negative life impacts, select "currently using alcohol."
- For youth actively using, assess the alcohol use relative to its disruption of the youth's life. If the alcohol use is causing disruption, select "Alcohol is negatively impacting the youth's life"
  - Disrupted functioning involves problems in any one of these five life areas: education, family conflict, peer relationships, crime or health consequences. Disrupted functioning usually indicates that treatment is warranted. Disruption may be evidenced by problems with attendance or poor school performance/grades. Use contributes to criminal behavior because there is evidence or reason to believe the youth's criminal activity is related to alcohol or drug use. Disruption of family life is evidenced by conflicts over alcohol or drug use, such as running away from home, stealing at home to support use, arguing over use, or stealing alcohol/drugs from home. Disruption in peer relationships is evidenced by most of the youth's friends using alcohol or drugs. Disruption in health is evidenced by emergency room visits or medical problems which resulted from alcohol or drug use.

### **2. History of drug use:**

- If the youth has never used drugs in his or her life, select "no history of drug use"
- If the youth has used drugs in the past (more than trying it one time) and is not using during the current time period, select "history of drug use"
- If the youth is actively using drugs within the current time period and the youth is not experiencing any (or very minimal) negative life impacts, select "currently using drugs."
- For youth actively using, assess the drug use relative to its disruption of the youth's life. If the drug use is causing disruption, select "Drugs are negatively impacting the youth's life"
  - Disrupted functioning involves problems in any one of these five life areas: education, family conflict, peer relationships, crime or health consequences. Disrupted functioning usually indicates that treatment is warranted. Disruption may be evidenced by problems with attendance or poor school performance/grades. Use contributes to criminal behavior because there is evidence or reason to believe the youth's criminal activity is related to alcohol or drug use. Disruption of family life is evidenced by conflicts over alcohol or drug use, such as running away from home, stealing at home to support use, arguing over use, or stealing alcohol/drugs from home. Disruption in peer relationships is evidenced by most of the youth's friends using alcohol or drugs. Disruption in health is evidenced by emergency room visits or medical problems which resulted from alcohol or drug use.

### 3. History of assessment/ diagnosis:

- Determine if the youth has ever been referred for a drug/alcohol assessment. If so, determine if the youth was actually assessed.
- If assessed, select the diagnosis and/or recommendation of the report; no problem, abuse, or dependent/addicted.
- If there are multiple previous assessments, select the most serious diagnosis received.

### 4. Current drug/alcohol treatment program participation:

Select the option that applies to the youth's situation.

- This item is asking about treatment within the current time period.
- Include both in-patient and out-patient treatment programs where addressing substance or alcohol abuse was the goal.
- If treatment is not warranted, this means the youth may not be using or if using, the use is so minor it does not negatively impact any of the life areas.
- If youth are using substances four or five days a week in an amount that alters their ability to function "normally" you may conclude they are in need of treatment.
- If the youth is using substances or alcohol in an amount that or manner that is negatively impacting the life areas and you conclude they are in need of treatment, then mark "not currently attending needed treatment program."
- If the youth is currently in treatment, select matching response.
- If the youth completed treatment successfully within the current time period, select "successfully completed treatment program and no longer needing treatment."

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## Domain 9: Trauma and Mental Health

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***Domain 9, Relationship to re-offending:*** Considerable research has been conducted to examine the relationship between mental health and criminal behavior. For example, there is some evidence to suggest that a large number of youth entering the criminal justice system have experienced or witnessed some form of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. Studies of victims suggest an array of emotional and behavioral consequences that vary dramatically across victims. Though abuse in and of itself may not be a causal factor of criminal behavior, many investigators consider a history of early victimization to contribute to further experiences of victimization and to increased risk for self-destructive behaviors (i.e., substance abuse, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, etc.), particularly for women. In addition, abuse is seen as one of the crucial antecedents to sexually and physically violent behavior.

Clinical observation, theory, and studies of adolescent disorder have often identified the fact that many adolescents experience depressed and anxious feelings together rather than as distinct problems.

Regardless of the causal factor, violent and aggressive behavior is viewed as a stable predictor of difficulties throughout the life span. That is, youth who rely on physically aggressive ways at an early age are more likely to continue this behavior into adulthood.

