

TRAINING AND INTER-RATER RELIABILITY EXERCISES

Three practice vignettes have been developed for self-training on the Oregon JCP Screen/Assessment V.2. These vignettes can also be used to promote inter-rater reliability within an agency.

Self-Training Instructions

- A. Read instructions for completing a JCP Risk/Assessment.
- B. Review the “Sample JCP Interview Questions” The vignettes report information you would expect to obtain from a youth interview that used these or similar questions to obtain the specific information required by the JCP Screen/Assessment tool. The Interview information is augmented with information from parents and agency records.
- C. Complete an assessment (written, not electronic copy) for the first sample vignette. Compare your ratings to the answer key provided.
- D. Use Vignettes #2 and #3 for additional practice, or use them in combination with the “Inter-Rater Reliability Comparison Exercise” described below to promote inter-rater reliability within your agency.

Inter-Rater Reliability Exercise

- A. Using the “Inter-Rater Reliability Form”, compare your results with others in your department who have completed risk assessments based on the sample vignettes.

The “Inter-Rater Reliability Comparison” form can be used by the agency coordinator to summarize similarities and differences among screeners.
- B. After completing the comparison exercise, discuss as a staff those items that you think require clarification, and explain what is confusing, conflicting, or otherwise contributes to differences in scoring. Please use additional pages if necessary. What are some of the reasons for differences?
- C. Are there any items where obtaining consistent, uniform information could lead to poor inter-rater reliability? For example, is there a uniform method for obtaining information about school performance, including sources contacted/used?
- D. Does your agency have consistent guidelines regarding the number and types of information sources that should be used to complete an initial assessment?
- E. Are there internal decision rules that your department will develop to guide scoring decisions in order to obtain maximum uniformity? If so, what are they?

#1 Ron Smith

Ron is a 15-year-old white male who was referred to the juvenile department for Criminal Mischief I for “keying a car.” The car belonged to another boy whom he got in a fight with, over a girl both boys were dating. Ron owes over \$3,000 restitution to the victim. He feels his behavior was justified and is angry about having to pay money to a guy who tried to steal his girl. Ron had one prior referral for Theft II at age 13, and three runaway episodes that occurred between ages 12 and 13, each of which involved extended absences from home. There have been no runaways in the past year. There is no history of fire setting, harming or injuring animals, or interest in weapons.

Ron is currently failing more than half of his classes. He has not been diagnosed with any learning disability, and has achieved average grades in the past. Now he rarely completes his work and is tardy or truant at least once a week. School records show he was identified as high risk prior to entering high school because of chronic disruptive behavior that began in fourth grade (at age 9). He was suspended a year ago for fighting, but there have been no suspensions or other destructive behavior at school in the past six months. His mother says she has tried to help Ron with homework, and that she has called his teachers to discuss his frequent absences. The girl Ron has been dating is doing community service for a shoplifting offense and is failing in school, but she has never been suspended or expelled. He has no other friends.

Ron has a very unstable home life. His father has been in the adult criminal justice system for trafficking narcotics. His mother is a recovering alcoholic who works at a bait and tackle shop for minimum wage. She has been alcohol free now for approximately nine months. Both Ron and his mother say they have a close relationship, but he mother admits she rarely knows where Ron is or what he’s doing, and feels she has little ability to influence his behavior. Ron’s father recently lost his job, and has a history of chronic unemployment. A lack of adequate income appears to be putting significant stress on this family. Family members have difficulty communicating with each other. Ron reports that there is a lot of yelling and fighting at home between his parents, and between him and his father. Court records show that Ron was in foster care twice because of neglect and domestic violence, but none has been reported in the past year. Ron is unhappy about his family’s financial pressures and yelling.. He couldn’t identify any adult in his life now or in the past year that he can talk to. However, he said he had talked a lot to a foster father he had a couple of years ago, and felt supported and appreciated when he was with him.

His family lives in a low-income trailer park in a neighborhood with a known high crime rate. He uses marijuana regularly and has been drunk over one hundred times. He says that he likes to smoke marijuana and drink alcohol because it helps him forget about his “crappy life”. He admits to driving under the influence on numerous occasions, including in the past month. His mother suggests that Ron’s use of marijuana is affecting his motivation to do well in school.

