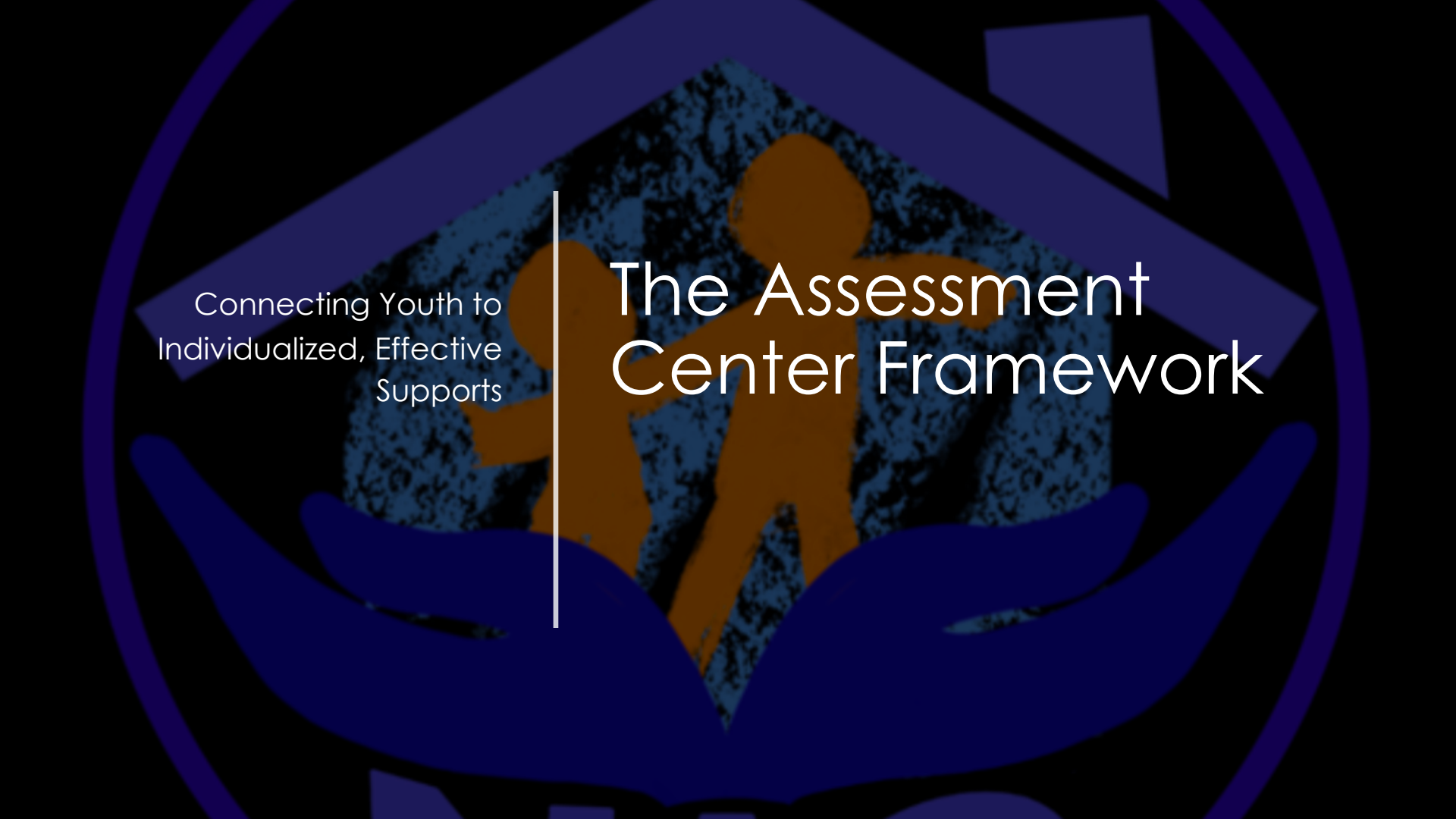


Connecting Youth to Individualized, Effective Supports

The Assessment Center Framework

Objectives

Understand	Learn	Conceptualize	Learn	Discuss
The theory behind the Assessment Center model;	The essential components and functions of an Assessment Center	How an Assessment Center could be applied to your community.	How other communities around the country operate Assessment Centers and achieve outcomes	Next steps to initiate conversation on exploring the feasibility and readiness of implementing an assessment center model.

CHECK IN!
WHO'S
HERE?

Definition

Prevent and divert youth from child welfare and justice systems through a single point of contact

Identifies underlying issues contributing to concerning behavior

Partners with youth and families to access individualized services and/or resources.

