



Why Measure Performance and Outcomes?

Evidence Based Principle #7 & 8: Measure Relevant Practices/ Processes & Provide Measurement Feedback

Success has
always been easy
to measure. It is
the distance
between one's
origins and one's
final achievement.

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Without effective performance measures, organizations and individuals are uninformed regarding any positive outcomes within the juvenile justice system. This lack of information can lead to suspicion, distrust, and at times criticism.

Agencies are developing methods to assess and evaluate their work. However, merely measuring and reporting on what is happening doesn't provide much guidance on what these activities actually mean with regard to outcomes and success.

Performance measures link organizational philosophy and mission to specific activities.

Recidivism rates are important measures of overall performance, and can easily be combined with additional

outcomes that reduce crime and improve public safety.

Performance measures inform good management.

Relevant and effective measures help to identify priorities for staff, track progress toward specific goals, prioritize stakeholders, direct resource allocation, and fine tune or strengthen practices.

Performance measures respond to the demands of juvenile justice stakeholders.

Our communities expect specific outcomes from the system, including rehabilitation and reintegration of juveniles, and enhancing public safety. Implementing systems of performance measures allows juvenile justice agencies and organizations to demonstrate that the myriad of services, including

daily programming and individualized treatment services, *do* work and result in positive outcomes.

Characteristics of good performance measures:

- ♦ Widely accepted and meaningful
- ♦ Clearly demonstrate goals and objectives to be met
- ♦ Valid and reliable
- ♦ Based on individual outcomes
- ♦ Easily understood
- ♦ Data is collected and reported in a timely manner
- ♦ And most importantly, are strength-based and supportive of continuous improvement.

Source:

American Prosecutors Research Institute. (2006). Guide to developing and implementing performance measures for the juvenile justice system. *Special Topic Series: A National Demonstration Project*. OJJDP; NCJJ; Community Justice Institute.

