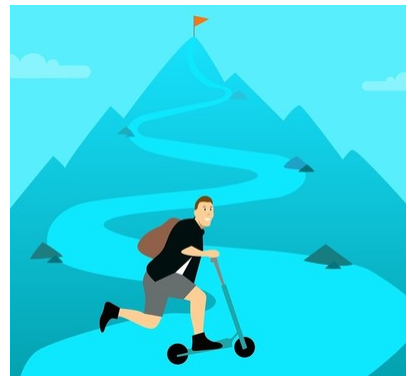









Using SMART Goals in Case Planning

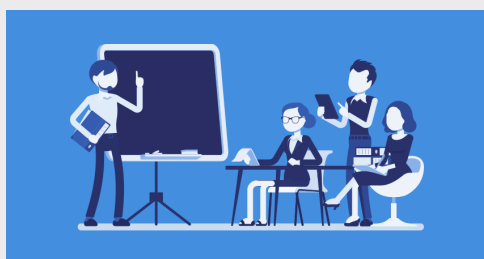
Goal setting is a common aspect of our daily lives, from setting personal exercise goals to developing work-related goals to implement evidence-based practices.

Goal setting has worked its way into juvenile justice case plan development and is recommended by national experts and researchers alike. Universally, we know that taking the time to write goals down can provide inspiration to keep working on goals, even when motivation is low. One of the most well-known goal setting techniques is the SMART method which encourages goals to be Specific, Measurable, Attainable or Achievable, Relevant or Realistic, and Time Bound. This newsletter builds upon the previously published [Developing and Using SMART Goals](#) newsletter by translating the SMART method into juvenile justice settings.



In the juvenile justice context, developing SMART goals or using the SMART methodology can help create a through line from the risk or need identified directly to the desired outcome. Taking the time to draft case plan goals using the SMART method can help youth fully understand what is expected of them. In addition, it also helps case managers objectively understand progress, in terms of reduced risk and need, and thereby reducing the risk to recidivate. The graphic below translates the SMART methodology into the juvenile justice context.

Specific S 	Goals should identify a Specific activity, treatment, intervention, service, or supervision approach that is used and Specific skills that will be learned through receiving services and/or participating in interventions. To further help translate the SMART methodology into work in the juvenile justice context: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address criminogenic needs with a specific intervention.• Help build a new skill by engaging in a prosocial activity.• Ask youth to describe the types of skills they would like to learn.
Measurable M 	Goals must be Measurable so that youth and case managers can determine when goals are complete or that progress has been made. More importantly, it's important to measure reductions in criminogenic risks/needs. Given that dynamic risks/needs are potentially changeable, reductions in risks/needs should be expected if the interventions are working as intended. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track school attendance as a measure of compliance.• Track certificates or final grades as a type of completion measure.• Track new skills learned.• Track the reduced criminogenic risk related to the intervention.
Attainable A 	Attainable goals in the juvenile justice context consider and understand if the youth can actually engage in the services and interventions that are recommended. When developing goals, ask targeted questions to determine if the goal is attainable: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the youth have the capacity to fully participate in the intervention?• Is the intervention developmentally appropriate?• Is the youth motivated to engage in the intervention or prosocial activity?• Are there external factors that are barriers to attending (i.e., transportation issues)?
Relevant R 	Relevant goals ensure that the specific intervention or service is directly connected to the prioritized risk/need and to the desired outcome. For example, referring all youth to anger management classes regardless of the need can cause more harm than good. Services and interventions should address a specific need rather than assigned as a general learning opportunity. In addition, engage youth and allow them some voice and choice regarding what goals to work on. Confirm that the service/intervention: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addresses a criminogenic risk factor, rather than a standard requirement for all youth.• Includes voice and choice from the youth and family.
Time Bound T 	Goals that are Time Bound include a timeline for completion. Timelines help youth and case managers set reasonable targets for completion and monitor progress. When setting deadlines, it's important to consider short and long-term goals and the relationship between them. For example, a long-term goal of improving school connectedness may include short-term goals such as enrolling in school, completing an individual education plan, or finishing a credit recovery course. When developing time bound goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage youth to identify a reasonable time period to complete a specific goal.• Break long-term goals into smaller, short-term goals so youth can achieve goals quickly and stay motivated to complete the long-term goal.



Training Opportunity Using SMART Goals to Engage and Motivate Youth in Case Planning

3 Day Virtual Training

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