

The Analysis of Trauma-Informed Risk Assessments Within a  
Juvenile Justice System in a Midwest State

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A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Science in Criminal Justice

College of Community and Public Service

April 2020

**ABSTRACT**

With approximately 90% of justice-involved youth experiencing at least one traumatic event before entering the justice system, trauma-informed care has moved to the forefront of juvenile justice in recent years (Dierkhising et al., 2013). Trauma-informed care aims to capture and address the impact trauma has on youth. One area within the juvenile justice system that is critical to capturing these events in justice-involved youth are risk assessments. The current study aims to address whether a Midwest state is using trauma-informed questions and incorporating aspects of intersectionality (gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and class) within practices directed at justice-involved youth. A content analysis of four risk assessments revealed that trauma-informed questioning was inconsistent among the risk assessments and there were no questions regarding concepts of intersectionality. Additionally, recommendations are provided on how to create more comprehensive risk assessments within the juvenile justice system.

**Keywords:** Juvenile Justice; Trauma-Informed Care; Intersectionality; Risk Assessments

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## INTRODUCTION

With over two million individuals involved in the justice system, the United States holds the title for the largest incarcerated population in the world (Wagner & Sawyer, 2018). The United States has become notorious for the use of punitive corrections and has developed a reliance on incapacitation. From a historical perspective, the United States correctional system focused on being “tough on crime” and seeking retribution for crimes committed by offenders since the early 1980’s (Enns, 2014). The “tough on crime” perspective was introduced by politicians stating the crime rates were high because the criminal justice system was too lenient on offenders (Curley, 2015). Though before the “tough on crime” perspective dominated the justice system, the United States used indeterminate sentencing in the 1960’s, which focused on individualization of sentencing and aimed to rehabilitate the individual rather than punish them (Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014). Due to criticisms of leniency from prosecutors and the rising fear of crime from the public, the United States transitioned from indeterminate sentencing to the current “tough on crime” practices (Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014). The introduction of the “War on Drugs” and various legislation such as, the Three Strikes Law in the 1980’s and 1990’s, led to the use of retribution in corrections (Curley, 2015). The “tough on crime” narrative took hold of politicians and public opinion and the justice system began focusing on punishment rather than treating the offender.

The tough on crime approach aimed to lower crime rates, but research has shown these tactics have failed to prevent or deter future crime (Muntingh, 2008). In a study conducted by Alper and Durose (2018), the United States had a recidivism rate of 83% over a nine-year period with the largest relapse in the first year after release (Alper & Durose, 2018). This statistic underscores the main problem with punishment in the U.S., which is the focus on retribution.

With an overwhelming amount of individuals re-offending, it is clear punitive measures are not preventing crime nor stopping individuals from future offenses. These statistics stress the need to reform the correctional system.

The emphasis on retributive punishment within corrections ignored many important patterns that emerged within the United States' prison population, specifically examining how trauma plays a role in offending (DeLisi, Alcala, Kusow, Hochstetler, Heirigs, Caudill, Trulson, & Baglivio, 2017). In recent years, there has been a gradual return from retribution to rehabilitation. Rehabilitation has become the new concentration within corrections to understand how trauma impacts offenders and focuses on addressing the underlying issues of experiencing trauma and how this can lead to crime.

One population who experiences a significant amount of trauma before entering the justice system are juveniles (Abram et al., 2013). Juveniles make up a small portion of incarcerated individuals in the United States, with 48,000 youth being detained in juvenile correctional facilities and 5,000 being held in adult facilities (Wagner & Sawyer, 2018). Though they make up a small fraction, juveniles are an extremely vulnerable population due to their immaturity and lack of development compared to adults (*Roper v. Simmons*, 2005; *Graham v. Florida*, 2010; *Miller v. Alabama*, 2012). These distinctions demonstrate the importance of recognizing how trauma plays a role within the juvenile population.

Trauma is a prevalent issue among justice- involved youth, which can be seen through the risk factors that led them to the juvenile justice system. Justice-involved youth are defined as any youth who comes in contact with the justice system, such as being arrested, coming into contact with police officers, going to court, and being adjudicated (Chisolm, 2017). It is important to recognize this distinction because seven out ten youth arrests are referred to the

courts, with only 30% resulting in adjudication (Chisolm, 2017). The majority of youth within the system are not formally detained, but they are still involved with the juvenile justice system. In order to fully understand the prevalence and impact of trauma, the research must capture *all* youth involved within the justice system, which is why this research will focus on justice-involved youth rather than only focusing on juvenile offenders.

Most research at present focuses on multiple risk factors linked to juvenile offending including internal and external factors, such as family, school, and personality (Shader, 2001). The current study will examine external factors, which play a significant role in a youth's risk of offending. These factors focus on variables a child cannot control within their environment. Examples of external risk factors include low socioeconomic status, poor child-parent relationships, abusive parents, neglect, and many other conditions that can impact a child's life (Shader, 2001). Additionally, this project will explore the impact of intersectionality on trauma, specifically the impact of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation.

Though there are many risk factors tied to juveniles becoming involved in the justice system, external risk factors arguably influence all other risk factors because of how central they are in a juvenile's life. External factors are often based on home conditions and family relationships that leave an impact on any child, regardless of whether they become a juvenile offender or not. The biggest strain on a child's environment is the trauma, or negative effects, they witness or experience themselves (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, 2014). For instance, there can be extreme strain on attachment and relationships when a child is exposed to negative caregiver relationships, such as abuse or domestic violence (The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), n.d.; Cook et al., 2005). Also, children who are abused, or even witness abuse, are at an increased vulnerability to stress and have a

harder time controlling or expressing their emotions (NCTSN, n.d.). This can lead to an array of issues throughout their life, such as poor peer relationships and inadequate coping mechanisms, which are both considered risk factors to juvenile delinquency (Maschi, 2006).

Trauma also impacts a child's basic brain development. High levels of stress induced by trauma can cause a strain on the brain and lead to issues of an over-responsive or under-responsive sensory system (NCTSN, n.d.). Research has also shown that trauma increases the likelihood of a child engaging in risky behavior, such as substance use, smoking, and participating in sexual activities early (NCTSN, n.d.; Cook et al., 2005). The risky behavior is found to be tied to the disrupted development caused by experiencing traumatic events (De Bellis & Zisk, 2014). Trauma also affects youth's self-regulation, contributing to a lack of impulse control and reduced ability to think through the consequences of their actions (NCTSN, n.d.).

Trauma can affect every aspect of childhood development and can define or alter their entire life course. Specifically, trauma increases the chances a child becomes involved with the justice system. Research has found that up to 90% of juveniles involved in the criminal justice system have been exposed to at least one type of traumatic event, and around 70% of the youth also met the criteria for a mental health disorder, many of which may be brought on by trauma (Dierkhising, Ko, Woods-Jeger, Briggs, Lee, & Pynoos, 2013). These percentages establish evidence that trauma is prevalent among justice-involved youth and has a significant impact on juvenile offenders. Furthermore, many juvenile offenders are exposed to more than just one single traumatic event, which may increase the risk of offending.

For juveniles, the extensive amount of literature on trauma and how trauma impacts their development demonstrates how important trauma-informed policy is within the juvenile justice system. The literature has shown that juvenile offenders have experienced higher rates of

traumatic experiences, such as abuse and exposure to violence, than the general population (Grella, Lovinger, & Warda, 2013; Baglivio, Epps, Swartz, Huq, Sheer, & Hardt, 2014). The most common types of trauma within the juvenile offender population are the separation of parents, domestic violence, emotional abuse, and physical abuse (Dierkhising et al., 2013), all of which will be explored in more detail. Experiencing trauma also increases the chance a juvenile will develop mental health issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (Dixon, Howie, & Starling, 2005; Stimmel, Cruise, Ford, & Weiss, 2014). The literature reiterates the importance of recognizing trauma within the juveniles involved with the justice system because it has significant impact on their development and reoffending after release.

The prevalence of trauma in juvenile's lives prior to offending demonstrates the need to screen for trauma within juvenile detention facilities. Using trauma-informed assessments is essential in making the transition from punitive measures to rehabilitation in a juvenile detention facility. Within juvenile detention centers, there is a unique opportunity to address the trauma a child has faced, and aim to reverse the effects and lower the chances of reoffending. Due to lack of uniformity in policy within the juvenile justice system, one major challenge is the large variation of juvenile assessments used across the country.

Through the use of trauma-informed screening assessments, juvenile detention facilities can capture the types of trauma experienced by justice-involved youth and make accurate recommendations to address the trauma they have experienced. Addressing traumatic experiences, and their impact, enhances the ability for the juveniles to re-enter society as a healthy young adult. The lack of transparency and uniformity in assessments used in juvenile facilities makes it difficult to determine whether facilities are actually assessing juveniles for traumatic events in their risk assessments versus not correctly identifying trauma within these



assessments. The current research aims to answer the following question: are risk assessments in a Midwest state's Juvenile Justice System using trauma-informed questions and incorporating aspects of intersectionality among justice-involved youth?

The forthcoming review of the current literature will focus on four topics. The first section examines how prevalent trauma is within the juvenile incarcerated population, focusing on the type of crime committed, age, and overall rates within facilities. This section will highlight how trauma is a common variable found within youth offenders. The second section will cover the impact of intersectionality on traumatic experiences among justice-informed youth, providing insight on how certain social constructs may create subsets of vulnerable populations within the justice-involved youth population in this Midwest state.

The third section will cover the impact of trauma on juveniles, specifically looking at how traumatic events impact a juvenile offender including the importance of addressing trauma within this population as well as highlighting the most prevalent types of trauma seen within juvenile detention facilities. This section will draw attention to the significant relationship between traumatic experiences and juvenile offending. Finally, this section will provide the foundation as to why juvenile detention facilities should implement and emphasize trauma-informed risk assessments.

The fourth section will explain what risk assessments are used for and how they are implemented in juvenile facilities. This portion of the literature review will also focus on the variation of risk assessments across the United States with special attention on risk assessments used in the Midwest state. Lastly, a brief overview of risk assessments analyzed in the current research study will be introduced.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Prevalence of Trauma

Trauma is defined as a resulting impact from an “event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being” (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2019, n.p.). Trauma follows after the individual experiences an event, such as, but not limited to, sexual abuse/assault, physical abuse/assault, emotional abuse, neglect, and exposure to violence (Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development, 2008). Additionally, trauma is a risk factor for many substance use disorders, mental health illnesses, and behavioral issues (Reavis, Looman, Franco, & Rojas, 2013). In brief, trauma can be detrimental to a person’s health and development, especially during childhood.

Trauma is not an isolated occurrence and is common within the general population. The average adult in the United States has been exposed to at least one traumatic event within their lifetime (Kilpatrick, Resnick, Malanack, Miller, Keyes, & Friedman, 2014). Though many are able to cope with their experiences in a healthy manner, trauma increases one’s chances to engage in risky behavior and increases the chance of engaging in deviant behavior (Campbell, Walker, & Egede, 2016). Research has demonstrated experiencing a traumatic event significantly increases one’s chance of becoming involved with the criminal justice system (Ardino, 2012; Jäggi et al., 2016).

As previously stated, juveniles that become involved with the justice system experience trauma at much higher rates than the general population. According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative (2015), around two-thirds of children in the United States experience

one traumatic event before the age of 16. However, when examining juveniles within the justice system, one study found that 92% of youth reported experiencing one traumatic event, 84% reporting more than one traumatic event, and 56% reported six or more traumatic experiences (Abram et al., 2013). In comparison to the juveniles in the justice system, only 20% of youth in the general population reported experiencing more than one type of victimization or traumatic experience (Saunders & Adams, 2015). The poly-victimization, or co-occurring trauma that justice-involved youth experience demonstrates how multiple traumatic events play an important role in the involvement with the justice system.

Traumatic experiences of justice-involved youth can range from, but are not limited to, witnessing domestic violence to being physically threatened. Abraham and colleagues (2013) found that the most commonly reported traumas in males and females were witnessing violence, being threatened with a weapon, and being in a situation where someone they were close to was near death. Another study examined traumatic events experienced by juveniles and found that, on average, youth experienced 4.9 traumatic events before becoming involved with the juvenile justice system (Dierkhising et al., 2013). The most reported types of trauma found by Dierkhising and colleagues (2013) were traumatic loss or separation from a caregiver, domestic violence, having an impaired caregiver, emotional abuse, physical abuse, and community violence. Looking at adverse childhood events, juvenile delinquents reported experiencing family violence, parental divorce or separation, or having a household member incarcerated (Baglivio et al., 2014). Additionally, Baglivio and Epps (2017) found that the most commonly reported traumatic events were emotional neglect and family violence.

One common pattern within juveniles involved in the justice system is the age of onset and age of first traumatic experiences. Justice involved youth often experience multiple

traumatic experiences, as stated above, but also experience them at young ages. Dierkhising and colleagues (2013) found that 33% of juveniles reported experiencing their first traumatic event during their first year of life. The study further found that by age 5, the majority of youth experienced co-occurring trauma or multiple traumatic events (Dierkhising et al., 2013).

Another study examined 64,000 juvenile offenders in Florida and found that when a juvenile was arrested earlier in life they were more likely to have experienced higher rates of trauma than those arrested later in adolescence (Baglivio et al., 2015). Thirty percent of those who were in the early onset group reported five or more adverse events and only 10% of the late onset group reported traumatic experiences (Baglivio et al., 2015). This research shows that when children have an earlier onset to traumatic experiences, they have a higher chance of being arrested earlier in life and maintaining a persistent criminal career (Baglivio et al., 2015).

Traumatic experiences can be broken down further by examining serious, chronic, violent (SCV) juvenile offenders. Serious offenders are juveniles who committed serious acts such as: violent offenses (murder, assault, etc.), serious property offenses, and certain drug offenses (White, 2015). Chronic juvenile offenders are individuals who commit repeated delinquent acts and often start from a young age (White, 2015). One study compared serious, chronic, violent (SCV) juvenile offenders to 'one and done' juvenile offenders, which means they commit one offense then stop (Fox, Perez, Cass, Baglivio, & Epps, 2015). The study found that SCV offenders experienced higher rates of traumatic events when compared to 'one and done' juvenile offenders (Fox et al., 2015). SCV offenders had higher rates of all traumatic experiences within the survey and reported having a family member in prison as the highest experience (Fox et al., 2015). Furthermore, the study found SVC offenders experienced trauma nearly twice as much compared to the 'one and done' offenders (Fox et al., 2015).

The literature shows trauma is prevalent within this population, which provides a strong argument for the importance of trauma-informed policies and assessments in the juvenile justice system. It also highlights a prominent pattern within this population that needs to be acknowledged. The traumatic experiences these individuals face impact how they cope with, or fail to, and address their emotions and stressors both inside and eventually outside of prison.

Capturing the trauma these children are experiencing could help the justice system target serious, chronic offenders because if the child's trauma is handled with proper rehabilitation, they could return to community and enjoy the rest of their youth. In sum, trauma has a major impact on juveniles and could potentially lead to chronic offending.

### **Intersectionality and Trauma**

When discussing trauma among justice-involved youth, intersectionality must also be addressed. Intersectionality is the concept that each individual has a socially constructed identity that places an individual into a social stratum/hierarchy leading to discrimination or disadvantage (Crenshaw, 1989; Potter, 2015). Intersectionality acknowledges how individuals experience life differently based on, though not limited to the intersection or combination of gender, sexual orientation, race, and class characteristics (Potter, 2015). Intersectionality is significant because based on a multitude of certain social constructs individuals can face, including racism, sexism, and discrimination, which can lead to higher rates of trauma among vulnerable groups within this country (Runyan, 2018). This paper will examine four social identities (gender, sexual orientation, race, and class) and the impact these constructs have on trauma within justice-involved youth.

*Gender Identity*

Gender identity in this research will be defined as “how an individual perceives themselves and what they call themselves,” which can be male, female, a blend of both, or neither (Human Rights Campaign, 2020). An individual presents their gender identity through gender expression and/or gender roles (masculine v. feminine), which is taught through socialization (Potter, 2018). Cisgender is the term for an individual who matches their gender with their sex assigned at birth with their identity and expression (Potter, 2018). Transgender refers to an individual whose gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth (Human Rights Campaign, 2020; Wilber, 2015).

Traumatic experiences of juveniles in the justice system can be examined by gender identity. One study found females were more likely to report sexual traumatic events, while males were more likely to report being in a bad accident, such as a car accident (Abraham et al., 2013). Baglivio and colleagues (2014) also reported similar gender differences in juvenile delinquents with more females reporting experiencing sexual assault or sexual abuse, while the males reported higher rates of interpersonal victimization. Sherman (2005) found that 77% of girls who were chronic offenders reported histories of sexual abuse. Furthermore, one assessment of youth in detention facilities found that 100% of females and 67% of males reported on average 6 traumatic events in their lifetime (Espinosa, Sorensen, & Lopez, 2013; Steinberg & Lassiter, 2018). Though in other studies, males reported witnessing violence at a higher rate and females reported being a victim of various types of violence at higher rates than men (Espinosa et al., 2013). A survey done with youth in residential placements also found females were twice more likely to report physical abuse than males (Sedlak & McPheson, 2010). Not only is trauma

prevalent in youth within the justice system, based on their gender identity, they could be at a higher risk of being exposed to specific types of traumatic events.

Juveniles who are gender-nonconforming, which is when an individual does not engage in cultural norms with the gender they were assigned at birth, experience higher rates of child abuse before the age of eleven (Mooney, 2017; Wilber, 2015). In comparison to cisgender youth, gender-nonconforming youth experience more verbal, sexual, and physical abuse (Mooney, 2017). Youth who do not conform to society's gender stereotypes are at a greater risk of being victimized throughout their childhood and have a higher risk of becoming involved with the justice system. It is important to note that the majority of research regarding gender non-conforming youth is research regarding sexual orientation meaning there is a lack of in-depth literature on gender-nonconforming youth and trauma.

Next, sexual orientation is defined as an innate emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other individuals (Human Rights Campaign, 2020). The spectrum for sexual orientation ranges from attraction to only male or female (heterosexual, gay, or lesbian), attraction to both male and female (bisexual), or attraction to all genders (pansexual) (Wilber, 2015). Though transgender is a gender identity, criminological research encompasses it with the research on sexual orientation, therefore, which is why it will be included within this part of literature review (Human Rights Campaign, 2020; Valcore & Pfeffer, 2018). Also, it is important to note there are various sexual orientations not included in this research due to lack of literature on LGBTQ juveniles. LGBTQ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual queer, and/or questioning, which will be used throughout the literature review (The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Community Center, n.d.).

