

A Desktop Guide for Tribal Probation Personnel: The Screening and Assessment Process



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The Screening and Assessment Process

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INTRODUCTION

Five hundred sixty-five federally recognized American Indian tribes

comprise more than 4.1 million individuals across the United States (Perry, 2004). According to the National Institute of Justice's website on Tribal Crime and Justice, "data suggest that crime rates are much higher for Native Americans compared to the national average" (para. 1). Tribal communities face staggering numbers of serious crimes either directly related to or associated with alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence, and gang activity. Furthermore, jurisdictional nuances complicate tribal justice agencies' abilities to adequately respond to serious crime committed on tribal land.

In response, tribal justice systems are exploring ways to deal with their crime and community safety issues in innovative ways. Historically, tribal communities have long had methods in place for working with individuals who violate tribal law; one such way was the use of peacemaking strategies. These strategies are finding new life through the use of more formalized approaches, such as probation. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, of the 315 federally recognized tribes that responded to the Census of Tribal Justice Agencies in Indian Country survey in 2002, 175 reported that they had operating tribal courts; 70% of the tribal courts indicated that they offer probation for adults and 66% indicated that they offer probation for juveniles (Perry, 2005). Tribal probations' primary mission is to improve the quality of life within families and communities while enhancing public safety by providing hope and opportunities for appropriate treatment with accountability.

The use of probation as a formalized approach to responding to crime in Indian Country is a relatively new approach. As such, tribal probation officers are reaching out for ideas and strategies that they can utilize in their community to promote healing, restore peace with victims, and still hold tribal offenders accountable. One way to improve outcomes among tribal offenders is through the use of screening and assessment tools. These types of tools can facilitate the development of supervision plans that protect the community and hold the tribal offender accountable, as well as identify more accurately any treatment needs that may be contributing to the offender's criminal offending behavior. Identifying and utilizing appropriate assessment tools are key factors in targeting appropriate interventions and treatment for tribal offenders.

This guide is intended to provide tribal probation personnel with information on how the screening and assessment process can facilitate and promote offender accountability and long-term behavior change.



SECTION 1: COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS IN CONTEXT

The perception most people have of the correctional system is that it consists solely of jails, prisons, or detention centers. However, almost everyone who has been accused or convicted of a crime, at some point in their exposure to the justice process, will be placed on some form of community supervision. Community supervision, which is defined as the conditional release and supervision of defendants/offenders in a community setting, can include the supervision of individuals placed on pre-trial release, pre-sentence/pre-plea release, diversionary status, probation, or parole. Today's community corrections practitioners must be adept in addressing the different needs posed by individuals on their caseload. They must be counselors, educators, social workers, enforcers, and allies while also serving as victim advocates and community protectors.

Probation is probably the most recognizable, yet misunderstood, form of community supervision. Essentially, probation is a court order whereby an individual is supervised in the community in lieu of being incarcerated in a prison or detention facility. Typically, the court will impose supervision conditions, such as paying a fine, completing community service activities, participating in drug and/mental health treatment, and/or education/employment requirements, which are monitored by a probation officer. Failure to comply with supervision conditions can result in the individual being incarcerated to finish out the court-imposed sentence.

It is often stated that probation officers wear many hats. They take on roles associated with law enforcement, social work, and court servant—which, at times, can have conflicting goals. A position statement published by the American Probation & Parole Association in 1997 summarizes the multifaceted role of probation:

“to protect the public interest and safety by reducing the incidence and impact of crime by probationers. This role is accomplished by assisting the courts in decision making through the probation report and in the enforcement of court orders; providing services and programs that afford opportunities for offenders to become more law-abiding; providing and cooperating in programs and activities for the prevention of crime and delinquency; and furthering the administration of fair and individualized justice.”¹

¹ Full position statement can be retrieved from http://www.appa-net.org/eweb/Dynamicpage.aspx?webcode=IB_PositionStatement&wps_key=dc223702-d690-4830-9295-335366a65d3e

PROBATION IN INDIAN COUNTRY

Tribal communities have long had methods in place for working with individuals who violate tribal law. The methods, while often not standardized or formalized, were based on today's concept of peacemaking, whereby "a respected member of the tribe brought individuals together and assisted in restoring harmony between them and working out a suitable remedy to victimization, often restorative in nature" (Meyer, 2009, p. 176). Historically, Indian culture has embraced and exalted the idea of the community being responsible for imposing and restoring social order. Elders, or individuals who were specifically selected either through hereditary right or custom, played a significant role in redirecting tribal members who were acting out. Today, in many tribes, this process is more formalized and supported through the use of tribal police and probation, both of which are relatively new systems in tribal communities.²

There is no unified picture of what probation looks like in Indian Country. Like non-tribal probation departments, tribes utilizing some form of probation agree that their primary purpose is to enforce the orders of the court through compliance monitoring. For non-tribal jurisdictions, the main benefit to the use of probation is to reduce jail/prison populations, whereas for tribal jurisdictions the benefit stems from the desire to treat and heal those involved in criminal offending and reduce the separation of individuals from their families and cultural connections (American Indian Development Associates, 2010).

Tribes exhibit great diversity in how they establish and operate their probation programs. For some tribal courts, an individual may be placed on unsupervised probation, where the sentence consists of paying a fine and nothing more. Those who are placed on supervised probation may report to a variety of individuals depending on the

² The existence of formal police personnel/agencies in Indian Country began around the 1950's to 1960's. The addition of tribal probation to tribal justice systems is more recent, within the past 10 years.

ROLE OF A TRIBAL PROBATION OFFICER

The myriad roles of a probation officer revolve around two primary functions—surveillance and services (Burrell, 1994). Common tasks associated with these functions include but are not limited to:

- Assess the risk and needs and investigate the background of a probationer to provide the tribal court judge with relevant and pertinent information about the individual to consider during sentencing.
- Utilize risk and needs assessment information to identify the level of supervision required of individuals on probation and develop an appropriate case plan.
- Develop a case/supervision plan that outlines the conditions of probation and a plan for services that promotes positive behavior change in probationers and incorporates culturally focused interventions when available.
- Monitor the activities and behavior of the probationer utilizing both evidence-based strategies and tribal resources such as elders.
- When appropriate, determine and provide access to appropriate services to help bring about positive behavioral changes in probationers, including spiritual and cultural interventions (e.g., restorative justice programs, substance abuse assessment, substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, job readiness development, involvement in spiritual or cultural activities).
- Apply graduated sanctions (e.g., more frequent reports to the probation officer, more frequent drug tests, a probation violation report, a recommendation for revocation) to respond to noncompliant behavior.
- Provide appropriate rewards or incentives (e.g., travel permits, early termination from probation, decreased frequency of drug tests) to respond to compliant behavior.

organization of the tribe, including the tribal court judge, court clerk, or elder in the community. Many tribes, however, are discovering the value of having an established, trained probation officer to carry out the orders of the court. While it is recognized that, in some instances, it is appropriate and useful to assign an individual to unsupervised probation, in general, for community supervision to be used effectively and systematically as an alternative to incarceration, it is important to have a trained professional designated to serve as a probation officer for monitoring the activities of those placed on community supervision.

Mission Statement From Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in Pablo, MT

“To provide a framework for adult and juvenile probationers in order for them to become productive citizens of the community. The Tribal Probation Department can provide rehabilitative measures by offering diversion opportunities, educational opportunities, treatment opportunities, compliance incentives, job training opportunities, which will instill work habits, give the probationer a sense of self-worth, which will aid in maintaining the family unit, fulfill fine obligations, fulfill incarceration requirements, pay restitution, satisfy the probationers debt to society, and be released from Probation/Parole as successful.”

Source: www.cskt.org/gov/probation.htm

Reentry is also an emerging issue for tribal communities. Tribal probation officers are playing a larger role in providing supervision for individuals released from a facility once they reach the community, as well as assuming a more active role with individuals before they are released from jail/prison/detention by developing and investigating release plans (e.g., for housing, continuing treatment services, medical services, employment opportunities).

It would be presumptuous to attempt to develop a blueprint for how a probation program should work for all 565 federally recognized tribes. However, there are specific practices that have been well researched and validated as being effective in working with individuals placed on community supervision. These practices provide a foundation upon which tribal probation practitioners can build to develop and/or enhance their probation programs, which mesh these foundational practices with the strategies that are important and integral to their individual tribal communities.

Ultimately, probation officers are servants of the court—they are charged with ensuring that individuals being supervised in the community are complying with court-ordered conditions. However, current research and practice emphasizes that the role of probation officer encompasses more than just enforcing court-ordered conditions; it recognizes the crucial role probation plays in working with individuals to help them change their attitudes and behavior to prevent future criminal or delinquent behavior (Burrell, 1994).

At times, this divergent role can be daunting; however, there is a growing body of research (i.e., evidence-based practices in community corrections) that provides guidance to probation officers on how they can work with individuals to improve outcomes. The National Institute of Corrections and the Crime and Justice Institute summarized much of this research by outlining eight evidence-based principles for effective intervention (Bogue, et al. 2004). Table 1 presents an overview of these interventions; it is important to be familiar with these practices as they provide the basis for the discussion and recommendations throughout the remainder of this guide.

Table 1: Eight Evidence-Based Practices for Effective Intervention

1. Assess Actuarial Risk	Refers to using tools that provide measurement on known risk factors associated with criminal behavior, such as criminal history, antisocial attitudes, unemployment, low education level, and substance abuse.
2. Enhance Intrinsic Motivation	Refers to helping offenders identify internal motivators (such as being able to provide for their family) to instigate and sustain behavior change rather than relying on external motivators (such as court compliance).
3. Target Interventions	This principle consists of five supporting principles:
a. Risk Principle	Refers to prioritizing supervision and treatment interventions toward offenders who demonstrate a higher risk of reoffending.
b. Need Principle	Refers to targeting interventions to address offenders' greatest criminogenic needs (or dynamic- or changeable-risk factors) that are directly related to an offender's criminal behavior, such as antisocial attitudes, values and beliefs, low self-control, criminal peers, and substance abuse.
c. Responsivity Principle	Refers to targeting interventions and services according to each individual offender based on things such as gender, culture, motivational stages, developmental stages, and learning styles.
d. Dosage	Refers to ensuring that offenders are exposed to and interventions are delivered at the amounts prescribed to effect change.
e. Treatment Principle	Refers to ensuring that treatment components are integrated into the supervision plan. This increases the accountability of the offender and allows the probation officer and the treatment provider to communicate regarding the offender's progress.
4. Skill Train with Directed Practice	Refers to ensuring that recommended interventions go beyond knowledge-building to include skill-based learning components related to antisocial thinking patterns, social learning, and appropriate communication techniques.
5. Increase Positive Reinforcement	Refers to ensuring that offenders are given positive reinforcement throughout the supervision and treatment process. At least four positive reinforcements are needed for every one negative reinforcement to promote positive behavior changes.
6. Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities	Refers to engaging prosocial supports for offenders. In most cases, family members and close associates are vital to reinforce new behaviors positively. Additional options include twelve-step programs, faith-based activities, and restorative justice initiatives.
7. Measure Relevant Processes and Practices	Refers to the process of agencies collecting data to track and measure outcomes of program services.
8. Provide Measurement Feedback	Refers to officers providing feedback to offenders on their progress. This feedback helps to increase motivation, lower treatment attrition, and improve outcomes.

Source: Bogue, et al. (2004).

SECTION 2: THE SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Reflect on your caseload. Are all your probationers alike? Do they all present the same likelihood of reoffending? Do they all come from the same circumstances and have the same level of needs? It would be simple if the answer to these questions were a yes, but the reality is that even among individuals charged with the same type of offense, they each bring a different set of issues, problems, and strengths to the table. So often the justice system tries to approach supervision and rehabilitation (particularly of those who commit the same types of crime) with a one-size-fits-all or cookie-cutter approach. Then, when that fails with some individuals on our caseloads, we shake our heads and wonder what happened.

The unique issues and problems mentioned above are what screening and assessment tools are designed to help us identify. By identifying these things, you can increase your ability to predict an individual's risk to the community, likelihood of reoffending, and needs and strengths that, if identified and addressed appropriately, can have a positive, long-term effect. As a tribal probation officer, the information you obtain from administered screening and assessment tools should be used to inform the entire supervision process, such as the development of individual supervision and treatment³ plans for those on community-based supervision. These plans, when based on validated measures, help to promote successful reentry and reduce recidivism.⁴ The benefits of using screening and assessment as a standard practice have a significant value for both new and established tribal probation agencies.

There are a number of jurisdictions that do not use screening and assessment tools; thus it is fairly common for probation officers to make risk, supervision, and treatment decisions based on their intuition or personal judgments about an individual on their caseload. Screening and assessment tools do not replace professional judgment and discretion. There are instances in which professional judgment is important, and probation officers should be given flexibility to act based upon their personal knowledge of an individual and his or her history (Nagy, 2007). However, the accuracy of assumptions and decisions about effective courses of action increases when professional judgment is combined with the information obtained from properly administered screening and assessment tools. Information from these types of tools adds an element of necessary objectivity to the process that can help validate or alter our subjective assumptions and decisions when working with individuals on community supervision (Kleiman, Ostrom, and Cheesman, 2007).

³ Supervision and treatment plans are dynamic documents developed by probation personnel and possibly treatment providers, which ideally are based on screening and assessment results. They directly target an individual's level of risk and identified need areas.

⁴ While there is no standard definition of recidivism, in general terms it is often defined as individuals who are charged with new criminal offenses. Definitions of recidivism vary greatly by agency, jurisdiction, etc. Variations may include whether recidivism includes only new offenses or violations; if the offense occurred while on supervision or for a defined period of time following supervision (e.g., six months to a year after supervision has ended), etc. For purposes of this document, recidivism is used in general terms of individuals who reoffend by being charged with new criminal offenses while on community supervision.

The foundation of community-based supervision and rehabilitation is screening and assessment. For probation, this process provides the underpinning upon which all community-based supervision programs should be built. Why? The simple answer is because screening and assessment tools can be, and should be, used to help guide decision making in almost every aspect of community corrections from the time an individual enters the system, until the time he or she is discharged from community supervision. Screening and assessments tools also assist in ensuring that available resources are used effectively.

SCREENING

Screening tools are usually short—consisting of only a few questions that provide probation officers basic information about an individual and his or her possible issues. Most screening tools are single-domain tools (meaning they only focus on one specific area); however, a few are designed to cover multiple domains (such as one screening tool that evaluates education and employment variables). While they don't give us a full picture of all the problems or the severity of the problem(s) an individual may have, they can provide basic information to help identify potential issues so that you determine the most appropriate next step (which may include the need for a more comprehensive assessment) and better utilize available resources.

