


**Understanding SPEP:  
The Partnership & The Process**

October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013  
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Adapted from: SPEP Scoring and Program Certification Training – Gabrielle Lynn Chapman, Ph.D.,  
SPEP Users Guide 2013, Lipsey & Chapman, courtesy of Peabody Research Institute, Vanderbilt  
University and Marion Kelly of Comprehensive Strategy, Corp.



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**Overview**

- JJSES Context
- SPEP Partnership
- Key Research Behind SPEP
- Program Improvement Lifecycle
- Questions & Answers

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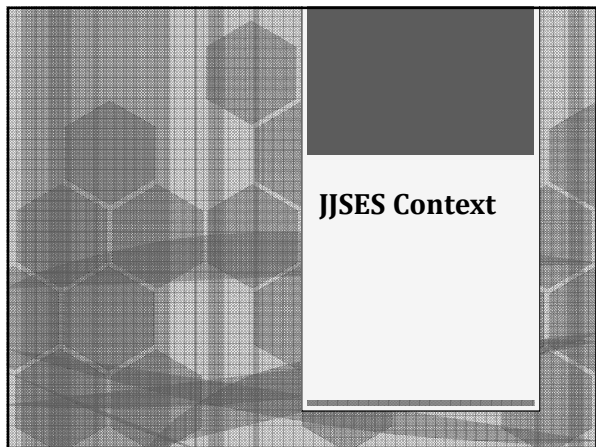
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**JJSES Context**

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### Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy

- o Statement of Purpose
  - o We dedicate ourselves to working in **partnership** to enhance the capacity of Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system to achieve its balanced and restorative justice mission by:
  - o Employing **evidence-based practices, with fidelity**, at every stage of the juvenile justice process;
  - o **Collecting and analyzing the data** necessary to measure the results of these efforts; and, with this knowledge,
  - o Striving to **continuously improve** the quality of our decisions, services and programs.

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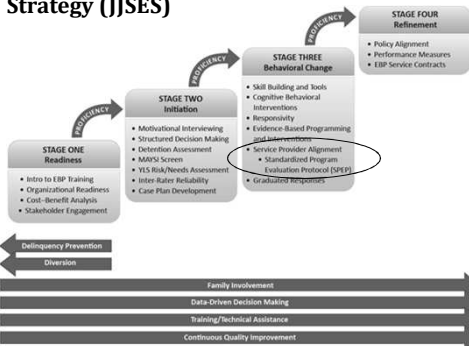
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### PA Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES)




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### Research on Reducing Recidivism

- o Thirty years of research tell us:
- o Well designed programs that meet certain conditions can reduce recidivism
  - o Risk Principle (Who to Target)
  - o Need Principle (What to Target)
  - o Responsivity Principle (How to Match)
  - o Treatment Principle (Which Programs to Use)

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**Assessing Risk in PA:  
Youth Level of Service (YLS)**

- Valid and reliable risk instrument
- Informs juvenile justice of appropriate level of supervision, service, and intervention targets
- Assesses risk for recidivism
- Risk levels: low, moderate, high, or very high
- Measures 42 risk/need factors
- Structured interview/information-gathering process

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**SPEP:  
Partnership in  
Reducing  
Recidivism**

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**What is the Standardized Program  
Evaluation Protocol (SPEP)?**

- Partnership – probation & providers
- Quality improvement process
- Aimed at reducing recidivism

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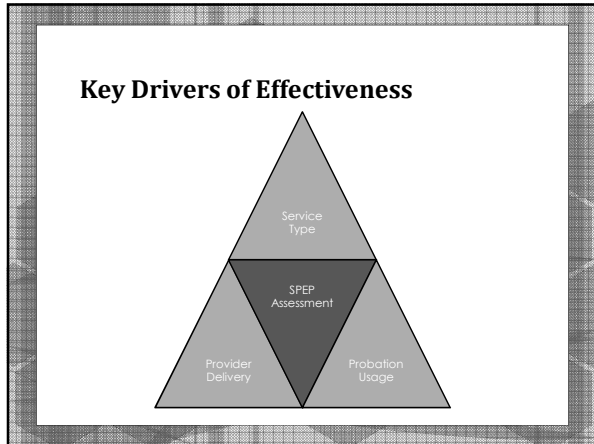
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- ### SPEP in Pennsylvania
- 5 Pilot counties
    - Berks
    - Allegheny, Bucks, Dauphin, Lehigh
  - Roll-out strategies
    - Community-based
    - Residential - prioritized
  - State-level advisory group
  - EPISCenter role in roll-out