Research has found that LGBTQ youth experience higher rates of traumatic experiences, such as emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, compared to heterosexual or cisgender youth

(Mooney, 2017). Research has also found that LGBTQ youth are targeted by peers or adults due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, specifically experiencing higher rates of verbal victimization such as threats of physical violence (Mooney, 2017). LGBTQ youth also report physical victimization due to their sexual orientation with about 11 to 30% reporting physical harassment or assault and 9% reporting sexual victimization (Mooney, 2017).

Not only are they at risk for victimization, LGBTQ youth also face higher rates of family rejection, stigmatization, child welfare involvement, peer victimization, and homelessness compared to heterosexual or cisgender youth (Hoffman et al., 2020; Graziano & Wagner, 2011). These experiences are also highly traumatic and lead to higher risk of becoming involved with the justice system (Hoffman et al., 2020). Around 26% of gay and transgender youth are forced out of their homes due to rejection from their family, leading to involvement with the justice system (Hunt & Moodie-Mills, 2012). Additionally, prosecutors can file charges against LGBTQ youth for being “incorrigible” or beyond control of their parents, which demonstrates how these youth may be criminalized for their identity rather than their behavior (Hunt & Moodie-Mills, 2012).

LGBTQ youth are a vulnerable population, but LGBTQ girls are at a higher risk than boys, demonstrating how gender and sexual orientation intersect. Belknap and Holsinger (2006) examined 444 incarcerated youth and found that 22% of youth identified as lesbian or gay, but girls were six times more likely to identify as bisexual than boys and three times more likely to identify as homosexual than boys. Another study examining bisexual and lesbian girls found they experience the highest rates of sexual, psychological, and physical abuse by family members compared to heterosexual girls and bisexual or gay males (Graziano & Wagner, 2011). The heightened risk of victimization also leads to a disproportionate number of LGBTQ youth in the



justice system with 12 to 20% of justice-involved youth identifying as LGBTQ compared to 5 to 8% of the general population (Hoffman et al., 2020). Research has found that lesbian and bisexual females are overrepresented compared to gay and bisexual males with 27 to 40% of females identifying as LGBTQ versus 11 to 14% of males (Hoffman et al., 2020). Sexual orientation and gender identity play a significant role in a child's development due to the higher risk of victimization among LGBTQ youth. This higher risk of trauma also leads to LGBTQ youth to be overrepresented in the juvenile justice system.

### *Race and Ethnicity*

Race and ethnicity are also social constructs, which are used interchangeably within criminology but are two different identities. Race is defined as the categorization of an individual based on physical attributes, such as skin tone (Potter, 2015). Ethnicity involves "the culture, customs, religion, language, dialect, and national identity of a group" (Potter, 2015, p. 10). There is extensive research on how race impacts the juvenile justice system such as the disproportionate number of minorities within the system, but research has not focused on trauma and race among justice-involved youth (Crosby, 2017).

One specific type of traumatic event prevalent among minority youth are incidents or assaults based on racism. Research has found that experiences based on racism (hate crimes, verbal assaults, or physically assaults) can be traumatic due to their derogatory and dehumanizing nature (Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005). Examining 189 justice involved African American males, Kang and Burton (2014) found youth indicated having a significant amount of trauma in childhood and almost all youth reported experiencing a type of racial discrimination. Around one-third of youth reported race-based violence, such as destruction of their homes, physical attacks or threats, and murder of family members (Kang & Burton, 2014). Due to

limited research on trauma among minority youth, one study examined adults within the United States and found African Americans and Hispanics reported higher rates of child maltreatment compared to whites (Roberts et al., 2012). African Americans also reported higher exposure to assaults than whites (Roberts et al., 2012). The gaps in literature emphasize the need for more information on trauma experienced by minority youth in the justice system.

### *Class*

The literature on race and trauma of justice-involved youth focuses on racial/ethnic minority youth's heightened risk of living in poverty, which increases the risk of experiencing trauma (Crosby, 2016). The focus on socioeconomic status and class, also highlights intersectionality, as class is often defined as a measure of one's combined economic and social status and is assessed using an individual's education level, income, and occupation (Baker, 2014). Living in low-socioeconomic communities leads to higher risks of exposure to crime, community violence, stress and trauma (Crosby, 2016). Also, research has found that a greater proportion of women of color and people of color live in lower socioeconomic communities than others (Potter, 2015). Living in poverty also exposes youth to higher risk of crime and violence because low family income is predictive for teen violence and being convicted for a violent offense (Henry et al., 1996). Living in low-socioeconomic communities also increases the likelihood of being exposed to community violence, which disproportionately affects minority youth (Colley-Quille et al. 2001). Finally, being exposed to community violence also increases risk of negative life experiences and internalizing behavior, both of which are also tied to a higher chance of becoming involved with the justice system (Colley-Quille et al., 2001).

These social constructs produce multifaceted identities among youth, creating vulnerable populations with the highest risk of victimization (Gunnarsson, 2017; Bowleg, 2012). It is

important to recognize how these social constructs create different narratives for individuals and how they are perceived by the justice system. Females and males will have different pathways to crime as seen with how gender impacts types of victimization (Jung et al., 2015). Also, youth who do not conform to society's views of gender and sexual orientation are also targeted due to their identities and subsequently overrepresented in the justice system. Race and class combined with sexual orientation and gender identity contribute to various pathways to delinquent behavior. In the juvenile justice system, intersectionality is an important concept to not only acknowledge, but insure it is being addressed within risk assessments.

### **Impact of Trauma on Justice Involved Youth**

The prevalence of trauma experienced by justice-involved youth indirectly impacts offending. Trauma impacts the child's mental health, coping mechanisms, behavior, and school performance, which are all potential risk factors for delinquency.

When a child experiences a traumatic event, they are at a higher risk of developing a mental illness, such as depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress, dissociative disorders, and psychosis (Wolff & Shi, 2012). These disorders effect an individual in every area of their life due to the symptomology and leads to issues involving poor coping mechanisms. Specifically, in juveniles involved with the justice system, 70% of youth met the criteria for at least one mental health disorder and 79% met the criteria for multiple diagnoses (Dierkhising et al., 2013). The most common diagnoses for youth in the justice system are disruptive disorders, substance use disorders, anxiety, and mood disorders (Dierkhising et al., 2013). These disorders can have a significant impact on how a child behaves and leads to a child developing maladaptive behaviors (Ford & Delker, 2017). The high prevalence of mental health issues within this population can be tied back to the high prevalence of traumatic experiences. With over 90% of children reporting at

least one traumatic event, youth in the justice system are at a high risk of having or developing mental health issues (Dierkhising et al., 2013).

One of the most prevalent illnesses that develops from a traumatic experience is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD is defined as an anxiety disorder that develops in response to a traumatic experience (Abram et al., 2013). The symptoms of the disorder include flashbacks, avoidance tactics, emotional numbing, and increased arousal (Abram et al., 2013). Within the general population, the prevalence of PTSD in children is around 6%, but among those involved in the justice system it ranges from 10 to 19% (Abram et al., 2013; Wilson et al., 2013). PTSD has a profound impact on development because the stress the disorder puts on a child can impair neurological development (Wilson et al., 2013). Additionally, PTSD leads to an increased risk for other mental health illnesses in youths, such as drug and alcohol use and risky sexual behavior (Wilson et al., 2013). The development of PTSD is directly linked to the traumatic event one has experienced. Therefore, PTSD is highly prevalent within juvenile detention facilities, which demonstrates why it is important to target and capture this disorder in assessments.

Wilson and colleagues (2013) found that juvenile offenders' most common form of trauma was witnessing violence. Furthermore, they found that 12% of their sample met the clinical criteria for PTSD and it was similar rates between genders (Wilson et al., 2013). Those youth who met the criteria for PTSD also reported more co-morbid health issues, such as internalizing and externalizing problems, and more specifically conduct problems and anxiety (Wilson et al., 2013). Developing PTSD puts youth at a disadvantage in their life because they become more vulnerable to other mental health-related illnesses and behavioral problems. Abram and colleagues (2013) studied co-morbidity and PTSD within juveniles in the justice system;

they found that 93% of children who experienced PTSD also reported having at least one other type of psychiatric disorder. Furthermore, 54% of youth reported having two or more disorders and 11% reported having four types of disorder (Abram et al., 2013). Developing multiple disorders creates a large impact on youth's schooling, relationships, and can create issues internally with how youth perceives themselves.

Research indicates that trauma increases the chances of a juvenile developing PTSD. However, PTSD is not the only mental illness found within justice-involved youth. Lasting complex trauma puts a child at risk for developing depression, suicidal ideation, and substance abuse problems (Ford et al., 2012). Depression is defined as a mood disorder where an individual persistently feels sad and experiences a loss of interest (Mayo Clinic, 2018). Depression can lead to emotional and physical problems, such as sleep disturbances, suicidal thoughts, and feelings of worthlessness (Mayo Clinic, 2018). Among juveniles in the justice system, research has found those who reported experiencing multiple traumatic events were seven times more likely to report depression compared to juveniles who reported one traumatic event (Wakefield, Baronia, & Brennan, 2019). Also, major depressive disorder was higher in justice-involved females compared to males (Wakefield et al., 2019). The onset of depression can also come from being arrested or entering the justice system rather than trauma experienced before arrest (Wakefield et al., 2019). Depression is often a co-occurring disorder and can lead to suicidal ideation. It must be recognized and treated within juveniles in the justice system, as, youth generally do not understand these disorders and may not recognize the symptoms until it is too late.

Research has found that children who experience traumatic events are also likely to show behavioral issues such as increased risk of fighting in school, substance abuse, smoking, and engaging in more risky behaviors in general (Youth, 2014). It is important to recognize this

relationship because these youth are more likely to become involved in the justice system while engaging in these behaviors. Also, children who experience large amounts of trauma are at increased risk of displaying more aggressive, self-destructive behaviors, and avoidant behavior (Cook et al., 2005).

From an academic perspective, youth who report traumatic experiences are also at an increased risk of academic failure, attendance issues at school, and presenting behavioral problems in school (Youth, 2014). Research found that children who experienced four or more traumatic events were 32 times more likely to have a learning or behavioral problem compared to children who did not experience trauma (Youth, 2014). Additionally, youth who experience complex trauma also have difficulties with attention and executive functioning as well as language development and focusing and completing tasks (Cook et al., 2005). These are important skills youth need in order to be successful in school; youth with extensive traumatic histories may not have the proper tools to academically succeed, which is also linked to delinquency.

Ford and colleagues (2012) studied aggression in youth within a juvenile justice setting and found children who experienced abuse were more likely to be reactive in nature rather than proactive. This means the child could not properly stop and think about their actions, and instead they act impulsively and with aggression. According to Ford and colleagues (2012), aggressive and antisocial behaviors are tied to low self-esteem and shame in justice-involved youth. When youth enter the juvenile justice system with reactive tendencies, it can lead to more harm and violence if not dealt with correctly. The justice system needs to recognize the trauma these youth have endured; if trauma is not correctly identified, these behaviors are likely to continue to persist not only in detention facilities, but also upon release.

From a theoretical standpoint, the developmental theory furthers the understanding of how trauma impacts youth. The developmental theory aims to explain the onset, persistence, and lack of criminal behavior by examining an individual's life-course (McGee & Farrington, 2016). Through the use of developmental theory, researchers examine one's protective factors, important life events, and the impact of intergenerational influences to explain why one turned to deviant behavior (McGee & Farrington, 2016). This theory focuses on how social processes and structures play a role in one's life, while also observing individual characteristics that emerge from these processes (McGee & Farrington, 2016). Examining how experiences and relationships impact an individual is key to understanding why they commit deviant behavior and provide insight on how to stop future reoffending.

One area of focus within the developmental theory is trauma and how negative life experiences increase an individual's risk of engaging in deviant behavior. As seen throughout this literature review, trauma impacts every aspect of development in a youth's life. Using the developmental theory, youth who have experienced traumatic events are at a higher risk of deviant behavior due to these experiences. Traumatic experiences impact a youth's psychological, physical, and emotional development by altering brain structure and impairing development (Weitzman, 2005). Trauma can also alter a youth's personality and increase the chances of aggressive or antisocial behavior as discussed earlier (Ford et al., 2012). According to the developmental theory, these experiences increased the child's likelihood of committing deviant behavior by developing issues with attachment, self-regulation, and impaired psychosocial functioning (Weitzman, 2005).

Trauma significantly impacts a juvenile in many facets of their life. Specifically looking at justice-involved youth, trauma influences them by increasing their mental health issues,

behavioral issues, and unhealthy coping mechanisms. It is important to examine these variables in juveniles because it supports the argument for a heavier focus on trauma informed measures in the juvenile justice system.

### **Reoffending and Trauma**

Understanding trauma in justice-involved youth does not only explain why they may have engaged in delinquent behavior; it also helps provide the basis for treatment. The stated goal of the juvenile justice department is rehabilitating youth leading them to rejoin the community and become productive members of society (National Research Council, 2013). As stated, trauma is prevalent among this population, which means the juvenile justice system should be assessing for trauma and working to treat it. This not only helps the youth cope with their experiences, it also teaches juveniles how to handle their emotions in a healthy manner, which in turn impacts recidivism rates.

Recidivism is defined as “a person’s relapse into criminal behavior” and one of the most essential concepts in the justice system (National Institute of Justice, n.d.). For youth who experienced trauma before entering the system, they are more likely to recidivate than youth who did not experience trauma (Wolff, Baglivio, & Piquero, 2017). Wolff, Baglivio and Piquero (2017) studied juvenile offenders in Florida, which in the last five years reported having a recidivism rate of 41% to 46% for juveniles placed in residential homes. The study found that children who reported experiencing traumatic effects were significantly more likely to be re-arrested earlier than juveniles who did not (Wolff et al., 2017). Also, the time of re-arrest after release was shorter for those with reported higher traumatic experiences (Wolff et al., 2017). This means that children with complex trauma present the highest risk of reoffending and at a quicker rate.



Also, recidivism varies with sex. One study examined how sexual abuse impacted differences between sexes in recidivism rates. Sexual abuse has a profound impact on girls; research has found it is more common in girls to report negative symptomatology after experiencing sexual abuse (Conrad et al., 2014). Conrad and colleagues (2014) found that sexual abuse in childhood has a large impact on recidivism risk for women. Additionally, girls in the study who reported experiencing sexual abuse had a recidivism rate of 27% compared to girls who did not with a 12% recidivism rate (Conrad et al., 2014). In a gender comparison, males who experienced sexual abuse had a recidivism rate of 4%, which illustrates how different types of trauma impacts gender and recidivism rates (Conrad et al., 2014). This reiterates the importance of acknowledging intersectionality within juvenile justice. Females experience different types of trauma compared to male counterparts, which emphasizes the need for varying rehabilitation efforts.

Recidivism can further be broken down by examining vulnerable groups discussed with intersectionality. There is a gap in the literature regarding justice-involved LGBTQ youth and recidivism. When observing risk factors though, LGBTQ youth face an increased risk of reoffending once released due to higher rates of family rejection leading to increased rates of homelessness (Hoffman et al., 2020; Graziano & Wagner, 2011). Homelessness creates instability among youth leading to higher rates of recidivism, and LGBTQ youth are 120% more likely to report homelessness than non-LGBTQ youth (Morton et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2018). Also, LGBTQ youth face unsafe school conditions because LGBTQ youth report higher rates of bullying and harassment due to their sexual orientation (Center for American Progress, 2016). These risk factors are cited as critical risk factors of reoffending in youth and provide insight on why LGBTQ youth could face higher rates of recidivism due to experiencing traumatic events

(Walker et al., 2018; Metcalf & Yalda, 2015). The lack of literature regarding recidivism rates and trauma among LGBTQ youth also demonstrates how the juvenile justice system lacks transparency with this vulnerable population.

Race and ethnicity present a new challenge when discussing recidivism and trauma among justice-involved youth. The literature has shown that minority youth are disproportionality represented within the juvenile justice system, arguably demonstrating that minorities would also be at an increased risk of re-arrest (Logan-Greene et al., 2018). Furthermore, a study examining the impact of traumatic events and recidivism observed the impact of race/ethnicity on youth (Wolff et al., 2017). They found that black and Hispanic youth were more likely to be taken into custody faster upon release compared to their white counterparts (Wolff et al., 2017). Also, the study found that reporting higher traumatic events was as significant predictor for reoffending in white males and black girls (Wolff et al., 2017). It is important to observe how race/ethnicity and traumatic experiences play a role in recidivism among youth, while also acknowledging the gap in the literature.

Specifically looking at trauma and how it influences recidivism, Wolff and Baglivio (2017) found that children born into dysfunctional families and maladaptive environments are more likely to present irritable, aggressive, and hostile behavior (negative emotionality). Experiencing traumatic events leads to an increased risk of a youth developing negative emotionality, which in turn, increases the chances of offending (Wolff & Baglivio, 2017). For recidivism, research has found that experiencing traumatic events has an indirect effect on recidivism via negative emotionality and justice-involved youth who are labeled as experiencing aggressive or irritable behavior are more likely to be re-arrested than those who do not present this behavior (Wolff & Baglivio, 2017). Trauma has led these juveniles to become more

aggressive or isolated; left untreated, these youth are returned to the community without the tools to control their negative emotions other than learned harmful behaviors.

Since trauma impacts multiple facets of development in youth, it is important to look at how behavioral issues, educational disadvantages, and mental health play a role in recidivism. A study done by Mallet, Fukushima, Stoddard-Dare, and Quinn (2012) examined youth within the Midwest region who were currently on probation. Through the use of court assessments, the researchers were able to examine how these disadvantages played a role in recidivism and placement in detention facilities. Mallet and colleagues (2012) found that minority children who were abused or neglected were three times more likely to be placed in detention and those who reported a suicide attempt were five times more likely to be placed in detention. Also, minority youth who had diagnoses of a conduct disorder were fourteen times more likely to be placed in a facility upon recidivism. The study emphasizes not only how these disadvantages play a role in recidivism but also put youth at risk of being placed in a detention facility, which will only worsen their developmental issues. Recognizing victimization allows for courts to proactively help youth and prevent the cycle of crime within the youths' lives.

The literature regarding reoffending in justice-involved youths with trauma indicates trauma increases their likelihood of reoffending. The existing studies demonstrate the need for more rehabilitative measures within the juvenile justice system and the importance of capturing the trauma these youth are facing. Juveniles released into the community without the proper tools to handle their trauma history, mental illnesses, and behavioral issues are a greater threat to themselves and the community. The juvenile justice system has the unique opportunity to provide a safe space for these youth and equip them with proper coping mechanisms and to set

them up for success. Though in order to help these youth, first the juvenile justice system must be properly assessing them for trauma.