Assessment Centers
General

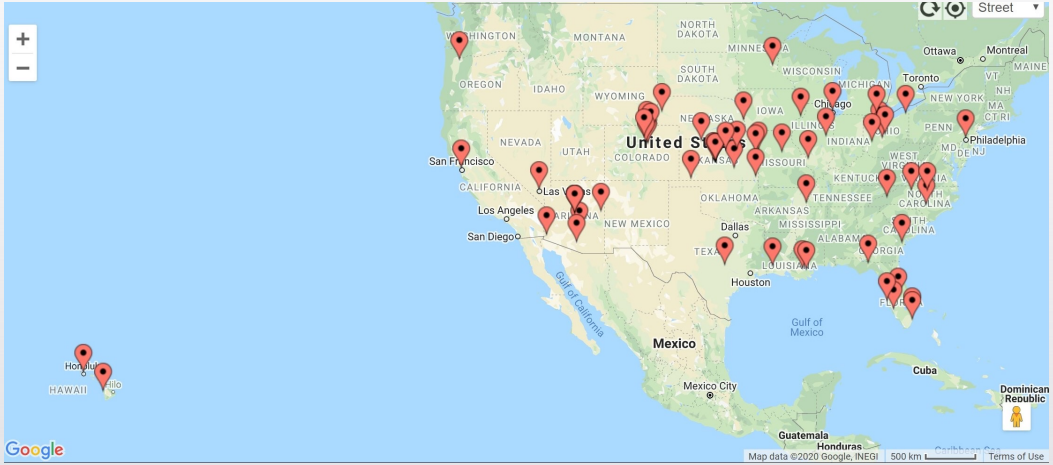
COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Increase in crime
- Frustration with lengthy case processing and lack of immediate response
  - Access to better information on youth at an earlier time
- Detention overcrowding and inappropriate use
- Officers spending too much time "babysitting youth"
- Need for more prevention services and services for at-risk youth

Evaluation Report from National Council on Crime and Delinquency

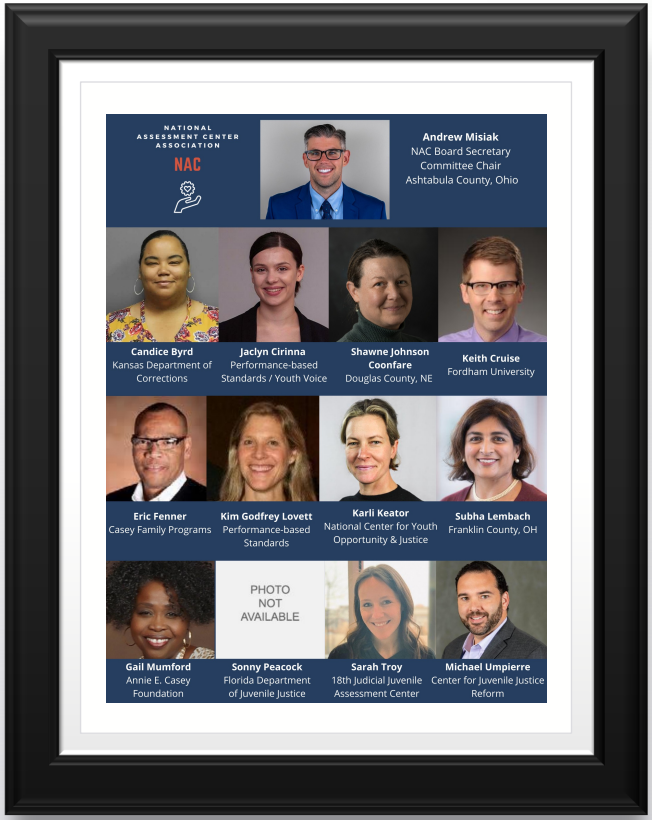
Initial Goals of Assessment Centers

- Prevention of delinquency or further delinquency;
- Provision of comprehensive services to youths their families and serving as a resource center for the community;
- Creation of a conduit to share information and improve communication among different agencies
- Provision of a cost-effective response to juvenile crime
- Reduction of the amount of time between arrest and intervention by expediting processing within the system