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### SPEP Research: Key Findings

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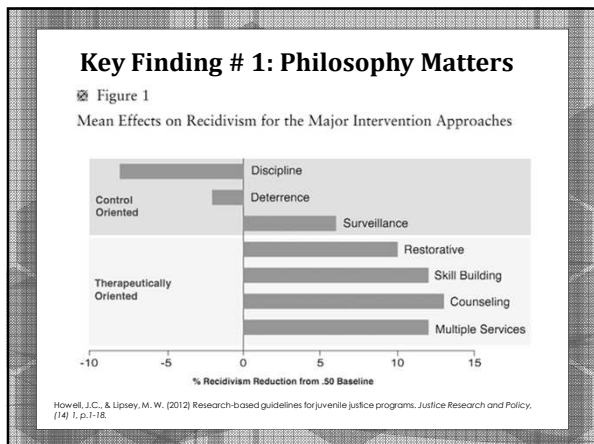
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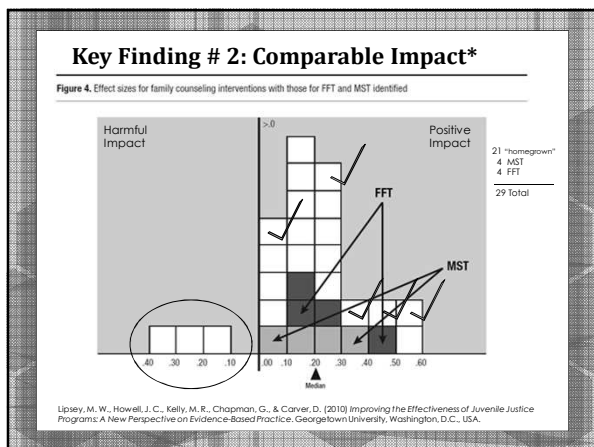
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- ### Key Finding # 3: Four Main Factors
- o Four factors most strongly related to recidivism reduction:
    - o Youth risk level and aggressive/violent history\*
    - o Program philosophy, and type
    - o Quality of service
    - o Amount of service
- \*Strongest predictor of recidivism identified in the meta-analysis.
- Lipsey, M.W. (2009). The primary factors that characterize effective interventions with juvenile offenders: A meta-analytic overview. *Victims and Offenders (4)*, 124-147.

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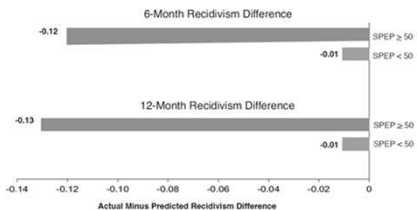
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### Key Finding # 4: Score is Predictive

Figure 5

Difference between the Actual and Predicted Recidivism Rates for Juveniles Served by 66 Programs Scoring Above and Below 50 on the SPEP



\*Quality of service delivery not scored in this sample. Howell, J.C., & Lipsey, M.W. (2012) Research-based guidelines for juvenile justice programs. Justice Research and Policy, (14) 1, p.7-18.

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### SPEP: The Process

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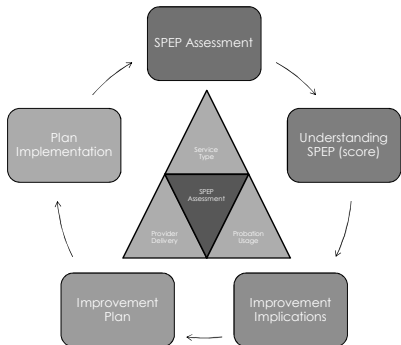
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### Program Improvement Lifecycle



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### Arriving at SPEP Assessment

IDENTIFY

MATCH

DATA

SCORE

EVALUATE

- Identify Juvenile Justice program(s)
- Break program(s) into services, and MATCH with research-based categories
- Obtain demographic, risk, quality and quantity DATA for each service
- Enter data into SPEP model to generate SPEP score
- EVALUATE performance based on SPEP components and overall score

SPEP: A Users Guide, Lipsey, M. W., Chapman, G. L., Peabody Research Institute, Vanderbilt University, May 2013, p. 4.

