

Prevention Assessment Tool- Help Guide

Domain 1

Even for youth without a 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. You cannot respond to these items. When applicable, these items will be completed from JJIS.

Domain 2

You cannot respond to these items. These items will be completed from JJIS.

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.

Research suggests that 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.

Protective factor research indicates that youth who get good grades in school demonstrate a 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.

Specific item help:

1. Youth is a special education student or has a formal diagnosis of a special education need:

- Indicate if the youth is or has ever been a special education student or the youth has special education needs as evidenced by his or her receiving special treatment/accommodations in school. Note: A 504 plan or IEP does not automatically indicate special education.
- If possible, contact the school to determine any/all special education classifications/needs.
- Specific special education needs that may be counted for this assessment are only:
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD):
Autism Spectrum Disorder is defined to be a range of pervasive developmental disorders that adversely affects a student's functioning and results in the need for specially designed instruction and related services. Autism Spectrum Disorder may include Autistic Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified, Asperger's Disorder, or other related pervasive developmental disorders. If this need is present, mark "Behavioral"
 - Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing (DHH):
A student who is deaf or hard-of-hearing has a hearing loss aided or unaided, that impacts the processing of linguistic information and which adversely affects performance in the educational environment. The degree of loss may range from mild to profound. If this need is present, mark "Learning"
 - Dual-Sensory Impairment (DSI): Deaf-Blind:
A student who has dual-sensory impairments affecting both vision and hearing, the combination of which causes a serious impairment in the abilities to acquire information, communicate, or function within the environment, or who has a degenerative condition which will lead to such an impairment. If this need is present, mark "Learning"
 - Emotional/Behavioral Disability (E/BD):
A student with an emotional/behavioral disability has persistent (is not sufficiently responsive to implemented evidence based interventions) and consistent emotional or behavioral responses that adversely affect performance in the educational environment that cannot be attributed to age, culture, gender, or ethnicity. If this need is present, mark "Behavioral"
 - Intellectual Disability (InD):

An intellectual disability is defined as significantly below average general intellectual and adaptive functioning manifested during the developmental period, with significant delays in academic skills. Developmental period refers to birth to eighteen (18) years of age. If this need is present, mark “Intellectual Disability”

- **Language Impairment (LI):**
Language impairments are disorders of language that interfere with communication, adversely affect performance and/or functioning in the student’s typical learning environment, and result in the need for exceptional student education. A Language impairment is defined as a disorder in one or more of the basic learning processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. These include: Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics, and Pragmatics.
The language impairment may manifest in significant difficulties affecting listening comprehension, oral expression, social interaction, reading, writing, or spelling. A language impairment is not primarily the result of factors related to chronological age, gender, culture, ethnicity, or limited English proficiency. If this need is present, mark “Learning”
- **Other Health Impairment (OHI):**
Other health impairment means having limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that is due to chronic or acute health problems. This includes, but is not limited to, asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, Tourette syndrome, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and acquired brain injury. For the purposes of this assessment we only count those youth with ADD or ADHD; do not count anything else within this category. If this need is present, mark “ADHD/ADD”
- **Specific Learning Disability (SLD):**
A specific learning disability is defined as a disorder in one or more of the basic learning processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest in significant difficulties affecting the ability to listen, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematics. Associated conditions may include, but are not limited to, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, or developmental aphasia. A specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of a visual, hearing, motor, intellectual, or emotional/behavioral disability, limited English proficiency, or environmental, cultural, or economic factors. If this need is present, mark “Learning”
- **Speech Impairment (SI):**

Speech impairments are disorders of speech sounds, fluency, or voice that interfere with communication, adversely affect performance and/or functioning in the educational environment, and result in the need for exceptional student education. If this need is present, mark “Learning”

- **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI):**
A traumatic brain injury means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects educational performance. The term applies to mild, moderate, or severe, open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one (1) or more areas such as cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem-solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities, psychosocial behavior, physical functions, information processing, or speech. The term includes anoxia due to trauma. The term does not include brain injuries that are congenital, degenerative, or induced by birth trauma. If this need is present, mark “Learning”
- **Visual Impairment (VI): Blind and Partially Sighted:**
Students who are visually impaired include students who are blind, have no vision, or have little potential for using vision or students who have low vision. The term visual impairment does not include students who have learning problems that are primarily the result of visual perceptual and/or visual motor difficulties. If this need is present, mark “Learning”

2. Youth’s current school enrollment status, regardless of attendance:

- 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.
- Include all school types: public, private, adult ed, vo-tech, virtual school, home school, dual enrollment, charter, etc.
- Part time will be considered any less than the weekly hours listed above.