Screenings should be conducted as early in the justice process as possible as they can guide decisions made throughout the system. For example, screening tools are useful in pre-trial for making quick determinations about whether to release or detain a defendant and for developing pre-trial supervision conditions. Once individuals are adjudicated, screenings help to determine a primary level of supervision (low, medium, high) as well as potential issues an individual may have that substantiate the need for a more comprehensive assessment (e.g., substance abuse, mental health).

Screening conducted at the pre-trial stage does not mean that an individual will not receive any further screenings. Human behavior is ever-changing, so while an individual is on supervision, a probation officer may feel that a screening is necessary based on new information or behavior.

The screening process can be likened to that of the triage that medical professionals perform when an individual comes into a hospital or clinic. Triage, in the medical realm, refers to the way medical professionals sort emergency patients according to the seriousness of their conditions so they can determine who needs the most attention and who should be seen first. As a probation officer, the screening tool allows you to quickly

“ As a tribal probation officer, the information you obtain from administered screening and assessment tools should be used to inform the entire supervision process...”

gather the information you need to determine who needs more attention (further comprehensive assessment, more rigorous supervision, immediate treatment interventions) and who does not.

While screening is recommended for every individual coming onto your supervision caseload, they all will not require comprehensive assessment. Therefore, the screening and assessment process should be considered a layered, on-going information collection process. The results you get from an administered screening or assessment at various points in the supervision process will determine if, and to what extent, further evaluation is necessary.

QUICK LOOK:

RISK tells us **WHO**

we should target with services and interventions.

NEED tells us

WHAT we should focus on (criminogenic needs).

RESPONSIVITY

tells us **HOW** to choose and provide interventions based on an individual's characteristics.

COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT

If a screening tool indicates the need for a more in-depth evaluation, then you may need to complete, or refer an individual for, a more comprehensive assessment. Comprehensive assessments are usually longer in length and are designed to get deeper into the issues individuals may be having. Like screenings, certain assessments may be specialized—meaning they are designed specifically for special populations or to cover only certain domains—but many comprehensive assessments are designed to capture information related to multiple domains. For example, the Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS) tool asks questions pertaining to substance abuse, mental health, family relationships, housing, employment, education, financial status, recidivism risk, and criminal thinking (Reentry Policy Council, n.d.).

The assessment process to determine an individual's likelihood of reoffending has gone through many evolutions. Bonta and Andrews (2007) provide an excellent summary of these evolutions. First-generation assessment tools were based solely on professional judgment and did not utilize objective methods to derive conclusions. Second-generation assessment tools became more objective, but only focused on static, historical factors and were only used to predict risk level. Third-generation assessment tools added the ability to identify needs along with risk prediction. Finally, fourth-generation tools take the ability to identify risk and needs a step further into using that information to develop treatment and supervision plans.

Assessment tools and the probation strategies utilized by probation practitioners based upon information garnered from administered tools are most effective when they adhere to the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) Model (Bonta and Andrews, 2007).

Essentially, the RNR Model states that identifying an individual’s risk and needs will help you identify the interventions that should be applied to facilitate behavior change. This model can best be explained by exploring the three principles that make up the model: the risk principle, the need principle, and the responsivity principle.

RISK, NEED, RESPONSIVITY PRINCIPLES

Risk Principle: First, when talking about the risk principle, it is important to understand what “risk” means. Risk refers to the likelihood that someone will reoffend. Many people mistakenly try to gauge a person’s risk level solely on the status of his or her offense. “Common practice dictates that charge level is the first determinant of crime severity, and felonies are assumed to be more severe offenses than misdemeanors” (Information Sharing and Integration Committee, n.d.); however, risk level is not necessarily related to the offense type. For example, a felon is not necessarily or automatically going to be at a higher risk level than a misdemeanor (Lowenkamp and Latessa, 2005). Take for example an individual who is charged with felony drug possession. While this is a serious crime, he or she may not necessarily be as high risk as say an individual charged with domestic violence, who will typically be charged as a misdemeanor.

This is an especially important distinction to keep in mind when thinking about tribal probation. Tribal courts only have jurisdiction over misdemeanor cases.⁵ As a result, there is sometimes a tendency—especially for persons not privy to the circumstances surrounding many of the individuals on a tribal probation officer’s caseload—to assume a tribal probation officer is not going to be supervising high-risk individuals. However, for many tribal probation officers, nothing could be further from the truth. Individuals who are high risk are placed on tribal probation, and must be correctly classified to guide effective intervention. Oftentimes, tribal members who commit a felony offense on tribal land may not be subject to any consequences if the U.S. Attorney’s Office fails to act. As a result, tribes respond by stacking multiple misdemeanor charges so that these tribal members can be held accountable. Hence, a felony assault charge may be charged as a misdemeanor charge to allow the tribe to process it through the tribal court—but that does not lessen the severity of the offense or the risk level of the person committing the offense.

Beyond just identifying and knowing the risk level of individuals on your caseload, the risk principle directs us to prioritize supervision and treatment resources for individuals who present a higher risk of reoffending. Research indicates that focusing time and resources on high-risk offenders (especially while adhering to the need and responsivity principles discussed below) results in lower recidivism rates (Latessa and Lowenkamp, 2006; Andrews and Dowden, 2006). In contrast, research also suggests that focusing resources on those

“...a felon is not necessarily or automatically going to be at a higher risk level than a misdemeanor.”

⁵ Although this may change in some jurisdictions as a result of the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010.

determined to be low risk tends to produce little, if any, net positive effects on recidivism (Gendreau and Goggin, 1997; Andrews and Bonta, 1998; Harland, 1996; Sherman et al., 1998; McGuire, 2001, 2002 as cited in Bogue, et al, 2004). There is also evidence to suggest that subjecting individuals who are determined to be low risk to intensive services can backfire and result in increasing their chances of reoffending (Latessa and Lowenkamp, 2006; Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, and Rooney, 2000). Some of the possible reasons attributed to this paradox are that those determined to be low risk may actually adopt the antisocial attitudes and behaviors of the high-risk individuals with whom they are placed, and/or that placing those who are low risk for reoffending in intensive interventions may actually disrupt any positive social bonds or activities that may have existed prior to their placement by putting undue time restraints on their positive activities. It is still important to hold low-risk individuals accountable for their behavior; however, minimal sanctions are usually sufficient with this risk population in reducing their recidivism rates (Latessa and Lowenkamp, 2006).

Risk Factors: A risk factor in the criminal justice field refers to anything that may increase the likelihood that an individual will engage in criminal behavior. Research indicates that there are a number of factors, namely static and dynamic risk factors that, when present, can increase the chances that someone will reoffend. Static risk factors are historical attributes of an individual that cannot be changed (such as age, age of first offense, number of prior convictions). While these factors are important and have value in informing risk determinations, a probation officer cannot do anything to have an effect on them because they happened in the past. As a tribal probation officer, you should direct your time and effort into addressing the dynamic risk factors, or factors that you can target with interventions to effect change over time such as employment, education, family dysfunction, negative peer associations, antisocial attitudes, antisocial personality traits, and alcohol/substance abuse. The use of screening and assessment tools will help you not only identify these

issues, but also to prioritize them in a way that is most helpful for individuals on your caseload and maximize the resources you have available.

It is not uncommon for tribal probation officers to already be familiar with or have pre-existing knowledge about some individuals coming onto their caseload. There is nothing wrong with tribal probation officers using this information to help inform decisions, and certainly tribal probation officers rely on their professional judgment and the input from other criminal justice and treatment professionals and community members to help inform supervision decisions. However, there are assessment instruments available that, when combined with these other sources of information, such as professional judgment, can help tribal probation officers make more objective and accurate predictions of the probability of an individual to reoffend (Campbell, French, and Gendreau, 2007).

**STATIC RISK
FACTOR =**
unchangeable

**DYNAMIC
RISK
FACTOR =**
changeable

Need Principle: Anyone who has worked with individuals caught up in the justice system can easily recognize that each person comes with his or her own unique set of issues and problems that contribute to his or her behavior (e.g., criminal history, substance abuse, lack of employment, homelessness, mental illness, gang association). Sometimes the number and variety of issues that an individual has can be overwhelming, and we wonder how we can address everything and make a difference in that person’s life, while still protecting public safety. The question then often becomes, what problems and issues do we need to focus on first? This is where the need principle can become helpful.

The need principle directs us to focus our energy, interventions, and resources on an individual’s greatest criminogenic needs. Criminogenic needs are dynamic, or changeable, risk factors that are proven by research to be directly associated with an individual’s delinquent or criminal behavior (Bonta and Andrews, 2007). It is important to recognize that not all dynamic risk factors are considered to be criminogenic. The risk of reoffending has been narrowed down to eight dynamic risk factors, with four, known as the “the big four,” demonstrating consistent correlation with criminal behavior (Andrews and Bonta, 2010). The “big four” are:

1. Anti-social behavior—aggressiveness, defiance of authority, cruelty, argumentativeness
2. Anti-social personality—impulsive, adventurous, aggressive, disregard for others
3. Anti-social cognition—faulty thought processes, such as rationalizing the crime (the victim “asked for it”, the justice system is “corrupt,” etc.)
4. Anti-social peers—prevalence of close associates engaging in criminal behavior (friends, family)

The “next four” predictors include:

1. Drugs /or alcohol abuse
2. Family and/or marital issues
3. Work or school—lack of education or employment
4. Leisure and/or recreation—engaging in inappropriate kinds of leisure activities

Therefore, it is these eight predictors—when identified through appropriate assessment practices—that we should prioritize and focus the majority of our resources on when working with individuals on community supervision.

We are not suggesting that you ignore the other needs individuals often have (e.g., housing, transportation, medical care, and other basic needs). However, you should not focus the majority of your time on these types of issues. If you reflect on your current contacts with the individuals on your caseload, you may realize that you spend an inordinate amount of time discussing or helping to direct resources toward these non-criminogenic types of needs. While it is important that these issues are addressed—and they are often key elements to keeping probationers out of trouble—as a probation officer, you have to find a balance between spending time on non-criminogenic needs and addressing criminogenic needs.

Responsivity Principle: The responsivity principle directs us to match probationers to treatment and interventions based on their individual characteristics. Responsivity factors can be internal (e.g., age, gender, race, mental health status, cognitive level, level of motivation for change) or external factors (e.g., how you interact with the probationer, characteristics of program staff, characteristics of the treatment environment, level of social networks of support). Both internal and external factors have the ability to either interfere with or facilitate learning (Birgden, 2004), so it is important to identify these characteristics so that they can be dealt with or capitalized upon during supervision. Being responsive involves considering these types of factors when matching probationers to treatment types (Guerra, 1995; Miller and Rollnick, 1991; Gordon, 1970; Williams, et al., 1995; as cited in Bogue, et al., 2004). Matching individuals to interventions is probably one of the most daunting challenges as most jurisdictions do not have an exhaustive menu of programs available to meet the responsivity factors presented by every individual on your caseload. Nevertheless, it is still important to identify these factors so that you can make the most appropriate referral based on the resources available in your community and work with the treatment providers to adjust their service modality as best they can to effectively treat the probationer.

For example, you have an individual on your caseload who is timid, socially isolated, a victim of abuse, and who has severe alcohol-related issues, and based on your interactions with this individual, you suspect that he or she is not ready to do anything to change his or her drinking habits. Would a treatment program utilizing group-based, confrontational activities be a program that matches this individual's current responsivity profile? Probably not. You may find better success by matching this probationer with an individual-based treatment approach designed to enhance his or her motivation to change while also establishing a trusting relationship with a counselor.

The relationship between a probationer and his or her supervision officer and their ability to communicate effectively is another key aspect to consider when thinking of the responsivity principle. The literature suggests that brief interactions, such as those between a probation officer and a probationer, have a significant influence on outcomes (Miller, 2000; Moyer, Finney, Swearingen, and Vergun, 2002) and can be "a pivotal source of influence on the implementation of treatment mandates" (Skeem, Encandela, and Loudon, 2003, p. 444). In the book, *The Heart and Soul of Change*, the authors Hubble, Duncan, and Miller state that a probationer's perceived positive relationship with a change agent, such as a probation officer, therapist, etc., accounts for 30% of the likelihood of a successful outcome. Therefore, it is important to understand that "every interaction with an offender is an opportunity to positively influence their behavior" (Kempker, Gibel, and Giguere, 2010, p. 21).

In an ideal setting, if a tribal probation agency had multiple supervision officers on staff, individuals' characteristics could be considered when making caseload assignments. However, especially in tribal probation settings, there is often only one probation officer on staff. In this case, it becomes important for probation officers to be able to recognize individual responsivity factors and try to adapt their style of working with the individual to accommodate the different personalities and learning styles.⁶ For example, if your

⁶ An excellent resource for more information on a probation officer's influence on offender outcomes: Carey, Mark. (2010). Coaching Packet: Shaping Offender Behavior. Center for Effective Public Policy. PDF available at: <http://www.cepp.com/documents/Shaping%20Offender%20Behavior.pdf>

supervision style is easy-going and laid-back, an individual who is forceful and belligerent may require a more assertive supervision approach.

As probation officers, the main goal is to keep the individuals on our caseload from committing new crimes or recidivating, both in the short term (e.g. while on supervision) and long term (beyond the supervision period). Monitoring compliance with supervision conditions helps to promote short-term public safety, while facilitating behavior change promotes long-term public safety. With that in mind, probation officers need to have at their disposal the tools to help identify those individuals who are at highest risk for recidivating so that they know where to expend their time and resources.

COMPREHENSIVE RISK AND NEED ASSESSMENT

One type of tool that provides a broader assessment of the risk level and needs of an individual probationer is an actuarial risk and need assessment. An actuarial risk assessment instrument “estimates the probability that individuals will engage in future violence” (Hart, Michie, and Cook, 2007, p. 60) or other criminal activity and identifies the criminogenic needs that have been demonstrated by research to be predictive of future criminal behavior. Latessa and Lovins (2010) liken risk and need assessment to risk assessment conducted in the insurance industry.

“For example, life insurance is cheaper for a nonsmoker in his 40s than a smoker of the same age. The reason insurance costs more for the smoker is that smokers have a risk factor that is significantly correlated with health problems. Similarly, an offender who uses drugs and is unemployed has a higher chance of reoffending than someone who does not use drugs and has steady employment” (p. 206).

Assessment is important because it “informs decisions about classification, placement, and programming” as well as “whether a specialized needs assessment is warranted” (Urban Institute, n.d.). Further, these types of tools allow you to make decisions based on statistical, validated data—not solely on subjective feelings and judgment.

