

Evidence-based practice is at the heart of Nevada’s juvenile justice reform under **AB 472** which establishes policies for reducing recidivism and improving outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system. Juvenile court involved youth, their families, and their communities have a right to know the extent to which court-imposed programs and interventions are effective. AB 472 established the Evidence-Based Program (EBP) Resource Center to support the implementation of evidence-based programs and practices. The EBP Resource Center contract was awarded to the **National Center for Juvenile Justice**, the research division of the **National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges**.

EBP 101 – What does evidence-based mean?



The juvenile justice system is designed to hold youth accountable, maintain public safety, and provide youth with opportunities for rehabilitation. Youth are referred to programs to acquire new skills and competencies while juvenile justice professionals use practices like case planning and Motivational Interviewing® to support youth in the process. Over the past three decades, a substantial body of empirical knowledge has established which practices, interventions, and treatment approaches work most effectively to reduce reoffending and improve outcomes for youth who have violated the law. These programs and practices are often referred to as “evidence-based.” In simple terms, an evidence-based program or practice is one that has been carefully studied and demonstrates effectiveness as opposed to those that may only be supported by anecdotal evidence.

Some juvenile justice professionals use a single definition of evidence-based, while others prefer a continuum of definitions based on the strength of the evidence and degree of effectiveness of the program or practice. The Strategic Plan Committee of the Nevada Juvenile Justice Oversight Commission is currently drafting a definition of evidence-based that will inform the use of evidence-based programs and practices across Nevada. Once the definition is approved, we will share it in a future email.

Evidence-based programs can be name brand curriculum that can be purchased, such as Aggression Replacement Training® (ART®) or Thinking for a Change® (T4C®), or locally-developed programs that have demonstrated empirical effectiveness. Evidence-based practices include youth mentoring and assessing risk and needs using a validated risk/need assessment tool.

Why choose EBPs?

Better outcomes for youth and families: Because evidence-based programs and practices have demonstrated effectiveness through research, they are more likely to result in positive outcomes than those that have not been researched.

Increased public safety: Reoffending decreases when a validated risk/needs assessment, like the Youth Level of Service (YLS), is used to develop a case plan and a range of effective interventions are available to match the identified criminogenic needs.

Cost savings: Implementing evidence-based programs can reduce costs associated with a reliance on out-of-home placement and court processing of reoffenders.



Programs vs Practices

A **program** is a planned, coordinated group of activities and processes designed to achieve a specific purpose.

A **practice** is a general category of programs, strategies, or procedures that share similar characteristics with regard to the issues they address and how they address them.

Defined by CrimeSolutions.gov

Additional EBP Resources

The [Juvenile Justice Information Exchange](#) highlights key issues and resources regarding evidence-based programs and practices.

This [National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices](#) registry includes information on evidence-based mental health and substance use interventions.

OJJDP’s [Model Programs Guide \(MPG\)](#) contains information about evidence-based juvenile justice and youth prevention, intervention, and reentry programs.

Coming Up Next:

The Principles of Risk, Need, & Responsivity

We are eager to hear from you!

Contact us to learn more about how the EBP Resource Center can help you. Feel free to share this email with your colleagues and other juvenile justice stakeholders in Nevada. If you would like to add your email to our distribution list, contact Andrew below.



Andrew Wachter
 Research Associate, NCJJ
 Email: AWachter@ncjfcj.org
 Phone: 412-246-0805



Samantha Ehrmann
 Research Assistant, NCJJ
 Email: SEhrmann@ncjfcj.org
 Phone: 412-246-0828

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