

Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI) in Wisconsin

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Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families

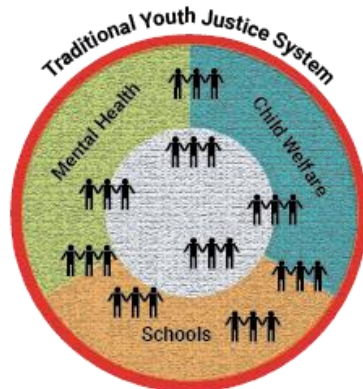
Please note that the information contained in this presentation is not meant to be construed as legal advice.

Any guidance provided should not override a judge's decision and authority.

Questions are welcome; however, we are unable to provide input on individual cases.

Thank you!

DCF Youth Justice Strategic Plan



The youth justice system encompasses youth with a variety of primary needs other than delinquent behavior.



Youth are served in the appropriate system, and are not brought into the youth justice system in order to address other primary needs.



Today's Goal

Answer the following questions:

Why did DCF implement a statewide risk/need/strength assessment?

What is the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI) and **how** is it being used?

Is YASI required and **when** are DCF standards effective?

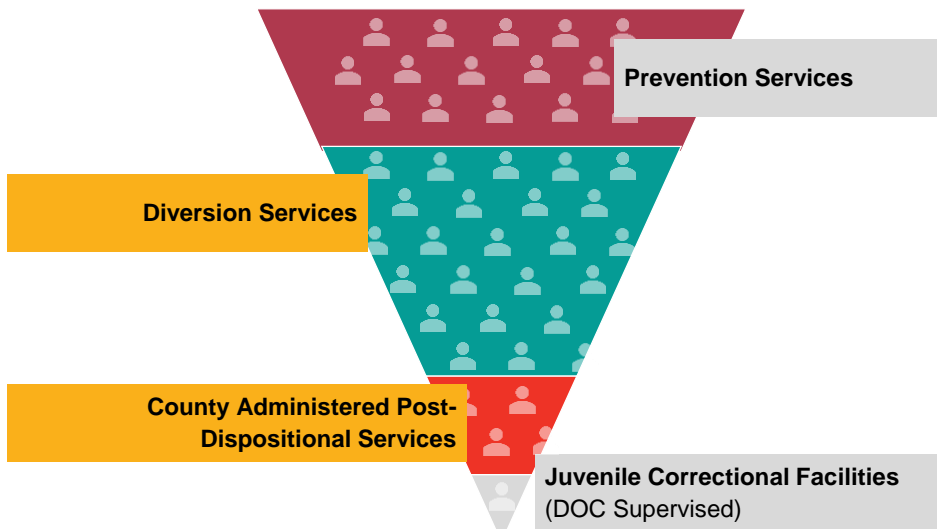
How will YASI help us achieve better outcomes for Wisconsin's youth?



Why did DCF implement a statewide Risk/Needs/Strengths Assessment?



Community Based Youth Justice System



Youth Justice Best Practices Research Summary

A more holistic understanding of youth paves the way for targeted, developmentally informed service delivery.

Severity of offense is not a strong indicator of the future pattern of offending; tested static and dynamic risk factors for offending are (Mulvey et al., 2010; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998).

Dispositions based on risk level and needs are more likely to be effective. When services are matched to youth's level of risk, strengths and criminogenic needs, chance of re-offense decreases (Peterson-Badali, Skilling, & Haqanee, 2015).

Overly broad and unclear orders that are not tailored to the strengths, interests, and challenges of an individual youth **can result in significant numbers failing on probation**, ultimately leading to costly and unnecessary out-of-home placement (NJDC, 2016).