The completion of risk and need assessments is essential throughout the supervision process. It should not be a “one and done” event. The re-assessment of probationers throughout the supervision process allows you to determine if interventions are working, as it is assumed that risk level and needs will change as individuals are exposed to interventions or as circumstances in their life change. Re-assessments for medium- and high-risk probationers should be built into your supervision plan at periodic intervals, such as every 4 months or

“The completion of risk and need assessments is essential throughout the supervision process. It should not be a “one and done” event.”

every 6 months; however, re-assessments should also be completed any time a probationer experiences a major event, such as a divorce/marriage, birth of a child or loss of a loved one, new crime, etc. Some of these risk-producing events may be time limited but would require increased attention because of the potential for these events to trigger a relapse.

A probationer may require assessment beyond a screening or comprehensive risk and need assessment. Certain circumstances, such as an individual's offense (such as domestic violence or a sexually based offense) or issues identified through comprehensive risk and need assessment may encourage the probation officer to either conduct or refer an individual for a specialized screening or assessment.

OTHER SPECIALIZED SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Specialized screening and assessment tools are used to assess specific domains (e.g., substance abuse) or special populations (e.g., sex offenders). You can more than likely identify a specialized screening or assessment tool to fit any specific domain or special population. There are specialized screening and assessment tools that can be administered by probation officers; however, there are other tools that will require a probation officer to refer the probationer to another professional well versed in the specialized area, such as a mental health professional or substance abuse counselor. If you make a referral to another practitioner, it is essential to ensure that the assessment results are shared with you for inclusion in the supervision strategy and for intervention referrals.

The need for an individual to receive a specialized assessment may occur at any point during the supervision process. At the beginning of the supervision process, a judge may court order an individual to undergo a specialized assessment based upon his or her offense or known history. If this is not the case, the completion of a comprehensive risk and need assessment, in a perfect world, will pick up on the need for further assessment within a particular domain. Further, during the supervision process, you may detect behaviors or become aware of an event or series of events that may warrant an individual being referred for a specialized assessment (e.g., a probationer that suddenly presents with suspicious ailments requiring pain medication may warrant a substance abuse assessment). Again, this highlights the importance of conducting periodic re-assessments to catch the possible need for specialized assessment. The following provides a brief overview of some of the more common specialized screenings and assessments of which probation officers should be aware. However, this is not an exhaustive list.

Mental Health Screenings and Assessments. If a referral is made to a mental health professional for a screening or assessment, he or she may perform more than one diagnostic test to adequately evaluate an individual's mental health status. Just as with all screening and assessment, no one standard tool is used by all mental health practitioners; each may use different tools depending on his or her preference or training. It is important to ask questions, similar to the ones you will ask in investigating your own tool, which is covered in Section 4, to make sure that the tool being used meets critical standards. Practitioners administering mental health screenings and assessments may rely on standardized forms they administer during an interview or

self-report forms that the client completes on his or her own or a combination of both. It is important to understand the process used so that you are sure you are using the information you receive back from the assessor appropriately. For example, if the assessor only relied on self-report data, you will need to take that information within the appropriate context.

Alcohol-Substance Use Screenings and Assessments. Some jurisdictions have chosen to use tools that have been shown to have some success in assessing alcohol issues, including predicting DUI recidivism, such as the Adult Substance Use and Driving Survey (ASUDS), the Mortimer-Filkins Questionnaire, or the Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Instrument (SASSI). Jurisdictions have also chosen to tailor existing tools to their own jurisdictions, such as the ASUDS-RI, which was revised for Illinois, or they have attempted to develop their own screening and assessment tools. The goal of conducting screening and assessment pertaining to an individual's use of alcohol/substances is to gauge the degree of use/abuse to target with the appropriate dosage of interventions and services (Cobb and Mullins, 2010). Again, assessors may couple self-report screenings and assessments with a more standardized tool that is administered by a trained clinician.

Sex-Offender Screenings and Assessments. Because of the very nature of their crime, it is often considered judicious to engage sex offenders with every intervention possible to “cover all the bases” in protecting public safety. However, “attempting to incorporate every strategy at the outset simply because it is available or because it intuitively makes sense—or primarily as a safeguard from agency or individual liability—is impractical, exceedingly costly, and unnecessarily time intensive for staff. Moreover, this ‘more is better’ philosophy of initial case planning does not automatically translate into recidivism reductions” (Center for Sex Offender Management, 2007, p. 2). Screening and assessment of individuals charged with sexually based offenses are essential because boilerplate supervision plans are not going to be effective with this population. No two sex offenders are the same and no two sex offenders should have the exact same interventions. Depending on the tool, sex offender assessments may be completed by you as the probation officer, or the individual may need to be referred to a mental health professional, who is trained in dealing with perpetrators of sexually based offenses, to complete this specialized assessment. The key is to ensure that whoever is doing the assessment is using a tool that has been validated, proven reliable, and administered objectively, as “subjectivity and inconsistency decrease the accuracy of assessments. In turn, this can adversely affect the critical decisions that rely on assessments, which can ultimately undermine community safety” (Center for Sex Offender Management, 2007, p. 4).

Domestic Violence Screenings and Assessments. There are a number of domestic violence instruments, some for general screening purposes and some for more comprehensive assessment. They generally look at behavior factors associated with psychopathy such as impulsiveness, lack of empathy, pathological lying, and manipulation; history of domestic violence in the family; current and past restraining orders; prior treatment history; substance abuse issues; employment status and history; and aversive attitudes (Bechtel and Woodward, 2008). Just as with other screenings and assessments, it is important to quickly discern which individuals are high risk so that a more intensive level of supervision can be provided.

Strength-Based Assessments. So often in the justice field, we only focus on individuals' problems or deficits. However, it is important for probation officers to also look for and focus on the positive attributes that individuals bring to the table. Strength-based assessments highlight the positives that individuals already have in place that may help them succeed in completion of their sentence. For individuals in the justice system, we tend use court action or sanctions as external motivators to prompt them to make the changes we think they should make. For example, we tell them "to avoid jail, you have to attend 30 hours of treatment; to avoid more community service hours, you have to get a job." However, probation officers have a unique opportunity to be more than just an enforcer of compliance. Probation officers can use the time they spend with individuals on supervision to determine what might internally motivate an individual to make changes in his or her life.

Strength-based assessments are designed to pinpoint those intrinsic, or internal, motivators for each individual person. For example, a strength-based assessment may identify a skill that a person has (such as woodworking, artistic ability, or handyman skills) that may trigger a community service or employment placement. Placing a probationer in a job or service intervention that focuses on something he or she enjoys or can succeed at oftentimes will increase the likelihood that that person will be more engaged.

“ Strength-based assessments highlight the positives that individuals already have in place that may help them succeed in completion of their sentence. ”

Strength-based assessments can also identify protective factors that an individual on supervision may have, such as a supportive family or a stable job that can be beneficial to aiding supervision and rehabilitation. For example, take the case of a probationer who consistently misses office appointments. During the course of counseling, the individual tells you that he does not have reliable transportation. You discuss ways to address this and he mentions that he has family members who live close by that he could reach out to for assistance in getting him to his appointments. This is one way that an existing strength—family support—can be utilized to aid in the supervision process. Currently, strength-based assessments are primarily used in the juvenile justice field, but there is certainly applicability in the adult criminal justice field as a viable source of information as well.

If a probation officer is inclined to use strength-based assessment, it is recommended that this assessment takes place prior to the development of the supervision plan. Information gleaned from this type of assessment can assist a probation officer with building goals into the supervision plan to match strengths or interests and in incorporating existing protective factors identified through the assessment into the supervision and/or treatment plan.

Summarily, screening and assessment is a process of gathering information to assist you—as a tribal probation officer—in making better informed decisions about individuals on your community supervision caseload. In dealing with any situation, the more information you have, the better equipped you are to make more informed decisions about what to do. For example, if you were going to purchase a new car, you would likely do some research on the types of cars you were interested in purchasing. You might compare the average gas mileage across different vehicles, safety standard ratings, customer satisfaction information, etc. Also, you may do some research on the Internet or talk to people who just purchased the same type of car to get their opinions and advice. The same philosophy holds true for working with individuals being supervised in a community-based setting; the more information you have about that individual, the more informed you will be about the risk that individual poses to the community and the level of intervention and services that may be needed to correct criminal offending and other problem behaviors.

SECTION 3: HOW SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS ARE BENEFICIAL

Now that you have a better understanding of what screening and assessment are, why should you consider incorporating their use into everyday practice? So far, this guide has provided information on theoretical explanations of how screening and assessment are beneficial, but how does this translate into practical benefits? The next section provides examples of a few of the practical benefits of screening and assessment for the individuals on your caseload, your community, and you, as a tribal probation officer.

Managing Caseloads and Workloads. The use of screening and assessment tools can help tribal probation officers better manage caseloads and workloads and, as a result, utilize the sometimes limited resources more effectively and efficiently. Anecdotally, some tribal probation officers often report having to supervise people spanning large geographical areas (sometimes as far as a one-day drive away to complete a home visit). The use of screening and assessment tools to identify the risk of each individual on your caseload helps to prioritize when and how often you make home visits and possibly identify the need for a mobile or satellite office to ease long-distance supervision barriers.

Another issue some tribal probation officers report is having a high number of individuals on their caseloads. Some tribal probation officers have active caseloads of more than 400 probationers, and many of these have mixes of both juveniles and adults. Realistically, it is almost impossible to provide equal services to 400 individuals; hence, the use of screening and assessment tools can help prioritize who needs more time and attention. Personal contact with 400 individuals can become overwhelming; however, if you are able to identify individuals that can be supervised through telephone contact or those individuals that only require monthly contact or bi-weekly contact, you can significantly lessen your workload.

Provide Objectivity. The use of screening and assessment tools allows for decisions to be based on statistical, validated data, not solely on subjective feelings and judgment. For example, as discussed earlier, actuarial assessment instruments identify variables that have been demonstrated by research to be predictive of future criminal behavior. These identified variables allow probation officers to provide objective supervision. Again, the use of actuarial screening and assessment tools does not discount personal or professional intuition; it provides an opportunity to provide validation for those subjective inputs.

Better Allocation of Resources. The availability of resources in any jurisdiction is limited—particularly in today’s economy. Evidence-based practice tells us that being responsive to the individual needs of probationers by matching resources to identified needs promotes better outcomes (Crime and Justice Institute, 2004). Further, research tells us that we should focus most of our resources on individuals assessed to be of higher risk for reoffending. If we don’t have a good way of differentiating probationers based on their risk level, it is likely that we will end up providing services to individuals when it isn’t necessary. Using resources for those assessed as low risk takes away resources other individuals may need. Exhausting resources on those who are not in need of it also causes problems for the probationer because exposing them to interventions they do not need has been shown to do more harm than good (Bonta and Andrews, 2007). The use of screening and assessment can help you determine not only who needs a particular intervention (e.g., behavioral treatment, increased surveillance), it can also help you prioritize whether they need access to that intervention immediately or whether another need is more imminent (e.g., substance abuse treatment).

Prioritize Case Management. Having available time to adequately supervise probationers is a challenge for probation officers. Probation officers’ interactions with the individuals on their caseload is limited—both in the total amount of time an individual typically spends on probation supervision, and in the amount of time a probation officer has to spend with an individual during each interaction. The prioritizing or classifying of probationers on a caseload allows officers to better manage their time by determining who needs more of their time, attention, and resources.

Prioritize Needs to Target Interventions. Probationers may come onto your caseload with many needs. It is not realistic or even likely that you will be able to help them with every single problem or issue they have. However, the assessment process can help you identify which need(s) are most pressing so that they can be prioritized and dealt with accordingly. For example, an individual may be on your caseload for driving under the influence (DUI). Typically, you are going to send this individual to some type of alcohol intervention program. But, what if you conducted a screening or assessment and discovered that the individual is suffering from clinical depression and that this condition is triggering his drinking? Would it make sense to only send him to an alcohol intervention program? Probably not, because a factor influencing the drinking—the depression—is not being addressed. Alcohol use may be a secondary issue to address concurrently or later, but it is not likely you will have an impact on this individual’s drinking habit unless his depression is addressed.

Tangible Ways to Identify Needed Resources. Information gathered from administered screens and assessments can do more than just help identify resources needed to address probationer issues. Compiling screening and assessment data can also help identify the need for specific resources or services for your community as a whole. For example, Indian Country faces staggering crime rates related to alcohol and substance use/abuse, yet many tribal jurisdictions often lack the treatment resources needed to accommodate the number of individuals requiring intervention, specifically intensive in-patient treatment options. By having

quantitative information available, you can take that information to your tribal council or tribal leaders to advocate the need for a specific program(s). Having the data to back up a request sometimes makes the difference between getting the resource or not.

Justify Community Supervision Over Incarceration. Many jurisdictions are faced with budget difficulties and must prioritize their budget allocations. Because of the high cost of incarceration, researchers have begun to focus on cost-effective alternatives. Tribal jurisdictions often face a lack of available detention facilities either on their own reservation or within close proximity. When detention space off the reservation is available, tribes incur costs associated with transporting offenders to and from available facilities and sometimes pay exorbitant per-day costs to house their detainees off tribal lands. Even for detainees who may only be held for 24–48 hours, these costs can mount up quickly.

A related concern for tribal communities is that housing detainees off the reservations and, most times a far distance away, further alienates them from their families and communities, making reentry that much more difficult. This further necessitates the need for effective community supervision programs to keep low-risk, non-violent tribal defendants/probationers out of detention. Further, research supports individuals remaining in the community who are adequately employed, married with children, and who have lived in their area for at least two years (Morgan, 1993). The use of assessments assists probation officers in identifying which individuals could be safely placed on community supervision and which offenders require incarceration.

Justify Sentencing Recommendations. Some tribal probation officers prepare predisposition or pre-sentence reports or pre-sentence recommendations for the tribal judge. When these reports are prepared, the tribal probation officer should consider risk, need, and responsivity factors that are identified through an assessment process. These types of reports can have an effect on and aid the judge's sentencing recommendations. Performing this groundwork can also be beneficial for the tribal probation officer, because the tribal probation officer can recommend the supervision conditions that he or she feels are necessary all at one time instead of having to go back and forth to the judge to add or remove conditions once the case is officially disposed. Keep in mind that recommendations for supervision conditions should be tailored to address the safety concerns related to a particular probationer being supervised in the community.

SECTION 4: CHOOSING A TOOL

Although there are no universal screening and assessment instruments used by all probation practitioners, there are many from which to choose. It is important that tribal probation departments research the variety of tools available and get input from any justice professionals that will be using the information derived from any administered tools. Getting input from others that could potentially be involved with offenders on your supervision caseload is important because it tries to facilitate everyone getting the information they need to work with your offenders from the chosen tool.

There are many factors to consider when choosing what screening or assessment instrument(s) to use in your jurisdiction. The following discussion, while not exhaustive, provides some factors for you to consider as you begin to explore tools for your particular jurisdiction. Figure 1, on page 27, presents some additional considerations specific to risk and need assessments.

