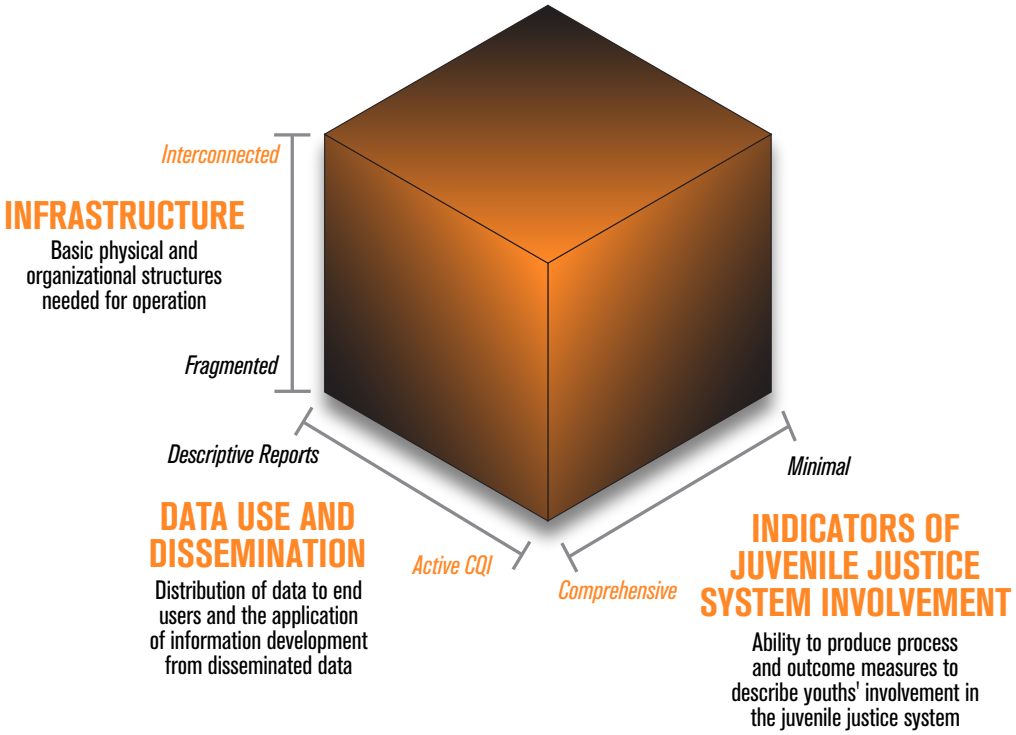
Juvenile Justice Model Data Project

3D DATA CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

02 DATA USE AND DISSEMINATION



The Juvenile Justice Model Data Project 3D Data Capacity Assessment is a tool for juvenile justice practitioners to strategically examine the data capacity of their juvenile justice system and reflect on their own use of data to inform decisions and drive improvements. The assessment indicates areas where system-wide, agency-level, and staff-level improvements can be made, and the responses listed inform improvement plans. The assessment has three sections: **Infrastructure**, **Data Use and Dissemination**, and **Indicators of Juvenile Justice System Involvement**.

This section, Data Use and Dissemination, is intended to help juvenile justice practitioners understand the extent to which their agency and juvenile justice system embrace policies and practices that promote both the sharing of information with staff, partnering agencies, and the public, and the application of information to decisions.

DATA USE AND DISSEMINATION

Juvenile justice-related agencies often disseminate statistical information through annual reports. Once a year data dissemination may be what leads front-line staff, as well as administrators and stakeholders, to disregard the information being supplied as "outdated" or "out-of-touch." Although descriptive reports are enlightening, the information contained within is only useful if there are established practices to review the information in the context of prior years' performance and current practices. Ideally, agencies have protocols to support regular review of performance measures and continuous quality improvement practices.

Data use and dissemination and continuous quality improvement are cycles that should be supported by policy and practice. These cyclical processes involve the following aspects:

1. **Assessment** – Analysis of current practice and performance as it relates to serving youth and families in the juvenile justice system.
2. **Planning** – Developing a plan to improve service delivery by setting achievable performance measures or benchmarks.
3. **Monitoring** – Reassessing practice and performance, based on agreed upon benchmarks.
4. **Improvement** – Implementing improvements and beginning the process of assessment again.