### **Risk Assessments in the Juvenile Justice System**

To understand whether juveniles are being screened for traumatic experiences in risk assessments, one must understand the basic assessment procedures in the juvenile justice system. When a youth enters the justice system, they undergo various assessments to evaluate certain areas of the youth's life. It is important to note that assessments given to youth can vary by state and by county within each state. One type of assessment given to the youth entering the justice system is a risk assessment. Risk assessments are specifically designed to provide insight on interventions best suited for the youth, estimate the likelihood of continued deviant behavior, and collect information about youth within the justice system (Vincent et al., 2012). Risk assessments are used in a youth's case to guide whether they receive certain programming or where they are placed in custody (e.g. in detention facilities, group homes, etc.), or back with their families (Vincent et al., 2012; Butcher & Kretschmar, 2020).

Risk assessments have increased in use over the last two decades because juvenile justice systems want to identify reoffending risk in youth (Campbell et al., 2014). These assessments predict recidivism by giving each youth a risk score (high, moderate, or low risk) during an interview conducted by court personnel (Vincent et al., 2012; Butcher & Kretschmar, 2020). The higher the score or perceived "risk," the more intensive supervision and programming provided to youth (Butcher & Kretschmar, 2020). Not only do risk assessments act as an intake measure, but they also aim to provide the ability to make an objective decision about youth rather than decision-makers relying on their professional judgment (Campbell et al., 2014). This is done by creating a format in which guides the interview and information collected about the youth during

intake. Each risk assessment has its own layout, length, question-structure, and different data collection method, which can alter how objective risk assessments are across the country.

By identifying the high-risk youth versus the low-risk youth, risk assessments allow for the juvenile justice system to become more efficient in processing youth and cost-efficient (Campbell et al., 2014). A cost-benefit analysis has demonstrated that risk assessments can save up to 2.3 million dollars per youth because, when implemented properly, it can recommend the best course of action for a youth's rehabilitation (Campbell et al., 2014). Rather than implementing the same program for every youth, the juvenile justice system provides appropriate interventions for every type of youth (Campbell et al., 2014). This is done by identifying the key factors in a youth that need to be addressed, which differ across youth and create the individualization need in the juvenile justice system. Beyond cost-effectiveness, these assessments also ensure low-risk and high-risk children are not placed in the same program because this could increase the low-risk youth's chances of reoffending (Campbell et al., 2014). Risk assessments must ensure they are capturing the risk in totality to make the most accurate prediction on reoffending risk and recommend the appropriate type of programming for the youth.

Risk assessments are designed to reduce recidivism by identifying key factors in a youth's life that influence the likelihood of reoffending (Vincent et al., 2012). There are no federal guidelines on what needs to be within a risk assessment (which creates large variations in risk assessments used across the United States) and the literature states there are twenty risk assessments currently being used in juvenile justice systems (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2015). This number only represents those recorded to the OJJDP,

meaning this number could be significantly larger. Each state and counties within states can choose what risk assessment(s) to implement or choose to design their own.

If risk assessments aim to address recidivism risk within youth, then these assessments should be targeting all areas of risk youth face. A global juvenile assessment task force identified eight domains which are key indicators in whether youth reoffend, known as criminogenic risk domains (Metcalf & Yalda, 2015). The eight domains are: offense history, family relationships and resources, educational history, peer relations, substance abuse, connection to the community, personality and behavior, and attitudes (Metcalf & Yalda, 2015). These domains are divided into dynamic and static risk factors. Dynamic risk factors can be changed and when addressed in programming can reduce the probability of reoffending, such as peer relationships (Vincent & Guy, 2013). Static risk factors cannot change with programming (e.g. prior offenses, gender, race, etc.) (Vincent & Guy, 2013). Though static risks are seen as fixed, they still provide insight into how youth will respond to programming and are important in understanding a youth's background, which can aid in selecting the appropriate intervention.

The eight domains of criminogenic risk often guide how risk assessments are created and implemented in the juvenile justice system. It is important to note that trauma can impact all eight of these domains as trauma impacts the development of the child and leads to issues pertaining to all of the domains (Vitopoulos et al., 2018; Bates-Mave & O'Sullivan, 2017). Also, a history of traumatic events is specifically mentioned within the family relationship and resources domain (Metcalf & Yalda, 2015). Though traumatic events may be seen as static risk factors, these events underline many of the dynamic risk factors. This means it is important to recognize traumatic events to understand the root issues leading these youth to offend. These

domains demonstrate how crucial it is for risk assessments to be capturing trauma because it plays a role in nearly all criminogenic risk factors.

Research also has supported that the most effective risk assessments are based on the risk, needs, and responsivity (RNR) model (Jones et al., 2016). The risk portion identifies between high, moderate, and low-risk offenders to recognize the youth who need the most intensive interventions (Jones et al., 2016). The need principle focuses on what risk factors within youth should be targeted to impact their risk of reoffending (Jones et al., 2016). The risk assessment aims to focus on the criminogenic risk factors listed above when addressing the needs principle. Finally, the responsivity principle concentrates on recommending interventions that will maximize rehabilitation (Jones et al., 2016). This principle focuses on the youth's demographic variables (gender, race and ethnicity, social class, etc.) (Jones et al., 2016). According to the literature, effective risk assessments incorporate the RNR model to ensure efficiency and accuracy. The RNR model not only supports the incorporation of trauma but also recognizing intersectionality within risk assessments.

Risk assessments are major components of the juvenile justice system and are key providers of information for court personnel. These assessments must be capturing the totality of risk within youth by ensuring they are addressing traumatic experiences. This can provide the opportunity to give more resources and support to youth who need it most. Though, it is important to note that adding more risk factors (e.g. traumatic experiences) into risk assessments could also increase the amount of youth being brought into the system and create a greater need for interventions among justice-involved youth.

This brief overview of risk assessments within the juvenile justice system is aimed to provide insight into what risk assessments are intended to achieve. A comprehensive risk

assessment will capture the major risk factors in a juvenile's life that increases the likelihood of further delinquent behavior. Since risk assessments are also used to make important decisions about youth these assessments should be capturing as much information about the juvenile as possible.

## **METHODS**

The gap in literature regarding risk assessments used within the juvenile justice system demonstrates the need for further research in this area. In order to assess whether risk assessments are capturing trauma among justice-involved youth, a summative content analysis was conducted. A summative content analysis is a qualitative content analysis that starts with identifying keywords among the text and aims to analyze the appearance of the keywords selected by a researcher (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Keywords provide the framework for analysis and are chosen based on the researcher's interests combined with the literature on the topic (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Conducting a content analysis will provide information on how trauma is being captured within this population. The use of content analysis will also help establish an understanding of trauma-informed risk assessments within the juvenile justice system by establishing patterns and discrepancies of the major risk assessments used in this Midwest State's juvenile justice system.

Content analysis is a technique used to systematically and objectively analyze the study of messages or human interactions (Neuendorf, 2002). Content analyses have been used throughout various contexts within the social sciences and have helped criminologists better understand violence in the media, gender roles, and communication within policy or politics (Neuendorf, 2002). A content analysis allows researchers to understand how information is captured through various types of frameworks, such as media or documents, which is the focus



of this study. An example of using content analysis to understand how humans capture information is a study done by Buist & Leighton (2015) conducted a content analysis on a television series to understand how corporate media distorts white-collar crime, leading individuals who view the show to develop a misinformed understanding of white-collar crime. Using a content analysis, the researchers were able to develop meaningful concepts through open coding allowing them to identify key themes throughout the show. Through the use of a content analysis, the researchers demonstrate how corporate media fails to show the true nature of white-collar crime and minimizes an individual's understanding of the type of crime (Buist & Leighton, 2015). This has a significant impact on how crime is portrayed within the United States and leads to media neglecting white-collar crime. Corporate America is allowed to control the media and present white-collar crimes in its own narrative (Buist & Leighton, 2015). The research offers insight on a topic many do not understand while looking at how individuals interpret information from various sources, such as television shows. Content analyses provide the methodology to understand forms of human communication, which in this research will focus on written communication via risk assessments.

Specifically addressing assessments, a study done by Hays and Emelianchik (2009) used content analysis methodology on the analysis of intimate partner violence (IPV) assessments. The study examined how the assessments were capturing certain aspects intimate relationships in relation to, what components of IPV were being assessed and how current assessments were structured (Hays & Emelianchik, 2009). Hays and Emelianchik (2009) were able to establish seven major themes within 48 IPV assessments, such as who is being targeted, risk factors, family dynamics, and forms of abuse being captured. Using a content analysis methodology, the researchers were able to identify limitations within IPV assessments and understand how these

assessments can be improved to help victims of IPV, while also providing insight on what risk factors are not being captured (Hays & Emelianchik, 2009).

Using similar methodology, this research will examine current risk assessments used in a Midwest state and determine how these assessments are capturing trauma, which is important due to limited knowledge about risk assessments within this state. The use of a content analysis provides the opportunity to directly study these assessments and identify context within them (Kort-Bulter, 2016). The research will provide insight on trauma-informed questions and more pointedly, if risk assessments are addressing intersectionality among justice-involved youth.

The current study aims to answer this research question: are risk assessments in a Midwest State's Juvenile Justice System using trauma-informed questions and incorporating aspects of intersectionality among justice-involved youth?

## **Design**

The population in this research includes risk assessments within the juvenile justice system in the United States. With the lack of standardization throughout the juvenile justice system, the sample was narrowed to only include risk assessments used in this Midwest State. The parameters used to select assessments were as follows: 1) the assessment had to be used within the justice system, 2) targeted justice-involved youth, and 3) were used to assess risk in the juveniles. The risk assessments for this content analysis were provided from reputable sources within the juvenile justice system in this Midwest state. A convenience sample was used due to lack of public access to risk assessments. Though six risk assessments were identified in use across the state in focus, the researcher has only gained access to four risk assessments, which include the Youth Level of Service (YLS), the Pre-Screen Youth Assessment & Screening instrument, the full Youth Assessment & Screening instrument, and the Ohio Youth Assessment.

The assessments were analyzed using an open coding method. Open coding identifies the main concepts within the document then builds categories, patterns, and eventually main themes in the text (Khandkar, 2009). Open coding is done by starting with concepts or as discussed earlier, keywords, and the concepts are identified as significant by the researcher after they have gone through the data (Khandkar, 2009). These concepts represent ideas within the research and help group similar ideas together making it easier for the researcher to analyze the text (Khandkar, 2009). In this analysis, there two concepts are used to code the risk assessments: trauma, using the ACEs scale and intersectionality. The concepts were defined and used to build a codebook for the researcher to use during analysis.

### *Trauma*

Trauma is the overall theme of the research and is defined as a resulting impact from an “event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being” (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2019, n.p.).

### *Adverse Childhood Experiences*

In order to code for trauma, the research used adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) as a guide for trauma in risk assessments and will be explained in greater detail next. Adverse childhood experiences are defined as high-stress events or traumatic events in childhood, which cause a long-term impact on a child’s development and life outcomes (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d.). The basic idea behind adverse childhood experiences is as a child faces more of these events, the more susceptible the child is to adverse life outcomes, such as becoming involved in the justice system (Felitti et al., 1998). ACEs was selected because it is not

only prevalent among the general population, but justice-involved youth specifically report high incidents of ACEs before entering the system (Felitti et al., 1998; Bethell, Davis, Stumbo, & Powers, 2017; Dierkhising et al., 2013). One study examining 64,000 juvenile offenders in Florida found only 1.8% of females and 3.1% of males reported *no* ACEs before entering the justice system (Baglivio et al., 2014).

Justice-involved youth are 13 times less likely to report zero ACEs than the general population based on a comparison between juvenile offenders and the original ACEs study (Baglivio et al., 2014). Beyond the juvenile justice system, ACEs has been extensively used within other social sciences, such as health care, the welfare system, and the education system (Freeman, 2014; Murphy et al., 2016; McCrae et al., 2019). ACEs is widely recognized and used a trauma scale within youth to educate these fields on traumatic experiences and help develop programming to address trauma (Leitch, 2017). With juvenile offenders having a higher rate of adverse childhood experiences compared to the general population, one can see how capturing this trauma within risk assessments is important and why ACEs will be used to code the current risk assessments being analyzed.

Adverse childhood experiences are broken down into three categories. The first is type is *abuse*, which includes emotional, physical, and sexual abuse (Felitti et al., 1998). Emotional abuse is defined as the psychological maltreatment of the child, making the child feel unloved or unwanted, or instilling fear within the child (Felitti et al., 1998; Hibbard, Barlow & MacMillian, 2012). Second, physical abuse is defined as a parent or adult pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping, or hitting a child (Felitti et al., 1998). Also, physical abuse encompasses if a child was injured repeatedly by an adult within their household (Felitti et al., 1998). The final type of abuse is sexual abuse, which is when an adult touches a child sexually, forces a child to touch them

sexually, having or attempting to have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with a child (Felitti et al., 1998).

The second ACE category focuses on *household dysfunction*, specifically looking at what the child witnesses within their home. The first category of household dysfunction is substance abuse, whether the child lives with an adult who was an alcoholic, problem drinker, or abuses any drugs (Felitti et al., 1998). Household dysfunction also includes mental illness, which examines if the child lives with someone who is mentally ill or has attempted suicide (Felitti et al., 1998). Domestic violence is the third category of household dysfunction defined as whether a child has witnessed domestic abuse within the home (Felitti et al., 1998). The last category is whether a household member has ever gone to prison or jail (Felitti et al., 1998). Though not included in the original ACEs study, parental separation or divorce is now recognized as another adverse childhood experience within the household dysfunction category (Baglivio et al., 2015).

Household dysfunction and the three types of abuse included were established in the original ACEs study, but over the past two decades, researchers have determined a third category that is equally important. The newest category is *neglect*, which includes emotional and physical neglect (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2018). Emotional neglect focuses on an adult not providing the emotional engagement a child needs and lacks to provide emotional support in a child's life (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), n.d.). Physical neglect focuses on whether an adult is providing the child's basic needs of clothing, food, shelter, and ensuring safety to the child (NSPCC, n.d.).

The adverse childhood experiences created the framework for how the risk assessments were coded by the researcher. For each assessment, the researcher assigned a different color for each adverse event and examined whether the risk assessments asked about each experience. In

order to ensure objectivity within coding, the researcher used the ACE Questionnaire used within the juvenile justice system, which provided the standards on how to decide whether the question is asked about an ACEs experience. This will demonstrate whether risk assessments are properly addressing the high trauma rates among justice-involved juveniles. Due to trauma's impacts on recidivism, risk assessments should be capturing it in justice-involved youth.

### *Intersectionality*

The final concept examined in the literature review was intersectionality, which is defined as the concept that each individual has a socially constructed identity that places an individual into a social stratum/hierarchy leading to discrimination or disadvantage (Crenshaw, 1989; Potter, 2015). As discussed earlier, it is important to recognize how these identities impact an individual's risk level for victimization or experiencing trauma, while also acknowledging how these identities impact their life experiences. The researcher will code for gender, sexual orientation, race, and class within the demographic portion of reviewed risk assessments.

Gender is defined as "how an individual perceives themselves and what they call themselves," which can be male, female, a blend of both, or neither (Human Rights Campaign, 2020). Furthermore, gender is broken down by cisgender or gender non-conforming. Cisgender is defined as an individual whose gender at birth matches their gender identity and expression (Potter, 2018). Gender non-conforming is defined as an individual who does not conform to cultural norms of the gender they were assigned at birth, such as transgender (Wilber, 2015). Transgender is defined as an individual whose gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth (Human Rights Campaign, 2020; Wilber, 2015). It is important to reiterate that transgender is a gender identity and not a sexual orientation, but is encompassed within LGBTQ.

The researcher will code for whether the risk assessments ask about gender beyond the cultural norm of male or female.

Sexual orientation will be defined as an innate emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other individuals (Human Rights Campaign, 2020). For sexual orientation, the researcher will examine whether the risk assessment asks about it. Race is defined as the categorization of an individual based on physical attributes, such as skin tone (Potter, 2015). Ethnicity is defined as “the culture, customs, religion, language, dialect, and national identity of a group” (Potter, 2015 p. 10). These concepts will be captured within the demographics section regarding information about the child’s identity. For race and ethnicity, the researcher will examine whether the risk assessments ask about both race and ethnicity, as well as, what the assessment includes in the race and ethnicity categories.

Class is defined as a measure of one’s combined economic and social status using an individual’s education level, income, and occupation (Baker, 2014). It is important to note for a child this will be defined as the guardian’s income and education level because the child relies on the household. The child cannot control their socioeconomic status, therefore, the researcher will code based on whether the risk assessment inquiries about the child’s household information. The researcher will look for questions regarding guardian’s income, education level, and occupation of the guardian. Also, the researcher will examine whether the risk assessments ask about the community the juvenile came from and the child’s level of education.

### *Risk Assessments*

The risk assessments used in this research were provided by individuals who work within the state’s juvenile justice department. The four assessments provided were Youth Level of Service (YLS), the Pre-Screen Youth Assessment & Screening instrument (pre-screen YASI),

the full Youth Assessment & Screening instrument (YASI), and the Ohio Youth Assessment (OYA).

The Youth Level of Service (YLS) is a widely popular risk assessment in the juvenile justice system, both internationally and in the United States (Onifade et al., 2008). The risk assessment is geared towards youth, both males and females, and modeled off of the risk-needs-responsivity (RNR) model (Campbell et al., 2014). The RNR model targets a youth's level of risk and matching it to an appropriate level of service, while also assessing the youth's criminogenic needs and juvenile's personality and learning styles to maximize the impact of treatment (Campbell et al., 2014). The YLS is mostly used for an initial risk classification when youth enter the juvenile justice system (Flores et al., 2004). For further clarification please see Appendix A for the Youth Level of Service (YLS) assessment.

The risk assessment is administered through an interview, which lasts around an hour and ten minutes, and is seventeen pages long with eight sections (prior/current offenses, family, education, peer relations, substance abuse, leisure & recreation, personality & behavior, attitudes & orientation) (Onifade et al., 2008; Baird et al., 2013). In each section, there are questions regarding that specific category. The questions are open-ended, meaning the interviewer asks the youth to answer the question without giving the youth choices. After the youth responds, the interview categorizes their answers from that section to create a risk level. Then after completing all eight sections, the interviewer gives the youth an overall risk score, while also identifying goals and intervention strategies. The assessment aims to not only classify risk but also identify key areas of treatment (Flores et al., 2004).

