

**Building Capacity for Performance Measurement and Evaluation:
Performance Measurement in Prisoner Reentry, Delinquency
Prevention and Intervention, and Victim Assistance Services**

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The Building Capacity for Performance Measurement and Evaluation (BCPME) project is designed to facilitate the capacity of Washington, DC's Office of Justice Grants Administration for Victim Services (OJGAVS) grantees to use performance measure data to build evidence of program processes and outcomes. An important goal of this project is also to create a portfolio of existing practices to inform OJGAVS's long-term strategy of supporting the implementation and utilization of evidence-based practices. The BCPME project consists of programs that fall into three types of service categories: adult reentry, delinquency prevention and intervention, and victim services. The following report reviews the literature on the use of performance measurement in each of these three areas. Notably, many of the performance measurement frameworks reviewed in each funding stream are from a national perspective and often lack specificity since they have to be able to address all levels and types of programs. However, the adult reentry, delinquency prevention and intervention, and victim services fields are in large part local issues, with local community concerns prioritized. Thus, the performance measures presented in the following literature review should be thought of in the broadest sense, and as a general roadmap for developing performance measures at the local level.

Performance Measurement and Program Evaluation

At the outset, it is important to clarify the difference between performance measurement and program evaluation. The United States General Accounting Office defines performance measurement as follows:

Performance measurement is the ongoing monitoring and reporting of program accomplishments, particularly progress towards pre-established goals. It is typically conducted by program or agency management. Performance measures may address the type or level of program activities conducted (process), the direct

products and services delivered by a program (outputs), and/or the results of those products and services (outcomes).¹

Performance measurement plays an important role in monitoring and assessing overall program performance, and can be a first step towards conducting a program evaluation if one is desired. At a fundamental level, the systematic collection and analysis of process and outcome performance measures can help determine whether or not a program is functioning as intended. However, performance measurement data cannot tell us whether or not a program caused particular outcomes (e.g., employment is a direct result of participation in the program). Only a program evaluation can determine the impact of the program on clients and whether or not outcomes can be attributed to the program. As stated in a brief by the Center for Effective Public Policy, designed to help prisoner reentry initiatives understand key elements of performance measurement:

In other words, because performance measurement systems report on collected data but do not provide a method to control for external variables, they cannot identify the reasons for a lower number of program graduates than expected, or explain why program participants were not employed at the rates originally planned.²

Despite these limitations, performance measurement serves several other purposes. Robert Behn, an expert on performance measurement in government agencies, explains that public agency leaders use performance measurement to: “1) evaluate; 2) control; 3) budget; 4) motivate; 5) promote; 6) celebrate; 7) learn; and 8) improve.”³ Behn notes that ultimately all eight of these purposes can be distilled down to one primary purpose – “to improve performance.”⁴ To do so, agency leadership must first learn how to use performance measures

to determine what is or is not working. Behn admits that it is often difficult to ascertain the factors that are contributing to “why” an agency is or is not performing well. Also, he acknowledges that using performance measures to learn what factors need to be modified to produce the changes necessary to improve performance is challenging, and requires obtaining not just quantitative, but qualitative information as well. Furthermore, Behn comments that learning how to actually implement changes necessary to improve operations and performance can be equally challenging. Yet, using performance measurement to improve performance is critical, and by understanding why agencies are performing well or poorly, funding agencies can align and reallocate resources accordingly.⁵

Performance Measurement and Prisoner Reentry

Among the OJGAVS BCPME grantees are six prisoner reentry programs. Performance measurement has played a key role in prisoner reentry initiatives at the federal, state, and local levels. At the federal level, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) has required performance measures for all grantees engaged in prisoner reentry work. Required performance measures include primarily output (services delivered) and outcome (the results of those services) in the domains of substance abuse, mental health, employment, housing, family support, and education. BJA’s required performance measures are below:

- Percent decrease in recidivism rates for the target population (TP) since the beginning of the initiative;
- Percent reduction in the crime rate;
- Percent increase in employment among TP from the previous reporting periods;
- Percent increase in TP enrolled in educational programs;
- Reduction in the number of violations of conditions of supervised release;