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| Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP)<br>for Services to Juvenile Offenders   |                 |                 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Recalibrated version, 2013  |                 |                 |
|   | Points Possible | Points Received |
| <b>Primary and Supplemental Service Types</b><br><small>(Identify the services to be delivered, selected from the directory)</small>  |                 |                 |
| <b>Primary Service Type for Program Being Rated</b>   |                 |                 |
| Group 1 services (3 points)<br>Group 2 services (12 points)<br>Group 3 services (12 points)   | 30              |                 |
| <b>Supplemental Service Type</b><br><small>(Identify supplemental services used: Yes (4 points), No (0 points))</small>   |                 |                 |
|   | 5               |                 |
| <b>Quality of Service Delivery</b><br><small>(Determined from a systematic assessment of the relevant features of the provider and provider organization)</small>                                 |                 |                 |
| Rated quality of services delivered:<br>Low (5 points)<br>Medium (10 points)<br>High (20 points)  |                 |                 |
|   | 20              |                 |
| <b>Amount of Service</b><br><small>(Determined from data for the qualifying group of service recipients)</small>  |                 |                 |
| <b>Duration</b> (Target number of weeks specified for each service type)  |                 |                 |
| % of youth who received at least the target weeks of service:<br>0% (0 points) 40% (4 points)<br>20% (2 points) 60% (6 points)<br>40% (4 points) 80% (8 points)<br>60% (6 points) 90% (10 points) | 10              |                 |
| <b>Contact Hours</b> (Target number of hours specified for each service type)   |                 |                 |
| % of youth who received at least the target hours of service:<br>0% (0 points) 60% (6 points)<br>20% (2 points) 80% (8 points)<br>40% (4 points) 90% (10 points)                                  | 10              |                 |
| <b>Risk Level of Youth Served</b><br><small>(Determined from risk ratings on a valid instrument for the qualifying group of service recipients)</small>   |                 |                 |
| % of youth with medium or high risk scores (greater than "low")<br>0% (0 points) 35% (7 points)<br>10% (2 points) 65% (13 points)<br>20% (4 points) 85% (17 points)                               | 25              |                 |
| % of youth with high risk scores (greater than "medium")<br>0% (0 points) 25% (5 points)<br>10% (2 points) 50% (10 points)<br>20% (4 points) 75% (15 points)                                      |                 | (Search Score)  |
| <b>Provider's Total SPEP Score</b>  |                 | 100             |

**Youth Level of Risk (25pts):**

% of youth served

- > low risk (mod, high, very high)
- > mod risk (high, very high)

**Youth Level of Service (YLS)**

42 item, interview-based

Risk factors assessed:

- Prior & current offenses
- Family circumstances/Parenting
- Education/Employment
- Peer Relations
- Substance Use
- Leisure/Recreation
- Personality/Behavior
- Attitudes/Orientation

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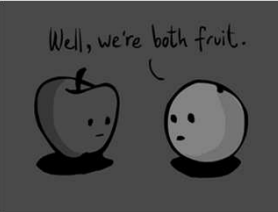
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### Understanding SPEP Basic Score

Compare the service to **all other** program service types.



Comparing:  
family counseling  
to  
cognitive  
behavioral.

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## Understanding SPEP Program Optimization (POP) Scoring

Compare the service to programs with **similar effectiveness**.



Comparing:  
family counseling  
to  
mixed counseling.

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| Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP)<br>for Services to Juvenile Offenders <sup>a</sup><br><small>Recalibrated version, 2013</small>   |                 |                 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
|   | Points Possible | Points Received |
| <b>Primary and Supplemental Service Types</b><br><small>(Determined according to definitions derived from the manual)</small>   |                 |                 |
| <b>Primary Service Type for Program Being Rated</b><br><small>Group 1 services (10 points)    Group 4 services (23 points)<br/>Group 2 services (12 points)    Group 5 services (30 points)<br/>Group 3 services (14 points)</small>  | 30              | 15              |
| <b>Supplemental Service Type</b><br><small>(Determined if supplemental service used - Yes (5 points) - No (0 points))</small>   | 5               | 5               |
| <b>Quality of Service Delivery</b><br><small>(Determined from a systematic assessment of the relevant features of the provider and provider organization)</small>   |                 |                 |
| <b>Quality of Service Delivery</b><br><small>(Determined from a systematic assessment of the relevant features of the provider and provider organization)</small>   | 20              | 5               |
| <b>Amount of Service</b><br><small>(Determined from data for the qualifying group of service recipients)</small>  |                 |                 |
| <b>Duration</b> (Target number of weeks specified for each service type)<br><small>% of youth who received at least the target weeks of service:<br/>60% (2 points)    70% (4 points)    80% (6 points)<br/>20% (2 points)    30% (4 points)    40% (6 points)</small>      | 10              | 6               |
| <b>Contact Hours</b> (Target number of hours specified for each service type)<br><small>% of youth who received at least the target hours of service:<br/>60% (2 points)    70% (4 points)    80% (6 points)<br/>20% (2 points)    30% (4 points)    40% (6 points)</small> | 10              | 2               |
| <b>Risk Level of Youth Served</b><br><small>(Determined from risk ratings on a valid instrument for the qualifying group of service recipients)</small>   |                 |                 |
| <b>Risk Level of Youth Served</b><br><small>% of youth with medium or high risk scores (greater than low)<br/>0% (0 points)    25% (4 points)    50% (8 points)<br/>10% (2 points)    25% (4 points)    50% (8 points)</small>  | 25              | 10              |
| <b>Risk Level of Youth Served</b><br><small>% of youth with high risk scores (greater than medium)<br/>0% (0 points)    25% (4 points)    50% (8 points)<br/>10% (2 points)    25% (4 points)    50% (8 points)</small>   | 25              | 5               |
| <b>Provider's Total SPEP Score</b>  | 100             | 48              |