The strength of the relationship between mental health factors and criminal behavior is less well understood than some of the factors previewed earlier. Of considerable importance is the investigation of these issues to assess current level of personal safety, community safety, and ability to cope with major life events and daily stressors. (Chen, 2015; Lilly et al., 2010)

## **Specific Item Help:**

### **1. History of violence/physical abuse:**

- For the purposes of the CAT, only include physical abuse. DCF defines physical abuse as any non-accidental physical injury, such as bruises, burns, fractures, bites, or internal injuries.
- Include suspected incidents of violence/abuse if disclosed by youth, whether or not reported or substantiated, but exclude reports investigated but proven to be false.
- Determine the existence of the abuse by asking the youth and by checking with any involved qualified professionals.
- Determine where has the youth been a victim of violence/ abuse; home or foster/ group home.
- Determine who has victimized youth; family member or someone outside the family.
- Parent/ guardian report of abuse can be considered confirmation.
- Remember to count any suspected abuse, even when it has not been reported. For previously unreported abuse allegations, you must follow mandatory reporting guidelines.
- Do your very best to determine if a youth has ever been attacked with a weapon.

### **2. History of witnessing violence:**

- Make selection based on the youth having witnessed violence in real life and in relatively close proximity.
- Consider event(s) involving the youth as a victim as well as a perpetrator.
- Determine where the youth is witnessing violence.
- It is especially important to accurately assess whether the youth has lost a family member to violence. This response option does not require the youth to have witnessed the incident; they must only be aware.

### **3. History of sexual abuse/rape:**

- Include suspected incidents of abuse, whether or not reported or substantiated, but exclude reports proven to be false.
- Sexual abuse includes acts such as indecent liberties, communication with a minor for immoral purposes, sexual exploitation of a child, child molestation, sexual misconduct with a minor, rape of a child, and rape.
- Indecent liberties occur when an adult engages in sexual behavior in the presence of a minor. These behaviors could be anything from exposing of one's private parts, communication of indecent language, or forced sexual contact of the minor to the adult perpetrator.
- Determine the existence of the abuse by asking the youth and by checking with any involved qualified professionals.
- Parent/ guardian report of abuse can be considered confirmation.
- Remember to count any suspected abuse, even when it has not been reported. For previously unreported abuse allegations, you must follow mandatory reporting guidelines.

#### **4. History of being a victim of neglect:**

- Include suspected incidents of neglect, whether or not substantiated, but exclude reports proven to be false.
- The Department of Children and Families (DCF) definition of neglect includes negligent or maltreatment (dangerous act) or omission that constitutes a clear and present danger to the child's health, welfare, and safety, such as:
  - Failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, emotional nurturing, or health care.
  - Failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the child's level of development.
  - An act of abandonment with the intent to forego parental responsibilities despite an ability to do so.
  - An act of exploitation, such as requiring the child to be involved in criminal activity, imposing unreasonable work standards, etc.
  - An act of reckless endangerment, such as a parent driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs with children present.
  - Other dangerous acts, such as hitting, kicking, throwing, choking a child, or shaking an infant.
  - Determine the existence of the abuse by asking the youth and by checking with any involved qualified professionals.
  - Parent/ guardian report of abuse can be considered confirmation.
  - Remember to count any suspected abuse, even when it has not been reported. For previously unreported abuse allegations, you must follow mandatory reporting guidelines.

#### **5. History of anger or irritability:**

- Determine if the youth has a history of anger or irritability after speaking with youth and the youth's parents.
- Ask questions related to how they react to negative consequences. Are they angry or irritable?
- These may be a general tendency toward irritability, frustration, and tension related to anger. Sometimes it may be explicit feelings of preoccupying anger and vengefulness. An angry mood, its associated tension, 'touchiness', and an impulsive reaction to annoyance or frustration are all relatively common among juvenile offenders. It is not a symptom of any particular disorder, and some youths experience irritability without having a significant disorder.

#### **6. History of depression or anxiety:**

- Take into account the youth's reported history of depression or anxiety, any diagnosis, and/or currently reporting of these types of feelings.
- Determine if the youth has a history of depression or anxiety after speaking with youth and the youth's parents.

#### **7. Current mental health status:**

- First, consider if the youth has a mental health problem. If there are no existing mental health issues, select "No current mental health problem."
- If the youth does have a mental health issue, select the correct response of whether they are complying with mental health treatment or not.