- Percent increase in the number of TP who fulfilled their child support obligations;
- Increased number of TP who have obtained housing;
- Increase in the number of TP who participate in substance abuse services;
- Percent increase in TP who participate in mental health services;
- Percent reduction in drug usage among TP during the reporting period; and
- Percent reduction in alcohol abuse and consumption among TP during the reporting period.⁶

Notably, BJA recommends several methods for measuring recidivism (arrests, technical violations, jail, or prison sentence), and suggests measuring recidivism over several follow-up periods (6 months, 12 months, and 36 months). A subsequent list of optional performance measures addresses risk/needs assessments, reentry plans, and program completion.⁷

Transitions from Jail to Community (TJC)

Other prominent reentry initiatives have developed performance measurement systems for participating state and local jurisdictions. The National Institute of Corrections, in partnership with the Urban Institute, developed a reentry model at the local level that served as the basis for the Transition from Jail to Community (TJC) initiative. The TJC initiative has been implemented in six jurisdictions. Over the course of the project, a technical assistance toolkit was developed to help other jurisdictions considering implementing a reentry initiative. The toolkit links to a short document, *Measuring Recidivism at the Local Level: A Quick Guide*, prepared by the Urban Institute.⁸ The guide highlights multiple methods to measure recidivism, such as rearrest, reconviction, reincarceration, and/or parole and probation violations. The guide also outlines the data source for each recidivism measure, acknowledging that each measure has limitations. For instance, the source of data for rearrests could be local law enforcement.

However, local law enforcement data are limited because they account for crime in a specific locality. Thus, in order to increase the accuracy of rearrest records, agencies would have to also collect data on rearrests from surrounding county- and state-level data sources, as well as from the FBI and the National Crime Information Center. Still, rearrest data are subject to inaccuracies, since for some individuals charges may eventually be dropped or a case acquitted. The guide suggests that reconviction measures could be more accurate than rearrest records as only those cases that result in a conviction would be measured. Yet, reconviction data are subject to delays as cases may take several months or years to be adjudicated, and agencies may not want to wait the period necessary to assess agency or program performance.

The *Measuring Recidivism Guide* also notes that it may be important to collect recidivism data on more than just rearrests or reconvictions, particularly for high-risk offenders.⁹ Additional measures that compare pre-release and post-release data on offense type and severity, as well as time to rearrest and frequency of reoffense, can be useful in capturing positive changes in behavior. The *Guide* warns that jurisdictions should be wary of using recidivism as the only measure of a reentry program's effectiveness as reentry programs often are intended to do more than just reduce reoffending (e.g., help with housing, employment, education, etc.). Additionally, some programs are developed for individuals who already have a high risk of reoffending. Thus, comparing the success of programs targeted to high-risk populations with programs geared towards low-risk offenders would be invalid without taking risk levels into account.

The TJC initiative toolkit presents a second document by the Urban Institute: *Performance Measurement Beyond Recidivism: A Quick guide to Reintegration Measures*.¹⁰ The guide recommends selecting measures that reflect the interventions jurisdictions want to

prioritize. TJC’s reintegration measures cover a number of intervention areas that may help reduce reoffending, such as programs focused on employment, housing, education, substance abuse, and health, as these are well-established as factors that influence the risk for recidivism.* For example, employment-related measures examine not only the attainment of employment, but employment stability (i.e., “number of jobs held over X months”). Similarly, housing-related measures explore not only the attainment of housing, but the stability of housing (i.e., “average number of address changes over the course of a year”). Education measures include both enrollment and completion of any type of secondary education or vocational training programs post-release, as well as educational or vocational training certificates earned. Substance abuse items include not only a measure of use, but also substance use/abuse-related hospitalizations. Health measures are recommended to account for the number of individuals with health insurance upon release, hospitalizations, or emergency room visits. For each of these intervention areas, the guide also recommends a number of process measures, including the number and percentage enrolled, engaged, and completing a specific program and/or service.