What Risk Assessments **CAN** do

- **Estimate the likelihood that delinquent behavior will continue** without intervention
- **Guide case planning** by identifying and indicating areas that are best targets for intervention
- **Standardize data collection**
 - Identify frequent areas of need in a system/agency
 - Measure overall progress of youth on supervision
- **Provide common language between agencies**
- **Reduce costs through “right sizing”** use of intensive supervision, incarceration, and provision of services



What Risk Assessments **DO NOT** do

- **Act as a “One Size Fits All” Tool**
 - Assessments are validated to address specific issues
 - YASI not appropriate for sexual offenses, truancy, mental health diagnoses
- **Prescribe Outcomes**— results are intended to guide decision making, not dictate a specific course of action or legal decisions
- **Replace Mental Health Assessments or Psychological Evaluations**
- **Enable youth to avoid accountability**

Adapted from Vincent, Guy, & Grisso, 2012



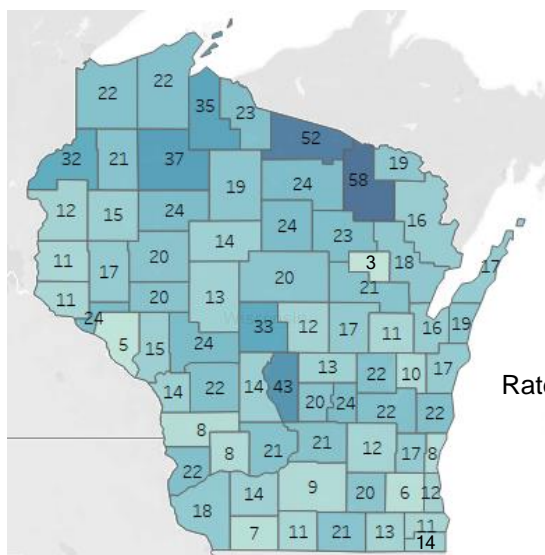
Five States' Analyses of Serious, Violent, and Chronic (SVC) Offender Careers

SVC Category	FL	PA	CT	NC	AZ
Non-SVC	44%	79%	67%	66%	64%
Serious offenders	55%	6%	24%	29%	34%
Violent offenders	29%	6%	6%	3%	8%
Chronic offenders	16%	14%	14%	9%	15%
Serious, Violent, and Chronic (SVC)	9%	0.4%	2%	1%	3%

Howell et.al, 2019



2022 Rate of Delinquency Referrals



Rate of Referral Equation

$$\frac{\text{Total youth referred in the county}}{\text{Total youth living in the county}} * 1,000$$

KEY

Rate of Delinquency Referrals
per 1,000 Youth

3

58



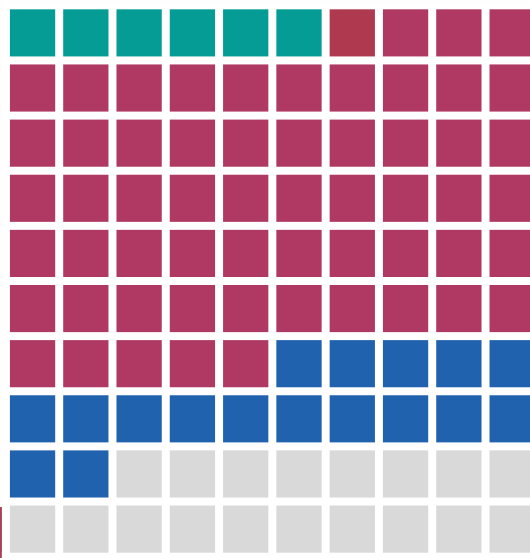
Wisconsin's Multi-Year Delinquency Offense Category Comparison

Offense Category	2022	2021	2020	2019
Society	52.2%	51.8%	48.4%	51.0%
Other	40.5%	40.4%	36.8%	34.8%
Property	27.0%	27.9%	32.5%	28.3%
Drug	7.0%%	6.0%	6.7%	6.6%
Violent	4.8%	4.3%	4.7%	3.6%

Data Note: Offense categories total to more than 100% as it is possible for one delinquency referral to include offenses from multiple offense categories.



