



PACT Assessment System Overview

In an effort to increase effectiveness of service delivery throughout the juvenile justice system, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice has focused on implementing Evidence-Based Practices (EBP). Our goal is to reduce further offending and to help youth find a positive direction for their lives by systematically introducing evidence-based assessment, intervention, treatment, and management practices that research has shown reduce the risk of re-offending.

The first, and foundational principle of EBP is to use an actuarial risk and needs assessment instrument. Such a tool, if implemented with fidelity, provides many benefits, including a consistent unit of measurement from which to study the efficacy of subsequent casework, programming oversight, a common language to enhance communication, and streamlined information gathering with the use of the same tool and reports, etc.

Recognizing the differences in our continuum of care from prevention to aftercare, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice has created assessment instruments that fit these specific environments while sharing the same foundational concepts for the assessment.

In Prevention and for Civil Citation youth, the Prevention Assessment Tool or PAT, assesses the youth in all the major criminogenic areas and highlights any needs that should be addressed with early intervention services.

The assessment created for the community, known as the Community PACT or C-PACT, identifies overall levels of risk to re-offend, as well as a youth's criminogenic needs. Addressing these needs has been shown through research to reduce their risk of re-offending. The C-PACT provides a mechanism for triaging youth, when first presented to the Department, to determine what level of intervention (if any) fits the youth's risk to re-offend. This triage allows us to provide needed services only to those that are most at risk to re-offend.

Similarly, the assessment created for residential settings, Residential PACT or R-PACT, provides a means to obtain more specific, relevant information that will guide our residential programs in developing intervention strategies utilizing EBP, addressing each youth's criminogenic needs, as well as serving as a mechanism to assist in determining when a youth is ready for release.

Our system provides the opportunity for the case plans to become living documents, constantly reviewed and updated when necessary. For youth on probation, the Youth Empowered Success Plan or YES Plan provides the youth, his/her parents, and others involved in the youth's life, a roadmap that if followed, will decrease the youth's risk to re-offend. Likewise, the Performance Plan provides the youth in residential commitment with the same type of roadmap.

The most important aspect of having a common assessment and evaluation process across our continuum of services is that it provides a common language for information sharing across program areas and between programs. Subsequent assessments serve as indicators of progress and improvement that will correlate with recidivism reduction. This information will tell us which of our programs are making the greatest impact and assist with directing limited resources.

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