The guide warns that data availability and accessibility often present a challenge for jurisdictions. In order to access data on many of the suggested reintegration measures, jurisdictions must collect data from sources such as community-based service providers, probation, courts, and other government agencies (e.g., agencies overseeing mental health or substance abuse services). As a result, a critical step in developing a performance measurement framework is the identification of the data source for each measure, as well as the steps needed to collect the data. Also, confidentiality may become an issue when seeking information from both

* Many of these areas are components measured by the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) and COMPASS – two widely used risk assessment tools in the corrections field.

public and private agencies. The guide suggests obtaining a memorandum of understanding and/or signed release of consent forms to address confidentiality issues.

An implementation evaluation of the TJC initiative reported a number of challenges jurisdictions faced in implementing a performance measurement framework.¹¹ All jurisdictions faced many data-related difficulties with management information systems, accessing and analyzing data, measurement definitions, and information-sharing agreements. Even those agencies that had sufficient capacity for data collection and analysis often lacked opportunities for staff to review data and incorporate data into decision-making. The evaluation concluded that implementing a performance measurement system and using the data consistently, for both monitoring and decision-making, were the most difficult components of the TJC initiative.

Prisoner Reentry Initiative

In recognition of the problems jurisdictions have in implementing performance measurement systems and using the data to inform decision-making, the Prisoner Reentry Initiative, established by the Department of Justice and the Department of Labor, issued a brief to help grant teams tasked with monitoring the initiative. Authored by the Center for Effective Policy, *Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts* is a useful document that outlines principles for using performance measurement to manage agency operations within the context of reentry initiatives.¹² The process by which agencies use performance measurement to manage and monitor agency operations is referred to as performance management. Performance management is defined more specifically as “a system of regularly measuring the results (outcomes) of initiatives, using this information to increase efficiency and effectiveness in approaches or service delivery, and reporting important indicators of program operations and results.”¹³

The brief provides a roadmap for designing performance management systems, as indicated in the following five steps:

- 1) Identify the goals and objectives of the initiative;
- 2) Develop a logic model;
- 3) Specify the measurement framework (i.e., develop a data collection plan);
- 4) Collect and analyze performance data; and
- 5) Create various reporting structures to capture changes in measures over time, and use the information to inform decision-making.¹⁴

Step five is a key point, given the difficulties reentry initiatives face in using consistent forums to review and incorporate data into decision-making. The authors provide a number of suggestions to facilitate the use of data to inform policy and improve programming for reentry initiatives.

- Hold regular performance management meetings with staff to review the data and discuss implications;
- Set success targets and report on the progress toward reaching performance goals;
- Use data to develop and support budget requests; and
- Use data to explore alternative strategies to support the agencies goals.¹⁵

Thus, *Measuring the Impact of Reentry Efforts* emphasizes that performance management is a method through which reentry initiatives can gauge their performance in relation to targeted outcomes, with the primary purpose of using the information to shape decision-making and take action to improve future performance.

Transition from Prison to Community Initiative

The Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) initiative, which focused on prisoner reentry at the state level, provided pilot sites with a performance management framework that

required the use of both reintegration and recidivism outcome measures.¹⁶ However, TPC also incorporated system-change performance measures designed to help jurisdictions determine whether or not changes in policies, procedures, resources, and tools had been implemented properly. System-change measures included the use of risk/need assessments, case management, targeted interventions, and collaboration. In the area of assessment, performance measures were designed to evaluate the use of appropriate risk/needs tools. Data collected for this area included the number and percentage of offenders receiving comprehensive risk/need assessments. Case management performance data centered on the use of assessment information to prioritize resources, while measures on targeted interventions tracked offender engagement into, and successful completion of, reentry programming. Lastly, performance measures identified the presence of practices, policies, and partnerships that fostered collaboration. Examples of collaboration measures included the presence of memorandums of agreements and the existence of in-reach activities (i.e., activities in which community-based service providers are allowed inside jails or prison to provide services).

In summary, it appears the field of prisoner reentry has given a significant amount of attention to performance measurement frameworks and has a number of resources to guide practitioners, policy-makers, and funders. In fact, the prisoner reentry field may have the most well-developed performance measurement framework within the three different funding streams (adult reentry, delinquency prevention/intervention, and victim services). Unfortunately, the fields of delinquency prevention/intervention and victim services appear to have fewer resources dedicated to performance measurement; however, we were still able to find some key sources for guidance.

