Risk & Needs Assessment & Response to Criminogenic Factors with Young Offenders

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Youth Justice
A balanced approach
Victorian Youth Justice

Framework for Rehabilitation

Risk & Needs Assessment

Offence-specific Programming
**Understanding Rehabilitation**

- **Correctional model**
  ‘What Works’ in effective correctional programming for the rehabilitation of offenders
  e.g. challenging offenders’ thinking, development of skills & motivation, target pathways to offending AKA criminogenic needs

- **Relational process**
  Rehabilitation as restoration, as ‘social integration’
  e.g. practical help in accessing accommodation & education;
  staff’s motivational, pro-social & personal skills to build on relational potential of case management role – negotiated consent for a collaborative & contractual style of work
Background – Rehabilitation Review 2003

Available at – www.dhs.vic.gov.au/youthjustice > publications

Commissioned by Youth Justice & conducted by
Dr. Andrew Day & Prof. Kevin Howells, University of South Australia &
Dr. Debra Rickwood, Australian Institute of Criminology

Based on the key principles of the ‘What Works’ approach to effective
offender rehabilitation: risk, needs, responsivity, program integrity &
professional discretion
From the Rehabilitation Review:

- ‘Underpinning any co-ordinated system of intervention program delivery is the accurate identification of offender needs at the point of entry to the system, a needs-focussed case management system, and a mechanism for determining whether targeted needs are showing evidence of change in the desired direction’

- ‘The adoption of an assessment system that accurately identifies risk of reoffending and associated criminogenic needs is critical to the ‘What Works’ approach’
Implementing the Rehabilitation Review

RR provides major programmatic direction for Victorian YJ & is being undertaken in 3 stages:

Stage 1  Development of a risk/needs tool for case management – the VONIY

Stage 2  Development of the case intervention framework – includes CHART

Stage 3  Ongoing development & evaluation
Developing the Tool

- Earlier development of Risk And Needs Tool (RANT) for Youth Justice in 1997
- Rehabilitation Review & specific report by consultants

YJ Program Development Unit – approach:
- Develop a discussion paper & detailed project plan
- Gather & analyse a range of existing risk/needs tool
- Form a Reference Group & Working Group
- Pilot tool & review by Uni SA
Discussion & Decisions

• Concept of risk assessments, purpose, timing & use of them, risk involved in assigning scores to young people & how that would be used

• Keeping the tool tight, relevant inclusion of domains & items, consistency with other risk/needs tools

• Development of descriptors for each item & checking for inconsistencies in interpretation of items

• Fit with case management
Young people enter Youth Justice on orders

Client Assessment & Planning (CAP) Process

Client interview/s + other sources e.g. police summary, PSR, family, specialist reports

Comprehensive Assessment

Offending history
Family
Health & substance use
Education, training & employment
Peer relationships & community linkages
Attitudes & behaviour
Comprehensive Assessment

VONIY & Summary

Needs prioritisation, responsivity to special needs, relationship building

Young people enter Youth Justice on orders

Client Assessment & Planning (CAP) Process
Young people enter Youth Justice on orders

- **Comprehensive Assessment**

- **VONIY & Summary**

- **Client Service Plan** by 6 weeks

Collaborative agreement with goals, issues & actions addressing key criminogenic factors from Assessment Summary
Client Assessment & Planning (CAP) Process

Young people enter Youth Justice on orders

Comprehensive Assessment

VONIY & Summary

Client Service Plan
by 6 weeks

Case work @ intervention level

Monitor & review

Intervention levels

INTENSIVE
High Offence-focused programs

MODERATE
Social integration

LOW
Sentence administration
Purpose of VONIY

- To profile the client and their needs
- To organise information in an evidence-based way, still allowing for individual differences
- To provide an individual, regional/custodial and statewide profile of youth justice clients
- To inform client service planning and to enhance case practice
Victorian Offending Needs Indicator for Youth (VONIY)

