

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 0332-T01

Agency Name: JusticeWorks Youthcare, Inc.

Program Name: Lycoming County JusticeWorks

Service Name: Violation Initiative Program (VIP®)

Cohort Total: 12

Timeframe of Selected Cohort: Began the service on/after March 1, 2019 and ended the service on/before March 1, 2020

Referral County(s): Lycoming

Date(s) of Interview(s): October 12, 2021 and November 9, 2021

Lead County: Lycoming

Probation Representative(s): Larry Smith

EPIS Representative: Kevin Perluke

## Description of Service:

JusticeWorks YouthCare was founded in 1999 with a mission to provide value added services which fill in the gaps in service delivery systems to troubled youth and families. Our goal is to build better futures for youth, families, and communities and our operating strategy is to do “whatever it takes” to achieve our goals.

JusticeWorks’s founder and President, Daniel S. Heit, has been acknowledged as a national leader in developing and managing innovative programs for youth and families with profound challenges. He served two terms as President of “Therapeutic Communities of America,” was appointed by President George H.W. Bush to a presidential commission for model state drug laws, and served on President William Clinton’s behavioral health subcommittee for health care reform. He has developed and managed a broad continuum of residential and outpatient services throughout Pennsylvania and in 10 other states.

The Violation Initiative Program (VIP®), operated by JusticeWorks YouthCare, Inc. is a community-based program for youth under the supervision of the Lycoming County Juvenile Probation Office who are moderate to high risk to reoffend and/or at risk of being removed from their homes due to violations of probation supervision. The intent of the program is to provide counseling, support, supervision, and to also assist with supplemental referrals to other community agencies in order to reduce the likelihood of long-term out-of-home placement.

It also functions as a re-entry component to supervision following an out-of-home placement to ensure a youth’s smooth and seamless entry back into their home community. The Family Resource Specialist (FRS) provides supervision at varying levels of service. Standard VIP® is 2 hours per week of face to face youth contact, Intensive VIP® is 4 hours per week, and Full VIP® is a minimum of 6 hours over a period of 7 days per week. The probation office staff decides what level of service should be provided based upon the juvenile’s risk score and current level of supervision compliance. The FRS is responsible for monitoring each youth at home, school, work when applicable, and “leisure time” activities. Based upon the goals outlined by the probation office, a treatment plan is developed with the youth and family within 48 hours of first contact. VIP® services are typically provided for 4 - 6 months.

### The four characteristics of a service found to be the most strongly related to reducing recidivism:

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Mentoring

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? Yes

If so, what is the Service Type? Behavioral Management

Was the supplemental service provided? Yes **Total Points Possible for this Service Type:** 30

**Total Points Received:** 30 **Total Points Possible:** 35

2. **Quality of Service:** Research has shown that programs that deliver service with high quality are more likely to have a positive impact on recidivism reduction. Monitoring of quality is defined by existence of written protocol, staff training, staff supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

**Total Points Received:** 20 **Total Points Possible:** 20

**3. Amount of Service:** Score was derived by calculating the total number of weeks and hours received by each youth in the service. The amount of service is measured by the target amounts of service for the SPEP™ service categorization. Each SPEP™ service type has varying amounts of duration and contact hours. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction.

Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks: 6  
Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours: 6

Total Points Received: 12 Total Points Possible: 20

**4. Youth Risk Level:** The risk level score is compiled by calculating the total % of youth that score above low risk, and the total % of youth who score above moderate risk to reoffend based on the results of the YLS.

11 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of youth 10 points  
6 in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 13 points

Total Points Received: 23 Total Points Possible: 25

**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 85 total points received out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP™ therapeutic service. (e.g. individual counseling compared to cognitive behavioral therapy, social skills training, mentoring, etc.)

*Note: Services with scores greater than or equal to 50 show the service is having a positive impact on recidivism reduction.*

**Program Optimization Percentage:** 89% This percentage compares the service to the same service types found in the research. (e.g. individual counseling compared to all other individual counseling services included in the research.)

### **The SPEP™ and Performance Improvement**

The intended use of the SPEP™ is to optimize the effectiveness of reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. Recommendations for performance improvement are included in the service Feedback Report, and these recommendations are the focus of the Performance Improvement Plan, a shared responsibility of the service provider and the juvenile probation department.

1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:
  - a. Written Protocol:
    - i. Ensure that the manual is timestamped when updated
  - b. Staff Training:
    - i. Ensure that staff receive a hard copy certificate whenever a training is completed
2. Regarding Amount of Service:
  - a. Maintain communication with Lycoming County Juvenile Probation to continue matching research recommendations for the targeted amount of service and appropriate length of stay for each youth
3. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served:
  - a. Continue to communicate with Lycoming County Juvenile Probation regarding the research supported targeted risk population recommended for this service type; there are larger positive effects on recidivism with high risk juveniles