This process can occur on a system, agency, and person level since improvements can be made on policy and legislation, interventions/services available, and service delivery through the use of data and continuous quality feedback.

The following 11 questions allow juvenile justice system practitioners to more fully understand how data are used and disseminated along a four-point scale (No Capacity, Minimal, Moderate, and Optimal) and on three levels: System, Agency, and Person. The scale itself provides examples of recommended practice. For example, the following three instances, taken from the assessment itself, highlight "optimal" practice in each level:

- **System: Overall Juvenile Justice Decisions** – Data are a key component in these decisions and are readily available to decisionmakers.
- **Agency: Performance Measures** – We have a documented set of performance measures and we routinely calculate and use them.
- **Person: Data-Supported Feedback** – I receive feedback supported by data on a continuous basis.

Optimal practice and the approaches used to get there may look different depending on a jurisdiction's structure, policies, and resources; however, the responses provided are intended to illustrate one example of how a jurisdiction can improve data capacity. In practice, this means that juvenile justice system practitioners, having rated *Agency: Does your agency have an overarching set of performance measures?* as "No Capacity" will be able to implement optimal practice by selecting a combination of front-line staff, administrators, research staff, and other stakeholders to serve on a committee to document performance measures and determine how and with what frequency they will be calculated.

INSTRUCTIONS

The 3D Data Capacity Assessment is most effective when a group of individuals from different juvenile justice-related agencies and different departments within each agency who have diverse perspectives and roles completes it. Juvenile justice-related agencies may vary across jurisdictions, but usually include the juvenile court, probation, juvenile corrections agency, legal representatives, law enforcement, and community service providers. We recommend convening a group to complete the assessment together or to complete the assessment individually and then meet to compare and discuss responses. Some items on the assessment may not be relevant to all juvenile justice-related agencies; however, it can still be beneficial for everyone to hear and learn from their partners.

Please carefully review each item. Respond to each item taking into account current activities and procedures of the system, agency, and practitioners.

SYSTEM QUESTIONS

To what extent are data used to inform decisions regarding the overall juvenile justice system (e.g., funding, community resources, and reducing gaps in services)?

UNSURE	NO CAPACITY	MINIMAL	MODERATE	OPTIMAL
I do not know/ Unsure	Decisions are made void of data and are based on discussions and anecdotes	Sometimes decisions are made using data – for example, if funding requires it	Most of the time, decisions are made using data, but data are not always available	Data are a key component in these decisions and are readily available to decision-makers

AGENCY QUESTIONS

Does your agency make reports available to stakeholders and the public regardless of whether the information shows positive or negative results?

UNSURE	NO CAPACITY	MINIMAL	MODERATE	OPTIMAL
I do not know/ Unsure	We do not currently make any reports available to stakeholders and the public	Positive information is publicly reported but negative information is shared only as required by law or agreement	Positive information is publicly reported and negative information is shared with partners for problem solving efforts	Reports are made public regardless of whether the information shows positive or negative results

Does your agency have an overarching set of performance measures?

UNSURE	NO CAPACITY	MINIMAL	MODERATE	OPTIMAL
I do not know/ Unsure	We do not have an overarching set of performance measures	We do not have documented performance measures, but we have an idea of our goals	We have a documented set of performance measures, but we do not routinely measure them	We have a documented set of performance measures and we routinely measure them

To what extent does your agency use data to inform decisions?