3. Youth’s conduct in the most recent term:

- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child’s conduct in the most recent term.
- For problems reported by teachers, this is a formal call to the parents/guardians by the teacher.
- Parents notified of problems of at school would be formal calls or notification from the discipline office or dean, etc. This would occur when 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, select calls to police.

- Do not count calls for the following types of misconduct: swearing, attendance, grades, and/or non-aggressive disrespectful behavior.
- 4. Number of expulsions and suspensions in the most recent term:**
- Include only out-of-school expulsions and suspensions.
 - Some special education students cannot be suspended and instead receive other interventions. Do not score this as a suspension, but make a note in the comments section of the domain. This would be considered with their school attendance.
- 5. Youth's attendance in the most recent term:**
- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's attendance in the most recent term.
- 6. Youth's academic performance in the most recent 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.

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 higher risk.

The protective factor research suggests that commitment and bonding to the community can reduce anti-social behavior.

Specific item help:

1. Types of structured recreational activities in which the youth is currently interested:

- Indicate what activities in which the youth has a genuine interest.
- If not interested in any, select 'none'.

- For the purposes of this assessment, only count structured pro-social activities.

2. Types of structured recreational activities in which the youth is currently participating:

- Indicate activities in which the youth participates.
- If none, select 'none'.
- 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 NOT interested in.
- Extracurricular school activities should be counted here.

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.

Specific item help:

1. Current 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 pay check is not necessarily required.

2. Understanding of 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.

Domain 6

General research information related to relationships:

Youth are influenced by their peers, family, and other adults. 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 anti-social and criminal behavior. The protective factor research suggests that youth with weak family attachments can be influenced by other positive adult role models. According to prevention 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 criminal activity.

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.

Specific item help:

1. Current positive adult relationships:

- This item is asking about the existence of reliable, caring relationships based upon compassion, understanding, respect, and interest that establish trust and self-confidence. That is, are there adults or older persons in the youth's life who provide support to help the youth live a positive life?
- Do not include the youth's parents or immediate family as they are captured in domain 7.

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

- The term *anti-social peers* refers to youth who are hostile to, or disruptive of, the legal social order; who violate the law and the rights of others. Anti-social youth are those who adults may 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.

3. Currently admires/emulates anti-social peers:

- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's current peers.
- Base this response on what the youth says about peers who get into trouble. Does the youth 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, include this in your response. Both admiration and emulation simultaneously are not required.
- If they do not admire or copy any of the anti-social peer behavior, or do not have any anti-social peers, select "Does not admire, emulate anti-social peers"
- If they sometimes admire or copy any of the anti-social peer behavior, select "Somewhat admires, emulates anti-social peers"
- If they always or a majority of the time admire or copy the anti-social peer behavior, select "Admires, emulates anti-social peers"

4. Current resistance to anti-social peer influence:

- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's current resistance to anti-social peers.

- 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.

Domain 7

General research information related to family:

The family environment in which the youth was raised has a large influence over the youth's attitudes and behaviors. Current living arrangements also have an impact on the youth's risk level. Youth who are not under the supervision and guidance of an adult are at a higher risk of getting into trouble.

Research has consistently identified parental characteristics (such as criminality, substance abuse problems, and mental health problems) 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 is shown to 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. Lack of parental affection and parental rejection of the youth have been consistently linked to criminal behavior. Third, poorly defined and poorly communicated rules and expectations for behavior that is inconsistent or excessively severe further contribute to difficulties for the youth. Finally, youth who witness or experience abuse are at a greater risk for behavioral and emotional problems.

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 other mental health providers who know the youth or the youth's family.

Specific item help:

1. Jail/imprisonment history of persons who are currently involved in the household:

- To count a person in this item, the person must have been sentenced to jail or prison as a result 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.
- This person does not have to live in the same home with the youth, but they do maintain regular, close contact with the family.
- Include non-parental caretakers. This includes guardians, relative caretakers, and foster parents.
- Answer based on jail/imprisonment that occurred after the youth was born.

