

# Evidence Based Principles

## Principle 3: Targeted Interventions



**COLORADO**  
Office of Children,  
Youth & Families  
Division of Youth Corrections

*The Evidence-Based Principles provide a framework for implementing the best possible services for youth. An integral part of these services includes the careful planning and structuring of **proven, effective interventions** based on several guiding principles.*

**Risk Principle:** *Prioritize supervision and treatment resources for higher risk youth. This promotes harm reduction and public safety through concentrating on teaching and developing pro-social skills and targeting the areas that contribute to ongoing criminal activities.*

**Need Principle:** *Target interventions to criminogenic needs. Youth have a variety of needs, and some of these needs are directly correlated to criminal behavior. Criminogenic needs are dynamic risk factors that, when addressed, can positively impact recidivism. Examples of these needs: criminal personality, antisocial attitudes and values, low self-control, criminal peers, substance use disorders, and dysfunctional family.*

**Responsivity Principle:** *Responsivity requires that we consider individual youth's characteristics when matching youth with services. These characteristics include (but are not limited to) culture, gender, motivational stages, developmental stages, and learning styles. In addition, this principle requires youth to be provided with treatment proven effective with the population to reduce recidivism through rigorous research.*

**Dosage:** *Providing appropriate doses of services, pro-social structure, and supervision is a strategic part of implementing an intervention. Higher risk youth require more structure and services than lower risk youth. In addition, special populations such as those with mental health needs and youth who have sexually offended require coordination of services and interventions. In general, 40-70% of higher risk youth programming should be clearly structured to include free time and treatment activities.*

**Treatment Principle:** *Treatment services should be integrated throughout programming and include structured case management strategies, targeting timely interventions to provide the greatest long-term outcomes and benefits, and taking a proactive approach to supervision techniques.*