Performance Measurement in Delinquency Prevention and Intervention Programs

Among the current OJGAVS BCPME grantees are three delinquency prevention and intervention programs. Two of the programs, Mentoring Today and Urban Education, serve adolescents and young adults who are involved in the juvenile or adult criminal justice system in Washington, DC. Their primary program goals are to reduce reoffending in youth by providing an array of services. The third grantee is the Department of Human Services' Parent and Adolescent Support Services (PASS) program, a diversion program that intervenes with youth before they get involved with the juvenile justice system. PASS serves youth who engage in low-level delinquency offenses or status offenses (e.g., truancy, curfew violation, etc.) with the goal of reducing status offending, preventing more serious forms of delinquency, and diverting youth from formal justice system processing.

Several types of delinquency prevention and intervention programs are replicated nationally and some have technical assistance and training resources to assist with implementation, evaluation, and ongoing monitoring efforts. We examine each program type (mentoring, workforce development, diversion/truancy prevention), and draw from national training and technical assistance resources for guidance on performance measurement systems.

Mentoring Programs

Mentoring programs have been replicated widely, though perhaps not as frequently with court-involved youth.¹⁷ As such, performance measurement in mentoring programs incorporates a number of different outcome measures. For example, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) provides a list of program performance measures required for mentoring programs that are Title II Formula Grant recipients. In terms of required output/process measures, only the number of program youth served is a required measure for

their grantees.¹⁸ However, a variety of optional output/process measures are identified, including the number of hours of program staff training, number of hours of mentor training, number of planning activities conducted, average time from assignment of case to first meeting with program youth, average length of stay in program, and average tenure of mentors. OJJDP's mandatory outcome performance measures include the following:

- Number and percent of program youth who reoffended during the reporting period (short-term and long-term);
- Number and percent of program youth who have exhibited a decrease in substance use (short-term and long-term);
- Number and percent of youth who have exhibited a decrease in anti-social behavior during their reporting period (short-term and long-term);
- Number and percent of program youth who exhibited an improvement in family relationships (short-term and long-term);
- Number and percent of program youth who have exhibited a decrease in gang activities during the reporting period;
- Number and percent of program youth who have exhibited an increase in school attendance during the reporting period (short-term and long-term);
- The number and percent of program youth who exhibited an improvement in social competencies during the reporting period (short-term and long-term); and
- The number and percent of program youth who have successfully fulfilled all program obligations and requirements (short-term and long-term).¹⁹

As mentioned above, some of the performance measures at the national level lack specificity. In OJJDP's mandatory outcome measures listed above, no specific guidance is

provided on how to measure reoffending (i.e., rearrests, reincarceration, and reconvictions).

With regard to the time frame in which to measure reoffending, the OJJDP performance measure glossary elaborates on their interpretation of “short-term and long-term” outcomes. For direct service programs, short-term outcomes are considered to be the changes in a young person’s behavior, attitude, or knowledge by the time he or she completes the program. Long-term outcomes are defined as changes in a young person’s behavior, attitude, or knowledge 6 to 12 months after program completion. In addition, long-term outcomes should reflect the program’s primary goals, such as reductions in reoffending.

A short brief by the Urban Institute and the Center for What Works, designed to help nonprofits develop a performance measurement framework, suggests a slightly different set of mentoring program performance measures. Process/output measures recommended are:

- Number of activities to recruit youth and mentors;
- Number of youth recruited in relation to number of mentors recruited;
- Number and percent of youth enrolled in mentoring; and
- Number and percent of youth participating in mentoring.²⁰

With respect to outcome measures, Urban and What Works recommend measuring outcomes relevant to education, well-being, and social behavior. Unlike the OJJDP performance measures, these measures also include outcomes related to employment. For example:

- Number and percent of youth who increased their weekly hours of homework/reading;
- Number and percent of youth who showed a decrease in or absence of times they skipped class/a day of school;

- Number and percent of youth who showed improved self-esteem and decreased alienation;
- Number and percent of youth who show decreased substance abuse, arrests, gang involvement and improved relationships;
- Number and percent of youth who) a) improved their test performance/overall GPA, b) graduate from school;
- Number and percent of youth who are enrolled in college the first year after high school graduation; and
- Number and percent of youth who establish themselves in employment/career. ²¹