- 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.
- Check an equal number of family members to match the youth's situation, regardless of the member type. Use the comments section if needed.

2. Problem history of parents who are currently involved with the household:

- *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 have ever experienced.
- Interviewing the youth and parent separately may help in getting this information.
- Problems with alcohol or drugs involve disrupted function in employment, family, health, and legal consequences.
- Employment problems are evidenced by problems with work, lack of work, absence from work, poor job performance, or quitting or being fired due to problems. This does not include working multiple jobs to make ends meet.
- Physical and mental health problems must be elevated to the point that they cause a disruption or hardship in the life of the family members.

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

- Include all family members (natural sibling, half sibling, step sibling, cousin) being raised in the household with the youth.
- Problems with alcohol or drugs involve disrupted function in employment, family, health, and legal consequences.
- Employment problems are evidenced by problems with work, lack of work, absence from work, poor job performance, or quitting or being fired due to problems. This does not include working multiple jobs to make ends meet.
- Physical and mental health problems must be elevated to the point that they cause a disruption or hardship in the life of the family members.

4. Youth's current living situation:

- This item is referring to the situation of the youth. For example, if the youth lives alone, assess their living situation only.
- A transient living situation is one in which the family moves regularly. This does not include when a family moved due to obtaining a better job or for military families.
- The intent is to uncover situations in which there is a lack of stability in where the youth lives and for youth who are moving multiple times throughout the year.
- This is especially destabilizing when the youth are forced to change schools multiple times per year or over several years.
- Transient living situations may also be the result of evictions or foreclosures in which the family is forced to move.
- Shelter may be selected for youth living in a shelter alone or along with other family members.

- Homeless youth may be those in a temporary shelter, or in a situation where they have not been in a home for more than 60 days, or have had two or more moves in the last 60 days. Also include those youth who live in a place not meant for human habitation.
- If the youth is in foster care, assess the stability of the foster family.

5. Youth has run away from home:

- Be sure to differentiate between a youth running away or being kicked out.
- This item is progressive from least to most severe. Choose the most severe relevant to the youth's situation.

6. Youth has been kicked out of the home:

- Be sure to differentiate between a youth running away or being kicked out.
- This item is progressive from least to most severe. Choose the most severe relevant to the youth's situation.

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

- This item is progressive. Since several forms of conflict may be present, choose the most severe. Look at the all dynamics in the home, not just those the youth is involved in, but also others' conflicts (i.e. mother and father).
- If conflict is present and not well managed, select 'Verbal Intimidation, yelling, heated arguments'.

8. Parental supervision:

- Good supervision includes encouraging and guiding youth to engage in pro-social activities.
- 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 child's whereabouts, activities, and peers.
- Knowledge alone is not good supervision. Knowing 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. Likewise, knowing the youth is skipping school implies parental supervision is inadequate.
- Think, does the youth know how to contact the parent at all times? Does the parent know where the youth is at all times? If parents are at work or out of the home, what efforts are in place to ensure the youth is properly supervised?
- Don't hold the parent responsible if the child is doing a good job hiding things from the parent. If the parent is appropriately monitoring the youth, they should get credit.

- Discussion with parent is important to gain their perspective.

9. Parental authority and control:

- Determine if the family has rules and expectations and how frequently the youth follows through and obeys them. Probe carefully if 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 confirmation of what the youth says, although if you suspect the parents are denying a problem, you may want to seek other sources.
- For example, if a youth gets in trouble in the middle of the night, or during the school day, the parent may not have adequate authority and control.

Domain 8

General research information related to alcohol and drugs:

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 a 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.

Specific item help:

1. Youth's alcohol use:

- If the youth has never used alcohol in his or her life, select "No past use of alcohol ever"
- If the youth has used alcohol in the past (more than trying it one time), select "Past alcohol use"
- If the youth used to use alcohol, but has not used during the current time period, select "Not currently using alcohol"
- If the youth is actively using alcohol within the current time period, select "Currently using alcohol"
- For youth actively using, assess the alcohol use relative to its disruption of the youth's life:
 - Causing family conflict is alcohol use that disrupts family life and is evidenced by conflicts over alcohol use, such as running away from home, stealing at home to support use, arguing over use, or stealing alcohol from home.