## 8. Current suicidal ideation:

- Include any previous serious thoughts, threats, plans and attempts, even if youth indicates they were manipulative and there was no intent.
- The response “has never had serious thoughts about suicide” means the youth has not has any serious thoughts. Account for typical negative or fleeting thoughts of a normal teenager, as “never thought” for this item.
- Ask the youth’s parent is they suspect any suicidal ideation in their child.
- Self-mutilating or self-injurious behavior can include, but is not limited to cutting, burning, scratching, head-banging, lip biting, stapling, etc.
- The general intention of self-mutilation is to feel pain and get an endorphin effect.
- **Note:** *If necessary, please initiate the process for formal suicide risk screening. If you suspect the youth is suicidal or at risk to harm self or others, please inform a supervisor immediately.*

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## Domain 10: Attitudes/Behaviors

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**Domain 10, Relationship to re-offending:** Perhaps one of the most important and consistently identified factors linked to criminal behavior is anti-social attitudes, values, and beliefs. Most people will deny responsibility or minimize the impact of negative behavior when placed in a difficult or embarrassing situation. However, offenders tend to minimize, deny, or excuse their behavior more frequently and across a broader range of situations than non-offenders. Typically, statements include negative comments about the law, courts, and police; conventional activities or practices in general; conventional people; and statements that suggest a lack of empathy for the victim. Other statements may attempt to diminish the impact of the offense. For example, the offender may deny responsibility, deny that any injury was done, blame the victim, blame the system, or claim that they had to do the crime to protect someone else.

In addition to anti-social attitudes, this domain is also concerned with how the offender views the future and his or her level of motivation to change. Research suggests that individuals may come into the system at different stages of readiness or willingness to change. Prochaska and DiClemente (1991) have identified six stages of change. The first two stages, pre-contemplation and contemplation, characterize individuals who deny they have a problem and who are not prepared to participate in the change process. The remaining stages, determination, action, maintenance, and relapse, characterize individuals who recognize that a problem exists and who are beginning to do something about the problem.

Readiness to change has been linked to success in altering anti-social and other destructive behaviors. A youth who is motivated to stay out of the criminal justice system is more likely to comply with supervision guidelines and to benefit from intervention.

A youth's lack of concern for others allows them to harm others without the normal social constraint. The youth may have inadequate guilt feelings that allow them to continue their anti-social activities. A youth's negative attitude toward the property of others makes them more likely to steal or damage property.

A youth's negative attitude toward authority sometimes makes them difficult to deal with and provide helpful interventions.

A youth's lack of belief in the rules and conventions of society is almost the definition for not being a pro-social individual but an individual with a low level of cognitive moral

development. The youth's lack of responsibility for their own actions allows them to commit behaviors without any second thoughts.

(Lilly et al., 2010; Morris & Copes, 2012; Shulman, Cauffman, Piquero, & Fagan, 2011)

### **General Instructions**

Use the information collected throughout the interview to respond to these items. Encourage an open discussion with the youth by asking them to describe how they felt, what they thought, and what they did--prior, during, and immediately after committing offenses.

Most items in this section deal with thinking errors (cognitive distortions) that increase the youth's likelihood of continuing anti-social behavior and getting into trouble.

### **Specific Item Help:**

#### **1. Attitude toward responsible law-abiding behavior:**

- If the youth abides by conventions/ values, the youth understands the value of at least some pro-social rules to themselves and to society; seeing beyond their own personal needs.
- If the youth does not abide conventions/values, the youth does not see a value in pro-social rules because they cannot see beyond their own personal needs. The youth rejects these values because they might interfere in their obtaining their own personal needs - what they want, when they want it.

#### **2. Accepts responsibility for anti-social behavior:**

- Determine if the youth minimizes, justifies, or excuses their anti-social behavior or blames others or circumstances. If this is true, they do not accept responsibility. This also includes openly not accepting responsibility for their actions, or even accepting their negative behavior as OK or being proud of it.

#### **3. Optimism:**

- Youth talks about future in positive way with plans or aspirations of a better life that could include employment, education, raising a family, travel, or other pro-social life goals.
- Determine the degree of optimism the youth has.
- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.

#### **4. Impulsivity:**

- Impulsivity is a tendency to act on a whim, displaying behavior characterized by little or no planning, reflection, or consideration of the consequences. Impulsive actions are typically "poorly conceived, prematurely expressed, unduly risky, or inappropriate to the situation that often result in undesirable consequences," which jeopardize long-term goals and strategies for success.
- Determine the degree of impulsivity the youth has.
- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.