While the lists of performance measures provided by OJJDP and those suggested by the Urban Institute and the Center for What Works appear to cover the spectrum, one key outcome that is not captured is the quality of the mentoring relationship. Relationship quality is considered an important path through which mentoring influences positive developmental outcomes.²² Several dimensions of relationship quality have been identified for mentoring relationships, including authenticity, trust, and dependability,²³ as well as empathy, mutual engagement, and mutual empowerment.²⁴ Other measures of the mentoring relationship are related to the “dosage” of the intervention, and could be measured through administrative records by examining the duration, frequency, and consistency of the relationship. Another measure of the relationship could be whether or not the mentor’s approach is youth driven (i.e., mentoring activities are based more on the youth’s interests, choices, and goals) or prescriptive (i.e., mentoring activities are more or less directed by the adult mentor, based on the adult mentor’s goals).²⁵ Self-report surveys, in-depth interviews with mentors, parents, and mentees,

focus groups, and observation are likely to be the most consistent means to gather information about the quality of the relationship.²⁶ An example of a survey used to assess relationship quality (which is in the public domain and is therefore available for use by programs at no fee) is the *Youth Survey: Measuring the Quality of Youth-Mentor Relationships*.²⁷ Questions from this survey were originally used in an evaluation of Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring relationships. The survey measures the extent to which youth think their mentor takes their preferences and interests into account (capturing a youth-centered approach), the extent to which youth feel emotionally engaged in and enjoy the mentoring relationship (measuring emotional engagement) and the extent to which youth are dissatisfied with the mentoring relationship (degree of dissatisfaction).

Employment/Workforce Development Programs

Resources on performance measurement for youth employment and workforce development programs are extremely limited. Most of the guidance for performance measurement in this arena stems from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, which authorized funding for a number of work- and education-related programs and supports for youth between the ages of 14 and 21. The WIA also established several performance measures that can be used as a guide for assessing local job training and employment programs for youth. For youth from 14 through 18 years old, performance measures under WIA youth programs assess:

- Skill attainment rate: measures the achievement of basic, work readiness or occupational skills while receiving services;
- Diploma or equivalent attainment rate of those who enter without a diploma or equivalent: measures the number of youth who receive one by

- the time they leave services. (Note that youth who are in school and leave services, but remain in school are excluded from this measure); and
- Retention rate: Measures the proportion of youth who are in the following activities 6 months after they leave services:
 - Post-secondary education
 - Advanced training
 - Employment
 - Military service
 - Qualified apprenticeships²⁸

For youth between the ages of 19 to 21, WIA's performance measures are:

- Entered employment rate: Measures the number of youth who didn't have a job before services who subsequently obtained a job after services;
- Employment retention rate: Measures the number of youth who had a job after leaving services and still had a job 6 months later;
- Earnings change: compares earnings youth had before services and 6 months after services; and
- Credential rate: Measures acquisition of recognized credentials 6 months after services by youth who were in jobs, or further education services. Credentials defined locally.²⁹

As noted previously, performance measures at the national level can sometimes be a bit broad since they are providing guidance to a variety of programs. For example, the last performance measure states "Credentials defined locally," which we interpret as local jurisdictions having the flexibility to select the types of programs and/or specific

vocational/education areas they wish to utilize in their performance metrics. However, while precise definitions of the terms were not provided, there is an online resource that provides the specific information required to conduct a calculation for each performance measure listed above.*

One program that receives funding under WIA is Job Corp. Job Corp, which provides economically disadvantaged youth with academic, vocational, and employability skills, has its own performance measurement system. Some of the performance measures for Job Corp participants are:

- High School Diploma or High School Equivalency Attainment Rate;
- Career Technical Training (CTT) Completion Rate;
- Combination High School Diploma or High School Equivalency, and CTT Attainment Rate;
- Average Literacy Gain;
- Average Numeracy Gain; and
- CTT Industry-recognized Credential Attainment Rate.³⁰

Additional possible performance measures beyond job placement rates include measures capturing wages, benefits, formality of employment (existence of contract), type of employment (full-time, part-time, or temporary), subsidized or unsubsidized employment, job satisfaction, and job mobility/promotion. Such measures go beyond attainment or stability of job placement and provide information relevant to the quality of employment.

