

Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) Summary

- ***Principle of Effective Classification***
 - There are 4 principles of effective classification – risk, need, responsivity, and the override principle (see Andrews, Bonta, Hoge, 1990 and Kennedy, 2000).
 - Risk principle
 - There are two parts to the risk principle: 1) identification of risk factors and 2) matching the risk level of the offender to the appropriate type of treatment and supervision. Prior research has now identified the known predictors of recidivism (i.e., predictors of what causes any individual to commit crime). These predictors are: antisocial attitudes, antisocial peers, antisocial personality, history of antisocial behavior, family interaction and relationships, low educational and vocational achievement, and substance abuse. In addition, there are minor predictors of recidivism – meaning that while these predict recidivism – these factors are not strong predictors. The factors include: personal distress, lower class origins, and biological factors.
 - Risk factors can be categorized into dynamic or static risk factors. Dynamic risk factors are those factors that are predictive of recidivism but can change with appropriate interventions. For example, a juvenile's current substance abuse problem is a dynamic risk factor because with appropriate interventions, the problem may be reduced. Dynamic risk factors are also called criminogenic needs because they should be targets for correctional interventions to achieve risk reduction.
 - Static risk factors are those factors that are predictive of criminal behavior but cannot change with any type of intervention. For example, prior criminal history is a static risk factor. Prior criminal history cannot change with any type of intervention.
 - The second part of the risk principle requires that a juvenile's risk level is matched to the level of treatment and supervision. That is, higher risk juveniles require more intensive treatment and supervision for a longer period of time in order to reduce their risk of committing another crime. In addition, research has shown that placing a low risk offender into an intensive treatment program may serve to make the offender worse and thus, increase his/her chance of recidivating.
 - Need principle
 - The second principle of effective classification is the need principle. This principle states that by assessing and targeting a juvenile's criminogenic needs, agencies can reduce their probability of recidivism. Criminogenic needs include: antisocial attitudes, antisocial peers, antisocial personality, history of antisocial behavior, family interaction and relationships, low educational and vocational achievement, and substance abuse (dynamic risk factors).

- The second part of the need principle states that agencies should match the type of treatment to the criminogenic needs of the juvenile. For example, if a juvenile is assessed as having a high need in substance abuse, the juvenile would need substance abuse treatment. Also, if a juvenile has displayed antisocial thinking and antisocial behavior, that individual would require cognitive interventions that target attitudes and skills training.
- Responsivity principle
 - This principle states that juveniles have different learning styles and will respond and adjust differently to treatment interventions. As such, agencies should assess responsivity characteristics and then match these characteristics to the program and staff. Important responsivity factors to assess for the correctional population include: IQ, motivation, and personality characteristics such as: anxiety, depression, self-esteem, and psychopathy. In addition, demographic characteristics such as age, race, and gender may be responsivity characteristics. Once these factors are assessed, agencies should match the characteristics of the juvenile to the type of treatment and to the characteristics of the staff.
 - There are two types of responsivity – general and specific. General responsivity states, in general, offenders will respond to cognitive behavioral interventions. Specific responsivity refers to specific characteristics that juveniles may possess that may be barriers to success in programming and interventions. These specific characteristics may include but not limited to: anxiety, antisocial personality, motivation. For example, juveniles who are highly anxious may not respond well to very intensive confrontational groups or counselors. In addition, mentally challenged juveniles may respond well to well monitored but low stress environments.
- Override principle
 - The fourth principle of effective classification is the override principle. This principle states that after consideration of risk, need, and responsivity the ultimate decision regarding the juvenile should be made by professionals.
- ***Generations of Risk Assessments***
 - Four generations of risk assessments (Bonta 1996)
 - The assessment of offenders has been a long-standing practice in corrections. For example, Lombroso described “atavistic” features and tried to classify offenders according to these features. The practice of assessment of offenders can be grouped into four generations. The first generation risk assessments are those bio-psycho-social assessments that require a professional to interview an offender and then make a professional judgment of risk and need based on the professional’s experience. The problems with these first generation risk assessments were that they were very subjective and subject to discretion. These

assessments made accountability and fairness difficult and prediction of recidivism is very poor with these instruments.

