

## SPEP Program/Service Classification Guide

### Major Therapeutic Program Approaches and Types of Services within Each Approach Identified in the Current Classification Scheme for Research on the Effectiveness of Programs for Juvenile Offenders

#### SPEP Service Type Categories: Definitions, Descriptions, and Examples from Research Studies

**Restorative services.** Services of this sort aim to repair the harm done by the juvenile's delinquent behavior by requiring some compensation to victims or reparations via community service. They may also involve some form of direct reconciliation between victims and offenders. Two different intervention types appear in the research, sometimes combined in the same service array:

- **Restitution/Community Service.** Offenders provide financial compensation to the victims and/or perform community service. Restitution focuses on making the offender accountable to the community through some form of service/payment, e.g., fines or payment/service to the victim; community service.

*Example from research study: The service provides the means for juveniles to become accountable for their crimes while compensating victims for their loss. Youthful offenders are held accountable for their conduct by performing a work service for the community in an effort to aid the rehabilitation of the delinquent youth and/or to compensate the victims for losses suffered.*

*Example from research study: The service is comprised chiefly of community service activities as restitution. The program works with Habitat for Humanity, Special Olympics, food drives, the Humane Society, tutoring and convalescent homes.*

*Example from research study: Youths were required to pay monetary restitution to the victims of their crimes or, if there was no outstanding monetary loss, they were required to complete a specified number of community service hours.*

- **Mediation.** Offenders apologize to their victims in spoken or written form and may meet with them under supervision. These interventions typically also include a restitution component. A counselor mediates/arbitrates between parties in conflict or between victim and offender.

*Example from research study: Service involved the mediation of victim-youth conflicts via an arbitration meeting.*

**Counseling and its variants.** This diverse and popular service approach is characterized by a personal relationship between the offender and a responsible adult who attempts to exercise influence on the juvenile's feelings, cognitions, and behavior. Family members or peers may also be involved and the peer group itself may take the lead role in the relationship. The major variants on this intervention approach that appear in sufficient numbers in the research to warrant separate consideration are the following:

- **Individual counseling.** To include Individual Counseling, Therapy, Psychotherapy, Guidance – Any of a range of treatment techniques that focus on psychological or interpersonal problems or issues faced by an individual and that involves a one-on-one relationship with a therapist or counselor.

*Example from research study: Counseling sessions are provided to address client problems on a weekly basis or more if needed. Each student receives a minimum of one hour of individual counseling per week. Counseling sessions also offer the opportunity to discuss family problems and conflicts and will provide time to counsel clients on specific problems they experience during the day, such as self-esteem issues, peer relationships, disruptive classroom behavior, truancy, and academic problems.*

*Example from research study: The student becomes a participant in ongoing individual counseling sessions held to address individual problems as well as family and community obligations. These sessions provide time to discuss the student's disruptive behavior in the classroom, community, and home.*

- **Mentoring by a volunteer or paraprofessional.** An individual provides support, friendship, advice, and/or assistance to the delinquent individual. The mentor spends time with the juvenile on a regular basis involving activities such as sports, movies, helping with homework, etc. The mentor does not necessarily have to be an adult, but may be an older youth.

*Example from research study: The service consists of matching an appropriate adult volunteer to an at-risk youth. Volunteers provide positive role modeling behaviors and mentoring of appropriate behaviors, monitoring of school and community behaviors, constant discussion of life choices, access to knowledge, guidance to families, and exposure to new experiences and opportunities.*

*Example from research study: The presence of a consistent positive role model provides the youth an opportunity to bond with another person in their community who establishes clear rules and boundaries for both behavior and academic performance.*

- **Family counseling.** To include Family Counseling, Family Systems Intervention, Functional Family Therapy – Any of a range of treatment techniques that focus on family dynamics as a factor impacting delinquent behavior. This type of treatment may encompass the entire family, but at a minimum involves the child and his or her parent(s).

*Example from research study: The service involves conducting intensive family counseling with both parents, juveniles, and other family members. Family treatment plans are developed to assist families in creating goals, which will help them change dysfunctional behavior patterns. Treatment issues addressed include family communication skills, anger control in the home, setting clear rules and boundaries for behavior, and parenting skills.*

*Example from research study: Family therapy intervention includes family preservation services, face-to-face and telephone consultation with family members, home visits, referral and consultation with schools and other community agencies, family assessment and evaluation.*

- **Family crisis counseling.** The availability of a trained individual to respond either over the phone or in person to a crisis involving the juvenile and/or his or her family. This is often a short term treatment service.

*Example from research study: 7 day-a-week telephone crisis service.*

- **Group counseling led by a therapist.** Any of a range of treatment techniques that focus on psychological or interpersonal problems or issues faced by an individual that involves a group of youths interacting with each other

*Example from research study: Treatment involved formal, insight-oriented discussions of the problem situations various members had been involved in during the week.*

*Example from research study: Through guided discussions in a group counseling format and planned activities youth have the opportunity to be part of a group where positive interaction occurs, and encouragement of positive behavior is provided through modeling and social reinforcement.*

- **Mixed counseling**—combinations of any of the above in equal proportion and often involves individual, group, and/or family. May also include supplemental referrals for other services, a common form used for diversion services.