The next assessment in this study is the Youth Assessment & Screening instrument (YASI), which has two forms used in the juvenile justice system, the pre-screen, and the full



assessment. Traditionally, the pre-screen assessment is used to assess youth upon entering the justice system and the full-screen assessment is used when a petition is filed (Jeter et al., 2016). The YASI follows the same interview set-up as the YLS but takes about an hour and a half to complete the full assessment (Baird et al., 2013). The YASI identifies protective factors and risk factors within youth (Jeter et al., 2016).

The pre-screen YASI is used as the first tool to gather information about youth during intake and is an abbreviated assessment aimed to identify ten areas of risk (legal history, family, school, community and peers, alcohol & drugs, mental health, aggression, attitudes and skills, use of free time & employment). The pre-screen is only used to assess the youth's overall risk of recidivism (high, moderate, or low risk) (Jones et al., 2016). The pre-screen assessment is five pages long with 34 yes/no questions and Likert scale questions. The Likert scale questions have six response options for youth to choose from creating an objective and quantifiable measure of the ten domains (Jones et al., 2016). For further clarification please see Appendix B for the pre-screen Youth Assessment & Screening instrument (YASI).

The full assessment YASI is more in-depth coverage of all ten domains with ten pages of questions. The full assessment is made up of 90 questions covering the risk of reoffending, the need for programming, and protective factors (Jones et al., 2016). It is important to note that all youth entering counties that implement the YASI receive the pre-screen assessment, but not all youth receive the full YASI. Also, since the pre-assessment contains less questions, the youth could receive different results on each assessment (Jones et al., 2016). This provides insight on how variation in assessments impacts how the juvenile justice system perceives youth. For further clarification please see Appendix C for the full Youth Assessment & Screening instrument (YASI).

The final assessment analyzed in this study is the Ohio Youth Assessment (OYA). The OYA analyzed in this study is used at intake to determine if a youth should be formally processed or if the youth is eligible for diversion (Latessa et al., 2009). There are 61 predictors asked about in this assessment on the ten domains of criminogenic risk (criminal behavior, general behavior, education, family, employment, mental health & medical factors, peers/support, substance abuse, antisocial attitudes/skills, and temperament). The risk assessment utilizes yes/no, Likert scale, and fill-in-the-blank question formats.

### *Coding the Risk Assessments*

Each variable within adverse childhood experiences and intersectionality will be assigned an individual color. There is no value for color assigned to each variable and sixteen different colors were assigned from left to right of the pen storage case. The researcher avoided using colors such as black or gray for coding to avoid confusion with the print on the assessment. For example, emotional abuse was assigned the color yellow and physical abuse was assigned the color orange. Then during coding, the researcher marked every instance a risk assessment asked about emotional abuse with a yellow pen by underlining the entire question and every instance of physical abuse with an orange pen. This allowed for the researcher to distinctly mark each variable without confusion. These steps were followed for each risk assessment and each variable. The researcher coded all sixteen variables in one assessment before moving on to the next assessment. After each variable was coded in each assessment, the researcher moved to categorize their findings and establish what risk assessments were capturing within the Midwest state. The researcher coded each risk assessment three times to ensure they got the same results to improve reliability of results. Each time, the researcher made notes to ensure the same results were found and compared the notes to conclude their findings.

## FINDINGS

### *Adverse Childhood Experiences*

To answer the research question on whether risk assessments in this Midwest state are capturing traumatic events within justice-involved youth, the answer is that risk assessments are not capturing all ACEs categories, but only inquiring about a few of the categories. There is large variation among risk assessments on what traumatic experiences they focus on within the youth and how much information the risk assessment collects about each experience. Each ACE category was asked about at least once in one of the risk assessments. Though in the end, ACEs were not fully captured in any of the risk assessments reviewed. See Table 1 for an overview.

The most frequently questioned category was physical abuse. There was great variation in how this category is captured among each individual assessment. The Youth Level of Service (YLS) did not directly ask about physical abuse within a juvenile's home, but did ask about punishments used in the home and whether there was "excessive corporal punishment." It is important to note though it did not directly ask about physical abuse, the youth were required at the minimum to explain how the parents discipline them. Then the interviewer must review whether they believe it is excessive corporal punishment. This leads to issues of subjectivity and how the child answers an open-ended question. The Ohio Youth Assessment (OYA) also asked about the types of discipline within home and did not directly ask about physical abuse. The OYA does provide a check box for different types of punishments such as "hit with object" or "hit without object," which both are categorized as physical abuse in ACEs. For both YASI forms, the assessments directly asked whether the youth was physically abused and by whom (parent, sibling, other family, or outside of family).

The second most frequent categories asked about within the risk assessments were “substance abuse within the home” and “mental illness within the home,” with three out of four assessments asking about them. The YLS did not ask about either of these categories. It is also important to note, for both categories, they were included in the same question for the three risk assessments. The risk assessments used one question to capture both of these ACEs categories rather than two separate questions. In both forms of the Youth Assessment & Screening instrument (YASI), “substance abuse within the home” and “mental illness within the home” asked about whom within the home experienced either. The YASI included the categories mother, father, stepparent, sibling, and other. This demonstrates how the assessment is capturing anyone in the youth’s home not just the nuclear family by adding the other category. For the OYA, the assessment asked about female caretaker, male caretaker, and brother/sister, which limits the amount of information captured about who the youth lives with.

For the categories of emotional abuse, sexual abuse, household member in prison, parents separated or divorced, emotional neglect, and physical neglect, each were only found in two of the four assessments. There were questions pertaining to emotional abuse in the YLS and the full YASI assessment, but not in the pre-screen YASI or the OYA. In the YLS, emotional abuse was captured in the same question used to capture physical abuse. For the YLS, the only type of emotional abuse asked about is whether the child was punished frequently by threats or yelling, which reiterates the issues of subjectivity of the interviewer and a deficit in capturing emotional abuse. In the full YASI, youth are asked in one question if their parents are hostile towards them or if they are berated and belittled by their parents. In a second question, the youth are asked if their parents use threats of physical violence or verbal intimidation.

As discussed throughout the literature, one of the highest risks for justice-involved girls and LGBTQ youth is experiencing sexual abuse, though only the pre-screen YASI and full YASI asked if a youth had experienced it. In both assessments, there is a question asking if there is a history of sexual abuse and who committed the abuse against the child (parent, sibling, other family, or outside family). There is also a second question regarding victimization, which asks if the youth was sexually exploited by a peer or older person. With research indicating how sexual abuse plays a role in not only becoming involved with the justice system but also reoffending, risk assessments should be doing more to capture information about sexual abuse among youth. This also includes adding these specific questions to risk assessments that currently lack this information, such as the OYA and the YLS.

The OYA and the YLS both asked questions for the categories, having a household member in prison and whether the youth's parents were separated or divorced. The OYA focuses solely on the female caregiver, male caregiver, and brother/sister for the question regarding prison, which leaves out extended family, of whom could live with the youth. The YLS asks about any family member who has been to jail or prison, which allows for the child to include any member in the household. Both YASIs fail to inquire about jail or prison time, but they do include questions about whether household members have a criminal record. This can be implied indirectly to whether the child has a household member in prison, but it would be more beneficial to add an additional question directly asking about prison in the assessments.

Regarding physical and emotional neglect, only the pre-screen YASI and the full YASI ask about these categories. Both assessments have one question that ask if the family court has any findings of neglect relating to the custodial parent. The questions do not specify what type of neglect and limit the cases of neglect to only those found guilty in court. This can lead to risk

assessments missing trauma regarding neglect that has not been reported to the court or was perpetuated by another caregiver within the home, which can lead to underreporting of neglect. There is a second question regarding emotional neglect in both assessments regarding the parents' attitude and support towards the youth. The answers to this question include: indifference, uncaring, and unwilling to help, uninterested, or inconsistent love, caring, and support. This helps captures emotional neglect within justice-involved youth, but a similar question should be created for physical neglect. This would allow the child to report physical neglect happening that has not been found in family court.

Finally, the least frequently reported category in the risk assessments was the presence of domestic violence in the home. Only the full YASI asked whether the youth saw physical violence between parents, physical violence between parents and children, and physical violence between siblings. Once again, the risk assessments are failing to capture one of the most prevalent traumatic events among justice-involved youth.

Overall, adverse childhood experiences are underrepresented in the risk assessments that were reviewed for this project. The questions that do pertain to certain categories of ACEs are either limited due to wording or combine multiple categories into one question. For example, the YASI combines neglect into one question then limits answers by only including instances that resulted in convictions in family court. This can lead to those interviewing to miss critical parts of a youth's environment and past trauma experiences. Also, it is important to note that none of the four assessments asked about every ACE category. Research has supported how detrimental ACEs are to justice-involved youth and how prevalent each category is within general trauma screenings. Risk assessments should address each ACE category with a specific question

outlining each aspect of the category. This will ensure interviewers are asking about each potential traumatic event and provide detail on what is included in each ACE.

Table 1. Prevalence of ACE Questions in Risk Assessments

<b>ACEs Category</b>	<b>Risk Assessment</b>			
	<b>YLS</b>	<b>Pre-Screen YASI</b>	<b>YASI</b>	<b>OYA</b>
<b>Emotional Abuse</b>	X		X	
<b>Physical Abuse</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>		X	X	
<b>Substance Abuse in Home</b>		X	X	X
<b>Mental Illness in Home</b>		X	X	X
<b>Domestic Violence in Home</b>			X	
<b>Member of Household in Prison</b>	X			X
<b>Parents separated or divorced</b>	X			X
<b>Emotional Neglect</b>		X	X	
<b>Physical Neglect</b>		X	X	

### *Intersectionality*

Addressing trauma within justice-involved youth goes beyond capturing information about the traumatic events with ACEs. This research examined whether these risk assessments were asking about certain aspects of intersectionality among the justice-involved youth. The research found that the risk assessments severely lack in, not only demographic information, but specifically in the categories selected above within intersectionality. There were only two questions found about one category in all four assessments. See Table 2 for an overview. Gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and class can all play a role in how a youth experiences

trauma. The lack of questions regarding these categories means risk assessments are not capturing all the information about a youth and their risk of future reoffending.

The pre-screen YASI and the full YASI were the only two assessments that asked if the juvenile was male or female. The questions were at the top of the page with the instruction to check one of the boxes. There was no label to question, such as gender or sex. There were also no other directions or options for the interviewer to select. This means gender non-conforming or transgender youth are not being identified in the risk assessment, which reiterates the idea that the juvenile justice system is not capturing information about specific vulnerable populations.

There were no questions in any of the assessments about gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, or class. Though the risk assessments did inquire about the youth's current education level, this is not enough information to inform the juvenile justice system about the youth's socioeconomic background. Also, the YLS asks about what the parents do for work, but the question is geared more towards learning about how much the parents are able to monitor their child's behavior, rather than about income or status. The risk assessments need to create more questions geared towards the caregivers about income, education levels, and community-based questions to provide more insight about how class plays a role in a youth's offending and risk of reoffending.

Table 2. Prevalence of Intersectionality Questions in Risk Assessments

	<b>Risk Assessment</b>			
<b>Intersectionality</b>	<b>YLS</b>	<b>Pre-Screen YASI</b>	<b>YASI</b>	<b>OYA</b>
<b>Gender</b>				
<b>Sex</b>		X	X	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>				
<b>Race</b>				
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
<b>Class</b>				



*Evaluation of Risk Assessments*

Overall, these risk assessments varied in many different ways, including question-structure, what categories of ACEs were asked about, and how long each assessment was. Though there was one similar pattern in all of the assessments, which was lack of demographic questions pertaining to intersectionality. There were five places for improvement the researcher observed when coding the risk assessments. These improvements focus on the lack of demographic information, lack of standardization, large variation of question forms used, the focus on youth's behavior rather than their environment, and issue of subjectivity. The risk assessments in this study would benefit from addressing these issues and the improvements will be explored in more detail within the recommendations section of the discussion.

**DISCUSSION**

This current study aimed to discover whether the juvenile justice system in a Midwest state is using trauma-informed questions in their risk assessments for justice-involved youth and if the risk assessments are properly addressing components of intersectionality. Through the use of a content analysis, the research determined how prevalent adverse childhood experiences and intersectionality are in four risk assessments used in this Midwest state. The main findings of this study conclude that trauma-informed questions are limited in their current risk assessments and there are no questions regarding intersectionality within these four risk assessments reviewed.

The first major finding within this research is the lack of comprehensive questions about adverse childhood experiences in the risk assessments. The use of adverse childhood experience questions is inadequate because, as discussed in the analysis, every assessment lacked multiple categories of ACEs and only the full YASI included eight out of ten categories. The analysis of these assessments demonstrates how risk assessments are lacking in trauma-informed questions.

One important goal of trauma-informed care is to ensure the juvenile justice system is identifying trauma in the youth, specifically by fully utilizing risk assessments (Dierkhising & Branson, 2016). Currently, these four assessments are not capturing the full extent of trauma within justice-involved youth, which can lead to underreporting of traumatic experiences and lead to misinformed decisions about these vulnerable youth. These misinformed decisions can be harsher punishments, programming insufficient for dealing with the youth's traumatic past, or dismissal of the child without any aide from the justice system. This could lead to issues with reoffending, exposure to further victimization, and distrust with the justice system.

The second major finding was that physical abuse represented the highest reported ACEs category in these assessments. Past research studies have reiterated how prevalent physical abuse is among justice-involved youth (Sedlak & McPheson, 2010; Dierkhising et al., 2013). The extensive research involving physical abuse and justice-involve youth may explain why each risk assessment asks about this type of traumatic event. Physical abuse has also been associated with higher risk of suicide ideation and substance abuse among justice-involved youth, which are two variables included in these risk assessments (Ford et al., 2013). Though sexual abuse has also been extensively studied among justice-involved youth, only two of the four assessments asked directly about history of sexual abuse. The lack of standardization among these assessments raises concerns about how juvenile justice systems are selecting which traumatic experiences to capture in youth.

The third main finding focuses on the least common ACE category present in risk assessments, which was domestic violence within the home. The impact of domestic violence on youth has also been extensively covered and has also been linked to suicide ideation and substance abuse among justice-involved youth (Ford et al., 2013; Finkelhor et al., 2015). This

reiterates the notion that these risk assessments are selecting only certain traumatic events and missing critical information about justice-involved youth. Studies have also shown that 40% of youth in a detention facility witnessed domestic violence (Ford et al., 2013). Therefore, the literature provides support for the link between witnessing domestic violence and negative outcomes and this current research demonstrates how risk assessments are not capturing this problem among youth. Risk assessments are to be used to capture information about juveniles and what factors may lead them to reoffend, yet these assessments are not capturing the entire information.

Overall, ACEs are a critical part of the juvenile justice system and impact youth in various ways, such as contributing to risky behavior and reoffending, but currently risk assessments are not capturing these experiences. In relation to reoffending, youth who experience higher rates of adverse childhood experiences are more likely to commit multiple offenses and violent juvenile offenders have the highest rates of ACEs compared to other justice-involved youth (Fox et al., 2015; Wolf et al., 2017). With high prevalence rates of these experiences, the current risk assessments being used are not sufficiently capturing a youth's risk of reoffending. The most common risk factors within violent chronic offenders were an incarcerated household member and witnessing violence within the home, yet half of the assessments evaluated in this study did not ask about either of these categories (Fox et al., 2015). Also, neglect has been found to increase a youth's likelihood of reoffending, yet only two assessments ask about neglect (Ryan et al., 2013). The basic concept of risk assessments is to capture a youth's risk of reoffending this prediction cannot accurately be made with the assessments used in the state's juvenile justice system because the risk assessments are lacking key components that comprise a youth's risk.

Though this research relied heavily on adverse childhood experiences to provide structure within coding, there are various traumatic events that increase risk of offending in justice-involved youth, such as witness violence, community violence, and other various high-stress environments (Baglivio et al., 2014). Throughout coding, there was a lack of questions about trauma in general, with the risk assessments focusing on the behavior of the youth rather than their environment or past experiences. These both are supported by the literature as major components of a developing youth (Anthony et al., 2010; Buffington et al., 2010). The risk assessments focused on the behaviors of the child such as substance use, and relationship with peers and also focused on educational achievement, but failed to gain vital information about trauma in general and how that potentially impacts youth's behavior. This hinders the ability of the juvenile justice system to make accurate decisions about justice-involved youth and address the root issues in delinquency.

When addressing the impact of trauma, the developmental theory adds further support on why risk assessments should be seeking information about trauma in justice-involved youth. The developmental theory focuses on the relationship between biological, psychological, and social factors with criminal behavior (France & Homel, 2008). Essentially, it examines how one's experiences impacts the way they behave throughout their life, specifically how negative events impact criminal behavior (France & Homel, 2008). The theory focuses on how socialization within the family in the first years of life determines a youth's ability for self-control, and negative experiences in early years are a major risk factor for potential offending (France & Homel, 2008). This theory further supports why risk assessments need to accurately capture traumatic experiences within justice-involved youth and recognize how trauma has impacted the development of these youth, which increases risk of offending. Without capturing the trauma, the

juvenile justice system will not be able to capture these risks or properly address the developmental problems caused by trauma, leading to an increase of offending behavior, ultimately defeating the purpose of risk assessments.

Researchers have demonstrated how prevalent trauma is among justice-involved youth (Ryan et al., 2013). Also, the literature has supported the notion of trauma-informed care among the juvenile justice system for better rehabilitation and outcomes for youth (Ko et al., 2008; Benekos & Merlo, 2019). The current study reveals how inconsistent trauma-informed questioning is among risk assessments, not only among categories, but also the type of question used. The risk assessments varied from open-ended, Likert Scale, and multiple-choice questions. Question-structure impacts how an individual will answer, such as how much information is shared and recorded, how the question is interpreted, and if the individual perceives one of the choices as fitting their answer. Therefore, it is not only important to address the lack of questioning in risk assessments, but also how risk assessments are capturing necessary information.

Risk assessments are used to make decisions about justice-involved youth. Judges and probation officers use this information to gauge the child's experiences and likelihood of reoffending (Holloway et al., 2018; Riggs-Romaine et al., 2011). Trauma is a key component of a youth's risk of reoffending as demonstrated in the literature and yet, these risk assessments are not capturing the most prevalent traumatic events among justice-involved youth. Since these risk assessments are used to make decisions about a youth's future and how the juvenile justice system will proceed regarding the youth, these risk assessments should be utilizing all the tools available to provide a comprehensive report about each youth.

Not only are the risk assessments inconsistent with capturing trauma, the content analysis also revealed that there is deficit in information being collected about the demographics of the youth, specifically areas within intersectionality. Regarding information about intersectionality, only two assessments captured information about the sex of justice-involved youth. With only questions about sex being asked, this presents more evidence on how risk assessments are lacking in information about a child, which can lead to misinformed decisions. Also, it demonstrates how risk assessments are missing the opportunity to collect significant demographic information.

