

THE SIX STAGES OF SUCCESSFUL AFTERCARE SERVICES

STAGE ONE: ASSESSMENT

Assessment includes the activities the agency uses as a way to measure, determine and make judgements. Good assessment requires a meaningful risk instrument and a solid needs assessment. Thorough assessment provides the foundation for successful treatment planning.

- Includes a risk instrument.
- Uses a thorough needs assessment.
- Utilizes Best Practices around cultural risk/needs assessment.
- Identifies language barriers.

THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS INTEGRATED INTO THE ASSESSMENT STAGE

Individualized/Specialized:

- Providing good assessment facilitates moving the juvenile offender quickly into culturally specific, gender specific and language appropriate programming.
- Juvenile feels understood, begins to buy into own process.
- Underscores and teaches the value that "your life is important. We take it seriously. So can you."

Family:

- An assessment of the family points out the strengths that can be a foundation for a later case plan.
- Cultural considerations are a part of the needs assessment for the family.
- The family's input is valued and the family is placed into the lead role as appropriate.

Strength Based:

- The relationship between juvenile and agency starts from a perspective of recognizing the strengths and protective factors unique to this family.

Community:

- Community based resources are an enormous asset to the assessment process and will build a foundation for providing services later.
- Community based services need to be culturally competent and gender specific and utilizes culturally appropriate resources.

Cultural Competency/Diversity:

- Certainly the agency will have some instruments that are used generally with the population, however the need for specialized assessments and Best Practices in culturally based risk assessments are essential.

Restorative:

- Even at this early stage, the corrections professional can begin to assess what steps will be necessary before the youth is ready to participate in "making things right" wherever that is necessary.

Accountability

- Builds a foundation for teaching accountability by modeling first, and expecting accountability from the juvenile offender later.

STAGE TWO: CASE PLANNING

Case Planning is the process of developing a plan that recognizes the individual strengths and risk areas present for the youth and family. Where possible, the case plan uses the strengths to address the risk factors, cultural and individual treatment needs of the juvenile offender. It sets forth through the establishment of goals and objectives an outline for risk mitigation, and shares a vision for success.

- Development of an individualized case plan for the juvenile.
- Case plan is culturally specific, gender specific and language appropriate.
- Establishes goals (benchmarks for success), and creates contingency plans to implement if needed.

THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS INTEGRATED INTO THE CASE PLANNING STAGE

Individualized/Specialized

- The plan commits the resources of the continuum to the juvenile in whatever flexible fashion will be necessary to support the progress of that individual.
- The plan has a positive tone. It speaks to specific goals, and in general addresses the life domains of home, community and school.
- The plan identifies and addresses the cultural and language needs of the youth.
- Relationship to the agency becomes an important tool in the delivery of the case plan.

Family:

- Although the aftercare worker is responsible for drafting and implementing the plan, the voices of several stakeholders are considered. A key stakeholder and active voice in the plan belongs to the family.

- Cultural considerations of the family are a part of the case planning.

Strength Based:

- Projected outcomes for the case plan are by nature successful.
- Plan gives the juvenile a sense of time frames. Part of the vision is that there can be an end in sight.
- The plan capitalizes on existing strengths and seeks to build new strengths.

Community:

- The case plan originates with the community-based aftercare worker, even if the youth is living at the institution.

Community, continued:

- The plan will make use of resources accessible locally to support the youth and family during placement and following release.
- The case plan will identify culturally competent and culturally relevant treatment services for the youth.

Cultural Competency/Diversity:

- The case plan should address how the continuum will wrap itself around the youth and family in a way that is relevant to them.
- The case plan will identify culturally appropriate resources for the youth and family.

Restorative:

- Goals for reparation are clear at this stage. The youth is aware that amends are expected and that the agency will support and assist them through that process.

Accountability:

- The plan is direct, understandable, and respectful. The juvenile offender begins to understand by this process of modeling what is also expected of them.
- Young offenders can't make abstract leaps connecting what they are doing to how they got where they are. The plan provides a structure so that the juvenile can understand the logic of the steps in the process.
- The juvenile may not agree at the outset that services specified in the plan are necessary, but they will understand a broad vision of the plan.

STAGE THREE: INSTITUTIONAL TREATMENT

The **Institutional Treatment** stage happens during the period of time that the youth spends in a juvenile correctional facility. During this stage, the juvenile is guided to recognize responsibility for thoughts and behavioral choices, and assumes responsibility for the actions that brought them into the facility. The juvenile learns to exercise appropriate behavioral control, and indicates a readiness to demonstrate that same control in a less structured setting.