~80 Assessment Centers

Updated Assessment Center Framework



Overview

ADVISORY GROUP

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CORE COMPONENTS

Updated Core Components

- Single Point of Contact
- Screening & Assessment
- Case Management

Process Core Components

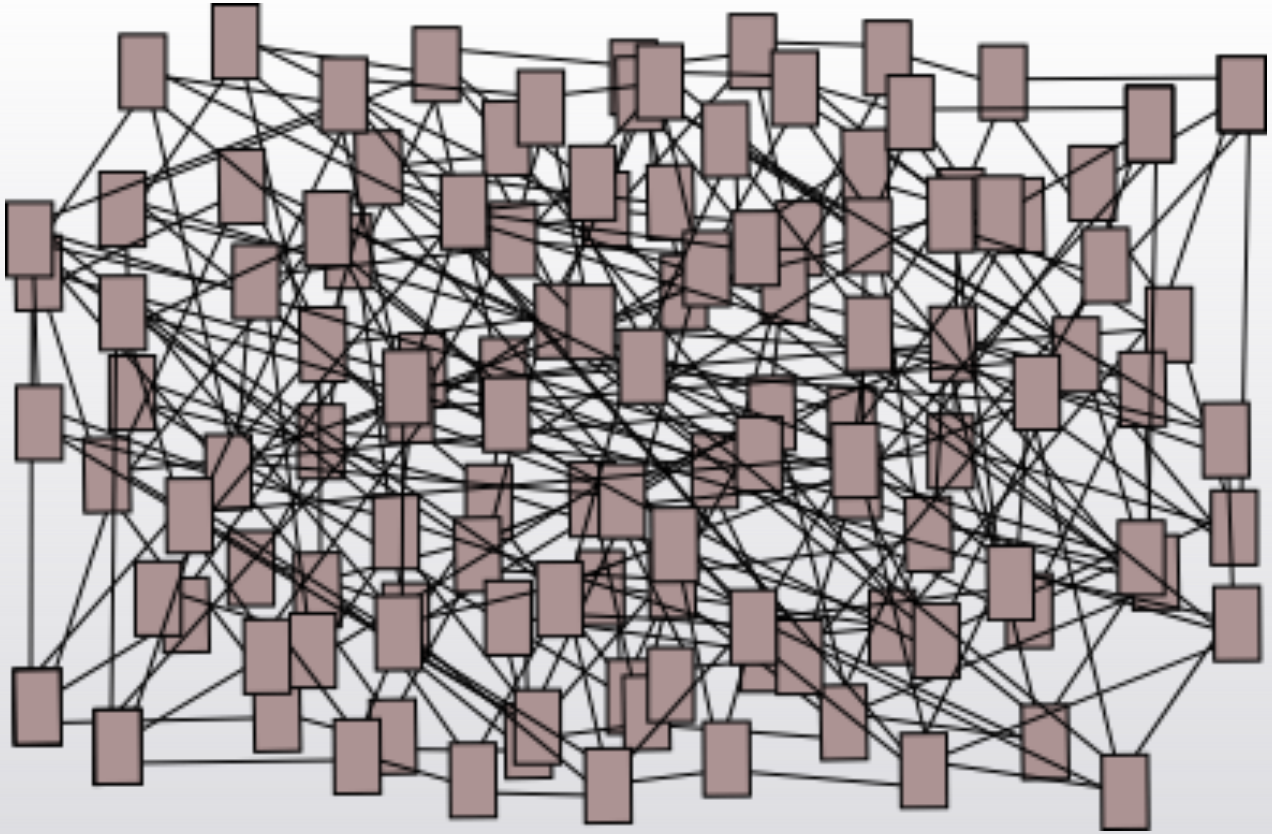
- Accountability
- Staff Development and Support

Structural Core Components

Single Point of Contact

Centralized, coordinated point of contact for youth who are struggling at home, community, or school or at-risk of systems involvement to identify opportunities

How do kids and families access services?



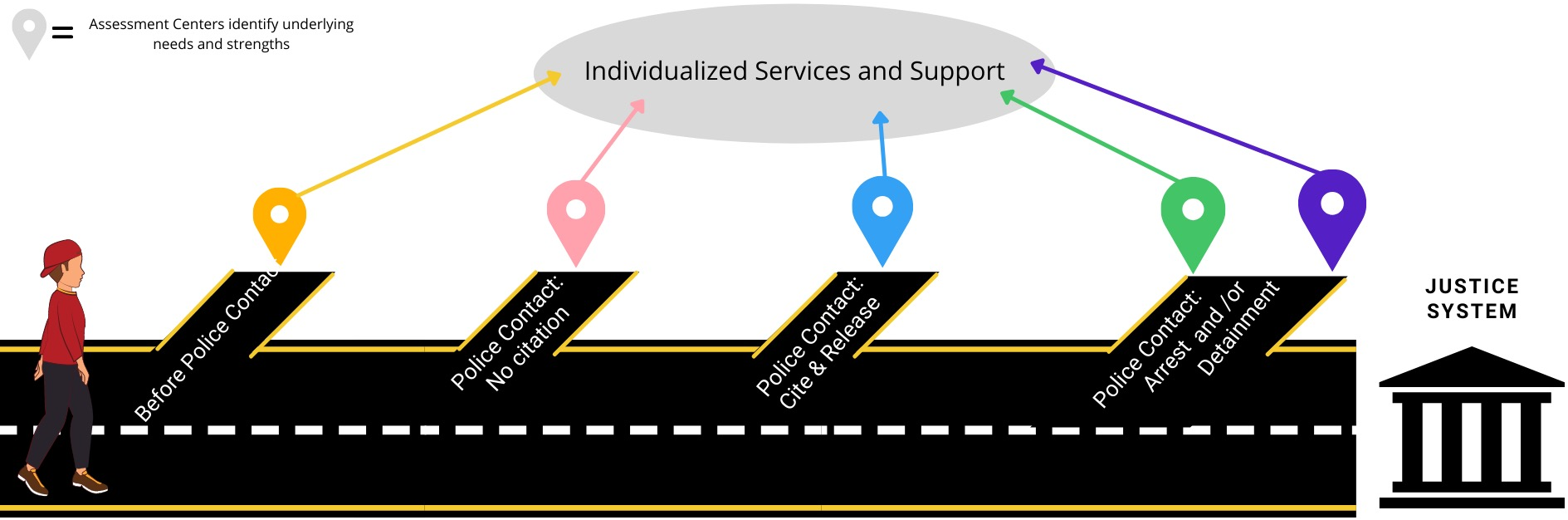
Establishing "point of contact"

- Critical Intervention Mapping (CIM) with **community** consensus
  - Community is defined as systems, organizations, leaders, youth, and families that represent the community the Assessment Center serves.

