



Management Practices, Resource Inventory and Access, and Professional Training Introduction to the Exercises

Probation departments within the juvenile justice system, like a number of other longstanding agencies, function within a framework of statutes, policies and practices that were developed over the course of many years. Typically, there has been little time or effort to reflect on that framework to determine how well it is working and whether it functions in a manner that is optimal. Further, a culture of doing things “the way we’ve always done them” often permeates daily operations despite changes that may be designed to improve practices. The probation system review process is an exciting opportunity for the principals involved in the management and day-to-day operation of a probation department to assess how they are doing in relation to their goals, objectives and outcomes. It is an opportunity to enhance practice by making sure policies and procedures, corresponding training, departmental management, effective access to and use of resources, and supervision of probationers are all lined up to reflect best practices that are connected to the sought youth outcomes.

The RFK National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice, through its history of field based experiences in this arena, believe the work grids that drive the following exercises, best directed by an empowered decision making group and supported by subject matter expertise (often in the form of a task force or ad hoc committee), will enable participant jurisdictions to engage in activities that effectively analyze management practices, resource access and allocation methods, and professional training requirements and current opportunities. When conducted as a part of a comprehensive system review, jurisdictions are better able to align policies, procedures and practices that result in improved outcomes.

The following working grids provide support for an organized analysis of current operations in:

- Management Practice – Communications
- Resources – Programs and Services Inventory
- Professional Training Inventory