Ron says he's thought of suicide but hasn't made any attempts, and has never made any concrete plans to kills himself. He reports no problems with sleeping, eating, or hallucinations. He has no goals at this point in his life other than getting a job at the tackle shop with his mom during the tourist season. Ron isn’t involved in any constructive extra-curricular activities. However, he says he used to fish a lot, and wouldn’t mind fishing again, but it would be nice to have a friend to go with. Both he and his mother expressed pride in his fishing expertise.

#2 Ricardo Luna

Ricardo is 12 years old. He has become involved with the Juvenile Department after a referral from the police department for Criminal Mischief II. Ricardo and a friend put graffiti on the side of a grocery store. Ricardo's parents saw the spray paint in his room and made him go to the police and tell them what happened. Ricardo's parents are very cooperative and want Ricardo to "learn his lesson". Ricardo's parents state they had had no problems with him until he started "hanging out" with his friend Travis. They feel that Travis is a bad influence on him because Travis' parents do not regulate who he's with or what he's doing.

Ricardo is enrolled in middle school and is a 'B' student. School records show he attends regularly. He is actively involved in soccer and plays saxophone in the school band. His parents help him with his homework when needed, and let him know how proud they are of his achievements. Neither he nor any of his close friends have ever been suspended, and he has friends who do well academically. Ricardo communicates well with the school staff and his parents, but had this one incident that surprised everyone.

Ricardo has not experimented with drugs or alcohol. His home is free of drug abuse, though his father does drink moderately while watching soccer matches at home with his friends. Ricardo's parents are American citizens although they emigrated to the U.S. from Mexico. Ricardo understands Spanish, but his primary language is English. Ricardo's neighborhood is tight knit and the residents watch out for each other. Once the members of his neighborhood were aware of the graffiti incident, they offered to help Ricardo's parents in any way they could. One neighbor is particularly close to Ricardo, and has offered to help him paint over the graffiti.

Neither Ricardo nor his parents report any serious family conflicts, and there is no official or self-reported history of child abuse, neglect, domestic violence, or familial criminal history. However, Ricardo's younger sister was diagnosed with leukemia about 5 months ago, and both Ricardo and his parents reported that this has been very difficult for all of them.

Ricardo is no longer allowed to hang out with Travis. Ricardo's parents have noticed that he has had a difficult time sleeping and seems to be dwelling on the incident. He says he feels very ashamed of his behavior, and is concerned about having disappointed his parents and neighbors, but hasn't had any thoughts of suicide. Ricardo has no history of running away, impulsiveness, aggressiveness, fire setting, preoccupation with weapons, or learning disabilities.

#3 Lisa Sanford

Lisa is a 16 year old African-American female. She lives at home with her mother and her two younger brothers. Lisa is a single mother and has an infant son who is six months old. Lisa gets no support from the Michael, the 17 year old father of the baby because he is in a youth correctional facility on five counts of burglary. She was referred to the Juvenile Department for unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. She took her cousin's car without permission to visit Michael, thinking she'd be back before her mother and cousin returned from a trip to the beach.. She was arrested in the stolen vehicle and was placed in the detention facility. That resulted in her infant son being placed temporarily in protective custody, which was very traumatic for her. This is her first referral of any kind, and there is no history of any prior problem behaviors such as running away, hurting herself or others, or impulsivity.

Though it is a challenge to find time for her daughter because of her two younger sons and her full time job at the thrift shop, Lisa's mother has been very supportive of her daughter throughout her pregnancy and adjustment to motherhood. Lisa says she talks with her mother nearly every day, and appreciates her encouragement and guidance. Her mother says she nearly always knows where Lisa is and who she is with. Lisa had asked permission to visit Michael, but the mother assumed she would be taking the bus. When she and the cousin returned home to find the car missing, it did not even occur to her that Lisa might have taken it. There are no reports of abuse, neglect, serious family conflicts, or domestic violence. Lisa's parents divorced several years ago, and her father, who has no apparent criminal or substance abuse history, lives in another state.