**Skill building services.** These services provide instruction, practice, incentives, and other such activities and inducements aimed at developing skills that will help the juvenile control his/her behavior and/or enhance the ability to participate in normative prosocial functions. The main forms of these services are the following:

- **Behavior management**—behavior management and other such services that reward selected behaviors. This treatment operates on the basic principle that individuals will adapt their behavior in response to positive (rewards) and negative (punishment) responses from their environment. Typically, a set of goals reflecting specific behaviors is agreed upon. If the goals are achieved the individual is rewarded, if not there is a cost or penalty either in terms of not receiving the reward or other sanctions. Some specific versions of services of this type include:
  - Behavioral contracting—youth agree to a contract that specifies certain rewards for certain positive behaviors

- Contingency management—rewards and possibly penalties are applied in response to positive or negative behaviors according to some predefined scheme. Token economies in residential facilities are one example of this type of program.

*Example from research study: Each youth has an individual service plan that describes the goals and time line the youth must abide by to successfully complete the service. Positive behaviors are rewarded and privileges are withheld for non-achievement.*

*Example from research study: The service rewards positive behavior at schools, homes, and within the service. Certain days are set aside for incentives. Clients may earn certain privileges by performing well and demonstrating consistent and positive behaviors.*

*Example from research study: Boys could earn mini-bike time for: bike safety, performing maintenance at scheduled times, and displaying appropriate social behaviors (including attending school regularly, abstaining from criminal activities and status offenses, being on time for group meetings, and cooperating with staff and peers).*

- **Cognitive-behavioral therapy.** The goal of cognitive behavioral therapy is to correct an individual's faulty cognitions or perceptions of themselves or the world around them. Additionally, this type of therapy provides skills individuals can use to monitor their thought patterns and correct their behavior as situations unfold around them. This type of treatment element may also focus specifically on relapse prevention by having juveniles evaluate situations that may lead to a relapse of delinquent behavior and plan for how to either avoid them or cope with them effectively.

*Example from research study: The program utilized a cognitive-behavioral, relapse approach- changing distorted thought patterns, reducing deviant interests, and developing healthy patterns of thought and behavior.*

- **Social skills training.** Based on the premise that individuals who lack appropriate social skills may be perceived as threatening, disruptive, or otherwise deviant. Interpersonal skill building is a treatment technique focusing on developing the social skills required for an individual to interact in a positive way with others. The basic skills model begins with an individual's goals, progresses to how these goals should be translated into appropriate and effective social behaviors, and concludes with the impact of the behavior on the social environment. Typical training techniques are instruction, modeling of behavior, practice and rehearsal, feedback, reinforcement. May also include training in a set of techniques, such as conflict resolution or decision making, that focus on how to effectively deal with specific types of problems or issues that an individual may confront in interacting with others.

*Example from research study: Communication skills included group activities that encourage effective communication between the youths and their peers, family members, and communities. Assertiveness skills training involved group activities to increase youth skills in assertive communication methods as opposed to passive or aggressive communication styles.*

*Example from research study: The service helps youth and their families learn appropriate positive communication skills. Subjects are given an opportunity to practice skills in listening, talking with respect, setting and maintaining appropriate house rules and negotiating conflicts.*

*Example from research study: The service offers classes on conflict resolution and making*

*appropriate decisions concerning behaviors and consequences.*

- **Challenge programs**—interventions with therapeutic component(s) that provide opportunities for experiential learning by mastering difficult or stressful tasks. Juveniles participate in physically challenging activities such as hiking, ropes courses, or canoeing. The objective of these services, based in the philosophy of experiential education, is twofold: First, to teach self-esteem and confidence through the mastery of a progressively more difficult set of physically challenging tasks; and second, to introduce participants to the prosocial interpersonal skills (i.e., problem solving, communication, trust, etc.) required to work successfully as a group.

*Example from research study: The survival program deliberately induced physical challenge including long marches, rappelling, forging streams, student expeditions, and a solo wilderness experience.*

- **Remedial academic program**; for example, tutoring, GED programs. To include Remedial Education—any education designed to address deficits in a juvenile’s education and bring him or her up to the level expected of children in his or her age group.

*Example from research study: The service was based on an academic treatment model which provided individual instruction in functional areas of greatest learning deficiency, e.g., expressive and written language, reading or arithmetic. During treatment sessions, the learning disabilities specialist and participant worked to improve academic skills and attitudes toward school with materials, which had been carefully selected to be compatible with the adolescent's strongest learning modality (visual, auditory, or motor).*

*Example from research study: Each week the volunteers help the youth with any homework or reading assignments.*

- **Job related training**—vocational counseling, job training, or job placement arranged to provide direct work experience. The overall emphasis is on preparing the juvenile to enter the work force. Service may include training job-related skills (e.g., interviewing), non-paid work service (non-restitution based), and other such employment related elements.

*Example from research study: The service encourages youth to train for and enter the work force to improve their self-esteem, independence, employment skills and marketability. The service focuses on increasing basic skills, as well as focusing on computer and other technology skills that will improve the opportunities of participants in a competitive job market.*

*Example from research study: Juveniles conducted supervised work with various public service agencies throughout the community. Volunteers and the Program Manager monitor the juvenile for his/her progress.*