- Disruption of education is evidenced by problems with attendance or poor school performance/grades related to alcohol use.
- Disruption in health is evidenced by emergency room visits or medical problems which resulted from alcohol use.
- Disruption in peer relationships is evidenced by most of the youth's friends using alcohol and a loss of pro-social friends.
- Use that contributes to criminal behavior typically precipitates the commission of a crime/anti-social behavior; there is reason to believe the behavior is related to alcohol use. Examples are being drunk when doing anti-social behaviors or stealing in order to get alcohol.
- If the youth needs increasing amounts of alcohol to get drunk, select the corresponding response.
- Withdrawal problems range from mild anxiety and shakiness to severe complications, such as seizures and delirium tremens (also called DTs). Other symptoms include irritability, agitation, shaky hands, sweating, nausea, vomiting, headache, and insomnia.

2. Youth's drug use:

- If the youth has never used drugs in his or her life, select "No past use of drugs ever"
- If the youth has used drugs in the past (more than trying it one time), select "Past drug use"
- If the youth used to use drugs, but has not used during the current time period, select "Not currently using drugs"
- If the youth is actively using drugs within the current time period, select "Currently using drugs"
- For youth actively using, assess the drug use relative to its disruption of the youth's life:
 - Causing family conflict is drug use that disrupts family life and is evidenced by conflicts over drug use, such as running away from home, stealing at home to support use, or arguing over use.
 - Disruption of education is evidenced by problems with attendance or poor school performance/grades related to drug use.
 - Disruption in health is evidenced by emergency room visits or medical problems which resulted from drug use.
 - Disruption in peer relationships is evidenced by most of the youth's friends using drugs and a loss of pro-social friends.
 - Use that contributes to criminal behavior typically precipitates the commission of a crime/anti-social behavior; there is reason to believe the behavior is related to drug use. Examples are being high when doing anti-social behaviors or stealing in order to get high.

- If the youth needs increasing amounts of drugs to get high, select the corresponding response.
- Withdrawal symptoms include anxiety or jumpiness; shakiness or trembling; sweating, nausea and vomiting; insomnia; depression; irritability; fatigue or loss of appetite and headaches. Does the youth use drugs to steady the nerves or stop the shakes in the morning? Drug use to relieve or avoid withdrawal symptoms is a sign of addiction.

3. Types of drugs currently used:

- Select any and all drugs the youth currently uses.

4. Prior participation in drug/alcohol treatment program:

- This item is asking for historical information; did the youth participate in drug treatment in the past?
- If treatment was never previously warranted, this means the youth was not using or the use did not negatively impact any of the life areas.
- Include both in-patient and out-patient treatment programs where addressing substance abuse was the goal.

5. Current drug/alcohol treatment program participation:

- This item is asking about treatment within the current time period.
- If treatment is not warranted, this means the youth may not be using or if using, the use does not negatively impact any of the life areas.
- If the youth is using substances 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.
- If the youth completed treatment successfully within the current time period, select the corresponding response.
- If the youth was unsuccessful in completing treatment within the current time period, select the corresponding response.

Domain 9

General research information related to mental health:

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 the 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, particularly for women. In addition, abuse is seen as one of the crucial precursors to sexually and physically violent behavior.

Regardless of the cause, violent and aggressive behavior is viewed as a stable predictor of difficulties throughout life. This means youth who rely on physically aggressive ways at an early age are more likely to continue this behavior into adult hood.

The strength of the relationship between mental health factors and criminal behavior is less well understood. What is important to focus on is assessing the youth's current level of personal safety, community safety, and the ability to cope with major life events and daily stressors.

Specific item help:

1. History of violence/physical abuse:

- For the purposes of this tool, select victim of violence/physical abuse at home for both mental abuse and physical abuse. DCF defines physical abuse as any non-accidental physical injury, such as bruises, burns, fractures, bites, or internal injuries. Mental abuse includes, by accident or omission, the damaging of the intellectual, psychological, or emotional functioning of a child.
- Determine the existence of abuse by asking the youth and by checking with any involved qualified professionals, like a DCF worker, school counselor, social worker, or health care provider. Qualified professionals are individuals with the necessary training or experience that enables them to determine, either directly from the youth or indirectly from the family, relatives, or other sources, whether the child was abused.
- If you suspect that self-reported abuse is being used to get back at parents, it is necessary to confirm the abuse with other sources.
- 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.

