

Core Concepts

Important DJC Principles: Second Edition

Accountability - taking responsibility - accountability does not equal punishment

What does it mean to hold youth accountable for their behavior? Accountability is when one **assumes responsibility for his or her actions, including making amends and avoiding a repeat, whether an authority figure is present or not.**

Most people assume that punishment is what helps humans decide to do the right thing. However, there's now a wealth of re-

search demonstrating that youth who are punished are LESS likely to make positive moral choices. Punishment focuses a youth on the "consequences" he is suffering, rather than on the consequences of his behavior to someone else, so it makes him more self-centered. Punishment makes kids look out only for themselves and blame others, rather than caring about how their behavior affects others. The most salient lesson of punishment is to avoid it in the future by sneaking and lying to escape detection, so punishment fosters dishonesty. Because kids invariably consider punishment unfair, it teaches kids that might makes right and abuse of power is ok -- which makes kids less likely to make moral choices. Punishment creates an external locus of control -- the authority figure. The youth actually comes to see staff as responsible for making him behave, rather than taking responsibility for his behavior as his own choice.

Tools to help youth take responsibility:

Connect the Dots - Help youth make the link between what they do and what happens by pointing out real-life examples, to help them identify causes and effects.

Make Honesty Easy - Being calm and approachable makes telling the truth easier for people.

Stick to the Rules - To be accountable, youth need to learn to accept the consequences of their words, actions, and decisions, and the only way they can do this is if staff are consistent with rules and discipline.

Plan – The case plan is a priority! It should be a living document that is updated regularly and guides a youth's progress

Case plans should serve as the road map for success for all of our youth. If this roadmap is not current, our youth cannot receive the best care. Case plans should reflect changes, successes and needs for each youth. We do not want our youth to stagnate, and a regularly updated case plan will ensure that this does not occur. Research has shown that recidivism can be reduced by as much as 30% if the right treatment is provided at the right time and in the right way. (Carey Group) Effective case planning is the key to achieving the goal of reducing recidivism.

We want to create case plans that are:

S	SPECIFIC	Details exactly what needs to be done
M	MEASURABLE	Achievement or progress can be measured
A	ACHIEVABLE	Objective is accepted by those responsible for achieving it
R	REALISTIC	Objective is possible to attain (important for motivational effect)
T	TIMED	Time period for achievement is clearly stated

Safety – Everyone needs to feel and be safe and not live or work in fear

Feeling safe is a basic and fundamentally important need. It is well known that when youth—or adults—do not feel safe, it undermines learning, teaching and healthy development. When a workplace is safe, workers feel more comfortable and confident when they are in that environment. A safe learning environment is essential for students of all ages. Without it they are unable to focus on learning the skills needed for a successful education and future.



Performance-based Standards will be used to measure how well we are doing



In October 2014 DJC began working with the Performance-based Standards (PbS) Learning Institute to better track, monitor, and improve performance at CLS and LHS, joining a collection of agencies in over 30 other states who already work with PbS. The PbS data-driven improvement model identifies, monitors, and improves conditions of confinement and treatment services in residential facilities and programs using national standards and performance outcome measures. PbS builds performance improvement and accountability into agency, facility, and program operations using a three-part cycle of activities: collecting data, analyzing the performance outcomes and summary data reports, and, at the heart of PbS, using the data to create improvement and reforms.

DJC completed its first round of data collection in October 2014; the second round took place in April 2015. Through summary data that PbS provides, DJC will be able to compare outcome data to previous data collection periods and to the PbS field. This will enable DJC and the PbS Institute to identify both progress and ongoing problem areas and to develop subsequent facility improvement plans as needed.

Did you know...?

The WI DOC offers a training session on Case Planning through the Training Center. Check the DOC Training Center webpage for more details.

References and Resources:

Accountability: [http://www.ahaparenting.com/blog/Why Punishment Doesnt Teach Your Child Accountability and https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/peaceful-parents-happy-kids/201405/why-punishment-doesnt-teach-your-child-accountability](http://www.ahaparenting.com/blog/Why_Punishment_Doesnt_Teach_Your_Child_Accountability_and_https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/peaceful-parents-happy-kids/201405/why-punishment-doesnt-teach-your-child-accountability) and <http://www.parents.com/kids/responsibility/values/its-not-my-fault/>

Safety: For information about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: <http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html> and for information about safety in schools: <http://www.schoolclimate.org/guidelines/safety.php>

For more information...

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