* U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration: *Office of Job Corps Performance Management System Overview Guide*. Retrieved on November 21, 2014 at http://www.jobcorps.gov/Libraries/pdf/jc_performance_management_system_overview_guide.sflb

Diversion Programs

Diversion programs for adolescents committing status offenses, or other minor forms of delinquency (, e.g., shoplifting) have been implemented in a number of states and local jurisdictions. Although juvenile diversion programming may vary, at a minimum they provide youth an alternative to formal court processing, with the hope of reducing the likelihood of recidivism, by providing appropriate services to youth and their families. There are a few important sources for guidance on the development of performance measurement systems for juvenile diversion programs, including resources available on OJJDP's website. Among OJJDP's online tools is a list of diversion program performance measures designated for programs receiving Title II Formula Grants. Notably, these performance measures closely resemble OJJDP's performance measures for mentoring programs. For example, the only required process/output performance measure for diversion programs is the number of program youth served. Other recommended process/output performance measures for diversion programs include the number and percentage of program staff trained, number of hours of program staff training provided, number of program youth service hours completed, and the average length of stay in the diversion program. Finally, while OJJDP's required outcome performance measures for diversion programs are also similar to mentoring programs, far fewer outcome measures are required for diversion programs. These include:

- Number and percent of program youth who offend during the reporting period (short-term and long-term);
- Number and percent of program youth who re-offend (short-term and long-term); and

- Number and percent of program youth completing program requirements (short-term).³¹

It is possible that OJJDP considers youth in diversion programs to be far less entrenched in delinquent behavior, and as a result have kept the required outcome measures minimal; however, they require both short-term and long-term outcomes. As referenced above in regard to mentoring program outcomes, OJJDP defines short-term outcomes as changes in behavior, attitude, or knowledge upon the completion of a program, and long-term outcomes as changes in behavior, attitude, or knowledge 6 to 12 months after completion of the program.

Another important source for guidance on performance measurement in diversion programs is *The Juvenile Diversion Guidebook* issued by the MacArthur Foundation's Models for Change initiative.³² The guidebook provides a list of basic outcome performance measures:

Short-term

- Number of juveniles referred to program;
- Number of juveniles diverted;
- Number of juveniles successfully completing terms of diversion;
- Amount of restitution ordered/paid;
- Hours of community service assigned/completed; and
- Number of diverted youth who commit new offenses while on diversion status.

Long-term

- Number of diverted juveniles who re-offend after diversion is completed;
- Retention in school and school progress; and

- Documentation of cost-benefits of diversion programs.³³

Unlike OJJDP, the guidebook does not provide specific guidance on how reoffending should be measured, or specify the number of months for short- and long-term follow-ups. However, the guidebook does raise a key issue, in that diversion programs may have more goals than simply to reduce recidivism. As stated above, diversion programs may want to examine outcome measures that explore youths' school engagement and retention and/or cost savings provided by the diversion program.

Along with the recommendation of collecting data on outcome performance measures, the *Juvenile Diversion Guidebook* also highlights the importance of establishing ongoing quality assurance processes to ensure program quality and fidelity. In order to monitor program fidelity, programs should collect data on the number of youth referred and accepted to the program, length of time youth spend in the program, and the characteristics of youth participating in the program to ensure the program is serving the target population. Also, the collection of other output measures, such as number of youth screened and assessed, number of youth who attend weekly sessions, and whether referring entities receive timely progress reports, can ensure that the program is complying with its own policies and procedures.

One final example of diversion performance measures is from the Juvenile Justice Coalition of Minnesota. They issued a *Diversion Guidebook* to standardize the implementation and operation of quality diversion programs across the state.³⁴ The Minnesota *Diversion Guidebook* recommends the following four performance measures as key outcome indicators of a successful diversion program:

- Accountability: Youth successfully repairs harm to victim and/or community;

- Family Involvement: Family (as defined by youth) is involved in the process. Families need to understand the program's conditions, consequences and successful completion markers and connect the youth to supportive services and interventions if needed;
- Diversion Completion: Youth successfully completes the diversion requirements; and
- Recidivism: Youth does not commit a new offense and remains law abiding for 6 months following diversion completion.³⁵

Unfortunately, the performance measures listed in the Minnesota *Diversion Guidebook* lack specificity. The performance measures listed above appear to resemble broad goals rather than specific performance measures. While this may be a limitation, their recommendation that family involvement and youth accountability be included in performance measures for diversion programs is unique and certainly worthy of consideration.