2. History of being a victim of sexual abuse/rape:

- 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, 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 one's private parts, communication of indecent language, or forced sexual contact of the child to the adult perpetrator.
- Determine the existence of abuse by asking the youth and by checking with any involved qualified professionals, like a DCF worker, school counselor, social worker, or health care provider. Qualified professionals are individuals with the necessary

training or experience that enables them to determine, either directly from the youth or indirectly from the family, relatives, or other sources, whether the child was abused.

- If you suspect that self-reported abuse is being used to get back at parents, it is necessary to confirm the abuse with other sources.
- 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.

3. History of being a victim of neglect:

- DCF defines neglect to include the negligent or dangerous act or omission that constitutes a clear and present danger to the child's health welfare, or safety, such as:
 - Failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, 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 abuse by asking the youth and by checking with any involved qualified professionals, like a DCF worker, school counselor, social worker, or health care provider. Qualified professionals are individuals with the necessary training or experience that enables them to determine, either directly from the youth or indirectly from the family, relatives, or other sources, whether the child was abused.
- If you suspect that self-reported abuse is being used to get back at parents, it is necessary to confirm the abuse with other sources.
- 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 suicidal ideation:

- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's history.

- The response “has never thought about suicide” means the youth has not had any serious thoughts. Account for typical negative or fleeting thoughts of a normal teenager, as “never thought” for this item.

5. Current suicidal risks:

- Engaging in self-mutilating behavior is not necessarily indicative of suicidal ideations. Self-mutilating or self-injurious behavior can include, but is not limited to, cutting, burning, scratching, head-banging, lit-biting, stapling, etc.
- The general intention of self-mutilation is to feel pain and/or get attention.
- Be sure to ask about hidden self-mutilation.

6. Mental health problems currently interfere in working with the youth:

- This is based on the interviewer’s or collateral contact’s perspective.

Domain 10

General research information related to attitudes and behaviors:

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, people getting into trouble tend to minimize, deny, or excuse their behavior more frequently and across a broader range of situations than people who are not getting into trouble. 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 victims of crime.

Research has shown that anti-social attitudes are directly related to criminal behavior. A number of intervention strategies have been developed in an effort to teach offenders to identify and replace pro-criminal expressions with pro-social statements.

In addition to anti-social attitudes, this domain is also concerned with how the youth views the future and their level of motivation to change. Research suggests that individuals may come into the system at different stages of readiness or willingness to change.

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 guidelines and to benefit from intervention.

The 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.

The youth’s attitude toward authority makes them difficult to deal with and provide helpful interventions, help, or advice.

The 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.

Specific item help:

- *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 thoughts, and what they did—prior to, during, and immediately after engaging in anti-social or risky behavior.*
- *Most items in this section deal with thinking errors that increase the youth's likelihood of continuing anti-social behavior and getting into trouble.*
- *Remember, sometimes means occasionally and often means frequently.*

1. Impulsive; acts before thinking:

- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.
- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's history.

2. Belief in control over anti-social behavior:

- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.
- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's history.
- 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 will be captured in Domain 12, Skills.

3. Empathy, remorse, sympathy, or feelings for the victim(s) of criminal behavior:

- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.
- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's history.
- Determine a youth's empathy, remorse, sympathy, or feelings—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 victims, but not all victims.

4. Respect for authority figures:

- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.
- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's history.

- 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.

5. Attitude toward responsible law abiding behavior:

- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.
- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's history.
- Believes pro-social rules/conventions apply to him or her means the youth understands the value of pro-social rules to themselves and to society; seeing beyond their own personal needs.
- Believes some pro-social rules/conventions sometimes apply to him or her means the youth understands the value of some pro-social rules when they benefit their own personal needs.
- Does not believe pro-social rules/conventions apply to him or her means the youth does not see a value in pro-social rules because they cannot see beyond their own personal needs.
- Defiant and resent pro-social rules/conventions means the youth rejects these values because they might interfere in their obtaining their own personal needs – what they want, when they want it.