- The second generation assessments were more a bit of an improvement of the first generation in that items were based on data that differentiated delinquents from non-delinquents. While this development was a major improvement over the younger generation, there was still a problem. These assessments were not treatment/programming friendly. That is, many of the factors that were included in these assessments were static or historical in nature and did not change with interventions.
 - The third generation assessments improved on the second generation assessments by including factors that were empirically based and dynamic (i.e., the factors can change with appropriate interventions). These instruments go beyond simple statistical risk prediction to include assessment of criminogenic needs in order to reduce the juvenile's risk of recidivism. Thus, these instruments allow agencies to match the risk and needs of the juveniles to interventions to reduce their chances of recidivism.
 - There are now some assessments which may be called fourth generation assessments because they link assessments with programming through the use case management mechanisms. These assessments link risk, need, and responsibility through case management to promote good planning and delivery of services.
- Validity of assessments differentiated by generation
- Andrews, Bonta, Wormith (2006) examined the predictive validity of the different generations of risk assessments. The first generation risk assessments (unstructured clinical judgment) predicted general recidivism in the range of .03 to .14 with the average being .10. The second generation risk assessments (such as PCL-R, Wisconsin, and SFS) had predictive validity in the range of .26 to .46. The third generation assessments (LSI-R) had an average predictive validity for general recidivism of .36 and the fourth generation (LS/CMI) had a predictive validity of .41. Accordingly, with the improvement in each generation there was improvement in the predictive power of the instrument.

○ ***Actuarial and Objective Assessments***

- Actuarial risk/need assessments are those assessments that are data-driven and empirically based which allow the user to obtain a risk or need score (Holsinger, Lurigio, Latessa, 2001). These scores can then be used by staff to categorize juveniles according to their likelihood of recidivating and to the types of programming needed to reduce the probability of recidivism. One of the major benefits of these classification instruments is that they allow agencies to allocate resources and staff hours more optimally and effectively. Agencies can identify which juveniles require more intensive treatment and supervision and focus more efforts on these juveniles; thus using staff more efficiently and cost-effectively. For example, high risk juveniles should be monitored more closely and require more intensive interventions than low risk juveniles. Accordingly, low risk

juveniles do not require as intensive supervision and interventions and therefore, staff will be able to focus more attention and time to the higher risk youth.

- In addition to the benefits listed above, these types of assessments are better predictors of recidivism than gut-level feelings. The statistical approaches result in more accurate and consistent decision making because cognitive errors and perceptual biases are removed with these types of instruments. These assessments are based on large sets of samples that contain a variety of offender characteristics. As such, these instruments result in objective and fair decisions that are applicable to a wide-range of offenders which allow staff to make uniform and reliable decisions about outcomes.

- ***Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory***

- The Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) is a risk/need instrument designed to aid professional workers responsible for assessing youthful offenders and in the formulation of a case plan/treatment plan. Probation officers, court workers, youth workers, psychologists, and social workers are among the professionals who might make use of the instrument. It is in the form of a checklist designed to provide a detailed survey of risk and need factors exhibited by the youth and to provide a linkage between these factors and the development of a case plan.
- The YLS/CMI examines 42 risk/need factors across the following 8 domains:
 - Prior and Current Offenses
 - Family Circumstances/Parenting
 - Education/Employment
 - Peer Relations
 - Substance Use
 - Leisure/Recreation
 - Personality/Behavior
 - Attitudes/Orientation
- The scoring for the instrument is dichotomous meaning that if the juvenile meets the criteria the item is marked as a risk factor. The higher the YLS/CMI score, the greater the likelihood of recidivism.
- The YLS/CMI identifies the major correlates of delinquency (e.g., criminogenic needs) and responsivity factors to assist the youth worker in developing a case/treatment plan. The YLS/CMI identifies the youth's level of risk and need so that the youth worker can tailor supervision and treatment to the risk/need level.
- The YLS/CMI is a general risk/need assessment instrument. Accordingly, it will identify the general risk and needs of youthful offenders. However, there may be certain types of offenders which would require additional assessments to provide a better prediction of their risk/need levels. For example, sex offenders are one population which would require an additional sexual offending assessment tool to uncover the risk associated with this particular behavior. Therefore, the YLS/CMI has an override section which allows for professional discretion in determining supervision and treatment level after consideration of risk and need.

