

# NEVADA YLS/CMI SUPPLEMENTAL ITEM RATING GUIDE & FAQs

USE THIS GUIDE & YLS SCORING CRITERIA FOR INITIAL  
YLS/CMI ASSESSMENTS AND COMMUNITY REASSESSMENTS

## General Scoring Rules:

**Handling discrepancies:** Sometimes different sources will provide discrepant information. If this is the case – go with the most credible source. If the sources are equally credible and there is no way to reconcile – omit the item.

**Whether to check an item – patterns vs single-events:** For some items within most domains, they could be checked based on a pattern of behavior or based on a single event if the event was serious. Obviously, a pattern of behavior is “stronger” evidence than a single event. If the item was checked based on weaker evidence (e.g., a single event), note this in the comments and consider it when making Part IV ratings and constructing a case plan.

## 1. PRIOR AND CURRENT OFFENSES / DISPOSITIONS

### Important Considerations:

**Conviction** – Conviction refers to receiving a “sentence” of some sort – which is related to a ‘disposition’ but not all types of dispositions would be counted as a conviction (for example, continuance for dismissal, pre-trial probation, etc. do NOT count).

### **What should NOT be considered under any of the items:**

- Referrals to diversion programs outside the purview of juvenile probation departments and youth parole do not count.
- Referrals to diversion programs within the juvenile probation department and youth parole that do not result in a sentence of some sort AND cannot be revisited for further penalty if the youth does not follow some order.
- Minor traffic offenses, CHINs (status offenses)
- Case dismissed without dispositional orders having been entered

**What SHOULD be considered as a general rule** - If a youth or their parent admits to any offenses that would count under these items (meaning they state that there has been a prior disposition, etc.), but the rater cannot find evidence of a previous record (for example, they were on probation in another state), take the self-report as true – particularly because this admission makes them look bad and in general we expect people to try and make themselves look better not worse.

- a. **Three or more prior convictions (adjudication events for which there has been a sentence):** periods of juvenile court jurisdiction prior to the current/ new offense.
  - **The disposition/sentence does NOT have to be completed to be counted.** In other words, youth could still be serving their sentence.
  - **Do NOT count** offenses for which they just received a disposition as a prior offense– this will however be counted on current offenses.

- This relates to separate and distinct prior periods of juvenile court jurisdiction at different time intervals. In other words, prior offense 'events'. Count the number of "bundles" of offenses (or events) as opposed to the number of offenses for which the client was sentenced. This is not tracked simply by court dates – sometimes individuals can be adjudicated on the same date for multiple events.
  - Any Periods of probationary supervision pursuant to a supervision and consent decree are counted
  - Suspended sentence IS counted
  - Do NOT include: Status offenses, disposition held in abeyance, pre-trial probation, or dismissal where no dispositional orders were entered, - none of these would be considered "sentences";
  - **If a juvenile is re-arrested while on probation, the offense for which he was originally placed on probation IS counted here because it is a prior adjudication and disposition.**
- b. **Two or more failures to comply: examples include:**
- Failure to appear
  - Probation or parole violations (VOP) filed with the court
  - Violation of Court Ordered Diversion or Supervision and Consent Decree
  - Escapes from custody (Escapes refer to a secure or staff secure facility. Does not include running away from foster care)
  - New offenses while on probation regardless of whether they were charged with a VOP
  - Violated conditions of release from detention, regional camps, or state correctional care if filed with court
- c. **Prior Probation:** Check this if the youth was **ever** on probation for a delinquency adjudication, or a supervision and consent decree, or court ordered diversion – regardless of whether they are still serving that sentence.
- Do NOT count Status offenses.
- d. **Prior Custody:** Check if youth has ever spent time post-adjudication in an out-of-home placement in detention, jail, regional camps, or DCFS correctional care for a delinquency charge.
- **In cases where the initial YLS/CMI assessment is being conducted by DCFS staff, this item would be checked.**
  - Do NOT count placements that resulted solely from child welfare, foster care, or pre-trial detention
- e. **Three or more sentences for current disposition:** the youth has received three or more separate offense 'events' that bring the juvenile before you.
- Do not count charges dismissed without any disposition having been entered.
  - If several offenses occurred within the same course of conduct, count the offenses as just one because this item is concerned with separate incidents (**referrals occurring at different points in time**).
  - Occurring at **different points in time** includes offenses that occurred on the same day, and for which the youth was charged on the same day – but were two separate incidents at a different time of that day.
  - Do NOT include offenses for which the youth received a prior disposition – even if they are still serving their sentence (for example, if a youth is currently on probation for some prior offenses, those offenses would not be considered current).
  - CWO and "filing" (i.e., if a charge was delinquent filed and the case is still open) would be included here because no 'sentence' has been given and it can be revisited if the

youth reoffends. If there was an adjudication of delinquency where the disposition was "filed" and subsequently dismissed, then it would be counted as a prior offense (section A of this item).