## **5. Empathy:**

- Determine the youth's empathy, remorse, sympathy, or feelings for the victims of their criminal behavior; the degree to which the youth sees how the victim is affected and whether they care how the victim feels.
- The response 'has some empathy' includes having some amount of empathy for all victims as well as having empathy for some, but not all, victims.
- If the youth has not committed a crime that involved a 'victim' you should still answer this item by asking the youth what they think about victims of crimes and giving specific examples of situations.
- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.

## **6. Respect for property of others:**

- If the youth has not committed a crime that involved property, the answer should still be completed by asking the youth what they think about property of others and give specific examples of situations.
- Determine the degree to which the youth has a problematic attitude toward the property of others.
- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.

## **7. Respect for authority figures:**

- Determine the degree to which the youth has a problematic attitude toward authority--refusing to follow directions from parents, teachers, employers, staff, etc.-or resents or is hostile to authority, being openly defiant toward authority.
- This assessment must be made relative to a normal teenager who is typically a little rebellious.
- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.

## **8. Youth's belief in successfully meeting conditions of court supervision:**

- Select a response based on the youth's assessment on whether he or she can successfully meet the conditions of court supervision and gain something positive from the experience. If the youth expresses confidence in his/her ability to manipulate the system in order to complete the program, do not select 'believes he or she will be successful' as the response.
- Answer this question based on your discussion with the youth and the youth's assessment of their likelihood of success. The JPO or case manager's opinion is not being measured here.

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## **Domain 11: Aggression**

**Domain 11, Relationship to re-offending:** The National Center for Health Statistics defines violence as the threatened or actual use of physical force or power that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in death, injury, or deprivation. Aggression refers to the intent to hurt or gain advantage over others, without necessarily involving physical attack.

Aggressive behavior is of particular concern to the courts and the public because of the fear that aggression leads to violent crimes. Violent crime is more severe than other forms of criminal activity because of the harm to the victim, as well as the greater costs incurred by society. Research supports the notion that aggression is one of the important precursors of risk for later serious and violent offending.

The literature discusses two purposes or motivations for violent behavior:

- Purely hostile or angry violence which can be impulsive or the reaction of an emotion or excitation (heat of the moment).
- Instrumental violence is a more deliberate act to obtain some goal, goods, or services.

The youth's inability to tolerate frustration can lead to impulsive reactions and over-reacting to situations. A youth may not be able to fulfill a perceived need and a low tolerance for this frustration may cause them to resort to anti-social means of fulfilling that need.

Attributing hostility is called attributional bias in the delinquency research literature. Because the youth sees others as hostile, their anti-social reaction may seem perfectly reasonable to them. This attitude can also help them justify their anti-social actions.

Youth's aggressiveness and hostility dispose them toward becoming violent or given the situation they would use verbal or physical aggression to get what they want or intimidate others, being the leader to perform anti-social activities.

(Baglivio et al., 2016; DeLisi et al., 2010; Hay & Evans, 2006; Hay, Meldrum, Widdowson, & Piquero, 2017)

### **General Instructions**

Use the information collected throughout the interview to respond to these items. Use information gained through your conversation with the youth and family, and any collateral contact.

Encourage an open discussion with the youth by asking them to describe how they felt, what they thought, and what they did- prior to, during, and immediately after engaging in anti-social or risky behavior

### **Specific Item Help:**

#### **1. Belief in fighting and physical aggression to resolve a disagreement or conflict:**

- Determine if the youth believes physical aggression is an appropriate way of expressing themselves and in dealing with others to get what they want or is an appropriate response when prevented from getting what they want. The youth believes that pushing, punching, or fighting are appropriate means for obtaining what they want.
- This item is asking about a youth's belief and not necessarily about their behavior. This should be answered based on what the youth says. If their behavior contradicts their belief, this should be captured in Domain 12, under skills. For instance, a youth can BELIEVE they should not hit someone, but when confronted, lack any other skills but to hit them. Their belief would be captured here, their behavior may be captured in Domain 12 under impulsivity and/or control of aggression.