Cost. One of the first things that an agency is going to consider is “how much is this going to cost us?”

There are many things to consider when evaluating the cost of a particular tool. Some tools are priced based upon use (only pay for what you use), some are priced based on annual subscriptions (may be over-paying if only a few are used in a year), and some can be accessed for free. It is important to ask whether the cost is per assessment used, per bundle, or per year and find out if the company offers any discounts for ordering a particular way. For example, an agency may offer a cheaper rate per assessment if you order 100 instead of 50. Further, it is important to inquire as to whether the quoted cost includes the cost of scoring materials, training on how to administer and score the tool, or any updates that may become available. It is important to investigate not only how much an assessment costs, but what you are getting for that price.

“How much is this going to cost us?”

Paper/Pencil vs. Computer-Based. In today’s technological age, many companies or agencies are developing tools that are computer-based or web-based. While it may seem like a basic question, it is important to determine whether the tool you are considering is a paper/pencil tool or a computerized or web-based tool. If the tool is computerized, some important questions to ask are:

- Is special software/hardware required?
- If so, how much does it cost?
- Is your system compatible with the company's program options?
- What will be involved with installing their software/hardware on your system (will they pay travel costs to come on-site and install it or provide you with technical assistance in installing it yourself, and is there a cost associated with that)?

If the tool is web-based, some important questions to ask are:

- What kind of server and Internet connection do you need to access the company's system?
- Do you need your own server to house the data or do they house the data for you?
- If they house the data, what kind of access do you have to that data?

You want to avoid situations in which you purchase a tool that you later find you cannot use because of computer system compatibility issues.

Self-Administered vs. Officer Administered. An important consideration when looking at different tools is determining whether the tool will be completed by individuals on their own or whether it is necessary for the probation officer to administer the tool. Specific factors to consider if the tool is to be completed by a defendant/probationer are:

- The reading level of the individual.
- The comprehension level of the individual.
- The length of the instrument—will he or she lose interest?
- The difficulty of branching questions. Will the individual be able to accurately follow the flow of the instrument? For example, many tools have questions that say "if no, skip to question #."
- How will an officer corroborate the information received from a self-administered tool (for example through the identification and interviewing of collateral contacts such as employers, family members, friends, treatment professionals, or through a review of documents such as arrest records, treatment records, etc.)? This will require additional time and effort on the part of the officer, which has an impact on workload.

If the tool is officer administered, then you should consider the following questions:

- How long will the instrument take to administer? This has an impact on workload issues.
- Does the instrument allow for the officer to ask clarifying questions and does that affect the scoring?
- If clarifying questions are allowable, are officers trained in interviewing?

Reliability and Validity. Inter-rater reliability simply means that the results obtained from the instrument should be consistent regardless of the person administering the screening or assessment instrument. Reliable instruments will produce the same or similar results for a group of individuals, even when administered by

different officers. For example, think of a scale you step on to check your weight. If you step on that scale 10 times in a row, it should register the same weight each time you step on it. If it does not, then you know the scale is not reliable. When researching a particular tool, ask the proprietor if they have conducted inter-rater reliability tests on their tool and to share those results with you.

Validity of a screening or assessment instrument means that the instrument is measuring what it is supposed to be measuring. It is also important to consider whether the tool, or the scoring of the tool, can be normed for your particular community. For example, many tools use employment as a score in determining risk level (unemployment scores higher on risk level). If unemployment is common within a particular tribal community, then an individual should not necessarily be penalized for that on a screening or assessment. The tribe could consider utilizing questions that gauge how an individual spends his/her free time instead.

Staff Skill Level. Community corrections agencies must consider the skill level of the probation officers that will be administering the selected tool (Austin, 2006). Some probation officers may feel more comfortable administering a simple screening or assessment wherein most of the information can be gathered without much input from an individual (e.g., from case file information or arrest reports). Conversely, some probation officers may feel comfortable with tools that may require a structured interview and more rigorous scoring applications. Training of agency probation officers and subsequent experience in utilizing the instrument are important components to consider when investigating and selecting a tool.

Buy-In from Staff, Probationers and Policymakers. Austin (2006) recommends that risk and need assessment tools must be considered creditable by all persons in the agency, and the same is true for other screening and assessment tools selected for your agency. It is impossible for any instrument to

be foolproof in predicting human behavior. Further, every professional who uses the tool or the information derived from the tool in some capacity, as well as the individual on supervision, should feel that the tool has significance and informs the decision-making process.

Training. The next thing to investigate is what type of training will be required to administer and score the tool/instrument being used. It is imperative, regardless of the tool that you select, that any and all staff who will be administering and scoring the tool receive, if recommended, the necessary training to ensure reliability of the results. Important questions to ask regarding training include:

- Is training built into the overall quoted cost of the assessment?
- Does every staff member need to be individually trained or is a “train the trainer” option available in which one staff person receives the training and is able to train the remainder of the staff?
- Does the cost of training include training on any updates that may become available, or will that be an additional cost to you?

RELIABILITY

consistent across administrations

VALIDITY

measures what it says it will measure

- Is there a cost for any follow-up questions or technical assistance following training or purchase of the assessment?

Although all of these considerations may seem overwhelming, it is essential that careful thought, consideration, and research go into determining the most appropriate screening and assessment tools to use in your jurisdiction. In the previous section, we discussed the many benefits that the use of screening and assessment offers in managing caseloads and limited resources and in enhancing available programming. Investing the time and energy up front on identifying the best tools you can, is time and energy well spent. “Resources spent on early assessment and accurate workload structuring are a worthy investment, ensuring the most efficient use of limited supervision resources in the long run” (Reentry Policy Council).

Figure 1

Special Considerations for Risk and Need Assessment Tools

Risk and needs assessment instruments, in particular, have several additional considerations that tribal justice agencies should consider when selecting an existing, or developing a new, tool (Austin, 2006).

Risk assessment instruments should be tested on your correctional population and tested separately for males and females. Austin (2006) notes that when assessment tools are tested on supervision populations in one jurisdiction, the results may not be as relevant to those supervised in another jurisdiction. In essence, instruments standardized for a given supervision population (e.g., male, juvenile, rural, urban, etc.) may not be accurate for other populations. For example, instruments should be tested separately for females because the issues leading to female probationers’ criminality, the type of crimes committed, and their prognosis for treatment tend to be different from male probationers.

Assessment tools must be tailored to the unique populations they assess (Hanser, 2010, p. 79). At the very least, when researching a particular tool, ask the proprietor if the tool has been tested on a population similar to your own and ask to see the results.

The instrument must allow for dynamic and static factors that have been well accepted and tested in a number of jurisdictions. As mentioned earlier in this guide, dynamic factors are those characteristics that are amendable to change (peer associations, beliefs, and attitudes). Static factors include those characteristics that are not changeable (prior criminal history, age of first offense, and number of prior periods of incarceration). Any assessment tool should address the static factors, yet also identify those dynamic risk factors that can be targeted with interventions.

SECTION 5: CHALLENGES TO USING ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

As stated previously, information obtained from screening and assessment instruments can provide you with many benefits; however, you will likely encounter some challenges in implementing a new, or enhancing an existing, screening and assessment process. Solutions to challenges are always more effective when identified locally, but we hope that bringing some potential challenges to light will better prepare you to consider them proactively rather than having to respond reactively. While this list of challenges is not by any means exhaustive, it does provide discussion about some of the issues you might encounter.

Current Workload and Perceived Staff Time Pressures Required to Administer the Assessment. Some screening and assessment tools are more time and labor intensive than others. As discussed in the “Choosing a Tool” section, administration and scoring of screening and assessment tools add to the time and effort spent on each probationer, so it is important to recognize that this additional labor and effort upfront may result in initial frustration by probation officers who already feel overwhelmed with other tasks and responsibilities.

However, it is important to keep in mind that the appropriate use of good screening and assessment tools can actually help you, or the agency staff, work more efficiently and effectively. For example, once an individual’s risk level has been established using a screening or assessment tool, it provides objective data that can reinforce subjective decisions about what individual officers should focus their time and energy on (Kleiman, Ostrom, and Cheesman, 2007). So, whereas the officer may have to spend more time upfront conducting screening and assessment, the amount of time he or she has to spend with certain probationers (i.e., low risk) throughout the supervision process may be reduced. Likewise, using a tool to identify high criminogenic need areas helps the officer to focus on the needs an individual has that have the highest potential for reducing recidivism, if addressed adequately.

Lack of Supportive Administrative Policy and Procedure. For screening and assessment procedures to be fully successful, support and ultimately endorsement of their use from administrators and leaders within the tribal justice system is imperative. Their support and the subsequent expectations about the use of screening and assessment procedures must be clearly communicated to all involved staff to establish buy-in. This can be accomplished through a clear explanation of the benefits to the court, probation officers, and the community; these benefits include enhanced effectiveness of supervision, intervention, and, ultimately, reduced recidivism. One way to legitimize the use and incorporation of screening and assessment into everyday practice is to

develop policy and procedures detailing why the process has been adopted and the importance and uses of the information generated.

Lack of Resources Necessary to Address the Individual Needs Identified. For probationers, one benefit of screening and assessing is to have their needs better identified (e.g., substance abuse problem, substance abuse dependency, family/marital issues, and mental health issues) and consequently, to have programs and services better targeted to these needs. However, if needs are identified and your tribe doesn't have the necessary resources available to address those needs (e.g., inpatient treatment, individual or group counseling, education and job readiness training), it can present problems. Knowing what the needs are is only the first step. Directing services to address those needs is vital to facilitating behavioral change in probationers.

Even in the absence of needed resources, however, data obtained from screening and assessment processes can be valuable. It can be documented (e.g., the number of individuals requiring a particular service) and communicated to the appropriate audience (e.g., tribal court judge, tribal council, elders) to help substantiate your tribe's or jurisdiction's needs for certain services. In addition, this type of data can be useful when reaching out to community partners or neighboring jurisdictions to address gaps in services.

Lack of Access to Records Outside of Tribal Jurisdiction. In order to get an accurate assessment, tribal probation officers need as much information about an individual placed on community supervision as possible. Access to tribal, local, state, and national criminal data about probationers is a critical element in the screening and assessment process to get a full picture of an individual's background in order to make accurate predictions of risk and identification of needs, as well as to identify resources outside the tribal community that may be tapped into to provide services not available from within the tribe. Establishing working relationships with local, state, and federal counterparts is essential for information sharing purposes. The passage of the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010 (TLOA) provides for tribal access to criminal information databases, such as the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), that will make this information more accessible for tribal jurisdictions. Additionally, tribal authorities may consider participating in other national data systems such as the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS), the FBI's Interstate Identification Index (III) program, and the Integrated Automated Identification Systems (IAFIS). Some tribal agencies have gained access to criminal databases by entering into contracts with local county law enforcement agencies. It is important for state agencies to acknowledge tribal sovereignty and recognize that state and county probation officers must work together with tribal probation officers and tribal courts.

SECTION 6: USING SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Now that you have some background information on screening and assessment and have a better understanding of the value of the information that various screening and assessment instruments can provide, now what? It is not just a matter of administering these tools and sticking them in a case file. The results yielded from these types of instruments, along with the experience and knowledge of the probation officer should be used to guide important decisions related to supervision and treatment.

The information obtained from screening and assessments yields pertinent information that can assist probation officers in every phase of justice system processing—from pretrial through community supervision. Information obtained from screenings and/or assessments can guide recommendations for referring the individual for more comprehensive assessments (e.g., risk and needs, substance abuse, mental health) or for getting the individual into the appropriate programs, services, and treatment intervention as soon as possible. The remainder of this section will explore ways screening and assessment can be used to promote compliance and rehabilitation with individuals on various forms of community based supervision.

PRE-TRIAL SUPERVISION

Pre-trial is the stage of justice processing between arrest and adjudication or finding of guilt. Not all tribal jurisdictions utilize probation personnel to provide judicial support at the pretrial stage; however, some are experimenting with its use. Tribal probation officers providing pre-trial support assist the judicial system by helping with release decisions, risk screening, information gathering and compilation and, in some cases, the supervision of released defendants (Pretrial Justice Institute, n.d.).

In some cases, personnel providing pretrial services will develop pretrial reports, which provide the judge with a quick overview of information pertaining to previous arrests, employment, education, and family background, and recommendations for pretrial release supervision conditions. Pretrial reports are typically informed by the arrest report, prior criminal history, and personal history (employment, education, residence, ties to the community) as well as by personal interviews with the defendant. However, pretrial is also a point at which one or more screenings may be conducted. An officer may want to conduct these screenings based upon the type or nature of the offense, personal knowledge of an individual, or other relevant information.

If a screening is not conducted by a pretrial officer, but it is felt one would be of benefit, it could be included in the pretrial recommendations to the judge that an individual receive screening or more comprehensive assessment.

Why would screening and assessment be important at the pretrial stage? Regardless of the screening type (alcohol/substance abuse, mental health issues, domestic violence), the literature consistently indicates that the earlier these types of issues can be diagnosed and intervention can begin, the better. This is particularly true when tackling issues related to alcohol and substance abuse, which can be such a prevalent factor surrounding crime in Indian Country.

PRE-SENTENCE OR PRE-DISPOSITION SUPERVISION

Court systems differ in how they operate once an individual is found guilty or has admitted guilt for a particular crime. Some judges will choose to impose sentence immediately, and not allow any time between adjudication and sentencing. Other judges, however, will delay sentencing decisions so additional information can be gathered on the individual to inform their decision.

Pre-sentence reports (adults) and pre-dispositional reports (juveniles) are completed by probation officers on individuals who have been found guilty or have admitted guilt to criminal or delinquent offenses. These reports contain an array of information, such as previous criminal or delinquent offenses, employment, level of education, and financial information, family situations, treatment history, etc., which is beneficial in assisting judges to choose appropriate supervision conditions and treatment requirements.

If a screening was conducted at the pre-trial stage, it is important for the officer who prepared the pre-trial report (if not the same person) to share information with the assigned tribal probation officer to inform decision making at the pre-sentence/pre-disposition phase. Conversely, if a screening was not conducted at the pre-trial stage, then the probation officer should conduct or make referrals for any needed screenings or assessments to help inform his or her pre-sentence/pre-disposition recommendations. Remember, tribal probation officers can also use strength-based screening and assessment tools to identify interests and positive sources of support in an individual's life.

It may be beneficial to identify and reach out to collateral contacts, such as neighbors, employers, family/friends, counselors, etc. Reaching out to these contacts serves to not only verify information given by someone on administered screenings and assessments, but also to informally identify potential strengths or social supports an individual may not have shared with you.

