

Core Concepts

Measurement in Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)

The purpose of measurement in evidence-based practices (EBP) is to accurately collect information on a specific program or intervention to see how well it works and if it's achieving the desired goals and outcomes.

DJC uses measurement for three primary purposes:

- Program assessment – collect data on program activities and their effects on juvenile offenders
- Program improvement – use the data to see if a program is successful or if it needs to be modified
- Planning – use the data to make decisions about how DJC resources should be allocated in the future

Measurement provides proof – or evidence – that a program is successful or not. Generally, evidence is numerical in nature and is shown by conducting:

- Scientific or experimental studies and publishing the results
- Statistical analysis from data collected about the program and its participants

How is Data Collected at DJC?

DJC collects comprehensive data on youth in many ways, including:

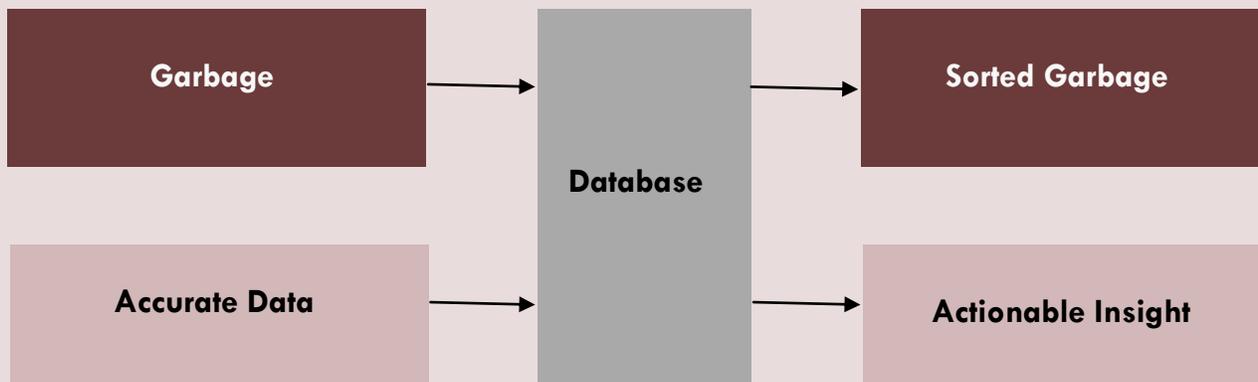
- Juvenile Justice Information Management System (JJIS)
- COMPAS
- Performance-based Standards (PbS) portal
- Surveys
- Questionnaires
- Interviews with youth, staff, and family

...And Why Does it Matter to Me?

Measurement is important to each position at DJC. It is a tool agencies use to understand where they meet or exceed expectations as well as identify areas for improvement. It is also used to assess safety and security within DJC facilities and develop action steps to improve the quality of services provided to youth. Each position at DJC plays a unique role in this process of continuous improvement, from collecting and entering data to analysis to decision-making.

Why Data Accuracy is Important

As DJC continues to use data to drive decision making, having accurate and complete data is critical. A database will only ever process what it is given. If incorrect data (or garbage) is input into the system, the output is not likely to be informative. Although the data is still processed, the result is inaccurate information being used to make decisions. On the other hand, if accurate data is input into the system then we can have deeper understanding and insight of the issues affecting juvenile offenders.



What is Performance-based Standards (PbS)?

Performance-based Standards (PbS) is a nationally recognized program developed by the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators to improve the conditions of confinement and quality of services provided at juvenile facilities across the country. Currently, Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake School are participating in PbS.

Overview of PbS Measures

PbS addresses 106 measures covering seven key areas that are critical to the success of a juvenile justice facility:

- Safety – practices that promote safety for staff and youth
- Order – addresses misconduct, restraints, confinement
- Security – looks at incidents that impact safety within the institution
- Health/mental health – percent of youth who get care within certain time periods
- Programming – educational attainment, family contact
- Justice – grievances, understanding rules
- Reentry – individual case plans

Benefits of Participating in PbS

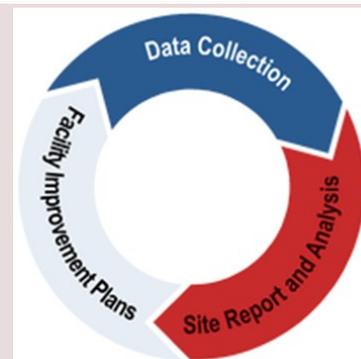
There are many benefits to participating in PbS, which extend to youth, staff, agency administrators, family, and communities. Some of the benefits include:

- The ability to measure and track key indicators
- Make data-driven decisions leading to safer environments and better quality of services
- Make comparisons to similar institutions across the country
- Promote accountability and transparency in practices
- Provide opportunities for youth, staff, and family to give input

The PbS Process

There are three parts to the PbS cycle: (1) collect data, (2) analyze the data, and (3) create an improvement plan.

Data is collected during two months of the year: April and October. This information is then entered into the PbS portal for analysis. Results of the analysis are used to develop a facility improvement plan, which identifies the outcome measures the facility would like to improve upon, specific action steps needed to do so, and how progress will be monitored. After each data collection period, the improvement plan can be adjusted until the desired goal is reached.



Who Is Involved with PbS?

Although PbS is available to community residential programs and secure detention facilities, LHS and CLS are the only facilities in Wisconsin that are using the program. DJC will expand the project to other entities once a solid foundation is built. In order for PbS to be successful, though, it requires staff at all levels to be engaged in the process. Much of the data is already being collected by front line staff (like youth counselors and teachers), while administrative staff will be responsible for compiling the information and entering it into the PbS portal. Results will be disseminated to all staff once a site report is generated.

For more information...

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