6. Accepts responsibility for anti-social behavior:

- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.
- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's history.
- Determine the degree to which the youth minimizes, justifies, or excuses their anti-social behavior or blames other or circumstances; not accepting responsibility for their actions, or even accepting their negative behavior as OK or being proud of it.

Domain 11

General research information related to aggression:

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 harm or gain advantage over others, inflict physical harm, or psychological distress on another. Bullying is a form of aggression where intimidation or domination toward someone who is perceived as weaker is used feel superior.

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 sorts 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 most important precursors of risk for later serious and violent offending.

The research discusses two purposes or motivations for violent behavior:

Purely hostile or angry violence which can be impulsive or the reaction of an emotion or excitement.

Instrumental violence is a more deliberate act to obtain some goal, goods, or services.

Specific item help:

- *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 contacts.*
- *Encourage an open discussion with the youth by asking them to describe how they felt, what they thoughts, and what they did—prior to, during, and immediately after engaging in anti-social or risky behavior.*
- *These items capture more information relating to angry violence than to instrumental violence.*
- *Remember, sometimes means occasionally and often means frequently.*

1. Hostile interpretation of the actions and intentions of others in a common non-confrontational setting:

- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.
- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's history.
- 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 to justify their anti-social actions.
- Determine the degree to which the youth attributes hostility to the actions or intentions of others when there is no such hostility.

2. Belief in fighting and physical aggression to resolve a disagreement or conflict:

- These responses are listed from most pro-social to least pro-social.
- This item is progressive; select the most severe response that matches the child's history.

- A youth's aggressiveness and hostility dispose them toward becoming violent. Given the situation, they would use physical aggression to get what they want or intimidate others.
- Determine the degree to which the youth believes physical aggression is an appropriate way of expressing themselves 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, pushing, punching, or fighting is an appropriate means for getting 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 will be captured in Domain 12, Skills.

3. Reports/evidence of violence not included in criminal history:

- This is a history of ever exhibiting these behaviors, the assessment "current" timeframes do not apply to this item.
- Direct questions might be necessary to determine if the youth has ever participated in any of these behaviors.
- Sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to, voyeurism, aggressive sex, young sex, sex for money/power.

Domain 12

General research information related to skills:

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.

The research indicates that interventions most successful with juveniles are those that take a cognitive-behavioral approach. This approach focuses on correcting the cognitive deficits and giving the youth new skills to more appropriately manage themselves and their environment.

Youths who have little ability to control themselves will have a difficult time avoiding anti-social behavior if they encounter triggers that lead them to re-offend. These youth lack the ability to avoid anti-social behaviors, and will respond to triggers without stopping or thinking. These youth may be

impulsive, excitable, or overly active with a low tolerance for frustration. These youth may also be controlled by immediate gratification.

Specific item help

- *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 contacts.*
- *This domain is based on your opinion of the youth's skill and not the youth's opinion.*
- *Use a general pattern of current behavior and not a single incident.*
- *Remember, sometimes means occasionally and often means frequently.*

1. Consequential thinking:

- These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.
- Because 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.
- Consequential thinking involves understanding there are consequences, both good and bad, to actions.

2. Goal setting:

- These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.
- Respond to this item relative to the youth's age. Assess whether youth's goals are realistic and appropriate.
- 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 necessary to achieve the goal.
- In order to set positive, realistic goals, the youth must have good consequential thinking skills.

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 anti-social behavior. Then, they must be able to apply their critical thinking skills to think of alternative solutions to their anti-social behavior. Finally, they must be able to apply or live out the best solution that will keep them out of trouble.

4. Dealing with others:

- These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.

5. Dealing with difficult situations:

- These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.
- 6. Dealing with feelings/emotions:**
- These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.
- 7. Control of impulsive behavior that get youth into trouble:**
- These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.
 - This skill goes beyond monitoring the trigger to being able to control them self to either avoid the trigger or diffuse its impact upon them.
 - A youth who can “stop and think”, and choose the response that is most pro-social would not have a problem with impulsive behavior.
- 8. Control of aggression:**
- These responses are listed from least skilled to most skilled.
 - 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.