

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

## Service Score Results:

Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Contact Time: 0372-T01

Agency/Program Name: JusticeWorks Youthcare, Inc.

Service Name: Violation Initiative Program®, (VIP®)

Cohort Total: 14

Cohort Time Frame: Youth that began the service on/after June 1, 2022 and ended on/before December 31, 2023

Referral County(s): Crawford (5); Erie (9)

Feedback Report Delivery: May 20, 2024

County/Probation Officer(s) Involved: Erie - Alex Hromyak & Chris Boyle

Crwaford - Holly Varndell, Matt Thompson, Jen Obenrader, & Dan Foltz

EPIS SIS(s): Shannon O'Lone & Christa Park

Founded in 1999, JusticeWorks Youth Care is a national agency which serves youth (11-18yr old males and females) in various systems: child welfare; juvenile probation; educational; and adult corrections agencies across more than 125 counties throughout Pennsylvania, Ohio, South Carolina, Colorado, Maryland, and Florida. As a part of the JusticeWorks “whatever it takes” philosophy, the main goal of all services is to build on the youth’s strengths and assist them to manage their situations to lead to the best outcomes for them, and for their families. With a focus on evidence-based and research-informed programming, JusticeWorks services aim to prevent out-of-home placement. JusticeWorks offers a wide array of programs and services, with a strengths-based, family-centered, trauma-informed, and outcomes-driven approach, and has created three signature services which aim to directly address those issues based on individual youth and family needs: Short-term Therapeutic Outreach to Prevent Placement® (STOPP®); Just Care Program®; and Violation Initiative Program® (VIP®).

The focus of this report is on the Violation Initiative Program® (VIP®) which is utilized by various juvenile probation departments across Pennsylvania. The program is an intensive community-based service for delinquent youth at risk for removal from the home, subsequent detention, and placement. Four core components encompass the service: Competency Development, Mentoring, Accountability, and Crises Response. VIP® uses a family-centered approach and works to strengthen the family’s ability to provide appropriate boundaries, direction, and support, while focusing on the youth’s needs as outlined by the Youth Level of Service (YLS). The fundamental goal of VIP® is to assist the youth in meeting the conditions of their probation, developing competency skills, and becoming productive members of their communities. Working in partnership with the Juvenile Probation Officer, the VIP® Family Resource Specialist (FRS) will work with youth to achieve these positive outcomes. VIP® is targeted for those youth that score in the Moderate to High range in multiple domain areas on the youth’s YLS assessment. Particular attention is placed on the domains for Attitudes/Orientation, Family Circumstances/Parenting, Leisure/Recreation, and Personality/Behavior. Additionally, VIP® routinely engages youth in pro-social activities centering on the Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) mission of competency development and accountability. The VIP® FRS provides supervision at varying levels of service dependent upon the youth’s unique needs, and contacts the youth and family within 24 hours of referral to set up the initial meeting. Over the course of the first 2 weeks, the FRS will establish a working relationship with the youth and family, discussing behavioral and engagement expectations, signing behavioral contracts with the youth, and building a network of supports.

As part of the design, VIP® utilizes a wide variety of community resources to engage the youth & family, encouraging collaboration in the process to address the youth’s needs (e.g., drug and alcohol counseling, mental health treatment, education, vocation and workforce development skills, and recreation). Several resources are utilized to assist in the development of the youth’s Service Plan including the Youth Level of Service (YLS), Strengths and Stressors Assessment, Family Assessment Device, and/or the Columbia Impairment Scale, county feedback, family input, and FRS observations. Goals are established collaboratively with the youth and family with the appropriate support and supervision necessary to achieve measurable results during the youth’s length of the program. Goals are fluid and change with the developing needs/increase in risk as the youth progresses, offering flexibility and rewards, or sanctions, when warranted. Standard VIP® is 2 hours of face-to-face contact with the youth per week. Intensive VIP® is 4 hours per week, and Full VIP® is 6 hours per week. Contacts are more frequent in amount in the first few weeks of VIP® with the goal of titrating down as engagement and cooperation are achieved.

### 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 dosage. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction. Targeted duration and dosage for this service is 26 weeks, 78 hours.

<u>4</u>	youth in the cohort of <u>14</u>	received the targeted Duration or Number of Weeks for a total	<u>2</u>	points
<u>1</u>	youth in the cohort of <u>14</u>	of received the targeted Dosage or Number of Hours for a total of	<u>0</u>	points

**Total Points Received:** 2 **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. The Risk Levels of Youth admitted to the service were: 1 low risk, 8 moderate risk, 5 , high risk, and 0 very high risk.

<u>13</u>	youth in the cohort of <u>14</u>	are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of	<u>10</u>	points
<u>5</u>	youth in the cohort of <u>14</u>	are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of	<u>13</u>	points

**Total Points Received:** 23 **Total Points Possible:** 25

**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 75 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:** 79% 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. The service could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction by addressing the following recommendations:

1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:
  - a. Written Protocol:
    - i. Within the existing written protocol/manual, ensure the details of how session content is chosen, documented, and associated resources are utilized is clearly outlined and communicated consistently among FRS.
  - b. Staff Supervision:
    - i. Consistently offer written feedback which includes signature lines as a method of documentation that the feedback was received on a more frequent basis (e.g., monthly Supervision Form).
  - c. Organizational Response to Drift:
    - i. Develop a procedure/policy to identify and prevent drift in service delivery to describe how all existing components work together (e.g., VIP® One Sheeter, VIP® Training Guide, Addressing Behavioral Concerns, Accountability Bank, No Show Protocol, Behavior Contracts, 2&2s, Corrective Action Form).
    - ii. Ensure the procedure/policy includes specific action steps or an if-then approach to identify the steps that administration would take to prevent drift in service delivery.
2. Regarding Amount of Service:
  - a. Continue communication with juvenile probation to better match research recommendations for the targeted amount of service.
3. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served:
  - a. Continue communication with juvenile probation using this service regarding the research-supported targeted risk population.