2022 YJ Referred Youth with Prior CPS Referral(s)



- Screened In Only (6.2%)
- Screened In & Screened Out (59.3%)
- Screened Out Only (16.0%)
- No Prior Referral (18.5%)



Tailoring YJ conditions

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) issued a 2017 resolution regarding tailoring Youth Justice conditions.

Too many juvenile courts and juvenile probation departments impose conditions of probation that are not individualized, have too many requirements, and lead to unnecessary detention or incarceration for technical violations.



Legislative intent and purpose: 938.01(2)c

To provide an individualized assessment of each alleged and adjudicated delinquent juvenile, in order to prevent further delinquent behavior through the development of competency in the juvenile offender, so that he or she is more capable of living productively and responsibly in the community.



What is the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI) and how is it being used?



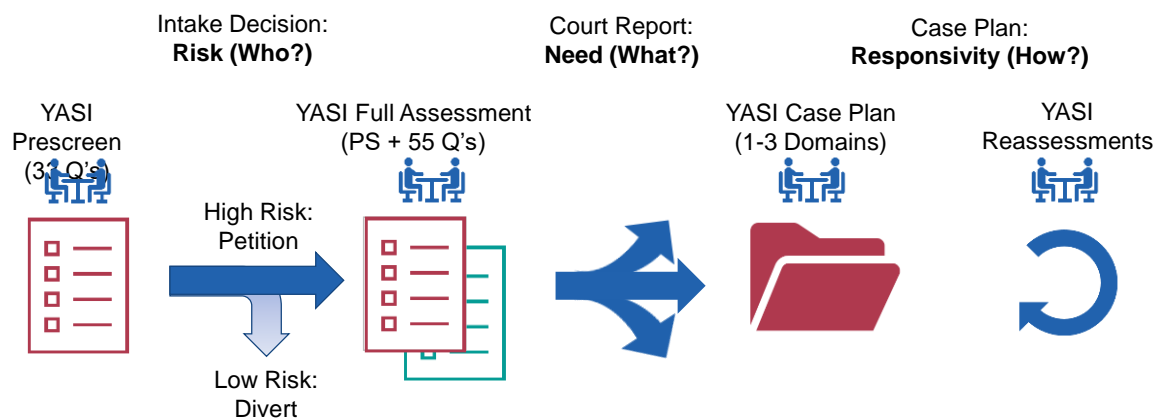
The Youth Assessment & Screening Instrument (YASI)

Focuses on the Principles of **Risk, Need, Responsivity (RNR)**

- Adapted from the Washington juvenile assessment model
- **Assesses risk** level for re-offense
- Identifies **dynamic need factors**
- Documents a variety of **responsivity factors** (trauma, mental health concerns, motivations) to guide individualized intervention approaches
- Uses **Motivational Interviewing (MI)** to inform both the assessment process and case planning
- Incorporates **validated strength scores** in case planning



How and When Will the YASI be Used?



Dispositional Structure Matters

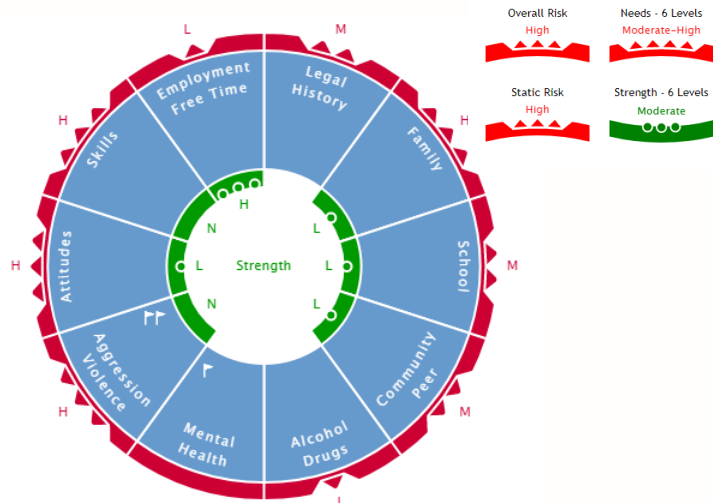
Bifurcated (adjudication & disposition separate)	Non-Bifurcated (adjudication & disposition together)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Time to complete YASI full assessment prior to adjudication ✓ Time to match service recommendations to identified youth needs prior to disposition ✓ Youth and family are aware of services that will likely be ordered – assists with engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Insufficient time to complete YASI full assessment prior to adjudication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have time if youth admits responsibility, but potential for due process violations ✗ Less time to match service recommendations to identified youth needs prior to disposition