Developing a comprehensive pre-sentence/pre-disposition report, which may include supervision and treatment recommendations prior to sentencing, allows for the recommendations approved by the tribal judge to be incorporated into the official court order and strengthens the tribal probation officer's ability to enforce compliance with the sentence. Further, a thorough and accurate pre-sentence/pre-dispositional report lays the foundation for supervision and treatment planning throughout an individual's time on community supervision.

“
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Additionally, by identifying a specific need or issue prior to sentencing, the probation officer has time to identify community resources that the individual can be referred to so that this can be included in the sentencing order. Judges may be more likely to impose sentencing recommendations if identified needs have been linked with resources available in the community to address them. This approach helps to build confidence from the bench that the probation department is being proactive in leveraging community resources to address the needs of individuals on community supervision.

COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

Once an individual is sentenced to a period of community supervision, the use of screening and assessment tools is still an important part of the supervision process. Ideally, you will work with the probationer to draft a supervision plan (may also be called a case plan). As with screening and assessment, there is not a universal example of what a supervision plan should look like; most jurisdictions create their own format to meet their agency's goals and expectations. Sometimes, probation agencies can fall into the practice of having standardized or

“cookie-cutter” supervision plans, which may be based upon risk level, offense type, etc.; however, these types of plans often fail to address the individual factors influencing criminal behavior.

Supervision plans are dynamic documents developed by probation personnel and possibly treatment providers that ideally are based on screening and assessment results. Supervision plans should be considered dynamic in that they should change as individuals experience successes and/or set-backs. Many times, we assume that if a probationer experiences a set-back, it is because he or she is failing; but the reality may be that the plan needs to be revised because it did not effectively lay out attainable goals and objectives for the probationer, probation officer, or other intervention providers (e.g., a supervision goal may be to enter into a treatment program in the next 30 days, but there may not be an available treatment slot in the time allotted for in the supervision plan).

Preferably, a supervision plan should be developed in conjunction with the individual coming onto supervision within the first 30 days. If screenings/assessments were not conducted at earlier stages, it may be necessary to conduct or make referrals for any screening and assessment warranted prior to the development of the supervision plan. If critical issues such as substance misuse/abuse, mental health, or other issues are identified, then the immediate goal should be to intercede in the issues that require urgent attention.

USING SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT TO IDENTIFY SERVICES AND INTERVENTIONS

Access to services and interventions varies greatly by jurisdiction. As discussed earlier, evidence-based practice tells us that we should strive to match probationers to services and interventions based upon their individual responsivity factors as identified through screening and assessment. For many jurisdictions, this is certainly easier said than done. It is important to take responsivity factors into consideration and match the probationer to the most appropriate service and intervention available in your community. In the absence of a needed service or intervention, documenting the number of probationers needing a particular type of program can be a powerful tool in advocating for that program.

RE-ASSESSMENT AND REVISION

Screening and assessment is not something that should be considered “one and done.” It is vital that probationers are re-assessed throughout the supervision process. This allows you to determine if prescribed interventions are working, as it is anticipated that risk level and needs will change as individuals are exposed to interventions or as circumstances in their life change. For high-risk and medium-risk probationers, re-assessments should be built into your supervision plan at planned, periodic intervals, such as every 4 months or every 6 months. However, these should not be hard-and-fast intervals. Human behavior is unpredictable, so there may be instances when an unscheduled screening or assessment may be necessary. For instance, if a domestic violence probationer receives divorce papers, this is a critical event that may temporarily affect his or her risk level or intervention (e.g., may need to involve the individual in individual counseling until the immediate situation is resolved).

It is also important to revisit the supervision plan periodically. Supervision plans should be updated to reflect changes identified through a new screening and assessment or when an individual accomplishes a goal or completes an objective so that new goals and objectives can be established. Likewise, if a goal or objective is not being accomplished, it should be re-visited to determine why it isn't working.

CONCLUSION

Probation in Indian Country is a vital component of the criminal justice system. Probation officers not only assist the judiciary by collecting and synthesizing important defendant/probationer information and available community resources, they also have the potential to positively influence the individuals they supervise into making long-term behavior changes.

This desktop guide has provided information on the important role the screening and assessment process plays in identifying risk and the needs of individuals on supervision, developing supervision strategies based on identified risk levels, and identifying and targeting criminogenic needs with the goal of affecting and sustaining behavioral change. The use of screening and assessment is a core strategy, which research shows to be effective in improving probationer outcomes.

Key points from this guide include:

- Tribes exhibit great diversity in how they establish and operate their probation programs.
- The screening and assessment process helps us to individualize our supervision and treatment approaches, thereby avoiding cookie-cutter or one-size-fits-all approaches to community supervision.
- Screening and assessment does not replace professional judgment or intuition; when coupled together, they provide objectivity and a rationale for supervision and treatment decisions.
- The screening and assessment process should be considered an on-going, information gathering process throughout an individual's placement on community supervision.
- The information garnered from screening and assessment tools helps to inform decision-making at all points in the justice process—from pre-trial to probation.
- There are no universal screening and assessment tools used by probation professionals; tribal jurisdictions should give careful thought to and research the tools they are interested in implementing.
- Introducing the use of screening and assessment will no doubt have challenges, but the end result is worth the time put forth in careful planning and administration.
- Re-assessment is vital throughout the supervision process as a means of measuring offenders' success with goals, identifying interventions that are not working, and detecting new issues that may arise during the supervision process that need to be addressed.

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APPENDICES OVERVIEW:

Appendix A & B contains an overview of various screening and assessment tools. The information contained within these appendices is not meant to be an exhaustive list. However, they serve as a quick reference of some of the available, validated assessment tools that tribal community supervision agencies may want to consider using to facilitate the development of effective supervision plans for offenders on community supervision.

Information in Appendix A is reprinted with permission by the Council of State Governments Justice Center from the Assessment and Risks/Needs Determination Tool at <http://tools.reentrypolicy.org/assessments/chart> (2009). APPA encourages you to visit the Assessment Tool interactive website for more detailed information on various assessment tools, program examples, and timeframes for when certain assessment tools might be helpful during various stages of the justice system processes.

The American Probation & Parole Association does not endorse any of the instruments contained in this guidebook.

APPENDIX A: INDEX OF SCREENING & ASSESSMENT TOOLS

This index provides the names of Screening & Assessment Tools organized by the focus areas or domains they assess. A page number is provided for each tool so you can read more about a specific tool (including description and contact information).

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SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS DESCRIPTION, ALPHABETICAL

A

ADDITION SEVERITY INDEX (ASI)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse

The Addiction Severity Index (ASI) is a semi-structured interview designed to measure the severity of both alcohol and drug abuse. The ASI is unique in that both the client and clinician rate the severity of each problem. Because of this clinician-rating component, it is critical that the ASI is administered by a qualified clinician. The ASI guides clinicians in developing appropriate treatment plans upon admission and serves as a measure of client change following treatment. The instrument has been validated with multiple populations and is available in 18 languages, including Spanish and French. A culturally sensitive version developed for the Native American population of North Dakota, the ASI-ND/NAV is also available. The test requires about 30-45 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): A.T. McLellan, L. Luborski, J. Cacciola, J. Griffith, P. McGRahan, Ch. P. O'Brien, The University of Pennsylvania / VA Administration / Center for Studies of Addiction

Available here: <http://www.tresearch.org/asi.htm>

ADULT BASIC LEARNING EXAMINATION (ABLE)

Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education

The Adult Basic Learning Examination (ABLE) is a battery of tests designed to measure the level of educational achievement among adults who may or may not have completed twelve years of schooling. The test has three levels, corresponding to skills taught in grades 1–4, 5–8, and 9–12, and the screening battery can help determine which of the three test levels is most appropriate for the test taker. ABLE is a standardized test of vocabulary, reading comprehension, spelling, language use, and mathematics. It has been normed with people who are incarcerated. The test requires about 2.5 hours to complete, and the screening test takes about 1 hour to complete.

Developer(s): Bjorn Karlsen and Eric F. Gardner

Available for purchase here: <http://harcourtassessment.com/haiweb/cultures/en-us/productdetail.htm?pid=015-4010-375>

ADULT MEASURE OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS (AMES)

Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education

The Adult Measure of Essential Skills (AMES) is a standardized test of silent reading comprehension, written communication, and mathematics that measures basic workplace and educational skills. The assessment consists of multiple-choice questions, and measures literacy and educational attainment as well as vocational potential. The results may be used to assist correctional staff with job placement for people who are incarcerated. AMES can be administered either individually or in a group setting and is presently used in 10 states.

Available for purchase here: (800) 531-5015

ALCOHOL USE DISORDERS IDENTIFICATIONS TEST (AUDIT)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse

The Alcohol Use Disorders Identifications Test (AUDIT) contains 10 questions about alcohol use, dependence, and problems associated with alcohol use. The AUDIT has been found to accurately identify those with an alcohol problem and those who do not have an alcohol problem. A study of the use of the AUDIT with prisoners found that scores differed greatly at the point of intake and after 15 days of incarceration. The study's authors recommended administering the audit for the purposes of identifying the need for treatment or further assessment after the first few weeks of incarceration. Its validity and reliability have been demonstrated with women who are incarcerated. The test requires about 10 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): World Health Organization, Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence
Available here: http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/publications/alcohol/en/

B

BASIC ENGLISH SKILLS TEST (BEST)

Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education

The Basic English Skills Test (BEST) is designed as a task-based assessment of life skills that has two sections. The oral interview section has 50 items and yields five scores for listening comprehension, pronunciation, communication, fluency, and reading / writing. The literacy skills section assesses reading and writing more thoroughly. The first section must be administered individually and to do so is moderately

complex. Administration and scoring require prior training and practice. Little validity data are available; however, the test has high inter-rater reliability. The test requires 10–20 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): Center for Applied Linguistics

Available for purchase here: <http://www.cal.org/topics/ta/adulteslassess.html>

BRIEF JAIL MENTAL HEALTH SCREEN (BJMHS)

Instrument Focus Areas: Mental Health

The Brief Jail Mental Health Screen (BJMHS) enables jail staff to screen people who are being admitted to a prison or jail with a potentially serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression. The instrument is made up of eight “yes” or “no” questions. BJMHS has been validated in jail settings. It can correctly classify almost three out of four of males being admitted to prisons or jails, but significantly underestimates mental illness in women and does not screen for co-occurring disorders. The screening is used to identify the need for further mental health assessment. In settings (such as jails) where individuals are incarcerated for short periods of time, the screening can be used to identify the need for referrals to community-based mental health services. The test requires about 3 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): Policy Research Associates

Available here: <http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/html/resources/MHscreen.asp#important>

BURNS/ROE INFORMAL READING INVENTORY

Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education

The Burns / Roe Informal Reading Inventory is composed of a series of graded word lists and graded passages that help determine an individual’s reading level. While the test taker is reading aloud, the administrator records any oral reading miscues (insertions, omissions, substitutions, repetitions, mispronunciations, etc.). After reading the selection, the test taker answers comprehension questions about what he or she just read. Answers to these questions illustrate whether the individual is able to understand the main idea, note details, understand causal relationships, and infer information. Validity and reliability data are not available because the test is not standardized, but reviewers report that its design is sound. The test takes 30 minutes to administer.

Developer(s): Paul C. Burns and Betty D. Roe

Available for purchase here: <http://www.college.hmco.com/CollegeCatalog/CatalogController?cmd=Portal&subcmd=display&ProductID=12364>

C

CIRCUMSTANCES, MOTIVATION, READINESS, AND SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT (CMRS)

Instrument Focus Areas: Criminal Thinking

The Circumstances, Motivation, Readiness, and Suitability (CMRS) assessment tool comprises 25 questions that can be used to assess motivation to seek and engage in treatment, and to gauge the appropriateness of treatment for an individual. The CMRS scales are designed to predict treatment retention based on dynamic client factors in four areas: circumstances, or external conditions that influence people to seek treatment; internal motivation, or an individual's inner desires for change; readiness, or the person's perceived need for treatment; and suitability for treatment. Tests of the validity of the CMRS have found that it is possible to predict treatment results based on the tool, particularly in therapeutic community (TC) settings. A version of the CMRS is available for prison settings. It can be administered by lay staff (including corrections officers), and requires 10 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): George De Leon, National Development and Research Institute, Inc., Center for Therapeutic Community Research

Available at:

71 W. 23rd Street, 8th Floor

New York, New York 10010

Or here: <http://www.ndri.org/ctrs/ctcr/ctcrpubs.asp>

COMPREHENSIVE ADULT STUDENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (CASAS)

Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education

The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) assesses the ability to perform a number of basic competencies (e.g., reading, listening, and mathematics) in everyday life situations. The system includes more than 80 standardized assessment instruments and is used to place learners in educational programs, diagnose need, and monitor progress. Levels AA, A, B, and C are suitable, respectively, for developmentally disabled, beginning, intermediate, and moderately advanced adult education learners. Level C is substantially easier than the GED test. CASAS content is exclusively life-skill oriented and does not assess specific competencies in substantial depth. The system has been validated, and requires specialized training to administer.

Developer(s): CASAS

Available for purchase at 1 (800) 255-1036

Or here: <https://www.casas.org/home/index.cfm>

COMPUTERIZED DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEW SCHEDULE IV (CDIS-IV) *Instrument Focus Areas: Mental Health, Recidivism Risk*

The Computerized Diagnostic Interview Schedule IV (CDIS-IV) is a structured interview for a psychiatric diagnosis according to DSM-IV criteria. The CDIS-IV assesses a lifetime history of symptoms and conditions, from childhood to the present. This instrument may be used by corrections staff to identify the mental health needs of incarcerated individuals and refer them to appropriate treatment programs. Since it covers all necessary symptoms, it is self-contained and does not require a follow-up examination to make diagnoses. Its validity has been established with diagnoses of mania, psychosis, and posttraumatic stress, but has been found to overestimate depression among homeless individuals. It has also been validated with jail populations. The interview takes 60–90 minutes to complete and can be administered by trained corrections personnel. Spanish and English versions are available.

Developer(s): Kathleen K. Bucholz, Linda B. Cottler, Wilson M. Compton, Carol S. North, Lee N. Robins, Kathryn M Rourke at Washington University School of Medicine
Available for purchase at (314)286-2252
or here: <http://epi.wustl.edu/CDISIV/dishome.aspx>

CORRECTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION SYSTEM (CAIS™) AND (JUVENILE ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION SYSTEM (JAIS™) *Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse, Criminal Thinking, Employment & Education, Family Relationships, Housing, Mental Health, Recidivism Risk*

The Correctional Assessment and Intervention System™ (or CAIS, used for adults) and the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System™ (JAIS) were designed to provide criminal justice personnel with integrated assessment tools, which identify evidence-based supervision strategies that emphasize public safety, rehabilitation, accountability, and criminogenic needs. CAIS™ and JAIS™ employ a single semi-structured interview to derive assessments of risk, strengths, and needs. The results of the interview are scored by an automated response system that produces an individualized case plan including risk, needs, and supervision strategy classifications, as well as recommendations for evidence-based programs and services. CAIS and JAIS include periodic reassessment components to automatically update individual case plans on a continuous basis. A reporting package provides real-time aggregate data reports for client monitoring, agency management and budgeting, and outcome measurement. The web-based system requires no agency investment in hardware or software, MIS redesign, or maintenance. Validity and reliability have been successfully demonstrated through multiple studies. CAIS and JAIS incorporate gender-responsive assessments and interventions to address the unique risk and needs areas of girls and women. Comprehensive training and technical assistance packages are offered.

