

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 288-T01

Agency Name: Venango County Adult/Juvenile Court Supervision Services

Program Name: Juvenile Division

Service Name: Victim Community Awareness Curriculum

Cohort Total: 15

Timeframe of Selected Cohort: February 1, 2019-December 31, 2019

Referral County(s): Venango

Date(s) of Interview(s): November 13, 2019

Lead County: Venango

Probation Representative(s): Julie Bullard

EPIS Representative: Shannon O'Lone

## Description of Service:

Venango County Adult/Juvenile Probation Services delivers a variety of services in a community-based setting for Venango County clients. Youth receive the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) upon intake and criminogenic needs are assessed. Results of the YLS assessment assist Juvenile Probation Officers in service selection that may reduce the youth's risk to reoffend. The following service is delivered to youth in a group format by Juvenile Probation Officers in Venango County.

As part of a youth's probationary obligation, all adjudicated delinquent youth within Venango County will attend the Victim Community Awareness Curriculum (VCAC) during their probationary time as mandated by the state of Pennsylvania. For those youth that are placed in residential facilities, the obligation will be fulfilled while in placement. For those youth that stay within their community, this restorative-based accountability activity can be fulfilled through Venango County Adult/Juvenile Court Supervision Services at any time during supervision.

The Victim Community Awareness Curriculum (VCAC) is utilized within the Venango County Juvenile Probation department as a means for (all adjudicated youth, regardless of YLS risk) youth to fulfill their obligation to the Victim and Community. This curriculum includes an overview of Balanced and Restorative Justice, education/discussion on the impact of crime, and ultimately requires the youth to describe in detail the offense they committed, followed by a description of how their offense affected the victim and the community. The primary focus is on the offender acknowledging the harm caused by their behavior, creating possible solutions to address that harm, and thereby assisting them in the task of drafting an appropriate apology letter. Pre/post tests are given and assess the content of concepts learned. Groups are facilitated six times per year, or quarterly depending on the number of youth waiting to begin the service. It is delivered one time, in the 4-hour format as outlined in the Curriculum. The targeted population for this service is 10-18 years old, adjudicated delinquent, all levels of YLS, male or female, and probationers from Venango County.

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

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Group Counseling

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? No

If so, what is the Service Type? There is no qualifying supplemental service

Was the supplemental service provided? N/A      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: 10      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:** 0

**Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours:** 0

**Total Points Received:** 0 **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.

9 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 5 points

1 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 0 points

**Total Points Received:** 5 **Total Points Possible:** 25

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**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 45 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:** 47% 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.)

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### **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. Create a mechanism to verify that the manual was utilized during service delivery.
- b. Staff Training
  - i. Clearly outline and document the minimum education requirement to deliver the service.
  - ii. Clearly outline the requirements of specialized training to deliver this service within the policies/procedures manual.
  - iii. Document the process for routine check-ins with the developer for booster training opportunities.
- c. Staff Supervision
  - i. Create a schedule for monitoring fidelity of service delivery.
  - ii. Create a documentation process for monitoring fidelity of service delivery by enhancing group sign-in sheets to include a signature line.
  - iii. Ensure the supervisor provides written feedback for those who deliver this service to capture the discussion from debrief sessions.
  - iv. Ensure staff performance is directly referenced into their yearly performance evaluations.
- d. Organizational Response to Drift
  - i. Develop/Coordinate existing procedures (i.e., "Administration Rules") into an overarching policy/procedure that describes how the service should be delivered.
  - ii. Confirm the policy/procedure contains corrective action steps to ensure an "if-then" approach, such as what to do if service delivery departs from what is intended.
  - iii. Consider collecting pre-test/post-test data which could be utilized more specifically for quality of service delivery.
  - iv. Consider collecting pre-test/post-test data (youth feedback) which could be utilized more specifically to adapt/improve the service in the future.

#### 2. Regarding Amount of Service

- a. Consider making modifications to provide longer service participation, allowing for alignment with research supported amounts.
- b. Consider increasing communication within JPO to better match research recommendations for targeted amount of service.

#### 3. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served

- a. Continue to collaborate within JPO to consider appropriate risk level for each youth referred to this service.
- b. Continue to collaborate within JPO to consider each youth's responsibility factors during group counseling sessions.