YASI Prescreen and Full Assessment

2 Parts, 88 Items

- **Prescreen**
 - 33 items
 - Rapid ID of 'moderate' and 'high' risk cases requiring more intensive services
- **Full Assessment**
 - 55 items



Matching Services to Needs Using a Service Matrix

EXAMPLE

Aggression/Violence Domain

Risk Level	General Recommendation	Services and Providers	Description of Services
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Group Counseling • Promote family engagement 	Completed by Human Service Agency	
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MH Assessment Encouraged • Other Tx: FFT, ART, CBT 	Completed by Human Service Agency	
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Treatment • Outpatient treatment or Groups • RCC Placement 	Completed by Human Service Agency	



County service matrices are not prescriptive. They are intended to serve as a guide for human service professionals in matching services to a youth's individually identified need(s).



What can court stakeholders expect to learn from the YASI?



Wisconsin YASI Prescreen Overall Risk Levels: 11/1/2022 – 10/31/2023

3,936 Youth assessed with
YASI Pre-Screen

43.6%
Low Risk of re-referral

41.4%
Moderate Risk of re-referral

15%
High Risk of
re-referral



Wisconsin YJ Recommendations for Youth Screened Low Risk: 11/1/2022 – 10/31/2023

1,714 Youth
Low Risk of re-referral

28.1%
482
Decision Pending

42.7%
732
Close Case

21.2%
363
DPA

15.2%
261
Formal
Petition

Data Note: Decision categories total to more than 100% as it is possible for one YASI Prescreen to be associated with more than one referral and therefore more than one decision.



Where do I find the YASI results?



New Youth Justice Disposition Report

Features

✓ Reduced length, tighter focus

- **3-pages** (blank with no tribal involvement, YJ or CPS history, or placement recommendations)
- **6-pages** (blank, full-length)

Structure

✓ Basic information

- **Youth legal/social history**
 - User-selectable YJ, CPS, & Placement history
 - Space and guidance for long-form narrative
- **YASI Information**
- **Recommendations**



Existing (CPS-focused) eWiSACWIS court report

✗ Too much of what we *don't (usually) need*

- Lengthy, static sections included whether applicable or not
- Content pertaining to both Ch. 48 & 938
- Significant focus on safety, placements, & permanence
- Potentially duplicative fields/narratives
 - Current Family Situation vs. Social History
 - Rules of Supervision vs. Conditions

✓ Not enough of what we *DO need*

- No prefill for prior YJ involvement
- No clear place for YASI-related information
- No clear tie between identified needs and suggested services
- Unintuitive section order = unclear "story"
- Little case manager-facing guidance on narrative fields, conditions



Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI) Information

YASI is an assessment tool aligned with principles of best practice in Youth Justice. YASI provides risk, needs, and strength scores for a well-rounded understanding of the Youth which can help select targeted, effective, and developmentally- and trauma-informed service delivery.

☐

Not Applicable

Description of why the YASI was not appropriate to administer, and case manager insights into root causes of the incident as would otherwise have been produced through completing the YASI.

1. Youth Dynamic Strength & Need Score

Youth's Strength – Protective Score:

Youth's Need – Risk for Rereferral Score:

2. Identified Area(s) of Strength

Domain :

Strength:

Description:

3. Priority Need Area(s)

Domain :

Case Manager Insights:

4. Responsivity Factors

Important factors to be considered at disposition and case planning for tailoring interventions and services to Youth's learning style, social functioning, motivation, and cognitive abilities. Common responsivity factors may also include mental health, hobbies or career interests, long-term and/or opportunities for growth, important relationships, cultural context, etc.