Beginning with gender and sex, one issue found beyond the lack of questions is the conflation of the two variables in the justice system. Outside of these risk assessments, the justice system often conflates gender and sex by using it interchangeably, but they cannot. Gender, as talked about in the literature review, focuses on gender expression and identity of an individual, while sex is determined at birth by genital development. Therefore, this research further supports the notion that the juvenile justice system is not actively seeking information about gender identify and focuses solely on sex of justice-involved youth. Though interestingly, only half asked about sex and the other half did not ask at all, which brings to light the troubling idea that risk assessments are not collecting any demographic information about a child.

Gender identity is an important concept to understand and recognize with the impact of trauma. As explained in the literature review, females and gender non-conforming youth are at a higher risk of certain traumatic experiences (Espinosa et al., 2013; Steinberg & Lassiter, 2018; Mooney, 2017; Wilber, 2015). These traumatic experiences put them at an increased risk of becoming involved with the justice system and lead to future offending if not captured and addressed. Also, the literature shows similar outcomes for youth who do not conform to society's

gender roles for sexual orientation based on their gender. LGBTQ youth also face high rates of traumatic experiences due to their sexual orientation (Mooney, 2017). Both gender identity and sexual orientation questions were lacking for the risk assessments in this study.

Since these risk assessments are not capturing data on gender non-conforming youth within their risk assessments, the juvenile justice system again cannot make an accurate depiction on the risk the juveniles present for reoffending. Gender non-conforming and LGBTQ youth are at a higher risk of committing ‘survival crimes,’ lack a safe environment due to family rejection, and experience homelessness at higher rates, which are all tied to an increased risk of being involved with the justice system (Mooney, 2017; Hoffman et al., 2020; Graziano & Wagner, 2011). If risk assessments asked about gender identity and sexual orientation, then the juvenile justice system may also understand why the youth committed the crime in the first place, help avoid the possibility of the youth reoffending, or understand why they will continue to commit crime once released. The juvenile justice system must move towards capturing gender identity; not only to establish vulnerable populations, but also capture traumatic experiences specific to those populations.

Furthermore, risk assessments are also not capturing data about ethnicity and race among justice-involved youth. It is important to understand minority youth are vulnerable to negative police interactions, racist experiences, harsher punishments, and higher rates of detainment (Crosby, 2016; Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005). Outside of traumatic events, recognizing the disproportionate number of minorities in the juvenile justice system should warrant the need for race and ethnicity questions in these assessments. Also, according to the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018, states must be reducing racial and ethnic disparities in their juvenile justice system (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2019). This can be done by adding racial

and ethnic questions in risk assessments to capture information not only about trauma in minorities but will also be able to target disproportionate numbers of minorities in the justice system. Though other assessments are collecting this data, risk assessments should be collecting it because race and ethnicity can indicate another form of trauma.

Regarding class, the risk assessments lacked any questions about the parent's jobs, educational level, and income. These variables have a large impact on a youth because youth living in low-socioeconomic environments are also at an increased risk of experiencing trauma, specifically community violence (Crosby, 2016). Risk assessments should be asking questions regarding class to not only gain insight on traumatic experiences, but also to gauge risk levels of juveniles returning to their home and community. It is important risk assessments are addressing every facet that could pose a greater increase risk of offending within juveniles or the risk assessment is not serving its purpose.

Risk assessments not only help decide the fate of justice-involved youth, they are also used as data collection for many agencies across the United States. Risk assessments should be implementing questions regarding intersectionality not only to help identify vulnerable populations, but also collect accurate data on the youth within the justice system. Throughout the literature review, it is noted how the lack of information regarding juveniles in the justice system hinders a lot of research, but also impacts the general understanding of the juvenile justice system. The risk assessments are not accurately capturing traumatic events among justice-involved youth or identifying vulnerable populations who experience trauma at exponential rates.

Beyond the research question, two other trends emerged from the current study. These were the lack of standardization among risk assessments and lack of transparency among the juvenile justice system. The lack of standardization addresses the issue of how different each



assessment was within this research. Each assessment had different question-structures, different trauma categories, and collected different information about justice-involved youth. This creates a problem with decision making within the juvenile justice system because children are given different assessments, which leads to potentially drastic different outcomes.

The lack of transparency focuses on the idea discussed above, that many agencies should be collecting this data in the first place to acknowledge the important patterns among justice-involved youth. This data is not only important to help address issues associated with justice-involved youth, it can also establish patterns about populations coming into contact with the justice system at higher rates. The juvenile justice system is also not publicly sharing the risk assessments being used in each county in this state. The assessments reviewed in this study had to be provided via outside sources. This again establishes the notion that the public, such as researchers, do not truly know what assessments are being used and what those assessments look like. This raises concerns with issues such as trauma-informed questioning. The juvenile justice system can do better, not only with sharing the data they are currently collecting, but also adding more crucial data points seen within trauma-informed questioning addressed in this research. Adding transparency in a justice system allows for growth by providing better outcomes for justice-involved youth.

### *Recommendations*

The current research also provides insight on how risk assessments can be improved in the juvenile justice system. There were five places for improvement the researcher observed when coding the risk assessments. The major findings of this research suggest the need for a more intensive questioning of traumatic events among justice-involved youth and questions about demographics, focusing on intersectionality of vulnerable youth populations. Further

improvements focus on the lack of standardization across the juvenile justice system, addressing the large variation of question formats in risk assessments and addressing the issue of subjectivity.

Beginning with standardization, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) does not have any published federal guidelines for risk assessments used on justice-involved youth. With no federal guidelines, states are allowed to implement their own tools and select which assessments to use within their juvenile justice system. Furthermore, counties are also allowed to implement their choice of risk assessment. This creates a large variation of risk assessments being used across the country and within the states, which is demonstrated in this study within this Midwest state. The OJJDP (2015) states that more than twenty risk assessments were used across the country. This disparity can lead to issues of disadvantage for youth across the country. Disadvantage can come in forms of harsher punishments or lack of access to programming due to variation of risk assessments because each risk assessment measures risk in its own way and categorizes youth differently, which in turn has a drastic impact on the youth.

Risk assessments are not solely used to provide harsher sentences to youth but can provide the opportunity to give youth more support and resources. By obtaining more information about the risk factors in a youth's life, the juvenile justice system can provide more rehabilitative measures to protect youth and ensure they do not face further traumatic experiences in the system. Risk assessments do not need to have a negative connotation and can be seen as a positive tool used to aide in change. By providing more standardization, the juvenile justice system can begin to understand how to use resources in order to provide more support.

Observing the risk assessments in this study, there were large differences among the four assessments. These differences were question-structure, information being collected, and length of assessment. Each of these differences can lead to different outcomes for youth in the justice system. With one child being assessed with the YASI and other being assessed with the OYA, they can come from the same environment, yet produce different risk levels based on the assessment used. This case demonstrates why risk assessments should be standardized throughout the United States. Risk assessments are supposed to provide structure and an objective outlook on a youth's risk to reoffend (OJJDP, 2015). With counties and states using multiple types of assessments, the juvenile justice system becomes un-structured and unequal. In order to provide a fair risk assessment to all youth, guidelines should be established, and states should organize a uniformed risk assessment.

One way to create standardization outside of a uniformed risk assessment is to address the large variation in question formats in these assessments and how questions address trauma. As discussed earlier, open-ended, Likert Scale, and multiple-choice question formats are being used across different risk assessments. When used together, multi-type questions can provide a wealth of knowledge. Though, if one assessment is using an open-ended question to ask about neglect and the other is using multiple-choice, the assessments are at a higher risk of receiving different answers for youth. This demonstrates how variation in question-structure can lead to underreporting of traumatic events and why it is recommended to standardize questions.

Furthermore, risk assessments are used to create an objective risk score for justice-involved youth to provide best recommendations for rehabilitation (OJJDP, 2015). In the current research, the issue of subjectivity arose when examining how certain risk assessments were instructing interviewers to code information about the youth. For the OYAS, the questions are

open-ended and from the youth's answer the interviewer categorizes. This can lead to biases of how answers are interpreted and lead to a misinterpretation of data. Not only does this demonstrate the need for standardization, it also demonstrates why risk assessments should be using multiple questions to capture traumatic events. For example, there should be more than one question for neglect to not only differentiate between physical and emotional neglect, but also to gain insight on type of emotional or physical neglect occurring in the youth's life. The more information provided, the better the chances of decreasing misinformation being reported about a youth.

These recommendations are aimed to strengthen the juvenile justice system's response to traumatic experiences among justice-involved youth. By addressing these recommendations, it must be noted that this could lead to an increase in youth within the system due to the increase of risk factors in risk assessments. When increasing the amount of youth in the system, it can lead to lack of resources, which means the juvenile justice system may not be able to provide the care and services youth may need to address traumatic experiences. It is important to provide these resources to the juvenile justice system or involve the community to aide in rehabilitation of youth. Trauma has a profound impact on youth and the juvenile justice system must be equipped to handle this vulnerable population.

Overall, risk assessments are a tool used within the juvenile justice system to provide an estimate of recidivism risk in youth and identify key components that increase or decrease that risk score (OJJDP, 2015). There are various components of these risk assessments that could be improved to provide better assessment of risk.

*Limitations*

It is important to note the limitations this research faced. One limitation concerns sampling, focusing on the use of convenience sampling, and sample size. The use of convenience sampling limits the generalizability because the sample is not representative of the population. Though the research did capture four major types of assessments used in the major counties of this Midwest state, there are issues of bias while gathering data and higher risk of sampling error. Also, convenience sampling was used due to time constraint and availability of risk assessments. Convenience sampling also does not use randomization causing weaker generalizability. The small sample size further produces more issues with generalizability. Another limitation of the study is the use of only one-coder. With only the researcher coding the data, it can increase risk of error, bias, and interpretation issues. These limitations impact the results and how the results can be applied to the population. In future research, these limitations should be addressed.

*Future Research*

Throughout this research, it became apparent how little is known about trauma-informed questioning in risk assessments and intersectionality in risk assessments. There are large gaps in the literature about trauma in justice-involved youth and understanding how risk assessments capture these events. This research provides basic framework on how one state is addressing trauma within their risk assessments and provides recommendations on how to improve. Future research should focus on gathering a larger sample size and doing a nationwide content analysis to provide more insight on risk assessments being used. The nationwide assessment could offer detailed recommendations for the juvenile justice systems as a whole and would increase generalizability of results. Future research could also examine how question-structure impacts responses in these risk assessments.

Overall, it is extremely important to continue collecting data on risk assessments within the juvenile justice system. Justice-involved youth are a vulnerable population and there should be an emphasis to understand how the justice system can better capture and categorize youth trauma and intersectionality.

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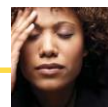
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## Appendix A

## The Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire

## Finding Your ACE Score



While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household **often** or very often...  
Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?  
or  
Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?  
Yes                      No                      If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household **often** or very often...  
Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?  
or  
Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?  
Yes                      No                      If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you **ever**...  
Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?  
or  
Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?  
Yes                      No                      If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you **often** or very often feel that ...  
No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?  
or  
Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?  
Yes                      No                      If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did you **often** or very often feel that ...  
You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?  
or  
Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?  
Yes                      No                      If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
6. Were your parents **ever** separated or divorced?  
Yes                      No                      If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
7. Was your mother or stepmother:  
Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her?  
or  
Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?  
or  
Ever repeatedly hit at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?  
Yes                      No                      If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?  
Yes                      No                      If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?  
Yes                      No                      If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
10. Did a household member go to prison?  
Yes                      No                      If yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Now add up your "Yes" answers: \_\_\_\_\_. This is your ACE Score.

Adapted from: [http://www.acestudy.org/files/ACE\\_Score\\_Calculator.pdf](http://www.acestudy.org/files/ACE_Score_Calculator.pdf), 092406RA4CR

## Appendix B

## The Youth Level of Service Assessment

<b>UNIVERSAL YLS RISK ASSESSMENT</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> 365 Day – Assessment /New Case	<b>Case #:</b> _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> 180 Day – TX (Re-Assessment)	<b>Juvenile:</b> _____
<b>Assessment Date:</b> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 90 Day – TX (Re-Assessment)	<b>PO:</b> _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> 45 Day - Residential Step-Down	<b>Judge:</b> _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Exit Review	<b>DOB:</b> _____

YOUTH RISK ASSESSMENT SCORING PROFILE & CASE MANAGEMENT FORM										
	PRIOR OFFENSES/ DISPOSITIONS	FAMILY AND PARENTING	EDUCATION	PEER RELATIONS	SUBSTANCE ABUSE	LEISURE & RECREATION	PERSONALITY & BEHAVIOR	ATTITUDES & ORIENTATION		
									(35-41)	Very High
<b>High</b>	(3-5)	(5-6)	(4-6)	(4)	(3-5)	(2-3)	(5-7)	(4-5)	<b>(23-34)</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Moderate</b>	(1-2)	(3-4)	(1-3)	(2-3)	(1-2)	(1)	(1-4)	(1-3)	<b>(9-22)</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Low</b>	(0)	(0-2)	(0)	(0-1)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	<b>(0-8)</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>Strength</b>									<b>Overall Risk Score</b>	<b>Overall Risk</b>
<b>Domain Scores</b>										

Criminogenic Factors	Responsivity Factors	Protective Factors
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
Goals	Intervention /Strategies	Time Frame
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.

3.	3.	3.
----	----	----

1. Prior & Current Offenses/Dispositions:		Strengths/Comments:	
<p>A. <input type="checkbox"/> Three or More Prior Convictions</p> <p>B. <input type="checkbox"/> Two or More Failures to Comply</p> <p>C. <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Probation</p> <p>D. <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Custody</p> <p>E. <input type="checkbox"/> Three or More Current Convictions</p>			
<b>Risk Level:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> (0) = Low <input type="checkbox"/> (1-2) = Moderate <input type="checkbox"/> (3-5) = High			
<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL:</b></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>			<b>TOTAL:</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>			

**NOTE: This domain area covers the juvenile's entire childhood history, regardless of whether this is a 90 day or 365 day assessment.**

- 1A. Have you ever been arrested before or in trouble with the police? How old were you when you were first arrested? Have you ever been in trouble in another county or state? How many times have you been found guilty of committing a crime? Can you list them for me?

Have you ever come to this court before for a delinquency charge or a crime? If yes, how many times? What happened each time? (e.g., charges dropped, consent calendar, placed on probation, etc.). What, if any, services did you or your family receive as a result of your court involvement?

**1A. Three or More Prior Convictions:**

FYI: If several offenses occurred at once, count only as 1 offense.

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile has 3 or more prior **adjudications** (convictions).
- ☐ Do not count the current offense(s).
- ☐ Do not count offenses that were kept informal.
- ☐ Do not count minor traffic offenses or civil ordinance violations.
- ☐ Do not count violations of probation or status offenses.

- 1B. After being found guilty or placed on probation, have you ever been charged or show-caused for violating probation or a court order? Tell me about it. How many times were you charged with probation violations? Did you ever run away from a court-ordered placement, like a group home, foster home, or residential facility?

**1B. Two or More Failures to Comply:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile has been charged, on 2 or more occasions, with violation of probation, violation of court order, or show-caused for noncompliance with court-ordered programming.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile ran away or escaped from a court-ordered placement on 2 or more occasions.



- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile had charges filed, on 2 or more occasions, during the time he/she was on probation.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile had only one violation in 2 or more of the categories listed above.

1C. Have you been on probation before? Tell me about the times you have been on probation.

**1C. Prior Probation:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile has ever been on **formal** probation, prior to his/her current adjudication.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile's prior **formal** probation cases have been closed.
- ☐ Do not count **Consent Calendar**

1D. Has the court ever placed you out of your home during the time you were on prior probation? Were you ever placed in the county jail or the Ottawa County Juvenile Detention Center during the time you were on probation? Please tell me about it.

**1D. Prior Custody:**

- ☒ Check this item for any out of home placement that was the result of any delinquency adjudication (e.g., Ottawa County Detention Center, foster care, or residential placement).
- ☐ Do not count pre-trial arrest or detoxification.
- ☐ Do not count juvenile placement made for the juvenile's welfare (e.g., foster care due to neglect/abuse, child protective services placement, protective custody, etc.).
- ☐ Do not count pre-trial confinement or detention as custody.
- ☐ Do not count detention for status offenses.

1E. Tell me about your current charges (adjudications). Have you been adjudicated of any of these charges? Can you recall how many charges you pleaded guilty to?

**1E. Three or More Current Convictions:**

- FYI: Count only the number of offenses that the juvenile pleaded guilty to.
- FYI: Count the number of offenses, for which the juvenile is currently under formal probation.
- FYI: Count a group of offenses as one if they were part of the same incident and occurred at the same time.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile received 3 or more convictions for the current disposition. **Note: this only refers to adjudications (convictions), not charges.**
- ☐ Do not check pending, dropped, or diverted charges.

2. Family & Parenting:		Strengths/Comments:
A.	<input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Supervision	
B.	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty in Controlling Behavior	
C.	<input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate Discipline	
D.	<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent Parenting	
E.	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor Relations (Father-Juvenile)	
F.	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor Relations (Mother-Juvenile)	
<b>Risk Level:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	(0-2) = Low	
<input type="checkbox"/>	(3-4) = Moderate	
<input type="checkbox"/>	(5-6) = High	
<b>TOTAL:</b>		

2A. What does your mom do for work? What does your dad do for work? What kind of hours (schedule, shift) do they work?

Who watches (supervises) you? Who watches you when your mom/dad is at work? Are there any times when you are not supervised or when your parents don't know where you're at? Tell me about those times. How often do these times occur?

With whom are you living? How many brothers and sisters do you have (biological, step, foster)?

**2A. Inadequate Supervision:**

- ☒ Check this item if the parent(s)/guardians(s) leave the juvenile unattended, and are not aware of his/her activities.
- ☒ Check this item if the parent(s)/guardians(s) leave the juvenile unsupervised without knowing how to contact him/her.
- ☒ Check this item if there are any additional situations of inadequate supervision per your best judgment.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile is living independently (without supervision).

- 2B. Do you have daily or weekly chores to do in your home? Do you have rules that you are supposed to follow? Can you give me some examples of your family rules? Do you respect /follow the household rules? If no, How do your parents react when you don't obey them?

**2B. Difficulty in Controlling Behavior:**

- ☒ Check this item if the parent(s)/guardians(s) have problems controlling/managing the juvenile's behavior (e.g., juvenile disobeys rules, instructions, leaves without permission, runs away, etc.).
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile states or boasts about not following any rules or parents not having any control over them.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile has little or no respect for parental rules or authority.
- ☒ Check this item if parents are unwilling or unable to enforce the household rules.