- Parameters may be set by the court to determine length of stay.
- Active engagement of the juvenile's family and/or support system, and other home community involvement is critical.
- The facility utilizes Best Practices around culturally competent treatment/services.

THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS INTEGRATED INTO THE INSTITUTIONAL TREATMENT STAGE

Individualized/Specialized:

- In this stage, as in the assessment stage, managing juvenile movement through the program is essential
- Regular turnover in programs happens as a result of highly individualized approach.
- In secure placement, many young offenders are able to develop enough behavioral control so that they can safely proceed into treatment in a lesser level of care.
- The youth has access to a continuum of services that can adequately address any specialized needs.
- The youth has access to culturally specific, gender specific and language appropriate treatment services.
- That same continuum expands on existing abilities and strengths.
- Programs work together to impact juveniles and teach them to connect their thoughts to their behaviors, identify thinking errors early and translate them into better choices.

Family:

- The institution and community based aftercare worker ensure that the family plays a prominent role in this stage, however that is appropriate.
- Cultural considerations and language barriers of the family are addressed.

Strength Based:

- Juveniles are actively engaged in programming and the level of restriction matches the level of risk, so that as skills and strengths emerge, they are practiced.

Community:

- Community-based services are brought into the facility, especially as it allows for the building of relationships that can continue past the point of release.
- Culturally competent community based services are available to meet the diverse needs of the youth.

Cultural Competency/Diversity:

- The institution provides a continuum of programming based on culture, gender, age and other issue relevant for the juvenile offender population.

Restorative:

- During this stage, the youth is prepared to engage in restoration activities upon release.

- Some restorative activities may take place while in the facility – beginning work on victim restitution or community reparation.

Accountability:

- Young offenders may need to leave and later return to the secure facility as the situation dictates. The system is flexible enough to accommodate such a move based on the needs of the youth.
- Sometimes, the risk posed remains significant and no other level of care is safe.

STAGE FOUR: PRE-RELEASE

The **Pre-Release** stage helps juvenile offenders understand that they must translate their energy into practical skills that can be called upon at the necessary moment. Young offenders tend to believe that they will be successful if released because of their sheer willpower and enthusiasm for their goal. By the end of the pre-release stage, a juvenile offender can assist in his own discharge planning by helping to predict which situations are likely to require critical skills.

- Help the juvenile to be pro-active in dealing with potential situations where they may fall into high risk behavior.
- The juvenile plays a prominent role in the discharge planning process.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS INTEGRATED INTO THE PRE-RELEASE STAGE

Individualized/Specialized:

- As the focus shifts towards preparedness for release, the importance of a working relationship between the facility and the aftercare worker increases. Aftercare must know what has been accomplished and what is yet to be done, so that effective planning can occur.
- Cultural and language needs are identified/addressed.

Family:

- The family's process parallels the juvenile's process at this point. The family has developed practical skills and insights that will prepare them for reunification.
- If reunification will not be possible, the family's voice is included in that decision-making process.
- The family participates in planning whatever the alternative placement will be.
- If a step down service such as foster or group care will be used, the plan may still be for later reunification. There is still time to work intensively on family issues.
- When an appropriate placement is necessary, placement must address the youths cultural/diverse needs.

Strength Based:

- This process continues to demonstrate the value that "your life and your future are important. Here is a plan that you can use to succeed."
- The youth demonstrates preparedness for release.

Community:

- The agency and its individual agents have working relationships with service providers and informal supportive resources across the service area and in local communities.
- During pre-release, the aftercare worker makes arrangements for formal services with appropriate community- based providers.
- Community based resource providers are culturally competent and deliver culturally relevant treatment services.
- Equally or sometimes more important, are the arrangements made for informal community supports. Families, schools, faith communities, are all good sources for ideas about who and what might be able to assist this individual youth with the reintegration process.
- Some informal supports will be geared towards the actual release, some will work prior to release to make smooth the way.

Cultural Competency/Diversity:

- Since pre-release is about "potentiality", this element of this stage is a real opportunity for creativity on the part of the aftercare worker.
- Ensure youths cultural needs/issues are met and incorporated prior to release i.e. Birth Certificate, Social Security, Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS), Tribal Affiliation/Registration.