Although resources on performance measurement in the field of delinquency prevention/intervention are not as robust as in the field of criminal justice and prisoner reentry, the resources mentioned do provide solid guidance on performance measures for delinquency prevention/intervention programs. Additionally, resources on performance measures in the areas of mentoring, workforce development, and diversion extend consideration of performance measures beyond simply reoffending, and highlight several outcome measures critical for positive youth development.

Performance Measures and Crime Victim Assistance Services

Under the BCPME grant there are six programs dedicated to serving crime victims. Most of these programs are focused on providing direct services and legal assistance to domestic violence victims, although some programs address victims of other crimes as well. While there is a wealth of guidance on performance measures for prisoner reentry initiatives, and some for juvenile delinquency prevention and intervention programs, information on performance measurement frameworks for victim services programs is limited. In *Vision 21: Transforming Victim Services, Final Report*, a comprehensive report designed to promote strategic changes in the field of victim services, the authors note that the field lacks a strong knowledge base that can guide practitioners, policy-makers, and funders.³⁶ The report highlights the need for more empirical research that could promote a better understanding of the causes and consequences of victimization. Equally important is the report's call for more research in the area of program evaluation and evidence-based practices related to serving crime victims. Thus, developing performance measurement frameworks for victim assistance programs is a timely effort and critical to building the capacity of victim services agencies, so that they may conduct program evaluations that can improve program implementation and outcomes in the field.

For initial guidance on performance measures in crime victim assistance services, BJA's Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement has identified a number of commonly used performance measures for programs providing services to victims.

Output/process measures listed include:

- Number of counseling sessions provided;
- Number of office walk-in clients;
- Number of referrals made;

- Number of closed cases;
- Number of interagency meetings held;
- Number of people attending support groups;
- Number of case disposition letters sent or calls made to victims and police officers;
- Number of follow-up contacts;
- Number of court protection orders extended beyond two weeks;
- Number of services offered;
- Number of unmet service needs (e.g., crisis intervention at the crime scene or updates on the status of one's case);
- Number of crime related problems (e.g., medical, financial, and job related);
- Number of volunteers;
- Number of staff hours by activity;
- Number of domestic violence training sessions provided;
- Number of calls to service hotline; and
- Type of services offered.³⁷

Along with commonly used output/process measures, BJA lists commonly used outcome measures.

- Improved system efficiency (e.g., decrease in time spent by witnesses waiting to testify in court);
- Crime impact on victim's relationships and daily activities;
- Change in victim service program usage;
- Change in satisfaction with agency services received;

- Change in satisfaction with case outcome;
- Change in neighborhood satisfaction;
- Change in psychological functioning (e.g., depression, hostility, and anxiety);
- Change in tangible social support;
- Change in emotional social support;
- Less physical reabuse;
- Decrease in fear of crime;
- Decrease in perceived vulnerability to misfortunes (e.g., feeling likely to be in a car accident or hospitalized in the near future);
- Decrease in self-blame;
- Change in victim's confidence in police effectiveness;
- Change in reporting future incidents to police;
- Change in attending court and assisting the prosecution; and
- Change in victim's attitude toward the courts.³⁸

Note that among these commonly used outcomes are several measures that involve some degree of change in victims' lives (e.g., decrease in fear of crime, decrease in self-blame, etc.).