Developer(s): National Council on Crime and Delinquency
Contact Toni Aleman at 608-831-8882, or taleman@mw.nccd-crc.org

CORRECTIONAL OFFENDER MANAGEMENT PROFILING FOR ALTERNATIVE SANCTIONS (COMPAS)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse, Family Relationships, Criminal Thinking Employment & Education, Financial Status, Housing, Mental Health, Recidivism Risk

The Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS) system is a statistically based risk and needs assessment specifically designed to assess key risk and needs factors in adult and youth correctional populations and to provide decision-support for justice professionals who must make decisions regarding the placement, supervision, and case management of individuals in community supervision and correctional institution settings. It achieves this by providing valid measurement and succinct organization of research-supported risk/need dimensions. COMPAS scores each individual based on three different types of risk (violence, recidivism, and failure to appear in court) and 19 different criminogenic needs. The software also includes case planning and outcomes measurement and reports generation modules. The internal Research Division (staffed by five PhDs) and the IT Division provide the research and technical support to norm the assessment for the local population and configure the software to local policy and procedure. The time required to administer each battery of tests varies and can be adapted to the needs of the jurisdiction. A peer-reviewed validation study of the COMPAS has been accepted by Criminal Justice and Behavior for publication in the June 2009 edition. An additional independent validation of the COMPAS in a California study by Zhang and Farabee (2007) indicated predictive accuracies comparable to other major instruments.

Developer(s): Northpointe Institute for Public Management, Inc.

Available for purchase at (888) 221-4615

or here: <http://www.northpointeinc.com/>

CRIMINAL SENTIMENTS SCALE-MODIFIED (CSS-M)

Instrument Focus Areas: Criminal Thinking

The Criminal Sentiments Scale-Modified (CSS-M) is a 41-item self-report measure of antisocial attitudes, values, and beliefs related to criminal activity. The CSS-M is composed of five subscales: Attitudes Toward the Law, Court, Police, Tolerance for Law Violations, and Identification with Criminal Others. Respondents rate prosocial and antisocial statements on a 5-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Research has established the validity and reliability of CSS-M for adult and juvenile populations. There has been limited research to validate the CCS-M on people who commit sex offenses. The test takes 10–15 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): David J. Simourd, Ph.D

Available at (613) 384-6637 or here: <http://www.acesink.com>

CUT DOWN, ANNOYED, GUILTY, EYE-OPENER (CAGE)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse

The Cut down, Annoyed, Guilty, Eye-opener (CAGE) is a screening tool used to detect alcohol dependency. The CAGE is a brief questionnaire, consisting of four questions, structured in a “have you ever” format that is applicable to the interviewee’s past or present. Answering Yes to two questions provides strong indication for substance abuse or dependency on alcohol. Answering Yes to three questions confirms the likelihood of substance abuse or dependency; however, further assessment is often required. Corrections staff may use this instrument to flag individuals with substance abuse or alcohol issues for further assessment or appropriate treatment services. CAGE may be self-administered or conducted by trained corrections staff. The test’s validity has been demonstrated with substance abusing populations and it is commonly used in criminal justice settings. The test may not identify harmful drinking by pregnant women, who may underreport their alcohol use. The TWEAK assessment was developed as a modified version of the CAGE for this purpose. The CAGE takes less than one minute to complete.

Developer(s): Dr. John Ewing

Available here:

<http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/bin/u/f/CAGE%20Substance%20Screening%20Tool.pdf>

E

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESLOA)

Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education

The English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA) is a diagnostic instrument that measures listening comprehension and oral proficiency at four levels of English proficiency for non-native English speakers. The ESLOA instrument provides an assessment that can be used by corrections staff to determine program placement for each individual. The test uses a booklet of pictures with accompanying questions beginning at Level I. Examinees answer questions through progressive levels of difficulty until they are unable to continue. The ESLOA must be administered by an official test administrator who records the correctness of responses on an answer sheet where scores are computed. Validity and reliability data are unavailable; however its use is standard in educational settings. The exam generally takes 10 to 20 minutes to complete, and is simple to score.

Developer(s): Literacy Volunteers of America

Available for purchase at:

New Readers Press

P.O. Box 3588, Syracuse, NY 13235, (800) 448-8878

or here: <http://www.newreaderspress.com/>

F

FAMILY JUSTICE ECOMAP

Instrument Focus Areas: Family Relationships

The ecomap is a visual representation of a family's strengths and social and material resources. It also displays positive and conflicted relationships between families and services, and between service agencies. Family case managers can use the ecomap to identify sources of support that people who are being released from prisons and jails can draw upon within their families and communities during the re-entry process.

Developer(s): For more information, write to mdizerega@vera.org.

Available here: http://www.familyjustice.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=108&Itemid=184

FAMILY JUSTICE STRENGTH-BASED GENOGRAM

Instrument Focus Areas: Family Relationships

Genograms are a type of family-mapping tool that diagrams a person's family and social network. Family Justice encourages the use of strength-based genograms with families that have a loved one involved in the justice system or at risk of such involvement. The history represented visually reflects not only a family's challenges (such as health issues and involvement with the juvenile or criminal justice system), but assets, such as education, child care, employment, and religious affiliation. It also displays information such as age and gender, as well as the nature and relative strength of the bonds among members of the family, broadly defined.

Government agencies (particularly parole and probation) as well as community-based organizations are increasingly using strength-based genograms as part of their efforts to change the conversation between workers and people involved in the justice system, to help identify the resources available to these individuals and their families. Participants in this process identify social supports in their lives, often as a result of questions a case manager asks. The tool helps recognize strengths within the family (for example, someone who has been steadily employed), and address issues that may recur across generations (such as harmful involvement with drugs or involvement in the justice system). Information about the family and domestic responsibilities provides a basis for programming and informs reentry planning. The genogram is not intended primarily to document lineage, but to assist case managers in exploring a social network's patterns and dynamics, including a family's relationships and strengths.

Developer(s): Family Justice

Available here: www.familyjustice.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=107&Itemid=183

G

GENERAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT (GED)

Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education

The General Educational Development (GED) is an exam that is designed to measure the educational and literacy skills that students normally acquire by completing a typical high school program of study. Each of the five tests uses a multiple-choice question format, and every GED candidate must also satisfactorily complete a timed essay on an assigned topic. The GED certificate is a prerequisite for pursuing vocational programs and higher education. Corrections officials can use the results of the exam to place individuals in appropriate educational or training programs. The full-length exam takes 7 hours to complete. It must be administered at an official GED test center approved by the GED Testing Service. GED preparation and testing is common in prison and jail settings. Research has found that people who obtain a GED while incarcerated have significantly lower recidivism rates.

Developer(s): American Council on Education

Booklets available for purchase here:

American Council on Education

Fulfillment Service, Department 191

Washington, DC 20055-0191

or visit: <http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=GEDTS>

GENERAL STATISTICAL INDEX OF RECIDIVISM (GSIR)

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The General Statistical Index of Recidivism (GSIR) is an assessment tool that reviews an individual's criminal record for 15 risk-related items. The 15 items are a combination of demographic characteristics and criminal history, which are scored and summed to provide five probabilities of risk for recidivism ranging from poor to very good. A report on its use among day parolees in Canada found the instrument valid for predicting outcomes among parolees, but it does not predict violent or sexual recidivism.

Developer(s): J. Nuffield, Canada Department of Justice

Available at the Canada Department of Justice, Research and Statistics Division here: rsd.drs@justice.gc.ca

GLOBAL APPRAISAL OF INDIVIDUAL NEEDS (GAIN)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse, Employment & Education, Housing, Mental Health, Physical Health

The Global Appraisal of Individual Needs (GAIN) is a series of instruments that includes a screening, a standardized biopsychosocial intake assessment, and a follow-up assessment. The instruments are designed to measure the recency, breadth, and frequency of problems and service utilization related to substance use, physical health, risk/protective involvement, mental health, environment, and vocational situation. Corrections staff can use results to identify co-occurring disorders and predict treatment outcomes. Instruments and manuals for training staff to administer and interpret them can be accessed online. GAIN instruments have been validated for use with criminal justice-involved adolescents who are receiving substance abuse treatment for marijuana use, and for use with adults under criminal justice supervision. Adolescent and adult versions are available in English and Spanish. The time that each instrument takes to administer varies, ranging from 3 minutes for screenings, to 60 minutes for assessments.

Developer(s): M.L. Dennis, J.C. Titus, M.K. White, J.I. Unsicker, & D. Hodgkins
Available at (309) 820-3543 ext 83439
or here: www.chestnut.org/li/gain

GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF FUNCTIONING (GAF)

Instrument Focus Areas: Mental Health

The Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) is an assessment tool that rates the social, occupational, and psychological functioning of adults. It can be used by corrections officers to obtain information about an individual's functioning in order to provide an appropriate mental health treatment. Its validity has been established in community mental health settings. The GAF must be administered by a trained clinician, and takes approximately 3 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): American Psychiatric Association

The GAF is presented in full on page 32 of the DSM-IV-TR, which is available for purchase here: <http://www4.parinc.com/>

The text of the GAF is also available here: <http://cms.bsu.edu/Academics/CentersandInstitutes/SSRC/PastProject/~media/DepartmentalContent/SSRC/DOCS/gafpage.ashx> .

H

HOSTILE INTERPRETATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE (HIQ)

Instrument Focus Areas: Criminal Thinking

The Hostile Interpretations Questionnaire (HIQ) is an instrument that measures an individual's propensity towards hostile interpretations in social situations and interactions. It includes four subscales that measure components of hostility (attribution, external blame, hostile reaction, and overgeneralization) and five subscales that assess the social context that elicits hostility (acquaintance, anonymous, authority, family, and work). Its validity has been established against other anger assessment instruments. Its developer reports that, while research has not demonstrated a link between anger/hostility and recidivism, corrections staff can use the HIQ's subscales to target interventions by identifying situations that elicit hostility, such as intimate/family settings. The instrument comprises 28 items and requires approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): David J. Simourd, Ph.D., & Joelle M. Mamuza, Ph.D

Available for purchase at (613) 384-6637

or here: <http://www.acesink.com/HIQ.htm>

L

LEVEL OF CARE UTILIZATION SYSTEM (LOCUS)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse, Mental Health

The Level of Care Utilization System (LOCUS) for Psychiatric and Addiction Services is a dynamic tool that assesses immediate care needs and monitors changes in level of care recommendations. The tool includes six evaluation parameters: risk of harm; functional status; medical, addictive, and psychiatric co-morbidity; recovery environment; treatment and recovery history; and engagement. LOCUS provides a structured process for assessing immediate service needs, organizing clinical and bio-psychosocial information, determining in a standardized manner the level of care needed during incarceration, and monitoring progress over time. The tool includes a level of care determination grid and decision-making tree. The tool's developers report encouraging preliminary reliability and validity data. LOCUS requires a trained clinician to administer.

Developer(s): American Association of Community Psychiatrists

Available here: http://www.communitypsychiatry.org/publications/clinical_and_administrative_tools_guidelines/LOCUS2010.pdf

LEVEL OF SERVICES OF INVENTORY-REVISED (LSI-R)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse, Employment & Education, Family Relationships, Financial Status, Housing, Recidivism Risk

The Level of Services Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) is a 54-item rating scale that measures static factors related to an individual's risk of committing a new crime and identifies dynamic areas of risk and need that may be addressed through programming. Areas evaluated by the LSI-R include criminal history, leisure / recreation, education / employment, associates, finances, substance abuse, family / marital status, emotional / personal well-being, housing, and attitude. The LSI-R may be administered at intake to aid in security classification and programming decisions. The instrument is also commonly used to determine and modify levels of community supervision. Research on the validity of the LSI-R indicates that certain items and sub-scales are more closely correlated with recidivism than others, in part because inter-rater reliability can be difficult to achieve on many of its items. Among the sub-scales, one study found that the general risk/need score correlated highly with general recidivism. It also predicted recidivism among subgroups of people convicted of sexual offenses, domestic violence, and people with mental health problems. The specific risk/need scale produced a slightly higher correlation with violent recidivism. The LSI-R requires 30–45 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): Donald A. Andrews and James Bonta

Available for purchase here: https://www.mhs.com/saf_om.aspx?id=ResourceCenter or <https://www.mhs.com/product.aspx?gr=saf&prod=lsirnr&id=overview>

LEVEL OF SERVICES INVENTORY-REVISED: SCREENING VERSION (LSI-R: SV)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse, Employment & Education, Family Relationships, Housing, Recidivism Risk

The Level of Services Inventory-Revised: Screening Version (LSI-R: SV) consists of eight of the 54 items contained in the full Level of Services Inventory-Revised (LSI-R). The eight items cover four risk factors: criminal history, criminal attitudes, criminal associates, and antisocial personality patterns. The instrument also samples the domains of employment, family relationships, and substance abuse. The LSI-R: SV was designed to provide a brief and inexpensive means of establishing whether the full LSI-R should be administered and is not intended as a stand-alone assessment instrument. It takes about 10–15 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): Donald A. Andrews and James Bonta

Available for purchase here: <http://www.mhs.com/product.aspx?gr=saf&prod=lsi-rs&id=overview>

M

MICHIGAN ALCOHOLISM SCREENING TEST (MAST)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse

The Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test (MAST) can be used to identify alcohol problems that warrant further assessment. The test contains 24 items, and is designed to provide a rapid and effective screening for lifetime alcohol-related problems and alcoholism. Research has established its reliability and validity in a number of settings. The MAST has been widely used with prisoners, but has not been normed to specific subgroups. The test takes about 8 minutes to complete, and it can be self-administered or administered by an interviewer.

Developer(s): Melvin L. Selzer, M.D.