- 2C. Do you receive punishment for misbehaving? How often and what kind of punishment is it?

**2C. Inappropriate Discipline:**

- ☒ Check this item if there is excessive corporal punishment, frequent use of yelling and threats, overly harsh or strict rules, or other poor disciplinary practices.
- ☒ Check this item if the parent is overly permissive, with little or no effort at providing direction, guidance, or discipline.
- ☒ Check this item if parent(s) unable/incapable of disciplining inappropriate behavior.

- 2D. Do your parent(s) apply the rules fairly in your family? Do your parent(s) follow through with consequences? Are they consistent in applying consequences or can you get out of your punishment? Is one parent more fair or consistent than the other? Can you split (manipulate, divide) your parents to get your way or to get out of your punishment?

Do your parents get along? If no, do you think that it affects the way they discipline you?

**2D. Inconsistent Parenting:**

- ☒ Check this item if the parent(s)/guardians(s) are inconsistent in applying the rules and use of punishment/rewards.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile frequently manipulates one parent against the other.
- ☒ Check this item if the parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot develop clear household rules
- ☒ Check this item if there is no conventional household routine or structure.
- ☒ Consider checking this item if one or more parents/guardians espouse antisocial attitudes, beliefs or practices when around the juvenile.

- 2E. How do you get along with your father? What are some of the positive things you can say about your relationship with him? What are some of the problem areas? If I asked your father about your relationship with him, what do you think he would say?

**2E. Poor Relations: Father-Juvenile:**

FYI: The juvenile does not need to be living with the father for this item to be checked.

FYI: If there is a father/stepfather situation, base your answer on the most important relationship over the assessment period.

FYI: Rate this item with reference to the parental father figure with whom the juvenile primarily resides.

- ☒ Check this item if the father is absent, including absence due to military, out of state residence, incarceration, etc.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile and the father have a poor relationship (i.e., hostile, alienated, uncaring, etc.).
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile rarely chooses to see/communicate with father, argues when they are together, relationship ranges from dislike to hatred, or the juvenile does not care what the father thinks, feels, or expects.
- ☒ Check this item if there is significant conflict, dissatisfaction, disappointment, or indifference in the juvenile's relationship with the father.

- 2F. How do you get along with your mother? What are some of the positive things you can say about your relationship with her? What are some of the problem areas? If I asked your mother about your relationship with her, what do you think she would say?

**2F. Poor Relations: Mother-Juvenile:**

FYI: The juvenile does not need to be living with the mother for this item to be checked.

FYI: If there is a mother/stepmother situation, base your answer on the most important relationship over the assessment period.

FYI: Rate this item with reference to the parental mother figure with whom the juvenile primarily resides.

- ☒ Check this item if the mother is absent, including absence due to military, out of state residence, incarceration, etc.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile and the mother have a poor relationship (i.e., hostile, alienated, uncaring, etc.).
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile rarely chooses to see/communicate with mother, argues when they are together, relationship ranges from dislike to hatred, or the juvenile does not care what the mother thinks, feels, or expects.
- ☒ Check this item if there is significant conflict, dissatisfaction, disappointment, or indifference in the juvenile's relationship with the mother.

3. Education:		Strengths/Comments:	
<p>A. <input type="checkbox"/> Low Achievement</p> <p>B. <input type="checkbox"/> Problems with Teachers</p> <p>C. <input type="checkbox"/> Problems with Peers</p> <p>D. <input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive Classroom Behavior</p> <p>E. <input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive Behavior on School Property</p> <p>F. <input type="checkbox"/> Truancy</p>			
<b>Risk Level:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> (0) = Low <input type="checkbox"/> (1-3) = Moderate <input type="checkbox"/> (4-6) = High			
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px;"><b>TOTAL:</b></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 20px; margin-left: 5px;"></div> </div>			

- 3A. What school are you attending right now (grade, etc.)? What grades are you getting now? What grades did you get on your last report card (improving or deteriorating)? Are you in any special education classes? Have you ever been evaluated by a school psychologist (if yes, please explain)?

**3A. Low Achievement:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile is currently failing subjects or if grades have significantly fallen compared to previous grading periods.
- ☐ Do not check this item if the juvenile is performing at his/her expected ability level, but is getting low grades.

- 3B. Describe your relationship with teachers. How do you get along with them? How are you treated by your teachers?

**3B. Problems with Teachers:**

- ☒ Check this item if there are significant and continuing problems or conflicts between the juvenile and his/her teacher(s).
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile hates his/her teacher(s), or is hostile towards them.

- 3C. Describe your relationship with peers/classmates. How are you treated by your peers/classmates?

**3C. Problems with Peers:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile is disliked, isolated, withdrawn, or there is other evidence of poor relations with peers in the school setting.
- ☐ Do not check this item if the juvenile has one isolated negative incident with peer(s).

- 3D. Have you ever been in serious trouble (e.g., detention, suspended, expelled, etc.) while in class? When? Can you tell me what happened?

**3D. Disruptive Classroom Behavior:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile is displaying acting out, attention seeking, defiant, or other disruptive behaviors within the classroom, and teachers/staff consider him/her to be a problem during class.
- ☒ Check this item only if the juvenile has been involved in **two or more** disruptive classroom incidents within the assessment period.

- 3E. Have you ever been in serious trouble (e.g., detention, suspended, expelled, etc.) outside of class, but while still in school or on school property? Have you ever been in serious trouble for your behavior on a school bus? When? Can you tell me what happened?

**3E. Disruptive Behavior on School Property:**

FYI: "School Property" applies to outside the classroom (e.g., in the hallways, on campus, at school bus stop, during walk home, etc.)

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile is aggressive/violent, engaging in misconduct while on school property.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile engages in theft, vandalism, or drug/alcohol use on school property.
- ☒ Check this item if there is disruptive behavior while the juvenile is on the school bus or at the school bus stop.
- ☒ Check this item if disruptive behavior occurs just before or after school, while juvenile is en route to or from school.

- 3F. Have you ever skipped class or school without a legitimate excuse? Did you get caught? Have you ever been charged with truancy? When?

**3F. Truancy:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile is missing school days or skipping classes without a legitimate excuse.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile has been charged with truancy during the assessment period.

4. Peer Relations:		Strengths/Comments:	
A.	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Positive Peer Acquaintances		
B.	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Positive Friends		
C.	<input type="checkbox"/> Some Delinquent Peer Acquaintances		
D.	<input type="checkbox"/> Some Delinquent Friends		
<b>Risk Level:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	(0-1) = Low		
<input type="checkbox"/>	(2-3) = Moderate		
<input type="checkbox"/>	(4) = High	<b>TOTAL:</b>	

4A/B. Who are your friends? What are their names (first names only if juvenile is uncomfortable /defensive)? What do they do to occupy their time? Do you have any acquaintances and/or friends that get good grades, are in clubs, organizations, band, sports, student government, etc?

#### 4A. Lack of Positive Acquaintances:

FYI: An *acquaintance* is defined as a casual and largely superficial peer contact

FYI: A positive acquaintance has not been involved in criminal activity for one year or longer.

FYI: A positive acquaintance is involved in pro-social activities and makes positive and constructive use of free time.

☒ Check this item if the juvenile has no positive peer acquaintances.

#### 4B. Lack of Positive Friends:

FYI: A friend is defined as an individual with whom the juvenile has a close emotional attachment, whose opinions are valued, who provides support to the juvenile when he/she needs help, etc.

☒ Check this item if the juvenile has no/few close friends who are positive role models.

☐ Do not check this item if the juvenile spends time with positive role models, respects their opinion, and does not engage in antisocial behavior when with them.

4C/D. Do you have any acquaintances and/or friends who get in trouble with the law? Have any been arrested? Do you know of any gangs in your school or neighborhood? Are any of your acquaintances and/or friends involved in a gang? Are you associated with, or a member of, a gang? How many of your acquaintances and/or friends use drugs/alcohol?

#### 4C. Some Delinquent Acquaintances:

FYI: An *acquaintance* is defined as a casual and largely superficial peer contact

☒ Check this item if some of the juvenile's peers/friends are known offenders, gang members, or exhibit antisocial attitudes/behaviors.

☒ Check this item if the juvenile has ongoing contact or past associations with individuals who have criminal records or engage in criminal activity, but are not close friends (e.g., fellow students, co-workers, people in the neighborhood, teammates, etc.).

#### 4D. Some Delinquent Friends:

FYI: If this item is checked, then item 4C must also be checked.

FYI: A friend is defined as an individual with whom the juvenile has a close emotional attachment, whose opinions are valued, who provides support to the juvenile when he/she needs help, etc.

☒ Check this item if some of the juvenile's friends are known offenders, gang members, or exhibit antisocial attitudes/behaviors.



Check this item if the juvenile displays friendship with individuals who have criminal records or engage in criminal activity.

5. Substance Abuse:		Strengths/Comments:	
A.	<input type="checkbox"/> Occasional Drug Use		
B.	<input type="checkbox"/> Chronic Drug Use		
C.	<input type="checkbox"/> Chronic Alcohol Use		
D.	<input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse Interferes with Life		
E.	<input type="checkbox"/> Substance Use Linked to Offense(s)		
<b>Risk Level:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	(0) = Low		
<input type="checkbox"/>	(1-2) = Moderate		
<input type="checkbox"/>	(3-5) = High		
		<b>TOTAL:</b>	

5A/B. Have you ever used pills or prescription drugs that were not prescribed to you? When was the last time you used these?

How many times have you used marijuana in the past 90 days? In the past year (e.g., 1x month, weekly, several times a week)? Where do you use and with whom (at parties, with friends, alone, etc.)?

If I dropped you right now, would it come back dirty? For what drugs?

Many kids your age have at least tried marijuana. Have any of your friends tried it? Have you tried it yet? How old were you when you tried it?

What other drugs have you used (e.g., cocaine, crack, heroin, ecstasy, skittles, crystal meth, etc.)? When did you begin and how much do you typically use? When was the last time you used?

#### 5A. Occasional Drug Use:

FYI: Occasional drug use is defined as 1 use or more within the assessment period but short of 2X per week.



Check this item if the juvenile is an occasional substance user.





Check this item even if the juvenile's drug use is not perceived to be a problem currently (i.e., the juvenile is a controlled and infrequent drug user).



Do not check this item if the juvenile has stopped his/her substance use for longer than the assessment period.

#### 5B. **Chronic Drug Use:**

FYI: If this item is checked, then 5A must also be checked.

FYI: Consider checking this item if the juvenile openly expresses worries about relapse or returning to drug usage.



Check this item if the juvenile has been using illegal drugs 2x per week or more and/or has a drug-related problem in at least one major life area (e.g., drug-related arrests, school/employment problems, contacts with medical facilities for drug problems, withdrawal symptoms, personality changes, family- social problems, etc.).

C/D/E. How many times did you drink over the past 90 days? Over the past year?

How often do you drink? Do you ever get drunk when you drink? Do you drink just to get drunk?

Most kids your age have at least tried alcohol. Have you tried it yet? How old were you when you first tried it?

#### 5C. **Chronic Alcohol Use:**



Check this item if the juvenile has been drinking 2x per week or more, and has alcohol-related problems in more than 1 major life area (e.g., passing-out, alcohol related arrests, school/employment problems, or recent diagnosis of alcohol dependency).



Consider checking this item for a juvenile who is worried about his/her drinking or relapse.

5D. Do you think your drinking or drug usage could be affecting your schoolwork, family life, or friendships? Have you been involved in any accidents that involved drinking or drug usage?

#### 5D. **Substance Abuse Interferes with Life:**



Check this item if drug/alcohol use affects the juvenile's physical-social functioning and/or is associated with antisocial activity (e.g., problems with schoolwork, job, parental relationships, loss of friends, accidents, etc.).

5E. Do you think your drinking or drug usage is causing your problems with the court (law)? Was your charge (offense/ truancy) related to alcohol or drug use in any way? Were you drunk/high at the time you committed your offense/truancy?

#### 5E. **Substance Use Linked to Offense(s):**

FYI: It is abuse of illegal drugs leading to law violations that is important.



Check this item if the juvenile's criminal activity reflects his/her drug or alcohol use.



Check this item if the juvenile's use of alcohol or drugs is contributing, has contributed, or might contribute (use your professional judgment) to violations or the law of the juvenile's probation. Include drug trafficking to support a drug habit, theft to support a drug habit, etc.

6. Leisure & Recreation:		Strengths/Comments:	
A.	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Organized Activities		
B.	<input type="checkbox"/> Could Make Better Use of Time		
C.	<input type="checkbox"/> No Personal Interests		
<b>Risk Level:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>(0) = Low</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>(1) = Moderate</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>(2-3) = High</b>	<b>TOTAL:</b>	

- 6A. Are you a member of any sports teams, organizations, bands, clubs, volunteering, etc., after school or on the weekends?  
Are you involved in any church group activities, youth group, etc?

**6A. Lack of Organized Activities:**

- ☒ Check this item if there is no evidence that the juvenile participates in sports, clubs, or other types of organized positive activities.
- ☒ Check this item if he/she only attends self-help groups that are mandatory and the juvenile does not find it enjoyable or helpful.
- ☐ Do not check this item if he/she attends self-help groups willingly and receives social rewards and help from this.

- 6B. What else do you like to do with your free time?

**6B. Could Make Better Use of Time:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile spends excessive time in passive/unconstructive activities (i.e., watching TV, DVD's, playing video games, on social networking sites, listening to the radio, partying, hanging around).
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile has no leisure activities and is bored during most of his/her free time.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile is involved in 1-2 recreational activities, but his/her involvement is inconsistent, limited to one season, or not rewarding.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile needs help from someone to plan positive leisure activities or structure their free time.

- 6C. Tell me about any other interests or hobbies that you participate in that we haven't talked about already.

**6C. No Personal interests:**

Check this item if the juvenile has no personal interests of a positive nature.



Do not check this item if the juvenile participates in his/her interests (of a positive nature).

7. Personality & Behavior:		Strengths/Comments:	
A.	<input type="checkbox"/> Short Attention Span		
B.	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor Frustration Tolerance		
C.	<input type="checkbox"/> Verbally Aggressive/Verbally Intimidating		
D.	<input type="checkbox"/> Explosive Episodes		
E.	<input type="checkbox"/> Physically Aggressive		
F.	<input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Guilt Feelings		
G.	<input type="checkbox"/> Inflated Self-Esteem		
<b>Risk Level:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	(0) = Low		
<input type="checkbox"/>	(1-4) = Moderate		
<input type="checkbox"/>	(5-7) = High	<b>TOTAL:</b>	

- 7A. Do you have trouble concentrating or paying attention? Do other people think that you have trouble concentrating or paying attention? Have you ever been told by others (e.g., teacher, counselor, psychologist, etc.) that you have a problem staying focused? Have you ever been evaluated for ADD/ADHD?

**7A. Short Attention Span:**

FYI: This refers to Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) related symptoms only, including: short-attention span, distractibility, and impulsivity.



Check this item if the juvenile has significant and consistent difficulty paying attention and/or concentrating on tasks.



Check this item if the juvenile has difficulty completing tasks or following sequential directions.



Check this item if the juvenile is hyperactive for his/her age or developmental level.

- 7B. What kinds of things frustrate you? Do you lose your patience easily? Describe what happens when you get frustrated? Do other people think that you get frustrated easily?

**7B. Poor Frustration Tolerance:**

Check this item if the juvenile deals poorly with frustration, loses patience easily, overreacts to minor setbacks or frustrations.



Check this item if the juvenile acts out destructively or violently when experiencing frustration or failure.



Check this item if the juvenile has significant trouble delaying or postponing gratification.



Check this item if the juvenile gives up easily when tasks becomes more difficult.

- 7C. What kinds of things make you angry? Do you yell, scream, or curse at other people when you get frustrated or angry? Can you describe what happens? Does this help you get your way?

**7C. Verbally Aggressive:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile is often verbally abusive in dealing with others.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile often uses language in a hostile, threatening, or intimidating manner.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile uses verbal aggression to manipulate others.

7D/E. What kinds of things make you so angry that you physically lose control? How angry do you get? What do you do when you get that angry? Do you break things, throw or punch things, destroy property? Do you get into physical fights with other people? Can you describe what happens (how bad do these fights get)?

**7D. Explosive Episodes (Objects/Property):**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile loses control physically of his/her temper when frustrated or angry.
- ☒ Check this item only if the juvenile's tantrums are limited to destruction of property or objects.

**7E. Physically Aggressive (People):**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile initiates physical aggression against others, starts fights, or has engaged in violent actions.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile believes physical aggression is an appropriate way of expressing oneself and dealing with others.
- ☐ Do not check this item if the juvenile has had one minor, isolated aggressive incident with peer(s).

7F. How do you feel after you have lost control, exploded, or acted out angrily? How do you think others feel after you have lost control? What do you think you could do to make amends for what you have done?

**7F. Inadequate Guilt Feelings:**

FYI: This item refers to the juvenile's feelings about his/ her actions and should not be confused with item 7E.

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile feels no remorse for causing harm or threatening the welfare of others.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile does not accept responsibility for his/her actions, or offers excuses.
- ☒ Juvenile displays little anxiety and/or guilt in manipulating and/or exploiting others

7G. How do those that know you well describe you as a person? What do you like about yourself (what are you good at)? Are there some things about yourself that you don't like? Do you sometimes think you are better or more talented than others? How do you know this?

**7G. Inflated Self-Esteem:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile thinks/demonstrates a need to express superiority over others, brags constantly, and has feelings of self-worth that seem to exceed his/her accomplishments.

8. Attitudes & Orientation:		Strengths/Comments:	
A. <input type="checkbox"/> Not Seeking Help B. <input type="checkbox"/> Actively Rejecting Help C. <input type="checkbox"/> Defies Authority D. <input type="checkbox"/> Antisocial/Pro-criminal Attitudes E. <input type="checkbox"/> Callous, Little Concern for Others			
<b>Risk Level:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> (0) = Low <input type="checkbox"/> (1-3) = Moderate			
<input type="checkbox"/> (4-5) = High	<b>TOTAL:</b>		

8A/B. (If the juvenile is already receiving treatment/help, continue with this question) If you are already receiving help (therapy, counseling, etc.), do you see it as being helpful to you or your family? Who set you up with getting this help? Do you feel forced into it? Would you still be attending this help if authority (parents, court, etc.) were not making you go?

What are your thoughts about your current offense /charge / truancy, etc.? Do you think you could be helped from counseling, therapy, anger management, educational classes, etc.? Do you see the need for help in other areas of your life?