- CIM focuses on community-based ways to respond to youth getting involved in the juvenile justice system and focuses on supporting and making connections and partnerships in the community.
  - Current practices are mapped out
  - Community services and supports are mapped out.
  - Opportunities to intervene are identified.
  - Chances to identify and respond to youth needs are documented in an action plan.
  - Opportunities to take advantage of or create additional resources are captured in an action plan.

= Assessment Centers identify underlying needs and strengths

Individualized Services and Support



- Schools
- Youth
- Familiy
- Hospitals
- Community

- Status offenses
- Family Conflict
- Misdemeanors
- Community-determined Criteria

- Misdemeanors
- Youngers Programs
- Felonies
- Community-determined criteria

- For youth arrested and/or detained Assessment Centers can aid in the decision of whether formal processing would neither make the public safer nor benefit the young person thus pursuing diversion
- For those moving into the formal justice system, Centers can aid In quicker connection to community services/supports

ASSESSMENTS CENTERS AS OFF-RAMPS TO THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Points of Contact

Prevention

- Schools
  - Universal Screening
  - Behavior
  - Absenteeism
- Youth
- Parents
- Community
- Hospitals

Juvenile Justice

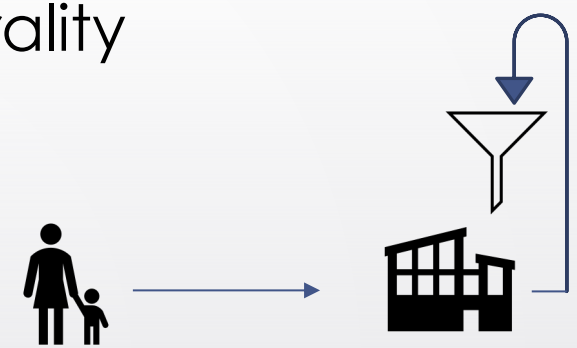
- Law Enforcement
- Courts

Child Welfare

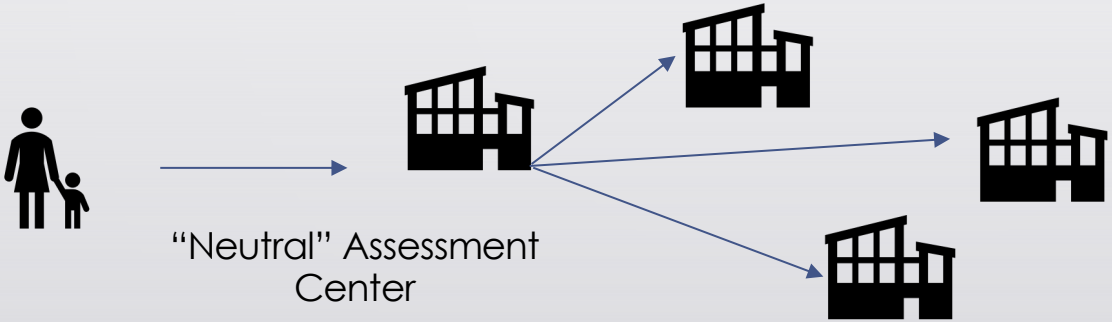
- Child Welfare
  - Families First – Definition of "at-risk"
  - Open Cases
- Parent referrals

The Benefit of Neutrality

Assessment Centers serve as a bridge to services and supports from multiple agencies through the creation of an actual or virtual single point of contact for services and supports.