**NOTE:** If it is unclear whether a sentence would be considered "prior" or "current", simply make sure it is rated in one of these categories.

### **DYNAMIC DOMAINS (2 thru 8):**

#### **Initial Assessments:**

The items in Domains 2 to 8 generally are rated based on the youth's conditions that were present currently and during the previous year. When trying to weigh the evidence for each item, there is no hard and fast rule. Generally, the assessor would consider the average behavior over the past year or weigh current behavior the most heavily if it is significantly different from past behavior within the year. Use your judgment based on circumstances of the case.

#### **Reassessments:**

In reassessments, the rating of items in Domains 2 to 8 are handled the same as for initial assessments. Consider the 12 months prior to the date of reassessment and generally weigh the youth's progress over the time since the last assessment most heavily. Again, the assessor must use some judgment.

## **2. FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES / PARENTING**

### **Scoring rules for youth not living with their parents (as per the manual):**

- If youth has been placed with foster parents, grandparents or some other surrogate parent for the majority of the past year, consider the quality of this care-giver/child relationship for 2(a) to 2(d).
- If youth has been in a child welfare placement (group home or residential placement) for longer than a year, there is "no parenting" so 2(a) through 2(d) should be checked. For items 2(e) & 2(f), consider the current quality of the parent/child relations or, if there is no current evidence, the quality in the year prior to child welfare placement.
- If youth is an emancipated minor or has been in independent living for the past year, 2(a) and 2(c) will be checked, 2(b) and 2(d) will be "omitted". Do this for all youth regardless of age, but if the overall score is not accurately reflecting the risk, compensate by using the professional judgment rating.
  - a. **Inadequate supervision:**
    - Mark this item if youth is living independently without supervision, living in independent living or has been in child welfare custody for past year.
  - b. **Difficulty controlling behavior:**
    - Mark this item if youth has been in child welfare custody for past year.
    - Check if youth is in independent living.
  - c. **Inappropriate discipline:**
    - Mark this item if youth is living independently without supervision, living in independent living or has been in child welfare custody for past year.
  - d. **Inconsistent parenting:**
    - Mark this item if youth has been in child welfare custody for past year.
    - Omit if youth is in independent living.

- e. **Poor relations/father-youth:**
- f. **Poor relations/mother-youth:**
  - Youth does NOT have to be living with the parent to rate these items. Evaluate both items based on the most **prominent relationship** over the past year (whether it is mother vs. step-mother or father vs. step-father). Prominent can be described as who the youth spends most time with over the assessment period. The one with most frequent contact.
  - If father/stepfather or mother/stepmother are deceased or otherwise absent but a poor relationship continues to be a problem, check the relevant item.

**FAQ: Items e and f** - This item can be scored as present for different reasons – e.g., either no or little contact with the prominent caregiver, or contact that is in some way conflictual (e.g. lots of arguing) or if the youth doesn't care about what the caregiver thinks, etc.– so the youth does not have to experience it as a “problem” necessarily. Definitely mark this item if physical abuse is present, or if resultant problems (e.g. alienation, uncaring, etc.) from previous abuse are ongoing/present.

### 3. EDUCATION / EMPLOYMENT

- b. **Disruptive school yard/property behavior:** misconduct on school property outside of the school building.
  - Includes behavior on school bus or when off school grounds but at school functions such as field trips, or school athletic events.
- e. **Unemployed, not seeking employment:** Without good reason, the youth has no job and is not actively seeking work, in employment training, etc.
  - If there is no expectation for the youth to work (i.e. involved with other appropriate activities) this does not get marked.
  - This generally relates to a client who is 16 or above, not enrolled in school and without good reason has no job or is not actively seeking employment, training, etc.
  - There may be occasions in which you believe a youth under the age of 16 should be working and this item should be checked. In addition, there may be times in which you do not want a 16 year old to be employed. Use your judgment in these instances.
  - If there is no expectation for the youth to work, this item does not get checked.