Either/or

Disposition Recommendations

Service Recommendations

Youth Services

☐ Not Applicable

Priority Need or Strength Being Addressed	Type of Service	Service Provider
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Description of services being recommended and how they will address the identified priority need areas above, or how the services will support the Youth.

Educational Services

☐ Not Applicable

☐ An Individualized Education Plan is in place or being recommended

Youth's Highest Grade Completed:

Has the school been notified of educational services/plan?

Description of current educational services or plans, and any additional relevant information.

Parental/Current Caregiver Services

☐ Not Applicable

Description of availability of services, and services that are recommended for the Youth's current caregiver(s) if applicable.

Repeats for any added domains

Best practice: no more than 3 (high-risk youth)

Required by statute

Not shown: Placement Recommendations (as needed)



Use of this template is encouraged, but DCF has **no timeline to require it as standard.**

Suggestions and discussion are welcome!



Is YASI required and when are DCF standards effective?



YASI Standards

YASI was implemented statewide over the past 5 years. YASI standards were published and effective statewide **October 1, 2023**.

See <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/policy/pdf/yj-standards.pdf> for a full version of YASI standards

Review and discuss local procedures and standards that may affect your work with your County Human Services Youth Justice staff.

Overly broad and unclear orders that are not tailored to the strengths, interests, and challenges of an individual youth **can result in significant numbers failing on probation**, ultimately leading to costly and unnecessary out-of-home placement (NJDC, 2016).



YASI is not a 'one size fits all' tool

The YASI is not validated to assess needs for the following:

1) Truancy

- As truancy is a status offense and is not a strong predictor of future delinquency, it is ***recommended counties use a validated needs assessment tool for truancy referrals.***

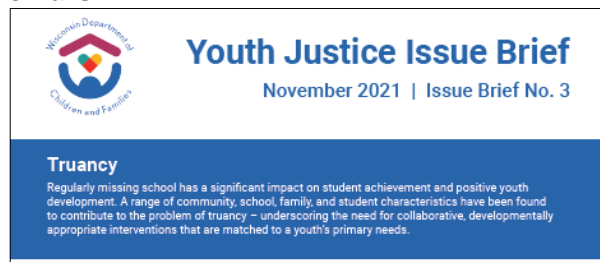
2) Sexual offenses

- Most score low risk

3) Mental Health

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Score
- NOT a proxy for mental health diagnosis

4) Pre-delinquency



How will the YASI help us achieve better outcomes for Wisconsin's youth?



Keys to Achieve Better Outcomes



Plan strategically

Develop and implement RNR-related policies and case plans along with an assessment

Ongoing stakeholder engagement



Conduct the YASI at the right time

Post disposition is too late!



Ensure services and programming are informed by the YASI

Includes conditions of supervision in court orders



Keys to Achieve Better Outcomes



Work effectively with service providers

Share information about youths' needs

Educate providers about RNR

Track quality and outcomes of services



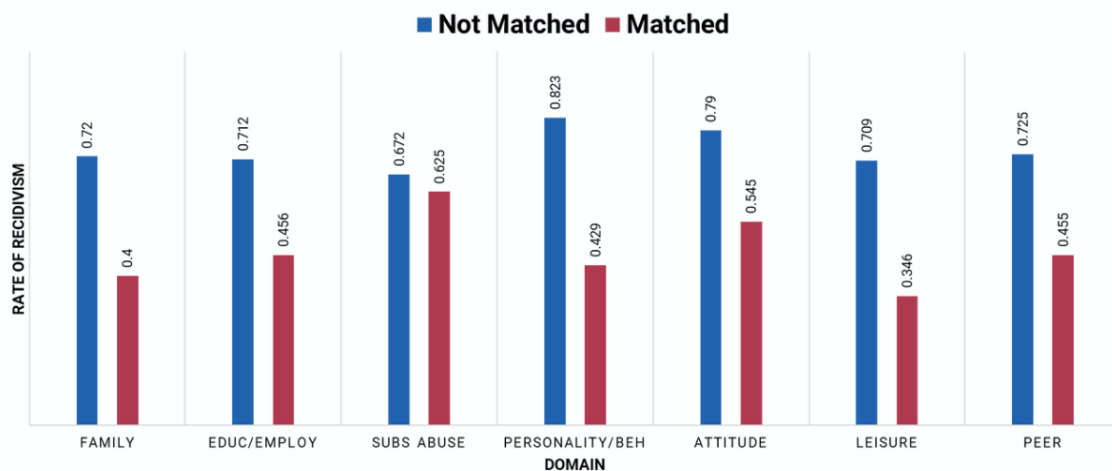
Practice good leadership and consistent communication