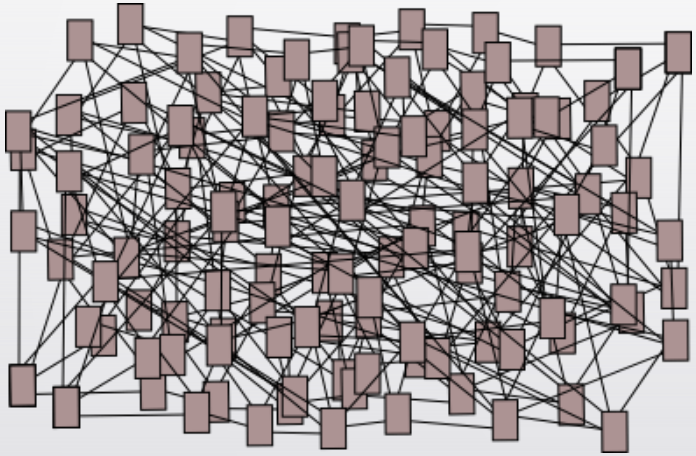


Service Provider Run Assessment Center



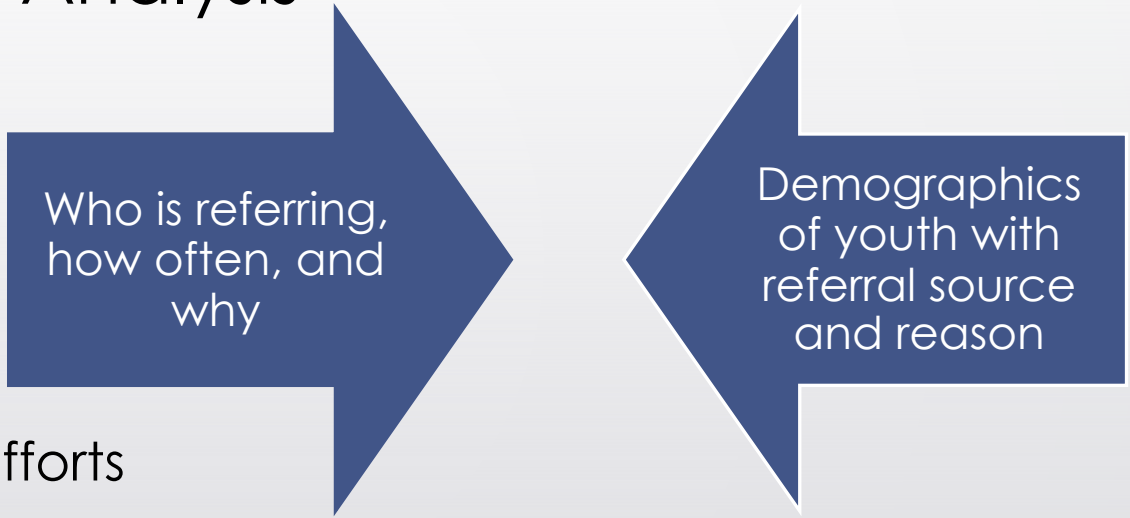
"Neutral" Assessment Center

Before



After

Single Point of Contact Data Collection and Analysis



- Purpose:

1. Awareness and outreach efforts
2. Identification of disproportionality and disparate treatment

Screening Vs. Assessment

Screening

- Structured, formal, validated
- Determines immediate attention and need
- Possible presence of a problem
- Determines need for more comprehensive assessment

Assessment

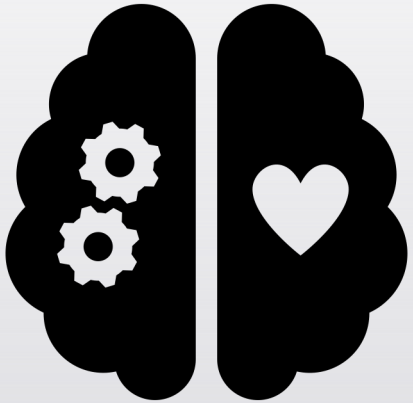
- Comprehensive
- Examination of psychosocial needs
- Uses collateral information
- Determines recommendations for treatment, services, or resources
- More specialized staff

GOAL: Deescalate current crisis and provide comprehensive screening to identify immediate needs and areas for future assessment.

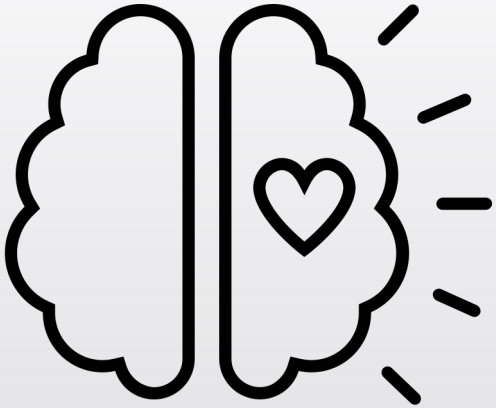
GOAL: Accurately identify youth and family strengths and needs to make data driven decisions on the right services, for the right clients, at the earliest time.

Screening Topics

- ***Basic Needs***
- ***Commercial sex or labor exploitation (Human Trafficking)***
- ***Community Safety***
- ***Mental/Behavioral Health***
- ***Safety***
- ***Physical Health***
- ***Substance Abuse***
- ***Suicide Risk***
- ***Traumatic Events and Trauma Reactions***



Assessment Topics



- ***All topics in Screening +***
- ***Aggression***
- ***Developmental***
- ***Education***
- ***Intellectual***
- ***Prosocial & Skills***
- ***Relationships***
- ***Social Determinants of Health***
- ***Strength & Protective Factors***
- ***Traumatic Brian Injury (TBI)***

Rationale for Topic Domains

What information do we want to gain from the screening process?

Why do we need to know this to assist in decision-making?

What will we do with the information gathered from the screening process?

Assessment Center Tiers

1

Screening Only;
Refer for Assessment

2

Screening &
Assessment In-house

Case Management

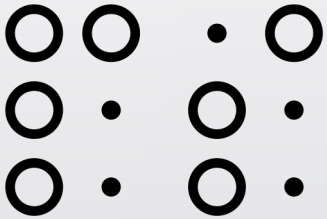
Case Management is a collaborative, strength-based process aimed at ensuring the needs of youth and families identified in the screening and assessment process are met. To achieve this, Assessment Centers utilize one or more of the following approaches:

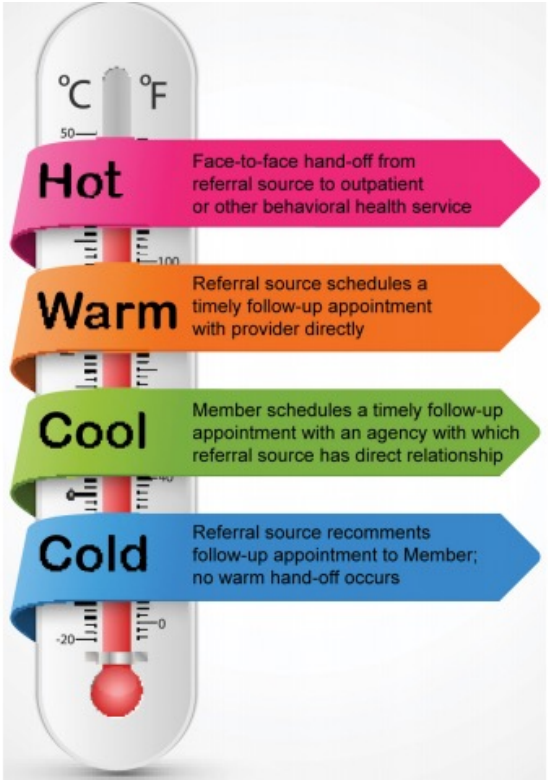
- **Referral & Information Sharing -** Informed from screening, Assessment Center makes referrals to community-based providers or system partners who can provide a comprehensive assessment of strengths and needs**.** In this approach, Assessment Centers have strong communication with partners to ensure information from the screening and assessment is received to inform an individualized plan and a case management process can be initiated.

- **Comprehensive Case Management -** Comprehensive case management is provided by Tier II Assessment Centers only. It requires an individualized plan that is developed with youth and families and outlines the support and services recommended. Comprehensive case management may include remote/virtual or face-to-face contacts, home visits, and accompaniment of youth and families to providers where necessary to ensure access. Contact and monitoring is made to follow up and determine the status of service and support referrals and to assess whether the youth and family has further needs. Depending on needs, contact and monitoring may be frequent and proactive in order to anticipate problems, stabilize, prevent crises, and support in achieving plan goals.

Matching to Effective Services

- Family interventions, including family counseling, Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), and other family-based interventions
- Substance use interventions—detox services, individual and group programs
- Mental health treatment
- Mentoring Programs
- Life skills training programs
- Educational assistance and advocacy
- Job placement services
- Respite and support services for caregivers
- Restorative Programming
- Transportation
- Basic needs and financial aid such as food, utilities, rent, etc.
- Medicaid Assistance
- After school recreational and support programs




°C
°F
50
100
0
-20
Hot
Face-to-face hand-off from referral source to outpatient or other behavioral health service
Warm
Referral source schedules a timely follow-up appointment with provider directly
Cool
Member schedules a timely follow-up appointment with an agency with which referral source has direct relationship
Cold
Referral source recomments follow-up appointment to Member; no warm hand-off occurs

Shelby County Youth Assessment Center

Goals of the Youth Assessment Center

- **To divert as many youth as possible, consistent with public safety, from entering or going deeper into the juvenile justice system.**
- To enhance public safety through early intervention, comprehensive assessment, and referral to supportive services and positive strategies tailored to address each youth and family's individual needs.
- To increase effectiveness in the use of limited community resources To serve as a resource and facilitate better relationships between law enforcement, agencies serving youth, families, and the community.

Assessment Center Services

- Screening
- Assessment
- Creation of Individualized Plan for Youth and Family
- Referral to Services
- Case Management and Follow Up

Points of Contact (Referrals)

- Schools
- Youth or Family Self Referral
- Community Partners
- Law Enforcement

Initial Challenges and Lessons learned

- Clear communication and information sharing is necessary with stakeholders and partners
- Service Provider and Center Operator roles must be distinguished
- Written policies and procedures are essential before doors are open

Staff Support & Development

- Staff support and development are the policies, procedures, and practices that equip and support an assessment center's workforce.
  - Relationship Building
  - Motivational interviewing
  - Youth and Family Engagement
  - Adolescent development
  - Cultural Responsiveness
  - Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
  - Trauma-Informed Care
  - Bias
  - Etc.

Accountability

- **Definition**: Accountability is the partnerships, processes, and procedures assessment centers have in place to ensure collaboration, inclusivity, transparency, and a research-based, data-driven approach in serving youth, families, and communities.
    - Information Sharing;
    - Information Technology & Data Collection;
    - Continuous Quality Improvement;
    - Community Need.

Assessment Center Logic Model

INPUTS

- Staff
- Funding
- Facilities
- Tech Infrastructure
- Governance/Advisory Board
- Agreements/MOUs
- Cross Systems Training
- Workforce Development

OUTPUTS

ACTIVITIES

- Single Point of Contact
- Screening
- Assessment
- Case Management
- Staff Development
- Evaluation/Continuous Quality Improvement

PARTICIPATION

- # of youth referred
- # of screenings completed
- # of youth with needs identified via screening
- # of youth with needs identified via screening connected to assessment (internally or externally)
- # of assessments completed
- # of youth connected to services & supported via case management
- # of youth participating in services and supports
- # of agreements/MOUs with system and community partners
- # of staff trained
- # of hours staff trained
- Staff composition compared to community

OUTCOMES — IMPACT

SHORT

- Youth in the defined target population are referred in an objective, equitable manner.
- Youth and families have an accessible, coordinated, & streamlined approach to identify opportunities for services and supports through a participatory process.
- Youth and families are satisfied with the intake, screening, and assessment process.
- Youth needs are identified.
- Youth feel their voices were heard.
- Staff are trained to effectively engage youth and families in the screening and assessment process.
- Assessment Centers inform key stakeholders and partners of individualized needs to ensure effective linkage and case management.

