

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEPTM)

Please read prior to review of Service Score Results

IMPORTANT: The intended use of the SPEPTM is to optimize the effectiveness of reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. SPEP results are a reflection of service delivery quality *and* how the service is utilized by the juvenile court system.

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol score provides an assessment of a service's potential to impact recidivism reduction. It is not intended to serve as a grade, in the educational sense. The SPEP tool provides information on areas where a juvenile court and a service can improve its potential to positively impact recidivism reduction. The tool compares the service to services included in a meta analysis conducted by Dr. Mark Lipsey, Director of the Peabody Research Institute at Vanderbilt University.

The results of the meta analysis of 700+ studies on therapeutic services designed to reduce delinquency, found that there are 4 key factors that influence recidivism reduction. The SPEP score is derived from:

- **Service type philosophy:** Therapeutic services backed by research positively impact recidivism reduction, and are the only services eligible to go through the SPEP process (control oriented services such as boot camps or scare tactics can be harmful for youth). The potential impact a service has on recidivism reduction will vary depending upon the service type.
- **Quality of service delivery** (written protocol, staff training & supervision, response to drift)
- The **amount of service** (the number of hours and weeks a youth is receiving the service)
- Youth assessed as high or very high **risk to re-offend** (including aggressive or violent history of youth)

For more information on the SPEPTM process, please visit the EPISCenter website at:
<http://episcenter.psu.edu/juvenile/spep>

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What Qualifies as a SPEP™ SCOREable Service & What are the Scoring Options?

A SCOREable service: A service with sufficient data to produce a *Full SPEP™ Score*.

Full SPEP™ Score Requirements:

- Service matches a SPEP service type as defined in the SPEP Service Classification Guide.
- SPEP quality of service delivery ratings are complete and current (within the last year).
- A cohort has at least 10 juveniles accepted for intake into the service whose cases have been closed whether or not they received all of the intended service.
 - A cohort with fewer than 10 juveniles but otherwise has complete data would result in an **“Advisory” SPEP Score**.
- Valid risk scores for at least 80% of the juveniles in the cohort.
 - A cohort that has risk data for fewer than 80% but at least 60% of juveniles would result in an **“Interim” SPEP Score** – provided it can be shown that the offenses of those without risk scores do not differ significantly from those of juveniles with risk scores.
- Dosage information (service duration and contact hours) is available for all the juveniles in the cohort.

[SPEP Score Summary Template](#)

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