

OYA Principles of Effective Intervention

1. **Assess risk.** Offender risk/need assessments drive effective programs. Use objective, standardized, and validated assessment of youth risk and need factors.
2. **Target treatment to risk level of youth offenders.** Use proven treatment interventions that target known predictors of crime and recidivism to prepare youth offenders for success in the community.
3. **Develop and implement evidence-based programs.** Programs that scientifically designed research has demonstrated as effective in reducing recidivism.
4. **Use cognitive behavioral and social learning approaches in treatment services.** Systematic use of behavioral contingencies including rewards and/or incentives is an integral component of all treatment services. Train skills with guided practice (i.e., modeling, behavioral rehearsal, performance feedback, etc.).
5. **Conduct interventions in an appropriate setting,** matching youth and interventions based on an assessment of risk, need, and responsivity.
6. **Ensure fidelity of program to evidence-based model.** Well-trained staff implement programs. Staff deliver services as designed, beginning with assessment and continuing through aftercare. Staff receive ongoing training and clinical supervision.
7. **Address youth responsivity.** Treatment services and staff are matched to the needs and abilities of the youth, including motivation, personality characteristics, identity characteristics (age, gender, race, and ethnicity), and cognitive/intellectual abilities.
8. **Plan for reintegration.** Support youth offenders toward completion of treatment. Involve families, provide continuity in programming, and structured support during transitions in treatment, placement, and/or supervision level. Ensure youth receive specific aftercare services (e.g. relapse prevention, safety plans, etc.) and ongoing support in home communities.
9. **Evaluate programs and control quality.** Measure relevant practices and provide feedback to ensure quality. Conduct evaluations to establish evidence of reduced recidivism and replicate programs that produce the desired outcomes.
10. **Make certain programs are supported** by qualified and involved leadership and staff, and community partners and stakeholders who understand program objectives.



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