MEDIUM

- Staff engage in a standardized, research-driven process that uses information gathered through screening and/or assessment, to make appropriate referrals and/or develop a case plan in partnership with youth and families
- Staff have access to the right information, tools, technology, and a continuum of effective services and supports for youth and families.
- Youth and families are supported through and express satisfaction with the case management process.
- Youth and families actively engage and are satisfied with services and supports as referred by the Assessment Center.

LONG

- Youth report an increased connection to positive community supports as a result of connections provided by the AC.
- Caregivers report positive differences in youth behavior and increased connection to positive community supports as a result of connections and supports provided by the AC.
- (JJ & CW) Youth have no new contact with the justice or child welfare system.
- (P) Youth have no contact with justice or child welfare system
- Centers have accurate information from ongoing evaluation to effectively identify strengths, opportunities for growth, and community needs.
- Communities have streamlined access to appropriate and effective services.
- Communities demonstrate readiness and preparedness to serve youth and families based on needs & gaps identified by the AC.
- Community and funders indicate a high degree of confidence that Assessment Centers are meeting their mission/objectives.

ASSUMPTIONS

Assessment Centers are implementing all criteria in the Framework.

EXTERNAL FACTORS

Availability and access to a continuum effective services and supports

Long-Term Outcomes (12 months)

- Youth report an increased connection to positive community supports as a result of connections provided by the AC.
- Caregivers report positive differences in youth behavior and increased connection to positive community supports as a result of connections and supports provided by the AC.
- (JJ & CW) Youth have no new contact with the justice or child welfare system.
- (P) Youth have no contact with justice or child welfare system
- Communities have streamlined access to appropriate and effective services
- Communities demonstrate readiness and preparedness to serve youth and families based on needs & gaps identified by the AC.

Douglas County Nebraska

- Provided supervision and services recommendations for 1739 youth through assessment processes.
- Connected 963 youth with services to match their identified risks and needs.
- Diverted an additional 391 youth from further system involvement without formal diversion, as their risks and needs indicated no need for further juvenile justice intervention.