Available for purchase (\$40.00 for copy, no fee for use) at (858) 459-1035
or here: http://pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov/vawp/vawp_supps_pg40.htm

MINI-INTERNATIONAL NEUROPSYCHIATRIC INTERVIEW (MINI)

Instrument Focus Areas: Mental Health

The Mini-International Neuropsychiatric Interview (MINI) is a screening tool that can identify individuals in need of further mental health assessment. It is a short structured diagnostic interview that consists of 120 questions that screen for 17 psychiatric disorders for the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) and International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10). The MINI has been validated against longer mental health assessments of DSM-IV criteria, and is available in 43 languages. It has been used to study mental health issues in jails, but does not help clinicians or corrections personnel clarify whether symptoms are due to substance use rather than to major mental illness. It takes 10–15 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): David V. Sheehan, M.D., M.B.A., Yves Lecrubier, M.D.

Available here (free registration required): <https://www.medical-outcomes.com/index.php>

MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY INVENTORY (MMPI-2)

Instrument Focus Areas: Mental Health

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2) is a broad-based test designed to assess a number of major patterns of personality, emotional, and behavioral disorders. It consists of 567 true/false statements and includes internal checks for validity. MMPI-2 has been found to accurately assess clinical condition, screen for substance abuse, and predict adjustment to correctional settings. In a study of its validity in a prison setting, the test was slightly less likely to have produced valid profiles in women and African-Americans; but produced valid profiles in 79% of cases overall. The test not an effective assessment with adults convicted of sex offenses. It is available in English, Spanish, French (Canadian) and Hmong. It takes 60–90 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): Starke R. Hathaway, PhD, and J. Charnley McKinley, MD

Available for purchase here: http://pearsonassessments.com/tests/mmpi_2.htm

MINNESOTA SEX OFFENDER SCREENING TOOL-REVISED (MNSOST-R)

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The Minnesota Sex Offender Screening Tool-Revised (MnSOST-R) is currently being used by the Minnesota Department of Corrections as an assessment tool to predict the risk of arrest for a new sexual offense among individuals convicted for rape and intra-familial child molestation. The tool comprises 12 historical variables (such as number and type of sexual offenses) and 4 institutional variables (including disciplinary history, participation in drug treatment, participation in sex offender treatment, and age at release). The test produces scores that are divided into six levels of risk. In a comparative study of five sex offender risk assessments, the MnSOST-R predicted general recidivism but did not significantly predict serious or sexual recidivism. This could have been due to its inclusion of institutional factors or the complexity of its use. The assessment requires trained staff to administer, and can be used at the time of release from a correctional facility or the beginning of a period of community supervision.

Developer(s): Douglas L. Epperson, Ph.D.; James D. Kaul, Ph.D.; Stephen J. Huot, M.Eq.; Denise Hesselton, M.A.; Will Alexander, Ph.D. Candidate; and Robin Goldman, M. A.

Available here: http://www.psychology.iastate.edu/~dle/mnsost_download.htm

N

NORBECK SOCIAL SUPPORT QUESTIONNAIRE (NSSQ)

Instrument Focus Areas: Family Relationships

The Norbeck Social Support Questionnaire (NSSQ) assesses the level of social support available to an individual. Respondents are asked to list each significant person in their lives who provides personal support to them. The instrument measures multiple components of social support including functional properties of social support (e.g., emotional and tangible support) and network properties (e.g., stability of relationships, frequency of contact), as well as eliciting descriptive data about recent losses of supportive relationships. The instrument's validity and reliability have been demonstrated; however the tool was developed and normed to female graduate nursing students, and may not be generalizable to people who are incarcerated or under community supervision. It is available in English and Spanish.

Developer(s): Jane S. Norbeck et al.

Available here: <http://nurseweb.ucsf.edu/www/ffnorb.htm>

NOVACO ANGER SCALE AND PROVOCATION INVENTORY (NAS-PI)

Instrument Focus Areas: Criminal Thinking, Mental Health

The Novaco Anger Scale and Provocation Inventory (NAS-PI) assesses cognitive, physiological, and situational contributors to anger. The NAS-PI is used to assess anger reactivity, anger suppression, and change in anger disposition. It is composed of two parts: The Novaco Anger Scale (60 items), which assesses how an individual experiences anger; and the Provocation Inventory (25 items), which identifies the kind of situations that induce anger in particular individuals. The NAS-PI can be administered as a whole, or the two parts can be used independently. A study of the NAS with people who were incarcerated for violent offenses found that its scores were not correlated with prior convictions, institutional misconduct, or postrelease performance. This tool is in the form of a self-reporting questionnaire and takes 25 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): Raymond W. Novaco, Ph.D.

Available here: <http://www.wpspublish.com/>



OFFENDER PROFILE INDEX (OPI)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse

The Offender Profile Index (OPI) was developed in 1987 by the National Association for State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) in concert with the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The instrument measures 10 core areas: drug severity, family support, social support, educational history, employment history, housing, criminal justice involvement, psychiatric profile, previous treatment, and engagement in behaviors that put the individual at risk for contracting HIV. The OPI is a classification instrument used to sort individuals into an appropriate treatment intervention, not a comprehensive needs assessment tool. The assessment is self-scoring; may be administered by any trained professional; and can be completed in 30 minutes.

Developer(s): Dr. James Inciardi and Dr. Duane McBride

Available at

National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors

444 North Capital Street

Washington, D.C. 200001

or here: <http://www.ncjrs.gov/App/publications/Abstract.aspx?id=148829>



PAYMENT ABILITY EVALUATION (PAE)

Instrument Focus Areas: Financial Status

The Payment Ability Evaluation (PAE) is a seven-page form that probation officers in Maricopa County, Arizona use when payments of restitution and probation fees are delinquent for more than 30 days. By itemizing an individual's monthly income, monthly expenses, assets, etc., the evaluation enables officers to assess an individual's ability to make payments towards fines, fees, and restitution.

Developer(s): Maricopa County Adult Probation Department

Contact: (602) 372-5552

PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT INVENTORY (PAI)

Instrument Focus Areas: Mental Health

The Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI) is an assessment tool used to measure mental health problems, substance abuse disorders, and motivation for treatment, among other factors. The PAI provides information to assist screening, diagnosis, and treatment. PAI comprises 344 items and contains 22 nonoverlapping scales that assess different factors, including clinical symptoms, treatment needs, and interpersonal dynamics. Research has tested the validity of various subscales in criminal justice settings, with mixed results. Among women who are incarcerated, the antisocial features scale (ANT) and aggression (AGG) scales have been shown to predict recidivism. The validity of the substance abuse scales has been weak, in part due to the likelihood of people under criminal justice supervision to underreport their substance abuse. The PAI is self-administered and requires a Grade 4 reading level. It takes 50–60 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): Lesley C. Morey

Available for purchase here: <http://www4.parinc.com/PARNewsArticle.aspx?id=39>

PSYCHOPATHY CHECKLIST-REVISED (PCL-R)

Instrument Focus Areas: Criminal Thinking, Mental Health

The Psychopathy Checklist Revised (PCL-R) is a 20-item, interview-based instrument that measures psychopathic attributes in individuals. Clinicians score each item on a scale of 0 (not present) to 2 (definitely present). The instrument measures two major factors that are correlated with psychopathy: a disregard for the feelings and rights of others, and the presence of persistent, antisocial behavior. The instrument has been validated with adult males in institutional and community corrections settings, and its reliability has been established with women who are incarcerated. The instrument's developer strongly cautions that, because the label of psychopathy can have lasting effects in an individual's life, the PCL-R should only be used by trained mental health clinicians and with populations with which the instrument has been validated. The PCL-R takes 1–2 hours to complete and score.

Developer(s): Robert D. Hare, Ph.D.

Available for purchase here:

<http://www.pearsonassessments.com/haiweb/cultures/en-us/productdetail>.

<http://www.pearsonassessments.com/haiweb/cultures/en-us/productdetail.htm?pid=paapclr&mode=summary> or <https://www.mhs.com/product.aspx?gr=saf&prod=pcl-r2&id=overview>

R

RAPID RISK ASSESSMENT FOR SEXUAL OFFENSE RECIDIVISM (RRASOR)

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The Rapid Risk Assessment for Sexual Offense Recidivism (RRASOR) is a brief 4-item actuarial instrument that predicts sexual recidivism among males who have been convicted of at least one sexual offense. This instrument focuses on measuring static factors and relies on information obtained in administrative files. The predictor variables that the instrument assesses are extrafamilial victims, male victims, prior sexual offenses, and age of release. Test scores range from 0–6. The instrument’s validity in predicting sexual recidivism has been established by research, but it does not predict nonviolent or general recidivism as well as other instruments. It must be administered by trained corrections staff.

Developer(s): Dr. R.K. Hanson

Contact:

Dr. R.K. Hanson, Senior Research Officer

340 Laurier Avenue West, 11th Floor

Ottawa, ON K1A 0P8

Canada

READING EVALUATION ADULT DIAGNOSIS (READ)

Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education

The Reading Evaluation Adult Diagnosis (Revised) (READ) is an evaluation of adult reading skills. It includes three parts that measure sight-word recognition, word analysis, and reading or listening comprehension. The test’s reading difficulty ranges up to that of grade 5. There is little validity data available, and reviewers report that its manually scoring requirements can be moderately complex. The test does not have a time limit for completion.

Developer(s): Literacy Volunteers of America

Available for purchase here: <http://www.newreaderspress.com/default.aspx?cat=prof&hid=79&pid=86>

RELATIONAL INQUIRY TOOL

Instrument Focus Areas: Family Relationships

With support from the National Institute of Corrections, Family Justice developed the Relational Inquiry Tool in partnership with state departments of corrections in Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio, and Oklahoma, and the Safer Foundation in Chicago. The tool consists of a list of eight carefully crafted questions supported by a training module. The Relational Inquiry Tool is designed for use by corrections staff who are providing day-to-day case management, and for developing reentry plans. As a complement to standard risk and needs assessments, the tool helps staff learn about a key resource for successful reentry: families and social networks.

The goals of the tool are:

- To provide staff with a user-friendly method of recognizing and reinforcing positive connections to family and social networks during and after incarceration
- To build rapport between the professional using the tool and the incarcerated individual

The American Correctional Association's Corrections Today published an article about the Relational Inquiry Tool in its December 2007 issue. Read the article [here](#).

With funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Family Justice is developing a second version of the tool, the Juvenile Relational Inquiry Tool.

Developer(s): National Institute of Corrections and Family Justice

Contact: Margaret diZerega mdizerega@vera.org

RIKERS ISLAND DISCHARGE ENHANCEMENT (RIDE) OR (FORM 983)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse, Employment & Education, Family Relationships, Financial Status, Housing, Mental Health, Physical Health

The Rikers Island Discharge Enhancement (RIDE) is a discharge planning program that uses a one-page questionnaire (Form 983) at the time of intake to ascertain an individual's housing and social service needs in preparation for release from jail. The housing section includes questions about past housing situations, homelessness, and the need for housing assistance upon release. Other sections assess the need for employment, healthcare, identification, transportation, substance abuse treatment, etc. The questionnaire includes a section that jail staff can use to make service referrals.

Developer(s): New York City Discharge Planning Collaboration

Available here: http://reentry.microportals.net/reentry/Document_Viewer.aspx?DocumentID=1756

RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (RMS)

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The Risk Management System (RMS) is a computerized tool for evaluating recidivism risk and programmatic needs. The system uses modeling software to generate reports that compare an individual's scores in a number of domains with that of the general population. Corrections, community corrections, treatment program, and judicial personnel can use these reports to inform treatment, programming, and supervision decisions. By using web-based software, RMS enables agencies seeking advanced risk assessment to receive reports on individuals' risks and needs while being able to continue to use their existing data management systems.

Developer(s): Modeling Solutions, Inc.

Available for purchase here: http://www.modelingsolutions.net/rms_ver2/services.html

S

SALIENT FACTOR SCORE (SFS)

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The Salient Factor Score (SFS) is a device that assesses an individual's risk of violating parole if he or she is released to community supervision. It was developed for the United States Parole Commission and is a component of the Commission's guidelines for making parole release decisions. The Salient Factor Score comprises six criminal history items which are added together to produce a score of 0–10 points. A higher score indicates that an individual is less likely to violate parole. The Salient Factor Score provides a guideline for determining the amount of time an individual should serve before being released to community supervision.

Developer(s): United States Parole Commission

Available here (the SFS and administration instructions begin on page 58): http://www.usdoj.gov/uspc/rules_procedures/rulesmanual.htm

SELF APPRAISAL QUESTIONNAIRE (SAQ)

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The Self Appraisal Questionnaire (SAQ) is a multidimensional, self-administered questionnaire designed to predict violent and nonviolent recidivism. This 72-item tool measures criminogenic risk / need and generates a total score and seven subscale scores. The subscales measure Criminal Tendencies, Antisocial Personality Problems, Conduct Problems, Criminal History, Alcohol/Drug Abuse, Antisocial Associates, and Anger. The SAQ can be used by parole officers, case managers, and corrections officers in determining correctional programming and institutional security levels. Researchers report that the instrument has high reliability and validity with male prisoners. The instrument can be administered by corrections staff and takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. Its short administration time makes it appropriate for use in jail settings.

Developer(s): Wagdy Loza, PhD

Available for purchase here:

<https://www.mhs.com/product.aspx?gr=saf&prod=saq&id=overview>

SEX OFFENDER NEEDS ASSESSMENT RATING (SONAR)

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The Sex Offender Needs Assessment Rating (SONAR) is an instrument that measures changes in risk level for individuals convicted of sex offenses. SONAR measures five dynamic variables that change slowly over time: intimacy deficits; negative social influences; tolerant attitudes toward sexual offending; self-regulation of sexual urges; and general self-regulation. It also measures four dynamic risk factors that can change quickly: substance abuse; negative mood; anger; and opportunities for access to victims. The tool requires a community supervision personnel to track these factors over time to identify changes in risk level and make treatment and supervision decisions based on these findings. Researchers report that the tool improves upon other formal risk assessments (e.g., the VRAG), but that the tool has only moderate validity and reliability on its own.

Developer(s): R.K. Hanson and Andrew Harris

Contact:

James Bonta, Ph.D.

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada

340 Laurier Avenue West

Ottawa, Ontario

K1A 0P8 Canada

SEX OFFENDER RISK APPRAISAL GUIDE (SORAG)

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The Sex Offender Risk Appraisal Guide (SORAG) is an actuarial tool designed to predict sexual recidivism among males convicted of sex offenses. It is a modified version of the VRAG, and is focused on measuring 14 static risk factors. The tool enables corrections personnel to calculate the probability that a convicted individual will commit a new offense (including sex offenses) within a specific period of time in which the person under correctional supervision has community access. Research has shown that the SORAG predicts sexual recidivism at a significantly higher rate than other sexual risk assessment tools, and has also been shown to predict violent recidivism. It is a static tool and cannot be used to tailor treatment or measure progress.