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The maximum total points this service type could receive is 85.

The POP score accounts for this maximum of 85.

The Program Optimization (POP) is 48/85 = 56.

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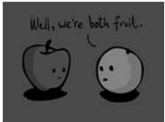
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### Basic Score



48/100 =  
**48**

### POP Score



48/85 =  
**56**

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**Program Optimization Report (POP)**

- o In person meetings to review with provider and probation
- o Summary of SPEP score, individual components, Basic score, POP score
- o Sources of information (interviews, manuals, etc.)
- o Review of service strengths
- o Suggestions for possible improvements
  - o Probation Use Example: Adjust risk level of youth referred
  - o Provider Delivery Example: Increase weeks of service to meet recommended target weeks

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**Program Improvement**

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**Program Improvement Plans**

- o **Addresses the areas identified** during the SPEP process, as prioritized by stakeholders
- o Identifies the **timeframe and method** for improvements in accordance with the stakeholder capacities
- o Identifies the **needed technical assistance** and support which may be necessary to implement improvements.
- o **Process for monitoring the progress** and outcomes of the Program Improvement Plan.

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### Improvement Plan Example

| Category                 | Improvement Opportunity   | Action Steps   | Responsible Party | Target Date | Status |    |    |    |
|--------------------------|---|--|-------------------|-------------|--------|----|----|----|
|                          |   |  |                   |             | Q1     | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Level of Risk            | Gear program toward serving higher risk youth                   | Refer high level of risk youth to program<br>Supply YLS      | Probation         | Sept30      | Y      |    |    |    |
| Duration & Contact Hours | Improve retention of youth and families referred to the program | Present findings to treatment staff and brainstorm solutions | Ex Director       | Oct 15      |        |    |    |    |
|                          |   | Prioritize and select strategies for implementation          | All Program Staff | Oct 23      |        |    |    |    |

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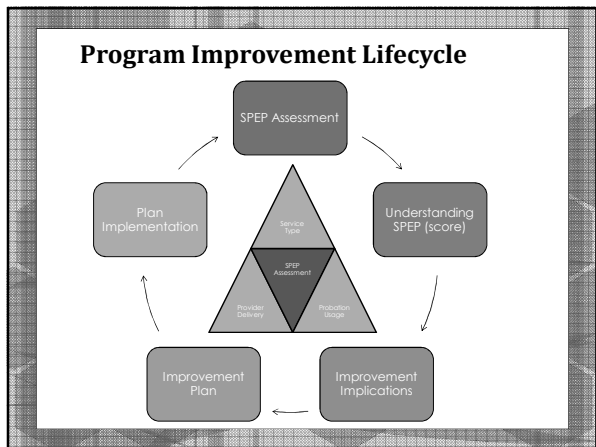
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## Questions & Answers

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- Webinar Evaluation
  
- EPISCenter Web Resources
  
- Webinars:
  - "Prepping for SPEP'ing": November 1st @ 11:00am
  - Understanding the YLS: TBD
  
- JCJC Conference, Juniata Room, AM & PM:
  - Jeff Grego, Berks County, Chief JPO
  - Lisa Freese, EPISCenter, JJ Specialist
  - Meghan Blevins, Olivet Boys & Girls Club, Reading

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