



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

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February 12, 2013

The Honorable Bruce Caswell, Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
Michigan State Senate
Lansing, Michigan 48933

The Honorable Peter MacGregor, Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
Michigan House of Representatives
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Senator Caswell and Representative MacGregor:

This report is provided pursuant to PA 200 of 2012, Section 511(1) of the Department of Human Services (DHS) Fiscal Year 2013 Appropriations Act. This section requires that DHS submit a report on the findings of a workgroup to determine which statewide, standardized assessment tools will be used for children in the foster care and juvenile justice systems and the costs of implementing the tools.

Recommendations were developed for the use of: 1) A standardized strength and needs assessment tool and 2) A standardized risk assessment tool.

The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment is the recommended strengths and needs assessment tool. The CANS is a multi-purpose tool developed for children's services to support decision-making, including level of care and service planning, to facilitate quality improvement initiatives, and to allow for the monitoring of outcomes of services. Versions of the CANS are currently used in 25 states in child welfare, mental health, juvenile justice, and early intervention applications. Research demonstrated that the CANS assessment is reliable. Estimated cost for implementation is \$25,000 for training.

The recommendation was provided by a workgroup consisting of representatives from contracted private residential care providers and child welfare and juvenile justice program offices within the department. The workgroup reviewed several tools and evaluated functionality for use across systems, cost of implementation, and the ability to use the data to establish performance measures and monitor outcomes. The CANS best met those factors to assess needs and strengths in both abuse-neglect and juvenile justice cases.

The Michigan Juvenile Justice Assessment System (MJJAS) is recommended for use by public and private juvenile justice residential providers for criminogenic risk assessment of juvenile offenders. The MJJAS is adopted from the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS). The larger vision of DHS is collaboration with county facilities and family courts to implement use of the MJJAS in those jurisdictions; however, the state cannot compel county courts to use any specific juvenile justice risk assessment tool. DHS can provide access, training, and technical support to those county juvenile systems willing to participate and partner with DHS in use of the MJJAS.

The MJJAS is a normed and validated assessment tool that measures criminogenic risks of youthful offenders to target treatment intervention needs, determine length of stay, and determine re-entry readiness. The tool is already in use at the three public juvenile justice residential facilities. Estimated cost for train-the-trainer training to provide training services to counties and private providers in use of the tool is \$15,000.

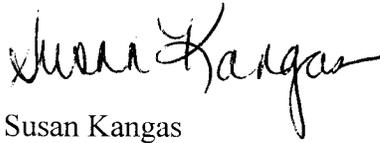
In 2012, Juvenile Justice Vision 20/20 (JJ 20/20) conducted an assessment survey of Michigan's family courts. JJ 20/20 is a State Judicial Institute grant-funded, collaborative effort composed of representatives from the State Court Administrative Office, Grand Valley State University, the 20th Circuit Court, DHS, and other juvenile justice stakeholders. JJ 20/20's purpose is to evaluate the state of juvenile justice in Michigan and develop a strategic plan and action agenda that will serve as a blueprint for strengthening juvenile courts, enhancing juvenile court services, and achieving better outcomes in Michigan. Of the 51 JJ 20/20 survey respondents, 35 reported using some type of juvenile offender assessment, with the MJJAS -26 users- and the Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI) - 9 users- the most commonly used instruments.

An independent search process for a criminogenic risk assessment tool was completed in 2010 by the Bureau of Child Welfare Funding and Juvenile Programs (BCWFJP). It is important to note that both the JJ 20/20 and the BCWFJP search supported MJJAS use. The BCWFJP search process for a risk assessment tool resulted in finalist consideration between the MJJAS and the YASI, with the MJJAS receiving the recommendation. In recommending the MJJAS, the bureau staff listed:

- MJJAS recidivism outcome data appeared to have longer follow-up timeframes.
- MJJAS re-entry tool had greater predictive validity compared to YASI (2010 data).
- MJJAS cost structure was more fiscally responsible over the life of the project due to its unlimited user capacity.
- MJJAS can assist case planning by suggesting treatment interventions.
- MJJAS requires less training.
- MJJAS includes five separate assessment instruments: diversion, detention, disposition, residential, and re-entry.

If you have any questions, please contact Terri Gilbert, Bureau of Child Welfare Funding and Juvenile Programs director at (517) 335-3489.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Kangas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Susan" and last name "Kangas" clearly legible.

Susan Kangas
Chief Financial Officer

cc: Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
Senate and House Fiscal Agencies
Senate and House Policy Offices
Senate and House Standing Committees on Families and Human Services