However, the YLS/CMI should not be overridden more than 10 percent of the time unless the staff member has a specific caseload such as sex offenders.

Conducting the YLS/CMI

- The Inventory was originally designed for application at the predisposition stage of processing, but assessments yielded by the YLS/CMI are relevant to all phases of the judicial decision making process: pretrial detention, pre-adjudicatory diversion, disposition/sentencing, and case planning within institutional and community contexts.
- The instrument was designed to be scored as a checklist after completion of a structured interview with youth. The initial interview with the youth requires approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to conduct. The youth is interviewed independent of the parents. Other collateral information should be used to verify youth reports. After completion of the interview, the youth worker scores the YLS/CMI using standardized scoring criteria.

Re-Assessing With the YLS/CMI

- Assessment is not a one-time process but an on-going process. Furthermore, the YLS/CMI is a newer generation risk/need assessment meaning that to use the instrument to its fullest potential, the results should be used in case management/case planning. Therefore, the YLS/CMI may be used to reassess the risk and needs of the youth.

Benefits of the YLS/CMI

- There are multiple benefits to using the YLS/CMI (Hoge, 2002). The benefits include:
 - The instrument is derived from a measure (the LSI-R) that has proven to be a valid and reliable measure of risk for a wide variety of adult offenders.
 - The instrument can be administered by frontline staff after proper training in administration and scoring and does not require special educational credentials.
 - The instrument is based on the latest theory and research regarding the causes and correlates of juvenile delinquency. The instrument examines known predictors of recidivism. As such, the instrument may provide protection where judgments are questioned.
 - The instrument measures multiple domains of recidivism. Furthermore, there are multiple predictors of each domain.
 - The instrument assists in determining risk and need levels for case planning and supervision.
 - The instrument can be used to reassess the juveniles to determine if intermediate objectives (i.e., target behaviors) are being met by agencies.
 - Facilitates communication among professionals.
 - The instrument helps ensure consistency in decision-making. The instrument reduces the bias and subjective decision-making processes with the juvenile justice system resulting in more efficient and uniform decision-making processes.

Validity and Reliability of the YLS/CMI

- While research on the YLS/CMI is evolving, Schmidt, Hoge, and Gomes (2005) examined the inter-rater reliability, concurrent validity, and predictive validity of the YLS/CMI. Reliability refers to the consistency of case classification tool. A reliable tool will result in the same decisions being made about offenders irrespective of who is using the tool. In other words, a reliable tool will ensure that two different raters will reach the same conclusion on a specific offender. Furthermore, a reliable instrument will led to better decision making by removing the bias in decision-making.
 - The inter-rater reliability estimates¹ of all the subscales of the YLS/CMI ranged from .61 to .85 which indicates there was a fairly strong inter-rater reliability. Hence, the results suggest that the YLS/CMI is a reliable instrument that can provide a consistent risk/need profile for juvenile offenders.
- Validity refers to the accuracy of the instrument to predict outcome (i.e., recidivism). A valid and reliable instrument identifies discrete groups of offenders who pose different levels of risk to public safety. There are different types of validity. Concurrent validity is the ability of an instrument to be correlated with another known valid predictor of outcome.
 - The study examined the concurrent validity of the YLS/CMI with the Child Behavioral Checklist. The concurrent validity estimates were statistically significant for most scales except for the parent internalizing scale for females indicating a strong relationship between the YLS/CMI and the CBCL.
- The second type of validity is predictive validity which refers to the ability of the instrument to predict outcome. For the current study, recidivism was measured as any re-offending and any serious re-offending.
 - Higher YLS/CMI scores were significantly associated with increased serious re-offending, increased number of new offenses, and a decreased time to offend for the entire sample. Higher-risk juveniles, regardless of gender, were found to commit more re-offenses, take a shorter time to reoffend, and were more likely to commit a serious offenses. The absence of a gender interaction effect suggests that the YLS/CMI is sound and valid in predicting recidivism patterns across gender.

From : http://www.kansas.gov/jja/documents/LegAff_2009_CJJ_YLSsummary.pdf