#### **2. Belief in yelling and verbal aggression to resolve a disagreement or conflict:**

- Determine the degree to which the youth believes verbal aggression is an appropriate way of expressing themselves and in dealing with others to get what they want or is an appropriate response when prevented from getting what they want. The youth believes that shouting, yelling, and verbally intimidating others are appropriate means for obtaining what they want.
- This item is asking about a youth's belief and not necessarily about their behavior. This should be answered based on what the youth says. If their

behavior contradicts their belief, this should be captured in Domain 12, under skills.

### **3. Tolerance for frustration:**

- Determine the degree to which the youth is able to tolerate frustration without acting out.
- This assessment must be made relative to a normal teenager who is typically a little emotionally volatile.

### **4. Aggressive behavior being exhibited by the youth:**

**Note:** This is a history of ever exhibiting these behaviors. Include behaviors not already included in Domain 1. This item captures the history of ever having exhibited these behaviors. Direct questions might be necessary to determine if youth has ever participated in any of these behaviors. When answering this item, include charges here that may not have been counted in Domain 1 because they were either plead down or were included in a referral where only the more serious charge was counted. Obtain additional information from the youth regarding charges that were no filed, nolle prossed and dismissed when responding to this item.

- Examples may be that the youth had been arrested and referred for multiple offenses. Domain 1 would only count most serious charge for that referral, therefore you could count the other violent charges here.
- If a youth was arrested for a misdemeanor weapon charge and a misdemeanor battery, the weapon would be considered the most serious charge in Domain 1. You could count the battery here.
- Similarly, if the youth was charged with a felony weapon and felony battery, the felony battery would be considered the most serious charge in Domain 1. You could count the weapon charge here.
- A youth was originally charged with arson, but plea agreement led to charge of criminal mischief. Fire starting should be captured here.

### **5. Reports of problem with sexual aggressive behavior:**

**Note:** This is a history of ever exhibiting these behaviors. Include behaviors not already included in Domain 1. This item captures the history of ever having exhibited these behaviors. Direct questions might be necessary to determine if youth has ever participated in any of these behaviors. When answering this item, include charges here that may not have been counted in Domain 1 because they were either plead down or were included in a referral where only the more serious charge was counted. Obtain additional information from the youth regarding charges that were no filed, nolle prossed and dismissed when responding to this item.

- Examples may be that the youth had been arrested and referred for multiple assaults. Domain 1 would only count one assault for that referral, therefore you could count the other assaults here.
- If a youth was arrested for multiple sex offenses only the most serious charge is counted in Domain 1. You could count the other offense(s) here.
- A youth was originally charged with sex offense, but plea agreement led to charge of battery. Sex offense should be captured here.
- Aggressive sex is potentially violent behavior focused on gratification of sexual drives, regardless of the desire for participation on the part of the partner.
- Sex for power is sex where a high level of coercion is used.
- Young sex partners can mean similar-age partners that are very young, significantly younger victims, or persistent sexual interests involving significantly younger children.

- Voyeurism is the practice of gaining sexual pleasure from watching others when they are naked or engaged in sexual activity.
- Exposure is to purposefully display one's genitals in public, causing others to be alarmed or offended. Indecent exposure is often committed for the sexual gratification of the offender or committed to entice a sexual response.
- Any mental health evaluations could assist in responding to this item.

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## **Domain 12: Skills**

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***Domain 12, Relationship to re-offending:*** A critical developmental task for preschool children is to gain increasing control over attention (become task-focused), emotions (anger, frustration, anxiety, disappointment, etc.), and behavior. This is commonly referred to as self-regulation and self-monitoring. Over time, the child must learn to acquire more complicated and sophisticated self-management skills in order to participate fully in academic and social pursuits.

Research suggests that the child's disposition and temperament play an important role in ensuring the development of self-monitoring and self-management skills. Youth in contact with the criminal justice system often display difficulties in focusing their attention, regulating, and controlling impulsive behavior, and in solving problems.

Youths who have little ability to control themselves will have a difficult time avoiding re-offending if they encounter triggers that lead them to re-offend. A youth who is not able to recognize and monitor those triggers that lead them into trouble is at risk of repeating their criminal behavior. A youth who does not understand those situations that get them into further trouble may find themselves in those situations again and commit another crime. These youth may be impulsive, excitable, and overly active with a low tolerance for frustration. These youth may also be controlled by immediate gratification. When the youth does not understand cause and effect concerning their actions, they do not understand that they can avoid bad consequences and can obtain good consequences.