Lisa has not attended school since her son was born and states that she is going to begin home schooling, but has not shown any initiative to gather the information or begin the process. She says her mom quit school after 8th grade, and has never helped her much with homework, or shown much interest in her education. Lisa attended school regularly prior to her son's birth, however, getting mostly B's and C's, and had never been in trouble at school.

Lisa has experimented with alcohol, but not with narcotics. Both mother and daughter deny any regular use, either currently or in the past, but Lisa says her boyfriend was a regular user, and had been suspended at least once for going to school high on marijuana.

Lisa's family moved a year ago and they do not know very many people. They have a minimal support system and know very few neighbors. Lisa feels depressed quite often while at home with her son because she knows her peers are living an active teenage lifestyle. Before she became pregnant and moved to a new neighborhood, she enjoyed singing in her church choir but now has no outside activities of any kind. She made only a few friends at her new school, but she said one friend was on the honor role. She frequently stays up until early in the morning and sleeps most of the day with her son. She eats very little and has lost weight. Lisa's mother is concerned because Lisa has been increasingly withdrawn and irritable since her baby's birth.

OREGON JCP SCREEN/ASSESSMENT INTER-RATER RELIABILITY FORM

Vignette: _____

Agency _____

Risk and Protective Factor Areas

For each domain, identify any differences between your rating, and the rating on the answer key. If your rating was different from the answer key, describe the reason. For example, was the risk item unclear? Or is the risk item definition unclear?

2.0 School Issues

- a. ___ Complete agreement with answer sheet [SKIP TO ITEM D]
- b. ___ Identified risks or protective factors that answer sheet did not (which ones?_
- c. Describe why you rated the item(s) different from the answer key.
- d. Do you have any suggestions for improving the clarity of the vignette or for improving the reliability of the risk indicator or protective factor?

3.0 Peer Relationships

- a. ___ Complete agreement with answer sheet [SKIP TO ITEM D]
- b. ___ Identified risks or protective factors that answer sheet did not (which ones?_
- c. Describe why you rated the item(s) different from the answer key.
- d. Do you have any suggestions for improving the clarity of the vignette or for improving the reliability of the risk indicator or protective factor?

4.0 Behavior Issues

- a. ___ Complete agreement with answer sheet [SKIP TO ITEM D]
- b. ___ Identified risks or protective factors that answer sheet did not (which ones?_
- c. Describe why you rated the item(s) different from the answer key.
- d. Do you have any suggestions for improving the clarity of the vignette or for improving the reliability of the risk indicator or protective factor?

5.0 Family Functioning

- a. ___ Complete agreement with answer sheet [SKIP TO ITEM D]
- b. ___ Identified risks or protective factors that answer sheet did not (which ones?_
- c. Describe why you rated the item(s) different from the answer key.
- d. Do you have any suggestions for improving the clarity of the vignette or for improving the reliability of the risk indicator or protective factor?

6.0 Substance Use

- a. ___ Complete agreement with answer sheet [SKIP TO ITEM D]
- b. ___ Identified risks or protective factors that answer sheet did not (which ones?_
- c. Describe why you rated the item(s) different from the answer key.
- d. Do you have any suggestions for improving the clarity of the vignette or for improving the reliability of the risk indicator or protective factor?

7.0 Other Non-JCP Issues for Case Planning

- a. ___ Complete agreement with answer sheet [SKIP TO ITEM D]
- b. ___ Identified risks or protective factors that answer sheet did not (which ones?_
- c. Describe why you rated the item(s) different from the answer key.
- d. Do you have any suggestions for improving the clarity of the vignette or for improving the reliability of the risk indicator or protective factor?

8.0 Mental Health

Differences with answer key? ___Yes ___No [IF YES, INDICATE REASONS]

12. Scoring and Classification

Any differences in:

- A. ___ Total Risk Domains
- B. ___ Total Risk Indicators
- C. ___ Total Protective Factors
- D. ___ Total Mental Health Indicators
- E. ___ Risk Level
- F. ___ Override? ___NO ___YES, higher ___YES, lower

[IF YES, WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THE OVERRIDE?]