Restorative:

- At this stage, the juvenile has fully engaged in the cognitive intervention opportunities at the facility, especially surrounding perpetration issues.
- The youth has developed a meaningful understanding of the impact the behavior has had on the victim(s) and the community.
- A plan for activities around reparations to be made at point of release is developed now.

Accountability:

- This stage helps establish the level of structure and support each juvenile requires in order to proceed with the next step towards release.
- This course of action models accountability to the juvenile offender.

STAGE FIVE: TRANSITION

In the **Transition** stage, the paper plan for the juvenile translates itself into real life services and programs. Services, frequency and timelines are attached to goals and objectives in an outcome based fashion. At the institution, the juvenile had the goal of developing enough

behavioral control and insight in order to warrant a trial in a lesser restrictive setting. Now, the juvenile offender will be expected to continue those expectations while at the same time negotiating all of the complex everyday decisions that surround living at home, attending school, and moving around the community. The idea here is to build a transition plan that is so seamless that it is easier to succeed than to fail.

- Build a plan for success with benchmarks for success.
- Transition plan is culturally specific, gender specific and language appropriate
- Create contingency plans in the event that the juvenile has difficulty achieving goals.

THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS INTEGRATED INTO THE TRANSITION STAGE

Individualized/Specialized:

- The process of community supervision prepares itself to unfold around the youth and family. It is part of an ongoing plan.
- The plan is flexible and can be re-worked quickly as the need arises. Required level of support can change frequently.
- The plan outlines the strengths, expected outcomes, services, consequences related to compliance, and approximate time frames.
- Culturally specific and language appropriate services are incorporated into the plan.

Family:

- The family leads as much as possible in developing the expected outcomes for placement in the home.
- Cultural considerations of the family are a part of the transition plan.
- The family may also have good ideas about what to include in setting forth expectations around behavior in the community, i.e. where and who to avoid, positive activities, possible informal supports.

Strength Based:

- As noted above, the idea is to build a seamless plan with contingencies and back-ups included. Thoughtful, thorough plans have a good chance of succeeding.

Community:

- Community based resources provide services that the corrections agency does not have the time nor the resources to deliver themselves.
- Community based resource providers are culturally competent and deliver culturally relevant treatment services.
- Informal supports and relationships in the community are invaluable eyes and ears for the aftercare worker. These collateral contacts make substantial contributions to the success of the aftercare plan.

Cultural Competency/Diversity:

- The cultural/diverse needs of the youth are addressed in the plan.

Restorative:

- During this stage, the juvenile may be ready to participate in accountability conferences or in a mediated event with a victim.
- Detailed plans are in place for addressing any community service or restitution obligations.

Accountability:

- A document that can be individualized and signed by the juvenile, an adult responsible for juvenile offender, and an agency worker is useful for purposes of accountability.

STAGE SIX: COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION

The **Community Reintegration** stage defines the difference between releasing a juvenile *to* a community and releasing a juvenile *into* a community. The idea of community reintegration assumes that the juvenile will be a contributing member of the community, viewed as an asset, rather than a liability.

- To be successful, the juvenile offender must be viewed and treated as a potential contributor to the home community.
- The juvenile needs to have a focus and feel a part of the community and his/her culture, via school, community, or faith group contact.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS INTEGRATED INTO THE REINTEGRATION STAGE**Individualized/Specialized:**

- In this stage, the individualized nature of this process focuses more on what the youth will be contributing, as opposed to the emphasis on receiving services.

Family:

- The family has developed a partnership relationship with the aftercare worker, and interacts at that level in the planning process.

Strength Based:

- At this stage, the juvenile is able to act as a partner in planning for their own needs. The youth has some understanding of what will work for them, and is able to articulate their needs.

Community:

- The youth reports a sense of ownership in the community at this stage, identifies themselves as belonging in the community, and behavior is congruent with these beliefs.

Cultural Competency/Diversity:

- The youth and family continue to identify their needs, and carry forth a plan for positive community reintegration.

Restorative:

- Reintegration work does not take the place of restitution or community service, and the concepts should not be confused.

Restorative, continued:

- Juvenile offenders have a relationship to their community. When a breach occurs in a relationship, the relationship is not satisfying to either party until amends are made.
- Juveniles share this need to complete the process and "make things right" before they are able to move on.

Accountability:

- The burden of responsibility for accountability has shifted from the aftercare agent to the juvenile, family and community at large.