Implement quality assurance and adequate system of checks and balances



Service to need matching: Recidivism rates for not matched vs. matched



Source: Peterson-Badali, Skilling, Haqanee (2014)

Key Takeaways



DCF vision for community-based youth justice **focuses on prevention and diversion, and provides accountability and services** to youth and families



YASI identifies and incorporates **risk, needs, responsivity, and strength factors in collaborative case planning**



Fidelity to YASI and matching services to youths' dynamic needs will help us make strides towards long-term system impacts



Stakeholder buy-in is critical to successful implementation and achieving better outcomes



Your Action Steps:



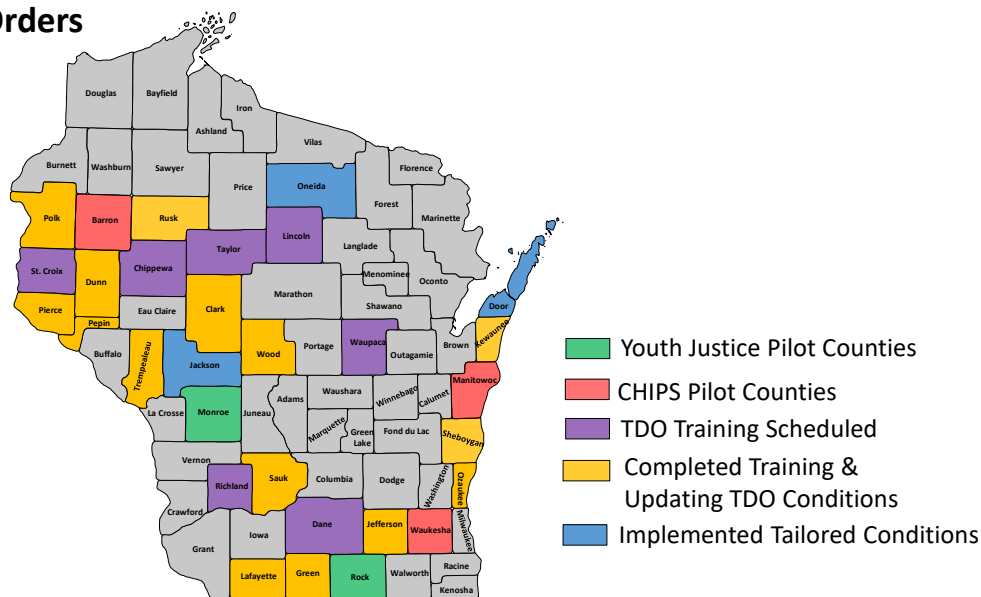
Collaborate with your human service agency and other court partners to discuss how the YASI has been incorporated into your county's practice.



Discuss court processes and consider adopting/advocating for a more tailored dispositional orders.



Tailored Dispositional Orders Project



Additional Resources and Contacts

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YASI County Support
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Available YASI documents:

- Wisconsin's Plan for Assessment and Case Planning
- YASI Intake Flowchart
- Recommendations for Sharing YASI Assessment Results
- Example Assessment
- Example Court Report
- YASI Service Matrix (blank)



Works Cited

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