**As per the YLS/CMI manual, if youth are employed (older youth) and not in school, items would instead be rated based on the following:**

- A - Omit automatically
- B – Disruptive behavior in workplace
- C – Poor work performance
- D – Conflicts with coworkers
- E – Conflicts with supervisors
- F – Missing Work
- G – Do not mark (youth is working)

**FAQ: Scoring cyber and home-schooled students** - The only areas that could be evaluated for cyber and home-schooled students (not home-bound where the school district is providing a teacher) are *low achievement*, and *unemployed, not seeking employment*. Truancy is not really an issue unless the kid is simply not doing the program, or as with home-schooling, leaving the house so as not to allow his parent(s) to teach, or simply refusing to do the work. If a home-bound youth is not cooperating, then one could check off “truancy” and/or “problems with teacher”. Complete the YLS items based on current scoring guidelines. Items that are not able to be scored or are not relevant should be omitted (e.g., Problems with Peers). The professional judgment rating in Part IV will be especially important for these

types of cases – consider whether the youth is completing the cyber schooling “successfully” and collect collateral information to verify (e.g., “log in” records from the school, any grades assigned or progress reports made, information from parent/guardian as to whether the youth is completing the cyber school requirements, etc.).

#### 4. PEER RELATIONS

a. **Some delinquent acquaintances:**

- Do not include acquaintances that have criminal records but are have been clearly pro-social and stable for approximately the past year or over the course of their association with the youth.

#### 5. SUBSTANCE ABUSE

a. **Occasional drug use:** The youth is an occasional user of an illicit drug.

- **Leave this item unmarked if the youth has stopped drug use for more than a year in the community.** At this level there is no evidence of a current problem. **Does not include alcohol.**

b. **Chronic drug use**

- If the juvenile has not used in over a year but is still concerned about relapse you would mark this item. While being concerned about relapsing can be seen as a healthy approach (you could note that in the comment section), it still shows a risk if the youth is concerned and therefore should be marked.
- **If this item is marked, item 5(a) must also be marked.**

c. **Chronic alcohol use**

- If the juvenile is using alcohol three or more days a week this should be checked. This should not be checked for a juvenile who uses alcohol only on weekends unless there is good justification (e.g., youth gets intoxicated every weekend).

d. **Substance use interferes with functioning**

- **5b or 5c must be marked to mark this item**
- Must be evidence that substance abuse interferes with the youth’s physical or social functioning. You cannot infer that the youth is truant or doing poorly in school due to substance use if there is no evidence that this is the case.
- If the only way in which substance use interferes with functioning is a link to offending and item e is marked DO NOT also mark this item.
- This item includes whether drug or alcohol use is associated with ‘antisocial activity’. If a youth has violated conditions of community supervision by using substances on more than one occasion, this item should be checked.

e. **Substance use linked to offense**

- Do not check this item for youth whose only link between substance use and offenses has been to violate conditions of community supervision by using substances. These situations are scored under ‘d’.
- Do not assume drug dealing should automatically result in this item being marked. Some drug dealers see their activity as a business and do not use drugs themselves. It is the abuse of substances leading to law violations that is important for this item.
- The substance abuse itself would not be considered an offense for this item
- Do consider checking this item if use is an actual problem for them and is related to OTHER types of offenses. For example, for a 6 month re-assessment the youth hasn’t

committed a new offense but has violated conditions by using drugs recently and has a history of committing delinquent acts while under the influence.

## 6. LEISURE / RECREATION

### a. **Limited organized activities:**

- Organized” does not have to be “organization-based” such as through school or playground associations. An ‘organized’ activity may include attending weekly pick up games, or informal lessons of some sort, especially if the youth is associated with positive peers in doing the activity.

## 7. PERSONALITY / BEHAVIOR

- Inflated self esteem- FAQ:** If someone believes they are normal but have a skewed perception of normalcy, does that equate to inflated self esteem? *No, a skewed perception of normalcy does not necessarily indicate inflated self-esteem. This item is intended for someone who is grandiose, cocky, bragging etc.*
- Physically aggressive:**
  - Even if the youth is aggressive to a particular person (such as a parent) and no one else, this should be marked. However, it should be more than one aggressive act (pattern) or one very serious aggressive act. In addition, it must be ‘**youth initiated**’.
- Tantrums :**
  - Include tantrums directed against objects but the tantrums do NOT have to be directed towards throwing or breaking objects to be counted here.
- Short Attention Span:**
  - A diagnosis of ADD/ADHD would qualify here but try to determine if the symptoms are currently expressed. If the condition is controlled through medication and has been for the past year, do NOT mark this. You can put in the comment section that the youth is currently on medication and revisit this at the time of reassessment.

## 8. ATTITUDES / ORIENTATION

- Actively rejecting help:**
  - This includes when the youth has started treatment in the past year but is now actively rejecting help
- Defies authority:**
  - Include Oppositional Defiant Disorder. If the diagnosis is not current/active or if for some reason was thought to be unreliable, consult a clinician or supervisor about how to best score this item.
- Callous, little concern for others:**
  - Consider friends, family and people other than the victims of crime in the rating of this item