The research indicates that interventions most successful with juvenile offenders are those that take a cognitive-behavioral approach. This approach focuses on correcting the cognitive deficits that the youth has and then giving the youth the skills to more appropriately manage themselves and their environment. The 'Skills' section measures these skill factors and the progress that a juvenile is making in improving these skills while involved in the juvenile justice system.

(Cauffman, Steinberg, & Piquero, 2005; Gardner, Dishion, & Connell, 2008; Gibson, 2012)

### **General Instructions**

This domain is based on your opinion of the youth's skills and not the youth's opinion. Use the information collected throughout the interview to respond to these items. Use a general pattern of current behavior and not a single instance.

## **Specific Item Help:**

### **1. Consequential thinking:**

These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.

- Consequential thinking involves understanding that there are consequences, both good and bad, to actions.
- Youth who have consequential thinking know that for example, if they study for a test they are more likely to get a good grade.
- Youth who do not have this skill do not understand that they can avoid bad consequences and can obtain good consequences.
- Youth lacking consequential thinking may attribute outcomes to luck instead of planning or effort. For example, if they get a good grade in school they attribute it to luck or the teacher being an easy grader. If they get a poor grade they blame it on bad luck or the teacher not liking them.

### **2. Goal setting:**

These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.

- Assess whether the youth has the ability to set positive, realistic goals.
- Goals are realistic if the youth can articulate the steps necessary to obtain the desired outcome, and is making efforts towards accomplishing specific tasks (e.g., looking at want ads, filling out applications, making good grades, etc.) necessary to achieve the goal.
- In order to set positive realistic goals, the youth must have consequential thinking skills (understand there is a cause and effect to their actions).
- Respond to this item relative to the youth's age. Assess whether youth's goals are realistic and appropriate.

### **3. Problem-solving:**

These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.

- First, the youth must be able to recognize that something is a problem--in particular their criminal behavior.
- Then they must be able to apply their critical thinking skills to think of alternative solutions to their criminal behavior.
- Finally, they must be able to apply or live out the best solution that will keep them from re-offending.

### **4. Dealing with others:**

These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.

- **Basic social skills** include listening, starting a conversation, having a conversation, asking a question, saying thank you, introducing yourself, introducing other people, and giving a compliment.
- **Advanced social skills** include asking for help, joining in, giving instructions, following instructions, apologizing, and convincing others.

### **5. Dealing with difficult situations:**

These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.

- Dealing with difficult situations includes making a complaint, answering a complaint, dealing with embarrassment, dealing with being left out, standing up for a friend, responding to frustration, responding to failure, dealing with contradictory messages, dealing with accusation, getting ready for a difficult conversation, and dealing with group pressure.

## **6. Dealing with feelings/emotions:**

These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.

- Includes knowing his or her feelings, expressing feelings, understanding the feelings of others, dealing with someone else's anger, expressing affection, dealing with fear, and rewarding oneself.

## **7. Monitoring of triggers:**

These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.

- Examples of internal triggers include distorted thoughts that lead to emotional states such as sadness, anger, loneliness, boredom, stress, wanting to celebrate or distorted thoughts that trigger an anti-social response.
- Examples of external triggers include events, situations or locations that trigger a youth's problem behaviors; for example, attending parties, being around a certain group of people, driving past a dealer's house or a liquor store, pay day, certain times of day.
- Actively managing responses to triggers goes beyond monitoring the trigger to being able to control themselves to either avoid the trigger or diffuse its impact upon them. There are techniques for self-control that are taught in cognitive-behaviorally oriented skill building interventions. These techniques include reframing, replacing anti-social thoughts with pro-social thoughts, diversion, relaxation, problem solving, negotiation, and relapse prevention.

## **8. Control of impulsive behavior:**

- First, consider if the youth has a problem with impulsivity. If there are no existing impulsivity issues, select "impulsivity is not a major issue for the youth."
- This skill goes beyond monitoring the trigger to extends to being able to control themselves to either avoid the trigger or diffuse its impact upon them.
- A youth who can "stop and think," analyze the situation, understand the consequences of certain reactions, and choose the response that is most pro-social would not have problems with impulsive behavior.

## **9. Control of aggression:**

- First, consider if the youth has a problem with aggression. If there are no existing aggression issues, select "aggression is not a major issue for the youth."
- A youth who can use self-control, stand up for their rights, respond to teasing, avoid trouble with others, and keep out of fights would not have a problem with aggression.