UNSURE	NO CAPACITY	MINIMAL	MODERATE	OPTIMAL
I do not know/ Unsure	Decisions are made void of data and are based on discussions and anecdotes	Data are used to make decisions for individual cases	In addition to individual cases, aggregate data are used to inform some decisions (e.g., in key management reports)	Data are used to make decisions throughout our work

Does your agency work with service providers to assist in continuous quality improvement of service delivery? For example, do you review data and make improvement plans with contracted providers.				
UNSURE	**NO CAPACITY**	**MINIMAL**	**MODERATE**	**OPTIMAL**
I do not know/ Unsure	We do not assist service providers with continuous quality improvement	We assist with continuous quality improvement for specific service providers if it is included in our grant requirements	We assist with continuous quality improvement for service providers, but not on a regular basis	We partner with service providers to promote continuous quality improvement in service delivery
Does your agency allow direct service staff to review data and make decisions based on agency-wide data?				
UNSURE	**NO CAPACITY**	**MINIMAL**	**MODERATE**	**OPTIMAL**
I do not know/ Unsure	No, administrative leaders are solely responsible for reviewing data and making decisions	No, but administrators review data and seek feedback on their decisions	Yes, the line of communication is open for direct staff to review and suggest changes	Yes, direct service staff are actively involved in interpreting and applying information
Does your agency collect satisfaction data from youth and their family on use of services and/or service delivery? For example, do you regularly use client satisfaction surveys or exit interviews?				
UNSURE	**NO CAPACITY**	**MINIMAL**	**MODERATE**	**OPTIMAL**
I do not know/ Unsure	We do not collect youth or family satisfaction data	We collect satisfaction data from youth in paper format	We collect and analyze aggregate data from a youth satisfaction survey	We collect and analyze aggregate data from both youth and family surveys
How does your agency share agency-wide information with the larger community (e.g., community stakeholder groups, funding sources, state administrators, the public, etc.)				
UNSURE	**NO CAPACITY**	**MINIMAL**	**MODERATE**	**OPTIMAL**
I do not know/ Unsure	We do not share our agency-wide data	We share our data upon request	We share our data on our website through reports	We share our data on our website through an interactive dashboard

PERSON QUESTIONS

Do you and/or your coworkers receive reports on overall agency performance?				
UNSURE	**NO CAPACITY**	**MINIMAL**	**MODERATE**	**OPTIMAL**
I do not know/ Unsure	We do not receive reports on agency-wide performance	We can request reports on overall agency performance	Once a year, we produce an annual report on overall agency performance	We can access up-to-date information on overall agency performance as needed

Do you receive feedback that is supported by data to improve service delivery and/or interactions with youth and their family?				
UNSURE	**NO CAPACITY**	**MINIMAL**	**MODERATE**	**OPTIMAL**
I do not know/ Unsure	I do not receive feedback that is supported by data to improve service delivery	I receive informal feedback that is not based on data, to improve service delivery	I receive feedback supported by data at a yearly review or when issues occur	I receive feedback supported by data on a continuous basis

Do you receive adequate training and feedback regarding your use of data?				
UNSURE	**NO CAPACITY**	**MINIMAL**	**MODERATE**	**OPTIMAL**
I do not know/ Unsure	I have not received adequate training regarding how to use data	I received training but I do not receive feedback regarding my use of data	I received training and/ or feedback regarding my use of data, but would benefit from more training and feedback	I received training and feedback regarding my use of data and I feel comfortable interacting with data

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE MODEL DATA PROJECT

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) invested in improving juvenile justice data and increasing its consistency across states and localities through the Juvenile Justice Model Data Project (MDP). The MDP developed model measures and analyses to monitor trends and assess the efficiency and effectiveness of juvenile justice systems and provided guidance to the field on the data elements and coding categories required to calculate the model measures. Organizations representing all sectors of juvenile justice—from law enforcement through the court process and juvenile corrections—contributed to the measures. This assessment is one of the products from the MDP. Please see https://www.ojjdp.gov/research/juvenile-justice-model-data-project.html for more information.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Deal, T., Schiller, W., Taylor, M., & Boc, J. (2018). *Model Data Project 3D Data Capacity Assessment: Data Use and Dissemination*. Pittsburgh, PA: National Center for Juvenile Justice.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-JF-FX-K003 awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice.

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES
WWW.NCJFCJ.ORG

NCJJ est. 1973
NATIONAL CENTER FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE
WWW.NCJJ.ORG

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE
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