#### 8A. Not Seeking Help:

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile is not seeking help, or is reluctant to seek the necessary interventions.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile lacks insight as to the need for help and/or does not recognize the value of help.

#### 8B. Actively Rejecting Help:

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile actively rejects or refuses to participate in the interventions of professionals or agencies.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile defiantly rejects help or passively aggressively rejects help.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile displays very poor attendance for appointments designed to help him/her.

8C. What do you think about people in authority telling you what to do (parents, family, teachers, police, court, etc.)? Do you think you should have to listen to (mind) them?

What do you think of the court system? How do you feel you have been treated by the court so far? How have you been treated at your hearing(s)?

What do you think of the police? How do you feel you were treated by the police on your charge?

**8C. Defies Authority:**



Juvenile is hostile to the juvenile justice system **AND** refuses to follow directions from parents, teachers, or other authority figures \*  
***(the juvenile must have both, in order to count this item) \****

8D/E. Do you have any family /extended family members (including parents, siblings) who have been in trouble with the law? Have any family members been to jail or prison? For what? How do you feel about them given their criminal behavior?

Do you think it is okay to have friends who commit crimes? How do you feel about friends who commit crimes? What would you do if you knew your friend was committing crimes?

Were there any victim(s) of your crime? How do you feel about the victim(s)? Note: You may have to give insight into apparent victimless crimes, e.g., how stealing CD's from Meijer increases costs which affects customers and how customers are viewed by security, etc.

Why do you think people commit crimes? Why do you think you committed your crime? Looking back on what you did, how do you feel about it?

Why do you think we have laws? Do you think the laws are fair? Are there any laws that you think are unfair that should be eliminated? Do you think that any of the laws are unfair and should not apply to you?


#### 8D. **Antisocial/Pro-criminal Attitudes:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile's attitudes are supportive of a criminal or anti-social lifestyle.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile's attitudes, values, beliefs, and rationalizations about the crime and victim show that he/she does not think social rules and laws apply to him/her.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile feels crime is useful, and he/she is better served by crime.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile denies responsibility for his/her actions and their consequences, and fails to empathize with the welfare of others who were victimized.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile accepts criminal others, values antisocial activities, and expresses hostility toward the juvenile justice system.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile expresses some guilt or remorse for the victim(s), but there is a mixed expression of self-concern (e.g., *I was in the wrong place at the wrong time; I wish I hadn't been caught; I'm only guilty because I got caught, etc.*)
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile has a mixed attitude toward criminal behavior, but still is willing to bend/break the laws when convenient, or when it serves them.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile has general disregard for non-criminal alternatives.
- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile has weak ties to home, school, or work; and is negative, hostile, and rejecting of non-criminal others.

#### 8E. **Callous, Little Concern for Others:**

- ☒ Check this item if the juvenile shows little concern for the feelings or welfare of others.
- ☒ Check this box if the juvenile engages in self-serving behavior to the neglect of others' welfare.
- ☒ Check this box if juvenile engages in antisocial, exploitive, predatory behavior.

## Pre-Screen Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument

		<h1 style="margin: 0;">Youth Assessment &amp; Screening Instrument</h1>		<b>PRE SCREEN</b>	
<b>Name:</b> <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> Last <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> First		<b>Case I. D.</b> <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>		<b>Date Administered</b> <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> MM/DD/YYYY	
<b>DOB</b> <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> MM/DD/YYYY		<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female		<b>Zip Code</b> <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>	
<b>Type:</b> <input type="radio"/> Probation <input type="radio"/> CUS		<input type="radio"/> Referred to Court (outcome pending)		<input type="radio"/> Informal Supervision <input type="radio"/> Diversion without Informal Supervision	
<b>Section 1 Legal History - Pre-Screen</b>					
<p>▶ Enter "0" in the boxes if there were no occurrences of the identified incidents. These items <u>must</u> include information about the current referral/offense or current circumstances.</p>					
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<b>1. Previous police contacts for delinquent/criminal offenses:</b> Check No if this is the first police contact. Check Yes if there were <u>any</u> previous police contacts that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed).				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>2. Age at first police contact for delinquent/criminal offense:</b> Include any police contacts for delinquent/criminal offenses that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed).				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>3. Number of police contacts:</b> Total number of police contacts for any delinquent/criminal offense that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed).				
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<b>4. Police contacts for felony offenses:</b> Police contacts for felony offenses that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed).				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>5. Transfers to criminal court:</b> Total number of transfers to adult court.				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>6. Weapon offenses:</b> Total number of police contacts for firearm/weapon offenses that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed).				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>7. Police contacts for offenses against another person:</b> Total number of police contacts for offenses against another person that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed). Includes threats, force, or physical harm to another person such as homicide, murder, manslaughter, assault, any sexual offenses, robbery, kidnapping, domestic violence, coercion, harassment, intimidation, obscene, or harassing phone call, etc.				
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<b>8. Police contacts for felony offenses against another person:</b> Police contacts for felony offenses against another person that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless whether successfully completed).				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>9. Placements:</b> Total number of placements in the custody of DCFS, Probation/Court Services, CCBYS/DHS, or other placements.				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>10. Juvenile Detention:</b> Total number of times youth has been confined in a juvenile detention center <i>for any reason</i> .				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>11. DOC Custody:</b> Total number of times youth has been committed to a DOC facility <i>for any reason</i> including evaluations.				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>12. Escapes:</b> Total number of attempted or actual escapes from detention or a DOC facility.				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>13. Failure-to-appear in court:</b> Total number of failures-to-appear court (juvenile or adult) that resulted in a warrant being issued.				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	<b>14. Number of Petitions for Violations of Probation or Supervision:</b> Total number of petitions or requests for petitions for violations of probation or supervision. If any, check all types that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Violation <input type="checkbox"/> New Offense <input type="checkbox"/> Absconder				



## Section 2 Family Pre Screen

1. Runaways or times kicked out of home: Include times the youth did not voluntarily return within 24 hours. Include incidents not reported by or to law enforcement. Enter 0 if none, up to a maximum of 5.
- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
|  | Times kicked out/locked out |
|  | Number of runaways          |
2. Has there ever been a family court finding of any child neglect (relating to a custodial parent): ☐ No ☐ Yes
3. Compliance with parental rules:
- ☐ Youth usually obeys and follows rules
  - ☐ Youth sometimes obeys or obeys some rules
  - ☐ Youth often disobeys rules
  - ☐ Youth consistently disobeys, and/or is hostile
  - ☐ No pro-social rules in place
  - ☐ Not Applicable
4. Circumstances of family members who are living in the household:  
• Check all that apply.
- |                            | Mother                   | Father                   | Step-Parent              | Sibling                  | Other                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Non-applicable             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No problems                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Alcohol/Drug Problems      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mental Health Problems     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| JD/Criminal Record         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| JD/Violent Criminal Record | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Section 3 School – Pre Screen

Complete this section based on information from school records and the interview:

1. Youth's current school enrollment status, regardless of attendance: If the youth is in home school as a result of being expelled or dropping out, check the expelled or dropped out box, otherwise check enrolled if in home school.
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Graduated, GED<br><input type="radio"/> Enrolled full-time<br><input type="radio"/> Enrolled part-time | <input type="radio"/> Dropped out<br><input type="radio"/> Suspended<br><input type="radio"/> Expelled<br><input type="radio"/> Not Applicable |
|--|--|
2. Youth's attendance in the last 4 months of school: Full-day absence means missing majority of classes. Partial-day absence means attending the majority of classes and missing the minority.
- ☐ Attends regularly (at least 90% of time)
  - ☐ Some partial-day unexcused absences
  - ☐ Some full-day unexcused absences
  - ☐ Five or more full-day unexcused absences per quarter
  - ☐ Not Applicable
3. Youth's conduct in the last 4 months of school.
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Positive behavioral adjustment<br><input type="radio"/> No problems reported<br><input type="radio"/> Infractions reported | <input type="radio"/> Intervention by school administration (calls to parents, principal or superintendent involvement, hearing)<br><input type="radio"/> Police reports filed by school<br><input type="radio"/> Not Applicable |
|--|--|
4. Youth's academic performance in the last 4 months of school:
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> B+ or above<br><input type="radio"/> C or better<br><input type="radio"/> C- or lower | <input type="radio"/> Failing some classes<br><input type="radio"/> Failing most classes<br><input type="radio"/> Not Applicable |
|---|--|

### Section 4 Community and Peers – Pre Screen

1. Associates the youth spends his/her time with:

• Check all that apply.

- ☐ Friends who have a positive pro-social influence
- ☐ No friends or companions, no consistent friends
- ☐ Friends who have a negative delinquent influence
- ☐ Associates or has been seen with gang members
- ☐ Family gang members
- ☐ Youth is a gang member
- ☐ None of the above

### Section 5 Alcohol and Drugs – Pre Screen



*"Disrupts function" involves problems in any one of these four life areas: education, family conflict, peer relationships, or health (Disrupted functioning usually indicates that treatment is warranted – refer for further assessment by a qualified professional). Alcohol/Drugs contributes to behavior means that use typically precipitates the commission of crime or other reasons youth's delinquent/criminal activity is related to alcohol and/or drug use).*

1. Alcohol and Drug Use	Ever Used	Times used last 3 months	Disrupts function	Contributes to behavior	Age at 1 <sup>st</sup> use	Attempts to cut back
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes Alcohol/Drug Use						
<input type="checkbox"/> No Alcohol/Drug Use						
Alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marijuana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cocaine/crack	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ecstasy or other club drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heroin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hallucinogens (LSD, Acid)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inhalants /huffing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amphetamines (Speed)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prescription drug misuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Section 6 Mental Health – Pre Screen



Any indications of the following 7 items indicate the need for further assessment by a qualified health professional. Indicators in item 1 should be confirmed by a health care professional.

### 1. Mental Health Problems:

- ☐ Mental Health Problems  
☐ No Mental Health Problems

Psychoses  
 Bi-Polar  
 Other Mood/Affective/Depression Disorders  
 Schizophrenia  
 Thought/Personality and Adjustment Disorders  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Exclude substance abuse and special education since those are considered elsewhere. Exclude oppositional defiant and conduct disorders.)

Diagnosed	Current Treatment	Past Treatment	Current Medication	Past Medication
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 2. Homicidal Ideation: Attempts or has thoughts to seriously harm others.

- ☐ No indications  
☐ Indications

### 3. Suicidal Ideation: Attempts or has thoughts to harm self.

- ☐ No indications  
☐ Suicidal thoughts  
☐ Suicide attempt

### 4. Sexual aggression: Indications of aggressive sex, sex for power, sex with younger children, voyeurism, exposure, etc.

- ☐ No indications  
☐ Indications



For abuse, include any history that is suspected, whether or not substantiated but exclude reports of abuse proven false.

### 5. History of physical or sexual abuse: Parents include biological parents, stepparents, adopted parents, and legal guardians. • Check all that apply.

Abused By:	Parent	Sibling	Other Family	Outside Family
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 6. Victimization: Indications that the youth has been victimized by a peer or older person. • Check all that apply.

- ☐ No indications  
☐ Sexual vulnerability/exploitation  
☐ Victim of bullying  
☐ Victim of physical assault  
☐ Victim of property theft/vandalization

## Section 7 Aggression – Pre Screen

### 1. Violence: Indications of any of the following: • Check all that apply.

- ☐ No reports of violence  
☐ Displaying a weapon  
☐ Use of a weapon (i.e., illegally)  
☐ Bullying/threatening people  
☐ Violent destruction of property  
☐ Assaultive behavior
- ☐ Assault causing serious injury (requiring medical attention)  
☐ Deliberate fire starting  
☐ Animal cruelty



**Section 8**    *Attitudes – Pre Screen*

1. Accepts responsibility for delinquent/criminal behavior:

- ☐ Voluntarily accepts full responsibility for behavior
- ☐ Recognizes that he or she must accept responsibility
- ☐ Indicates some awareness of the need to accept responsibility
- ☐ Minimizes, denies, justifies, excuses or blames others
- ☐ Openly accepts or is proud of behavior as OK



**Section 9**    *Skills – Pre Screen*

1. Consequential thinking skills:

- ☐ Acts to obtain good and avoid bad consequences
- ☐ Can identify specific consequences of his/her actions
- ☐ Understands there are good and bad consequences of actions
- ☐ Sometimes confused about consequences of action
- ☐ Does not understand there are consequences of actions

## Appendix D

## Full-Screen Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument

		<b>Youth Assessment &amp; Screening Instrument</b>		<b>FULL ASSESSMENT</b>	
Name: <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> <small>Last</small> <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> <small>First</small>		Case I. D. <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>		Date Administered <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> <small>MM / DD / YYYY</small>	
DOB <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/> <small>MM / DD / YYYY</small>		<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female		Zip Code <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>	
Type: <input type="radio"/> Probation		<input type="radio"/> CUS		<input type="radio"/> Referred to Court (outcome pending) <input type="radio"/> Informal Supervision <input type="radio"/> Diversion without Informal Supervision	
<b>Section 1 Legal History</b>					
▶ Enter "0" in the boxes if there were no occurrences of the identified incidents. These items <u>must</u> include information about the current referral/offense or current circumstances.					
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	1. <b>Previous police contacts for delinquent/criminal offenses:</b> Check No if this is the <u>first</u> police contact. Check Yes if there were <u>any</u> previous police contacts that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed).				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	2. <b>Age at first police contact for delinquent/criminal offense:</b> Include any police contacts for delinquent/criminal offenses that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed).				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	3. <b>Number of police contacts:</b> Total number of police contacts for any delinquent/criminal offense that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed).				
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	4. <b>Police contacts for felony offenses:</b> Police contacts for felony offenses that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed).				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	5. <b>Transfers to criminal court:</b> Total number of transfers to adult court.				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	6. <b>Weapon offenses:</b> Total number of police contacts for firearm/weapon offenses that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed).				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	7. <b>Police contacts for offenses against another person:</b> Total number of police contacts for offenses against another person that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless of whether successfully completed). Includes threats, force, or physical harm to another person such as homicide, murder, manslaughter, assault, any sexual offenses, robbery, kidnapping, domestic violence, coercion, harassment, intimidation, obscene, or harassing phone call, etc.				
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	8. <b>Police contacts for felony offenses against another person:</b> Police contacts for felony offenses against another person that resulted in adjudication/conviction, diversion/station adjustment, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition (regardless whether successfully completed).				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	9. <b>Placements:</b> Total number of placements in the custody of DCFS, Probation/Court Services, CCBYS/DHS, or other placements.				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	10. <b>Juvenile Detention:</b> Total number of times youth has been confined in a juvenile detention center <i>for any reason</i> .				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	11. <b>DOC Custody:</b> Total number of times youth has been committed to a DOC facility <i>for any reason</i> including evaluations.				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	12. <b>Escapes:</b> Total number of attempted or actual escapes from detention or a DOC facility.				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	13. <b>Failure-to-appear in court:</b> Total number of failures-to-appear court (juvenile or adult) that resulted in a warrant being issued.				
<input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	14. <b>Number of Petitions for Violations of Probation or Supervision:</b> Total number of petitions or requests for petitions for violations of probation or supervision. If any, check all types that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Violation <input type="checkbox"/> New Offense <input type="checkbox"/> Absconder				
Orbis Partners Inc. Used with Permission © 2008					
					
<b>F-1</b>					

**Section 2 Family**Check if family items do not apply to this client : ☐

1. Runaways or times kicked out of home: Include times the youth did not voluntarily return within 24 hours. Include incidents not reported by or to law enforcement. Enter 0 if none, up to a maximum of 5.

	Times kicked out/locked out
	Number of runaways

2. Has there ever been a family court finding of any child neglect (relating to a custodial parent): ☐ No ☐ Yes

3. Compliance with parental rules:

- ☐ Youth usually obeys and follows rules  
☐ Youth sometimes obeys or obeys some rules  
☐ Youth often disobeys rules  
☐ Youth consistently disobeys, and/or is hostile  
☐ No pro-social rules in place  
☐ Not Applicable

4. Circumstances of family members who are living in the household:  
 • Check all that apply.

Non-applicable  
 No problems  
 Alcohol/Drug Problems  
 Mental Health Problems  
 JD/Criminal Record  
 JD/Violent Criminal Record

Mother	Father	Step-Parent	Sibling	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Historic problems of family members who lived in the environment in which the youth was primarily raised:  
 • Check all that apply.

Non-applicable  
 No problems  
 Alcohol/Drug Problems  
 Mental Health Problems  
 JD/Criminal Record  
 JD/Violent Criminal Record

Mother	Father	Step-Parent	Sibling	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Youth's current living arrangements: • Check all that apply.

- ☐ Mother (biological or adoptive)  
☐ Father (biological or adoptive)  
☐ Stepparent

- ☐ Siblings  
☐ Other relatives  
☐ Other adult

- ☐ Foster/group home  
☐ Independent  
☐ No permanent address/shelter  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

7. Parental/custodial supervision: Parents know whom youth is with, when youth will return, where youth is going, and what youth is doing.

- ☐ Good supervision  
☐ Some good supervision  
☐ Some inadequate supervision  
☐ Consistently inadequate supervision  
☐ Not Applicable

8. Appropriate consequences for bad behavior: Appropriate means clear communication, timely response, and response proportionate to conduct.

- ☐ Consistently appropriate consequences  
☐ Sometimes appropriate consequences  
☐ Usually not appropriate consequences  
☐ Never appropriate or no consequences  
☐ Not Applicable



9. Appropriate rewards for good behavior. Rewards include affection, praise, or other tangible means.
- ☐ Consistently appropriate rewards
  - ☐ Sometimes appropriate rewards
  - ☐ Usually not appropriate rewards
  - ☐ Never appropriate or no rewards
  - ☐ Not Applicable
10. Parental attitude toward youth's maladaptive behavior:
- ☐ Disapproves of youth's maladaptive behavior
  - ☐ Minimizes, denies, justifies, excuses maladaptive behavior, blames others/circumstances
  - ☐ Accepts youth's maladaptive behavior as okay
  - ☐ Proud of youth's maladaptive behavior
  - ☐ Not Applicable
11. Support network for family; extended family and friends who can provide additional support:
- ☐ Strong family support network
  - ☐ Some family support network
  - ☐ No family support network
  - ☐ Not Applicable
12. Family member(s) youth feels close to or has good relationship with:  
• Check all that apply.
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother/female caretaker | <input type="checkbox"/> Male sibling    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father/male caretaker   | <input type="checkbox"/> Extended family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female sibling          | <input type="checkbox"/> No one          |
13. Family provides opportunities for youth to participate in family activities and decisions affecting the youth:
- ☐ Ongoing opportunities for involvement provided
  - ☐ Some opportunities for involvement provided
  - ☐ No opportunities for involvement provided
  - ☐ Not Applicable
14. Family provides opportunity for youth to learn, grow and succeed:
- ☐ Ongoing opportunities for growth provided
  - ☐ Some opportunities for growth provided
  - ☐ No opportunities for growth provided
  - ☐ Not Applicable
15. Parental love, caring, and support of youth:
- ☐ Consistent love, caring, and support
  - ☐ Inconsistent love, caring, and support
  - ☐ Indifferent, uncaring, uninterested, unwilling to help
  - ☐ Hostile toward youth, berated and belittled
  - ☐ Not Applicable
16. Level of conflict between parents, between youth and parents, and among siblings:  
• Check all that apply.
- ☐ No Conflict
  - ☐ Some conflict that is well managed
  - ☐ Some conflict that is distressing
  - ☐ Verbal intimidation, yelling, heated arguments
  - ☐ Threats of physical violence
  - ☐ Physical violence between parents
  - ☐ Physical violence between parents and children
  - ☐ Physical violence between siblings
  - ☐ Not Applicable

**Section 3 School**Check if School items do not apply to this client : ☐

Complete this section based on information from the interview, school records, contacts with the school.