Developer(s): Vernon L. Quinsey, Ph.D

Available here: <http://books.apa.org/books.cfm?id=4316068>

SEXUAL VIOLENCE RISK-20 (SVR-20)

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The Sexual Violence Risk-20 (SVR-20) is an instrument used to assess individuals for the presence of risk factors for sexual violence and to develop risk management plans. The 20 factors featured in the risk assessment were identified through a review of sexual recidivism literature, and fall into three main categories: Psychosocial Adjustment, Sexual Offenses, and Future Plans. The SVR-20 manual provides information for administrators on its use. Little validity or reliability data are available; its utility lies in its ability to help structure clinical assessments.

Developer(s): Douglas R. Boer, PhD, Stephen D. Hart, PhD, P. Randall Kropp, PhD, Christopher D. Webster, PhD

Available for purchase here:

<http://www4.parinc.com/Products/Product.aspx?ProductID=SVR-20>

SLOSSOM ORAL READING TEST (SORT) *Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education*

The Slossom Oral Reading Test (SORT) is a brief screening test designed to assess a person's reading level. This instrument is not a diagnostic measure, nor does it measure all aspects of reading such as word knowledge and comprehension. SORT can be used by corrections officers to determine the educational needs and placement for people who are incarcerated. Basic administration and scoring procedures are printed on each protocol and may be conducted by a trained professional. The assessment takes approximately 3–5 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): Richard L. Slosson and Charles L. Nicholson

Contact:

Slosson Educational Publications Inc

PO Box: 544

East Aurora, New York 14052

<http://www.slosson.com>

STAGES OF CHANGE READINESS AND TREATMENT EAGERNESS SCALE (SOCRATES)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse

The Stages of Change Readiness and Treatment Eagerness Scale (SOCRATES) is an assessment instrument designed to assess readiness for change in people with drug or alcohol problems. The instrument is a 19-item scale that yields three scale scores: Recognition, Ambivalence, and Taking Steps. Its validity and reliability have been established in non-corrections settings (with veterans and military service personnel). Information about its validity with prisoners is not readily available; however it is used in prisons in the United States. The tool can be administered by corrections staff and is also available in Spanish.

Developer(s): W.R. Miller and J.S. Tonigan

Available here: <http://casaa.unm.edu/inst/SOCRATESv8.pdf>

STATIC 99

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The Static 99 is a 10-item risk prediction instrument designed to estimate the probability of sexual and violent reconviction for adult males who have already been either charged with or convicted of at least one sexual offense against a child or a nonconsenting adult. The instrument measures static factors using question sets that cover three different areas: demographics, criminal history, and victim information. The Static 99 was created by combining items from two older risk assessment instruments: the Rapid Risk Assessment for Sexual Offense Recidivism (RRASOR) and the Structured Anchored Clinical Judgment-Minimum (SACJ-Min). In a comparison of the Static-99 and its successor, the Static-2002, the instruments were found to predict general, violent, and sexual recidivism. However, little evaluation data is available for the Static-2002.

Developer(s): R. Karl Hanson, Ph.D. and David Thornton, Ph.D.

Available here: <http://www.static99.org/>

STATISTICAL INDEX OF RECIDIVISM (SIR)

Instrument Focus Areas: Recidivism Risk

The Statistical Index of Recidivism (SIR) is an assessment tool that reviews an individual's criminal record with 15 risk related items. The 15 items are a combination of demographic characteristics and criminal history which are scored and summed to provide five probabilities of risk for recidivism ranging from poor to very good. The instrument does not predict recidivism for sexual or violent offenses.

Developer(s): J. Nuffield, Canada Department of Justice

Contact: Research and Statistics Division, rsd.drs@justice.gc.ca

STRUCTURED CLINICAL INTERVIEW FOR DSM IV-TR (SCID)

Instrument Focus Areas: Mental Health

The Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV-TR (SCID) is a semi-structured interview that allows an experienced mental health clinician to tailor questions to fit the patient's understanding of his or her symptoms; to ask clarifying questions; to challenge inconsistencies; and to make clinical judgments about the seriousness of symptoms. It assesses 33 of the more commonly occurring psychiatric disorders described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – Fourth Edition (DSM-IV). The SCID requires a licensed mental health professional to administer and takes 90 minutes to complete.

Developer(s): Michael B. First, Robert L. Spitzer, Miriam Gibbon, and Janet B.W. Williams

Available for purchase here: <http://www.scid4.org/>

T

TCU CRIMINAL THINKING SCALES (TCU CTS)

Instrument Focus Areas: Criminal Thinking

The Texas Christian University Drug Screen II (TCU-DSII) is a screening tool that enables corrections staff to quickly identify individuals who report heavy drug use or dependency and therefore might be eligible for treatment. Questions are based on the DSM-IV and the National Institute of Mental Health Diagnostic Interview Schedule. It is well validated, and commonly used in corrections settings and to determine eligibility for alternatives to incarceration (e.g., court). (TCU has also developed a number of other substance abuse, HIV risk behavior, and program planning assessments for clients and for staff; however the TCU-DSII is most commonly used). The screening takes 5–10 minutes to complete. English and Spanish versions are available.

Developer(s): Institute of Behavioral Research, Texas Christian University

Available here: [http://www.ibr.tcu.edu/pubs/datacoll/Forms/ShortForms/09\(SF\)TCUDSIIFORM.pdf](http://www.ibr.tcu.edu/pubs/datacoll/Forms/ShortForms/09(SF)TCUDSIIFORM.pdf)

TESTS OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (TABE)

Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education

The Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) assesses a broad range of literacy and work-related skills. There are four levels of the test corresponding in difficulty to grades 2–4, 4–6, 6–8, and 8–12. TABE is a standardized test that measures vocabulary, reading comprehension, language mechanics, language expression, spelling, mathematical calculation, and mathematical concepts and application. The scores on the TABE have been moderately correlated with comparable scores on the GED. The TABE has been normed with people in adult and juvenile correctional facilities. The full TABE takes approximately 4.5 hours to administer. For this reason, many programs use only one or two sections for pre- and post-testing purposes. A locator test is also available to match individuals' learning skill levels to appropriate test levels.

Developer(s): John P. Sabatini et al

Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

Available for purchase at (800) 538-9547

or here:

<http://www.ctb.com/ctb.com/control/productFamilyViewAction?p=products&productFamilyId=608>

TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY DRUG SCREEN (TCU-DSII)

Instrument Focus Areas: Substance Abuse

The Texas Christian University Drug Screen II (TCU-DSII) is a screening tool that enables corrections staff to quickly identify individuals who report heavy drug use or dependency and therefore might be eligible for treatment. Questions are based on the DSM-IV and the National Institute of Mental Health Diagnostic Interview Schedule. It is well validated, and commonly used in corrections settings, and to determine eligibility for alternatives to incarceration (e.g., court). (TCU has also developed a number of other substance abuse, HIV risk behavior, and program planning assessments for clients and for staff; however the TCU-DSII is most commonly used). The screening takes 5-10 minutes to complete. English and Spanish versions are available.

Developer(s): Institute of Behavioral Research, Texas Christian University

Available here: <http://www.ibr.tcu.edu/pubs/datacoll/tcutreatment.html#CorrScreeningforTreatment>

TRAUMATIC ANTECEDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE (TAQ)

Instrument Focus Areas: Mental Health

The Traumatic Antecedents Questionnaire (TAQ) is a self-administered tool that assesses the type and frequency of traumatic events experienced across an individual's lifespan. The TAQ asks for the frequency (never, rarely, commonly) of experiences assigned to 11 domains ranging from positive experiences to negative experiences such as neglect and physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Each type of experience is separately assessed for four developmental periods: early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. This tool can be used to assess the need for trauma-centered programming, where it is available in corrections settings.

Developer(s): J.L. Herman, J.C. Perry, and B.A. van der Kolk

Available for purchase here: <http://www.traumacenter.org/products/instruments.php>

TRAUMATIC SYMPTOM INVENTORY (TSI)

Instrument Focus Areas: Mental Health

The Traumatic Symptom Inventory (TSI) is a 100-item screening tool that evaluates various forms of posttraumatic distress and symptomatology, including the effects of rape, domestic violence, physical assault, natural disasters, and childhood abuse. The TSI assesses a wide range of psychological impacts, including symptoms typically associated with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and intra- and interpersonal difficulties associated with chronic trauma. The tool requires approximately 20 minutes to complete and may be administered by corrections staff. This tool can be used to assess the need for trauma-centered programming, where it is available in corrections settings.

Developer(s): Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc

Available for purchase at 1-800-331-TEST

or here:

Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc

P.O. Box 998, Odessa, FL 33556

Phone: 1-800-331-TEST

V

VIOLENCE RISK APPRAISAL GUIDE (VRAG)

Instrument Focus Areas: Mental Health, Recidivism Risk

The Violent Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG) is a tool used with people with mental illness who have been convicted of violent offenses to predict the risk of violence within a specific time frame following release. It uses the clinical record, particularly the psycho-social history component, as the basis for scoring as opposed to an interview or questionnaire. VRAG was initially developed to assess recidivism among people with mental illness, and considers 12 items including personality disorder, schizophrenia, age, marital status, and criminal record. In a comparative study with five other risk assessment instruments, the VRAG was found to predict general, violent, and sexual recidivism.

Developer(s): Vernon Lewis Quinsey, Grant Thomas Harris, Marnie Elizabeth Rice, and Catherine A. Cormier

Available for purchase here: <http://www.apa.org/books/431604A.html>

W

WAIVER OF COURT FEES AND COSTS

Instrument Focus Areas: Financial Status

The application for a Waiver of Court Fees and Costs is used in all California courts to determine whether a defendant is eligible to have his or her court costs waived due to financial difficulty. The form assesses income levels and eligibility for a number of programs that confirm financial difficulty, including Temporary Aid to Need Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and food stamps. The form, while used in courts, can also be used by corrections, probation, and parole staff to determine an individual's ability to pay his or her court-ordered financial obligations.

Developer(s): Judicial Council of California

Available here: http://www.ventura.courts.ca.gov/forms_packets/fee_waiver.pdf

WRITING RANGE ACHIEVEMENT TEST (WRAT)

Instrument Focus Areas: Employment & Education

The Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) is a brief screening test that measures reading recognition, spelling, and arithmetic computation skills. It can be administered to determine if a more comprehensive achievement test is needed. Level two of the test is normed for people ages 12 and over. The test takes approximately 15–30 minutes to administer and 5 minutes to score.

Developer(s): Gary S. Wilkinson, PhD

Available for purchase here: <http://www4.parinc.com/Products/ProductsListAZ.aspx?Letter=W&PageNo=1>

APPENDIX B: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The previous appendix provided a comprehensive, yet not exhaustive, listing of screening and assessment tools cataloged by the Reentry Policy Council. However, at the time of printing, there were no tools listed that can be used to assess domestic violence offenders, which is often a common offense in tribal communities.

For purposes of this resource, APPA reached out to the Corrections Unit Supervisor for Hennepin County, Minnesota to share their knowledge of available screening and assessment tools for this specialized population. This list is not exhaustive of domestic violence screening and assessment tools available nor does Hennepin County or APPA endorse the use of any specific tool provided in this guidebook.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT METHODS

Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation
Evidence Based Practice Sub-Committee on Assessment Tools

Method/Tool	Description	Administration	Primary Intended Uses	Additional Information
Domestic Violence Screening Instrument (DVSI) (Williams and Houghton, 2004)	<p><u>12 questions</u> given 0-3 points, primarily related to offender’s criminal history, employment & several other risk factors.</p> <p><u>Scoring:</u> Risk score 0-30, and two risk categories (not high risk & high risk).</p>	Probation or other court officer completes instrument based on offender’s criminal record and other interviews.	Assess risk of recidivism/ re-assault for supervision, probation/ parole, and other offender-related decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently normed & in use in Hennepin County. • Determines “cut-off” for further assessment with SARA.
Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA) (Kropp, Hart, Webster, and Eaves, 1994, 1995)	<p><u>20 items clinical checklist</u> given 0-4 points (weighted), related to criminal history, psychosocial adjustment, spousal assault history and alleged/most recent offense; other risk markers can be noted and items marked as critical.</p> <p><u>Scoring:</u> 0-37, with risk of violence toward partner or risk of violence toward others of low, moderate or high.</p>	As assessment guide or checklist developed to be accessible and useful to a variety of practitioners, including probation officers.	Assess risk of recidivism/ re-assault for corrections applications including pretrial, presentence, correctional intake and discharge, victim safety assessments, and probation case planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently used in Hennepin County for misdemeanor. & gross misdemeanor. Domestic cases with a DVSI of 9 or higher. Available for purchase here: http://www.mhs.com/product.aspx?gr=saf&prod=sara&id=overview

Method/Tool	Description	Administration	Primary Intended Uses	Additional Information
DVSI-R (Williams and Grant, 2006)	<p>11 items given 0-3 points, primarily related to offender's criminal history, employment and several other factors (somewhat different than DVSI).</p> <p>Scoring: 0-28, with risk of violence toward partner or risk of violence toward others of low, moderate or high.</p>	Probation or other court officer completes instrument based on offender's criminal record and other interviews.	Assess risk of recidivism/ re-assault for supervision, probation/parole, family court and other offender-related decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed for State of Connecticut due to "unknowns" in DVSI. Currently being validated in Connecticut. No cost—available here: http://www.j-sat.com/Downloads/tool_DVSI.pdf or at the homepage http://www.j-sat.com/Toolkit/Adult/2abbd7a0-7fa1-4eca-985d-5a716a828cce
Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) (Hilton, et al., 2004)	<p>13 items given 0-1 point; includes domestic & non-dom. Criminal history, threats and confinement during the index incident, children, substance abuse, and barriers to victim support.</p> <p>Scoring: 0-13, can be scored with up to 5 missing/unknown. The score will provide a likelihood of recidivism and comparison to others of same score.</p>	Can be used by police, probation or a variety of other users; not applicable to DV assaults by women.	A brief actuarial assessment for the prediction of repeated wife assault (recidivism) -How the man's risk compares with that of know wife assaulters & -How likely the man is to assault again.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validated with police records. Available for purchase here http://www.mhcp.on.ca/Site_Published/internet/SiteContent.aspx?LeftNavigation.QueryId.Categories=63&Body.QueryId.Id=1666
B-SAFER (Brief Spousal Assault Form for the Evaluation of Risk) (Kropp, Hart and Belfrage, 2005)	<p>10 items: 5 factors related to perpetrator's history of spousal violence, and 5 factors relating to history of psych. & social function, identified as present, not present, omitted or possibly or partially present.</p>	Useful to police and criminal justice professionals.	A "structured professional Judgment" guide to identify risk areas, so that the practitioner may tailor management strategies to prevent future violence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available for purchase here http://www.psychassessments.com.au/Category.aspx?clD=393

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