July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

1,262 YOUTH

X

$1,475 SAVINGS

=

$1.9 MILLION

Nebraska Center for Justice Research

$20.3 MILLION

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

JUVENILE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

*Miami-Dade Office of Strategic Business Management

2019
COMPARED TO 2014 (BENCHMARK)

Petitions
Down 42%

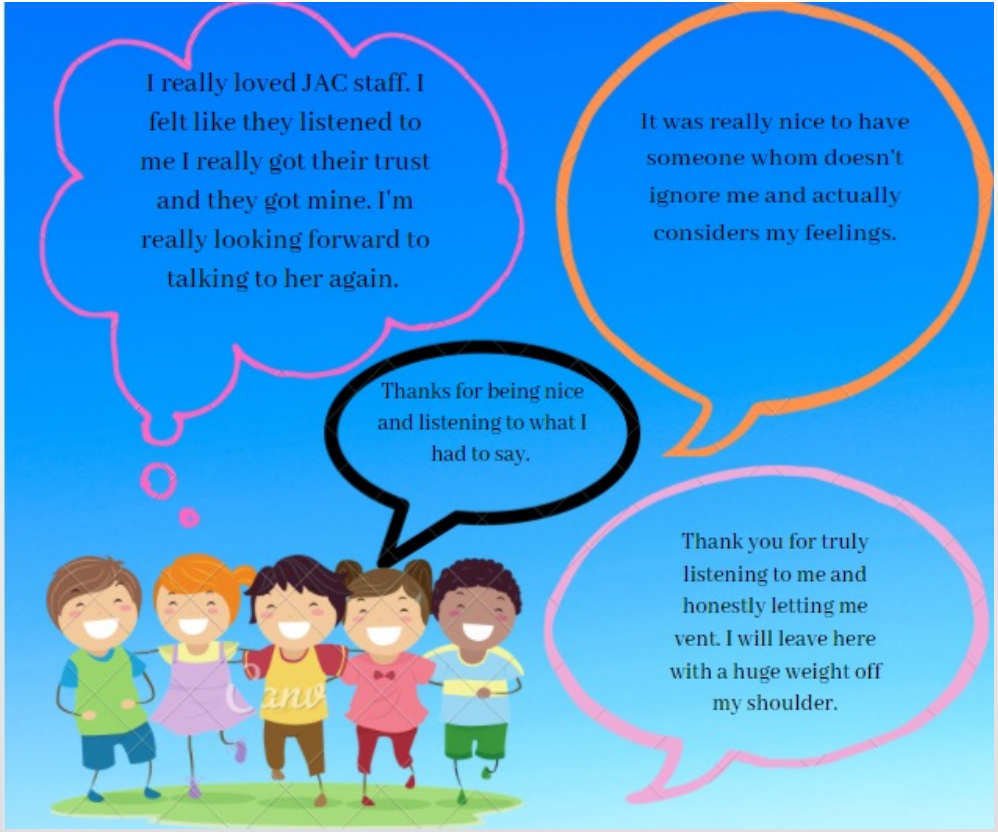
Diversions Up 22%

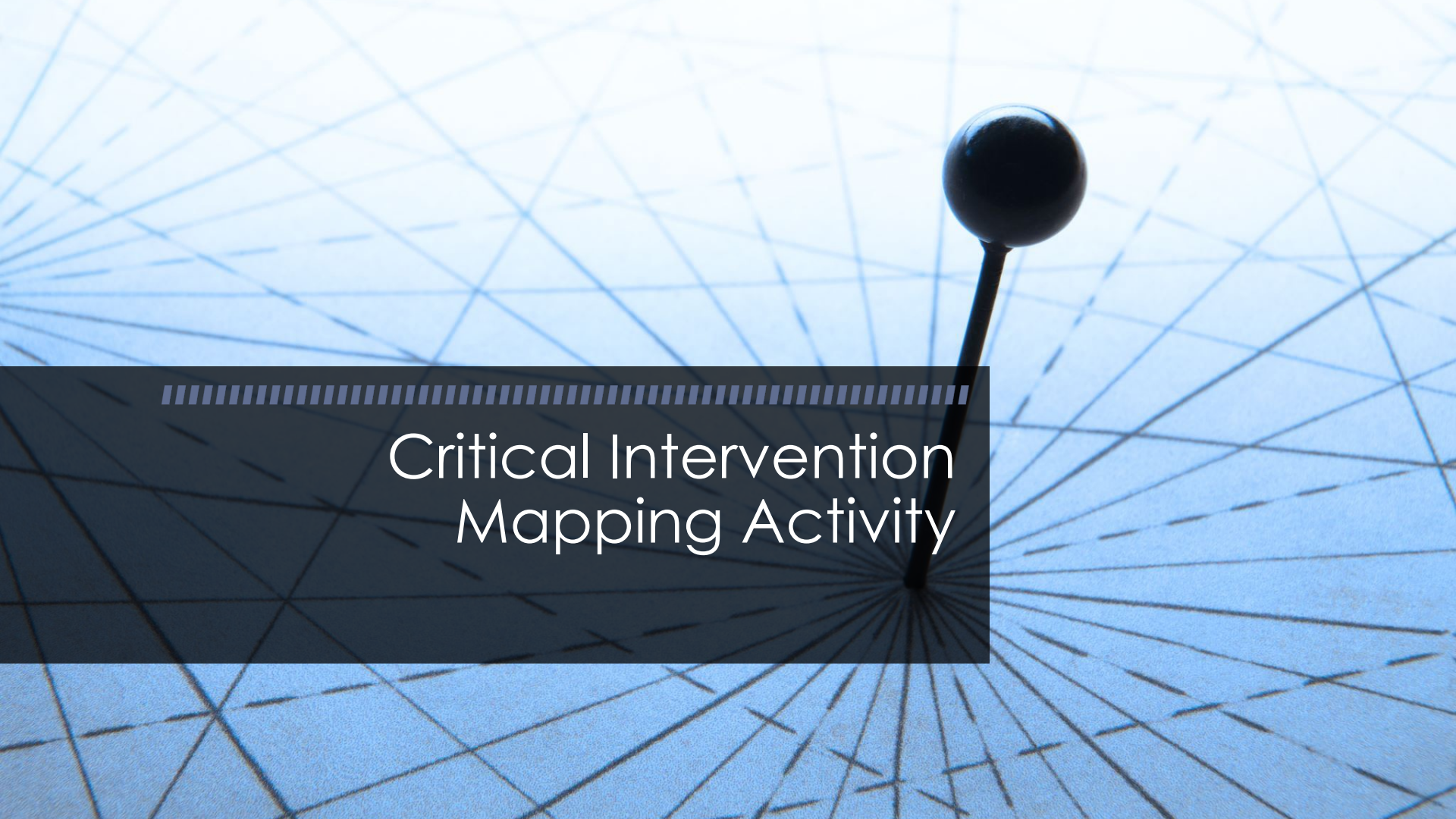
Status
Referrals
Down 68%

Walk-Ins up 7%

Delinquent
Referrals
Down 3%

Detention
Placements
Down 36%


I really loved JAC staff. I felt like they listened to me I really got their trust and they got mine. I'm really looking forward to talking to her again.
It was really nice to have someone whom doesn't ignore me and actually considers my feelings.
Thanks for being nice and listening to what I had to say.
Thank you for truly listening to me and honestly letting me vent. I will leave here with a huge weight off my shoulder.



Critical Intervention Mapping Activity

QUESTIONS?

- National Assessment Center Association
- Phone: 563-676-3020
- Website: www.nacassociation.org
- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn

Molli Barker Cook: molli@nacassociation.org

Dorcas Young Griffin: Dorcas.Young@shelbycountytn.gov

Dr. Cedrick Gray: Cedrick.Gray@shelbycountytn.gov