1. Youth Offending
2. Protective Factors
3. Special Needs
4. Offence-Related Factors
1. Offending Profile
2. Family Circumstances
3. Accommodation & Finance
4. Substance Use
5. Education, Training & Employment
6. Peer Relationships & Community Linkages
7. Attitudes & Behaviours
VONIY

INTERVENTION LEVEL INDICATED
For clients aged **15-20 years** at time of current offence, use this scale -

- **LOW**
- **MODERATE**
- **HIGH**
- **INTENSIVE**

For clients aged **10-14 years** at time of current offence, use this scale -

- **MODERATE**
- **HIGH**
- **INTENSIVE**
Why does the VONIY have two scales?

To distinguish between two groups:

1. ‘Life-course persistent offenders’
   - exposure to multiple risk factors evident from an early age
   - more likely to lead to persistent, serious & violent crime

2. ‘Adolescent-limited’ offenders – more likely to desist from offending with maturation
Framework for Rehabilitation

- **Intensive** programs for serious & persistent offenders
- **High** Offence-focussed criminogenic programs for medium/high risk offenders
- **Moderate** Social integration programs
- **Low** Sentence administration

Intervention levels

Increasing intensity of intervention levels

Case management
2. Protective Factors  (total 15 items)

- Individual  (7 items)
- Family    (5 items)
- Community (3 items)
3. Special Needs

- Demographics – Special Needs Groups
- Health & Developmental Needs
4. Offence-Related Factors (regarding current offence/s)

- Offence Analysis
- Attitudes & Skills
Assessment Summary

Translates VONIY into written report –

Succinct overview of offence/s, key areas of need, Intervention Level, Protective Factors, Special Needs, Offence-related Factors

- Most important targets for intervention prioritised

- + strategies, agencies, referrals, special conditions, other professional considerations
Key Findings from ‘What Works’ Research

• It is possible to devise interventions with young offenders in a way that will reduce their risk of reoffending

• Certain features of programs increase the likelihood of achieving this goal & of increasing the extent of reduction in reoffending
Process of Change in Offender Rehabilitation Programs (Day et.al. 2006)

- Being mindful of the *sequence* of components of programs
- The development of preparation or *readiness to change* – increasing motivation
- Rendering the *offence process explicit* – working through the offence in CBT detail & narrative
- Desistance is encouraged when offenders believe they are the *agents of their pro-social change*
- Offer a broad *suite of programs*
CHART is designed to

• be a practical tool to support casework with young offenders

• employ a skills-oriented, cognitive-behavioural focus

• be clearly directive in its approach to intervention

• use active, participatory learning methods

➤ CHART is not just a program but is also - a way of working
CHART is -
Changing Habits And Reaching Targets

The CHART Program

not just a program but a way of working

Modular, structured, sequential intervention PLUS offence-specific behaviours and needs

6 CORE modules
- Mapping my Offences
- Motivation to Change
- Thinking and Offending
- Problem-solving
- Lifestyle Balance
- Relapse Prevention

5 DISCRETIONARY modules
- Healthy Relationships
- Violence
- Motor Vehicle Offending
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Living Independently
- Education and Work

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Worksheet for each session
- visually engaging
- adolescent-appropriate
- systematic
- offence-focused
- evidence-based

Completion
CERTIFICATE OF
CORE Program Completion

Mapping my Offences
Motivation to Change
Thinking and Offending
Problem-solving
Lifestyle Balance
Relapse Prevention

presented to

Manager, Youth Justice Unit

Signature Date
Worksheet 4: My Map

My Offence

WHO was with me?

WHERE was I?

WHAT was I doing?

WHAT did I do?

WHEN was this offence?

WHY did I do it?
Assists clients to:

• understand beliefs that are supportive of offending behaviour

• re-examine their motives and re-evaluate the potential consequences of their actions

• develop the skills to find new directions
Victorian Youth Justice

Framework for Rehabilitation

VONIY – implemented in WA, 2007 & to be implemented in ACT, 2008 recommended for SA

CHART – roll out in ACT & QLD, 2008