Although BJA does not indicate the actual measures programs should use to assess outcomes specific to the degree of change in victims' lives, the Urban Institute does provide some guidance through a published brief entitled *Evaluation Guidebook: For Projects Funded by S.T.O.P (Services Training Officers Prosecutors) Formula Grants Under the Violence Against Women Act*.³⁹

In discussing the tools used to assess short- and long-term outcomes that indicate changes in the lives of victims, the Urban Institute's *Evaluation Guidebook* begins by identifying the

difference between short- and long-term outcomes for victims of violence. Short-term outcomes are identified as changes that occur in victims' lives that are more immediate and occur in smaller increments. For example, short-term outcomes may refer to whether or not a victim feels the intervention was effective in meeting her/his immediate needs, whether or not a victim gained more information regarding referrals and resources, and/or whether or not the victim was satisfied with the program. The hope is that short-term outcomes lead to long-term outcomes in the safety and well-being of victims. Long-term outcomes are considered outcomes that may take months or years to occur (although no definitive time frame is given). Examples of long-term outcomes could be decreases in symptoms of depression and/or trauma, increases in self-esteem, and increases in psychological or economic well-being.

In regard to measures used to assess outcomes that indicate changes in the lives of victims, the *Evaluation Guidebook* cautions that there are generally fewer standardized measures of short-term outcomes for victims. As a result, programs may need to develop their own surveys to assess short-term outcomes. The guidebook authors raise some key questions to consider when developing such surveys. The questions are as follows:

- **What specifically** did survivors receive from this program/service/intervention?
- **How much** did survivors receive from this program/service/intervention (i.e., how much time, how many units of service)?
- **How effective** did survivors feel this intervention was in meeting their needs?
- **How satisfied** were survivors with the various components of this intervention?
- If this program/service/intervention was designed to result in any tangible measurable change in survivors' lives (e.g., change of residence, new financial resources), **did this change occur?**⁴⁰

In terms of outcomes that assess long-term changes in victims' lives (e.g. changes in the level of violent victimization, and/or changes in symptoms of depression and/or trauma), the *Evaluation Guidebook* strongly recommends using standardized tools that previously have been used in research on victims of violence. The authors acknowledge that many programs may not have the resources or expertise to assess long-term outcomes. However, if programs do have the required resources to assess long-term outcomes, the guidebook recommends a number of tools, and gives a short description of the tool and additional resource information. Tools described include those that assess self-esteem, perceived social support, coping strategies and depression, as well as measures to assess victims' safety in terms of physical, psychological, and/or sexual violence. The authors note that some of the measures are copyrighted and would have to be obtained directly from the publisher of those measures.

While the *Evaluation Guidebook* is meant to provide program personnel with information on assessing both short- and long-term outcomes, it recommends that victim services programs funded by STOP grants under the Violence Against Women Act should primarily focus on short-term outcomes as opposed to long-term changes in the safety and well-being of victims. The authors warn that long-term outcomes in the safety and well-being of victims may not only take a long time to occur, but may also take multiple interventions that comprehensively target change at the individual, organizational, and system levels. The guidebook also advises that direct service programs that focus exclusively on victims should not be expected to decrease the violence in women's lives.

Victim-based direct service programs can provide support, information, assistance, immediate safety for women and/or psychological counseling, but they are not designed to decrease the perpetrators' abuse or end the risk of rape. A coordinated community

response that holds perpetrators accountable for their behavior is necessary to decrease the risk of continued abuse and sexual assault.⁴¹

Conclusion

We reviewed several examples of performance measures used within the prisoner reentry, delinquency prevention and intervention, and victim assistance fields. In concluding our review, we would be remiss not to raise a few important points about generating performance measures for OJGAVS programs. First, it is important to remember that specificity is key in designing any performance measurement framework. In an audit of performance measures for Pennsylvania's Committee on Crime and Delinquency, the Justice Research and Statistics Association recommends that in creating performance measures, "The wording should indicate the subject of the measure; how the measure will be collected; when the measure will be collected; in what format the data will be collected; and, in cases when calculations are required, the formula to conduct the calculation."⁴² Specificity can enhance the accuracy and reliability of performance measures and ensure standardization across several agencies, offices, and/or programs. Second, as Behn pointed out, the goal of performance measurement is to improve performance.⁴³ Thus, developing methods for using performance measurement to manage programs is critical. Equally important for OJGAVS and OJGAVS grantees is developing forums to review performance measurement data and to develop methods through which the data are used to inform decision-making and improve program performance. OJGAVS grantees that learn to manage programs through the use of performance measurement data will then be able to provide OJGAVS with far more useful information, and, in turn, OJGAVS will be able to use performance data to align resources more effectively.

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