Validity & Accuracy of PACT Assessment
Myths vs. Facts
(Updated July 2018)

Myth: The risk assessments used by DJJ—the Community PACT and the Residential PACT—are not valid predictors of risk.
Fact: Both the C-PACT and the R-PACT are valid risk assessment tools.

Multiple studies have confirmed that the risk assessment tools used by DJJ are valid predictors of recidivism. In fact, these studies have used data from multiple fiscal years (2005-2012), providing further evidence that the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) assessment accurately predicts criminal recidivism across different populations of youth.

Baglivio (2009) found the PACT to be equally predictive of male and female recidivism in a population of youth from FY 2005-2007. Further, a study conducted by an independent organization discovered that PACT risk scores predicted reoffending regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or age. Moreover, Baglivio and Jackowski (2013) found the overall PACT risk score to be highly predictive of recidivism for 15,072 youth who completed probation during FY 2007-2008.

Recent examinations of the PACT have concurred with previous studies—that is, the PACT and its measures significantly predict reoffending. Baglivio et al. (2015) found that changes in PACT scores during residential placement significantly predicted the likelihood of recidivism. In other words, those who exhibited increased risk scores during placement were more likely to reoffend, and those with decreased risk scores during placement were less likely to reoffend. Further, Hay et al. (2016) found that static and dynamic measures included in the R-PACT were highly predictive of recidivism for youth released from residential placement during FY 2010-2011.