1. Youth's current school enrollment status, regardless of attendance: If the youth is in home school as a result of being expelled or dropping out, check the expelled or dropped out box, otherwise check enrolled if in home school.
 

<input type="radio"/> Graduated, GED	<input type="radio"/> Dropped out
<input type="radio"/> Enrolled full-time	<input type="radio"/> Suspended
<input type="radio"/> Enrolled part-time	<input type="radio"/> Expelled
	<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable
2. Youth's attendance in the last 3 months of school: Full-day absence means missing majority of classes. Partial-day absence means attending the majority of classes and missing the minority.
 

<input type="radio"/> Attends regularly (at least 90% of time)
<input type="radio"/> Some partial-day unexcused absences
<input type="radio"/> Some full-day unexcused absences
<input type="radio"/> Five or more full-day unexcused absences per quarter
<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable
3. Youth's conduct in the last 3 months of school.
 

<input type="radio"/> Positive behavioral adjustment	<input type="radio"/> Intervention by school administration (calls to parents, principal or superintendent involvement, hearing)
<input type="radio"/> No problems reported	<input type="radio"/> Police reports filed by school
<input type="radio"/> Infractions reported	<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable
4. Youth's academic performance in the last 3 months of school:
 

<input type="radio"/> B+ or above	<input type="radio"/> Failing some classes
<input type="radio"/> C or better	<input type="radio"/> Failing most classes
<input type="radio"/> C- or lower	<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable
5. Youth's current school conduct:
 

<input type="radio"/> Consistent, stable	<input type="radio"/> Worsening
<input type="radio"/> Improving	<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable
6. Youth's current academic performance:
 

<input type="radio"/> Consistent, stable	<input type="radio"/> Worsening
<input type="radio"/> Improving	<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable
7. IF youth is a special education student or has been found to have a learning, behavioral, or other disability; or has a formal IEP: • Check all that apply
 

<input type="checkbox"/> No Special Education Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Retardation
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> (ADHD / ADD)
<input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
8. Youth believes receiving an education is beneficial to him or her:
 

<input type="radio"/> Believes	<input type="radio"/> Does not believe
<input type="radio"/> Somewhat believes	<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable
9. Youth believes school provides a supportive and encouraging environment for him or her:
 

<input type="radio"/> Believes	<input type="radio"/> Does not believe
<input type="radio"/> Somewhat believes	<input type="radio"/> Not Applicable
10. Total number of out of school suspensions in the last 2 years:  
Enter the number up to 10, if none enter 0.  
Total number of in-school suspensions in the last 2 years:  
Enter the number up to 10, if none enter 0.  
Total number of expulsions since the first grade: Enter the number up to 10; if none enter 0
 

	Number of out-of-school suspensions
	Number of in-school suspensions
	Number of expulsions
11. Age at first expulsion: Enter 0 if never expelled.
 

	Age at first expulsion
--	------------------------



12. Youth's involvement in school activities during most recent school year: School leadership; social service clubs; music, dance; drama, art; athletics; other extracurricular activities.

- ☐ Involved in two or more activities  
☐ Involved in one activity  
☐ Interested but not involved in any activities  
☐ No interest in school activities  
☐ Not Applicable

13. Teachers/staff/coaches youth likes or feels comfortable talking with: Enter the number of adults; if none enter 0.

Names:

Number of teachers/staff/coaches

#### Section 4 Community and Peers

1. Associates the youth spends his/her time with:

• Check all that apply.

- ☐ Friends who have a positive pro-social influence  
☐ No friends or companions, no consistent friends  
☐ Friends who have a negative delinquent influence  
☐ Associates or has been seen with gang members  
☐ Family gang members  
☐ Youth is a gang member  
☐ None of the above

2. Attachment to positively influencing peer(s):

• Check all that apply.

- ☐ Youth maintains contact with peers who are responsible and goal-focused  
☐ Youth admires or emulates older adolescents in school and/or work  
☐ Youth has a best friend who is supportive and a positive influence  
☐ None of the above

3. Admiration/emulation of high risk delinquent peers:

• Check all that apply.

- ☐ Youth does not admire, emulate delinquent peers  
☐ Youth minimally admires, emulates peers  
☐ Youth admires, emulates peers  
☐ Youth is a delinquent leader who is admired or emulated by others

4. Number of months youth has been associating with negatively influencing/delinquent friends/gang: Enter 0 if no delinquent friends/gangs.

Months has associated with delinquent friends  
 Months has associated with gang

5. Amount of free time youth spends with negatively influencing/delinquent peers:

- ☐ No delinquent peers  
☐ Spends one or two hours of free time per week  
☐ Spends three to seven hours of free time per week  
☐ Spends eight to 14 hours of free time per week  
☐ Spends all or nearly all of free time

6. Strength of negatively influencing/delinquent peer influence:

• Check all that apply.

- ☐ No delinquent peers  
☐ Does not go along with delinquent peers  
☐ Sometimes goes along with delinquent peers  
☐ Usually goes along with delinquent peers  
☐ Leads delinquent peers

7. Number of existing positive adult relationships in the community: Adults who provide support and model pro-social behavior, such as a religious leader, club member, community person, mentor, previous employer or any other non-family adult(s). Enter number of adults up to 5, if none enter 0. Exclude school-based relationships.

Number of existing adult relationship(s) in the community

8. Pro-social community ties: Youth is involved in community organizations that provide explicit opportunities for learning pro-social behavior and attitudes (e.g., church, community service clubs, volunteer activities).

- ☐ Highly Involved  
☐ Involved  
☐ Not Involved

### Section 5 Alcohol and Drugs



*"Disrupts function" involves problems in any one of these four life areas: education, family conflict, peer relationships, or health (Disrupted functioning usually indicates that treatment is warranted – refer for further assessment by a qualified professional). Alcohol/Drugs contributes to behavior means that use typically precipitates the commission of crime or other reasons youth's delinquent/criminal activity is related to alcohol and/or drug use).*

1. Alcohol and Drug Use	Ever Used	Times used last 3 months	Disrupts function	Contributes to behavior	Age at 1 <sup>st</sup> use	Attempts to cut back
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes Alcohol/Drug Use						
<input type="checkbox"/> No Alcohol/Drug Use						
Alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marijuana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cocaine/crack	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ecstasy or other club drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heroin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hallucinogens (LSD, Acid)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inhalants /huffing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amphetamines (Speed)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prescription drug misuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Youth is receptive to participation in alcohol/drug treatment:		<input type="radio"/> N/A No problem	<input type="radio"/> Receptive	<input type="radio"/> Not Receptive		
3. Previous alcohol/drug treatment:		<input type="radio"/> N/A No problem	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No		

## Section 6 Mental Health



Any indications of the following 7 items indicate the need for further assessment by a qualified health professional. Indicators in item 1 should be confirmed by a health care professional.

### 1. Mental Health Problems:

- ☐ Mental Health Problems  
☐ No Mental Health Problems

Psychoses  
 Bi-Polar  
 Other Mood/Affective/Depression Disorders  
 Schizophrenia  
 Thought/Personality and Adjustment Disorders  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Exclude substance abuse and special education  
 since those are considered elsewhere. Exclude  
 oppositional defiant and conduct disorders).

Diagnosed	Current Treatment	Past Treatment	Current Medication	Past Medication
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 2. Homicidal Ideation: Attempts or has thoughts to seriously harm others.

- ☐ No indications  
☐ Indications

### 3. Suicidal Ideation: Attempts or has thoughts to harm self.

- ☐ No indications  
☐ Suicidal thoughts  
☐ Suicide attempt

### 4. Sexual aggression: Indications of aggressive sex, sex for power, sex with younger children, voyeurism, exposure, etc.

- ☐ No indications  
☐ Indications



For abuse, include any history that is suspected, whether or not substantiated but exclude reports of abuse proven false.

### 5. History of physical or sexual abuse: Parents include biological parents, stepparents, adopted parents, and legal guardians. • Check all that apply.

Abused By:	Parent	Sibling	Other Family	Outside Family
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 6. Victimization: Indications that the youth has been victimized by a peer or older person. • Check all that apply.

- ☐ No indications  
☐ Sexual vulnerability/exploitation  
☐ Victim of bullying  
☐ Victim of physical assault  
☐ Victim of property theft/vandalization

### Section 7 Aggression

1. **Violence:** Indications of any of the following:  
• *Check all that apply.*
  - ☐ No reports of violence
  - ☐ Displaying a weapon
  - ☐ Use of a weapon (i.e., illegally)
  - ☐ Bullying/threatening people
  - ☐ Violent destruction of property
  - ☐ Assaultive behavior
  - ☐ Assault causing serious injury (requiring medical attention)
  - ☐ Deliberate fire starting
  - ☐ Animal cruelty
2. **Hostile interpretation of actions and intentions of others in a common non-confrontational setting:**
  - ☐ Can easily tolerate criticism or hostility directed by others
  - ☐ Shows constraint in dealing with conflict from others
  - ☐ Recognizes that most people do not have mal intentions
  - ☐ Frequently attributes hostile intentions to non-confrontational behavior
  - ☐ Attributes almost all neutral actions of people as hostile and antagonistic
3. **Tolerance for frustration:**
  - ☐ Never gets upset over small things or has tantrums
  - ☐ Rarely gets upset over small things or has tantrums
  - ☐ Sometimes gets upset over small things
  - ☐ Frequently gets upset over small things or has tantrums
  - ☐ Highly volatile with reputation for fits of anger and rage
4. **Belief in use of physical aggression to resolve a disagreement or conflict:** (e.g., fighting and physical intimidation)
  - ☐ Believes violence is rarely appropriate or necessary
  - ☐ Believes violence is sometimes appropriate or necessary
  - ☐ Believes violence is often appropriate or necessary
5. **Belief in use of verbal aggression to resolve a disagreement or conflict:** (e.g., yelling and verbal intimidation)
  - ☐ Believes verbal aggression is rarely appropriate or necessary
  - ☐ Believes verbal aggression is sometimes appropriate or necessary
  - ☐ Believes verbal aggression is often appropriate or necessary

### Section 8 Attitudes

1. **Accepts responsibility for delinquent/criminal behavior:**
  - ☐ Voluntarily accepts full responsibility for behavior
  - ☐ Recognizes that he or she must accept responsibility
  - ☐ Indicates some awareness of the need to accept responsibility
  - ☐ Minimizes, denies, justifies, excuses or blames others
  - ☐ Openly accepts or is proud of behavior as OK
2. **Understands the impact of his or her behavior on others:**
  - ☐ Fully understands the nature of harm caused to others
  - ☐ Indicates awareness that harm has been caused
  - ☐ Does not understand or fully appreciate effects on others
  - ☐ Minimizes or denies harm caused
  - ☐ Total lack of empathy for harm caused to others (e.g., callous)
3. **Willingness to make amends:**
  - ☐ Eagerly indicates plans for making amends
  - ☐ Indicates a desire to make amends
  - ☐ Willing to cooperate with making amends
  - ☐ Non-committal toward making amends
  - ☐ Unwilling to make amends
4. **Optimism:**
  - ☐ Is very confident that the future will be bright
  - ☐ Looks forward to the future with anticipation
  - ☐ Believes some things matter and he or she has a future
  - ☐ Believes little matters because he or she has no future
  - ☐ Believes nothing matters; fatalistic



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 5. Attitude when engaged in delinquent/criminal act(s):  | <input type="radio"/> Nervous, afraid, or worried<br><input type="radio"/> Uncertain, or indecisive<br><input type="radio"/> Unconcerned or indifferent<br><input type="radio"/> Hyper, excited, or stimulated<br><input type="radio"/> Confident, or brags   |
| 6. Law-abiding attitudes:  | <input type="radio"/> Clearly positive commitment toward law-abiding behavior<br><input type="radio"/> Expresses a desire to live in a law-abiding manner<br><input type="radio"/> Expresses neutral attitude toward law-abiding behavior<br><input type="radio"/> Feels law-abiding behavior does not apply to him or her<br><input type="radio"/> Openly admits unwillingness to demonstrate law-abiding behavior |
| 7. Respect for authority figures:  | <input type="radio"/> Indicates respect for the role of authorities<br><input type="radio"/> Appreciates the role of authorities<br><input type="radio"/> Expresses neutral attitude toward authorities<br><input type="radio"/> Expresses resentment toward authorities<br><input type="radio"/> Views all authorities with contempt   |
| 8. Readiness for change: Is the youth willing to address issues that contribute to problem behavior? | <input type="radio"/> Actively committed to working on change<br><input type="radio"/> Shows co-operation in taking steps toward positive behavioral change<br><input type="radio"/> Believes there may be a need to change<br><input type="radio"/> Exhibits only passive or no support for change<br><input type="radio"/> Hostile or unwilling to make positive behavioral change                                |

## Section 9 Skills

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Consequential thinking skills:   | <input type="radio"/> Acts to obtain good and avoid bad consequences<br><input type="radio"/> Can identify specific consequences of his/her actions<br><input type="radio"/> Understands there are good and bad consequences of actions<br><input type="radio"/> Sometimes confused about consequences of action<br><input type="radio"/> Does not understand there are consequences of actions                                   |
| 2. Social perspective-taking skills:  | <input type="radio"/> Can accept other points of view without necessarily agreeing<br><input type="radio"/> Tries to understand other points of view<br><input type="radio"/> Can reason there are two sides to a situation<br><input type="radio"/> Difficulty understanding there are other points of view<br><input type="radio"/> Unwilling to recognize there can be other points of view                                    |
| 3. Problem-solving skills:  | <input type="radio"/> Can apply appropriate solutions to problems<br><input type="radio"/> Can generate different solutions to problems<br><input type="radio"/> Can identify or describe problem behaviors or situations<br><input type="radio"/> Can sometimes identify problem behaviors or situations<br><input type="radio"/> Cannot identify when problem behaviors or situations occur                                     |
| 4. Impulse-control skills to avoid getting in trouble: Self-control techniques include reframing, replacing delinquent/criminal thoughts with pro-social thoughts, diversion, relaxation, problem solving, negotiation, relapse prevention. | <input type="radio"/> Uses self-control techniques to avoid trouble<br><input type="radio"/> Knows some self-control techniques to respond to triggers<br><input type="radio"/> Can identify triggers (e.g., persons, events, situations, thoughts, emotions, physical cues)<br><input type="radio"/> Usually fails to identify triggers<br><input type="radio"/> Cannot identify triggers that cause problem behaviors           |
| 5. Loss of control over delinquent/criminal behavior:   | <input type="radio"/> Recognizes problem behavior is controllable and accepts full responsibility<br><input type="radio"/> Strives for some control over own behavior<br><input type="radio"/> Recognizes that some problem behavior is controllable<br><input type="radio"/> Believes that most problem behavior cannot be controlled<br><input type="radio"/> Believes problem behavior is completely out of his or her control |

6. Interpersonal skills:
- ☐ Demonstrates social appeal through positive interpersonal skills
  - ☐ Can appropriately express needs and feelings in an assertive, non-confrontational way
  - ☐ Recognizes the need to nurture positive interpersonal relations with others
  - ☐ Has some difficulty in expressing needs and feelings effectively
  - ☐ Cannot express needs to others without an element of inter-personal conflict or lack of clarity
7. Goal-setting skills:
- ☐ Carefully sets out realistic goals and plans and takes active steps to achieve them
  - ☐ Demonstrates skills in developing realistic goals and plans
  - ☐ Recognizes the need to plan, but may set unrealistic plans
  - ☐ Lacks skills and motivation for developing realistic goals and plans
  - ☐ Exhibits no interest or desire to set goals and make plans for the future

### Section 10 Employment and Free Time

1. History of employment: (Exclude odd jobs or babysitting unless a regular paid job)  
• Check all that apply.
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Currently employed          | <input type="checkbox"/> Was fired or quit because of poor performance                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never employed              | <input type="checkbox"/> Was fired or quit because he or she could not get along with employer or coworkers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prior successful employment |   |



Complete following section only if the youth has ever been employed. Enter 0 for items 2-4 if the items are non-applicable.

2. Total number of times youth has been employed:  Number of times
3. Number of weeks of longest period of employment:  Number of weeks
4. Positive personal relationship(s) with current employer(s) or adult coworker(s):  Number of adults
5. Structured recreational activities: Youth participates in structured and supervised pro-social community activities such as religious group/church, community group, cultural group, club, athletics, or other community activity (Exclude activities already counted in the School section).
- ☐ Involved in two or more activities
  - ☐ Involved in one activity
  - ☐ Interested but not involved
  - ☐ Not interested in any activities
6. Unstructured recreational activities: Youth engages in positively influencing activities – may include reading, artwork, music, computers, hobbies, etc.
- ☐ Involved in two or more activities
  - ☐ Involved in one activity
  - ☐ Interested but not involved
  - ☐ Not interested in any activities
7. Challenging/exciting hobbies/activities: Youth identifies a hobby or activity that is or could be especially challenging, intense, or exciting.
- ☐ Identifies hobby(s) or activity (s) that are currently challenging/exciting
  - ☐ Can identify hobby(s) or activity (s) that would be challenging/exciting
  - ☐ Cannot identify hobby(s) or activity (s) that would be challenging/exciting
8. Decline in interest in positive leisure pursuits: Decline in interest during the past year due to involvement in negatively influencing activities (e.g., substance abuse, gang involvement, delinquent peer groups, illegal activity):
- ☐ No change, or never experienced positive leisure pursuits
  - ☐ Decline in interest in positive leisure pursuits
  - ☐ Recent increase in interest in positive leisure pursuits