

# **Skill Building**

**NADCP All Rise Conference**

**July 2022**

***Martha-Elin Blomquist, Ph.D.***

***Elisha Harris***

# Disclaimer

---

This presentation is supported by grant number 2015-DC-BX-K001. Points of view or opinions expressed in this presentation are those of the presenter(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of OJJDP or the U.S. Department of Justice.



OJJDP

# Learning Objectives

---

- Increase familiarity with research related to the importance of skill building with youth to reduce recidivism
- Strengthen JDTC skill-building focus and opportunities
- Help participants identify and practice team strategies for supporting youth and families with skill building

# **Where does skill building fit into your juvenile drug treatment court program?**

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

# Core Skills Youth Need for Life\*

---

- ***Planning*** – being able to make concrete plans, carry them out, and set and meet goals
- ***Focus*** – concentrating on what is most important at any given time
- ***Self-Control*** – controlling responses to emotions and stressful situations
- ***Awareness*** – noticing people and situations around us and how we all fit into the picture
- ***Flexibility*** – adapting to changing situations

# Research on Importance of Skill-Building to Reducing Recidivism

---

Types of skill building interventions found to reduce recidivism:

- Cognitive-behavioral skills
- Social skills
- Academic skills
- Vocational skills

# Research cont'd

---

Research from 500+ studies (Lipsey et al., 2010)

- Of interventions with a skill-building component, those in the cognitive-behavioral (CBT) category had the largest effect on reducing recidivism
- The skill building focus of CBT includes assisting youth with acquiring/strengthening problem-solving, coping, and social skills

# Research cont'd

---

Counseling-related interventions with a skill-building component also reduce recidivism (Henggeler & Schoenwald, 2011)

- Multisystemic Therapy (MST) includes learning and practicing communication, social, problem-solving, and academic skills
- Functional Family Therapy (FFT) includes learning and practicing communication, problem-solving, and relationship skills specifically with youth and parents in the family context; it has the additional focus of assisting with parenting skills



# Research cont'd

---

- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) includes learning and practicing skills associated with self-control and coping with stress and anger (Shelton et al., 2011)

# Skill Building in JDTCs

---

Where does skill-building come in to play in JDTCs?

- Risk Needs Assessment
- Case Plan
- JDTC Phase Requirements
- Evidence-Based Treatment
- Case Staffing
- Family Engagement

# Risk Needs Assessment

---

JDTC teams uses RN Assessments to

- identify dynamic risk need factors that the JDTC can help youth address
- target top needs domains for each youth
- identify behavioral goals and related skills that youth would need to achieve goals in order to reduce risk/needs

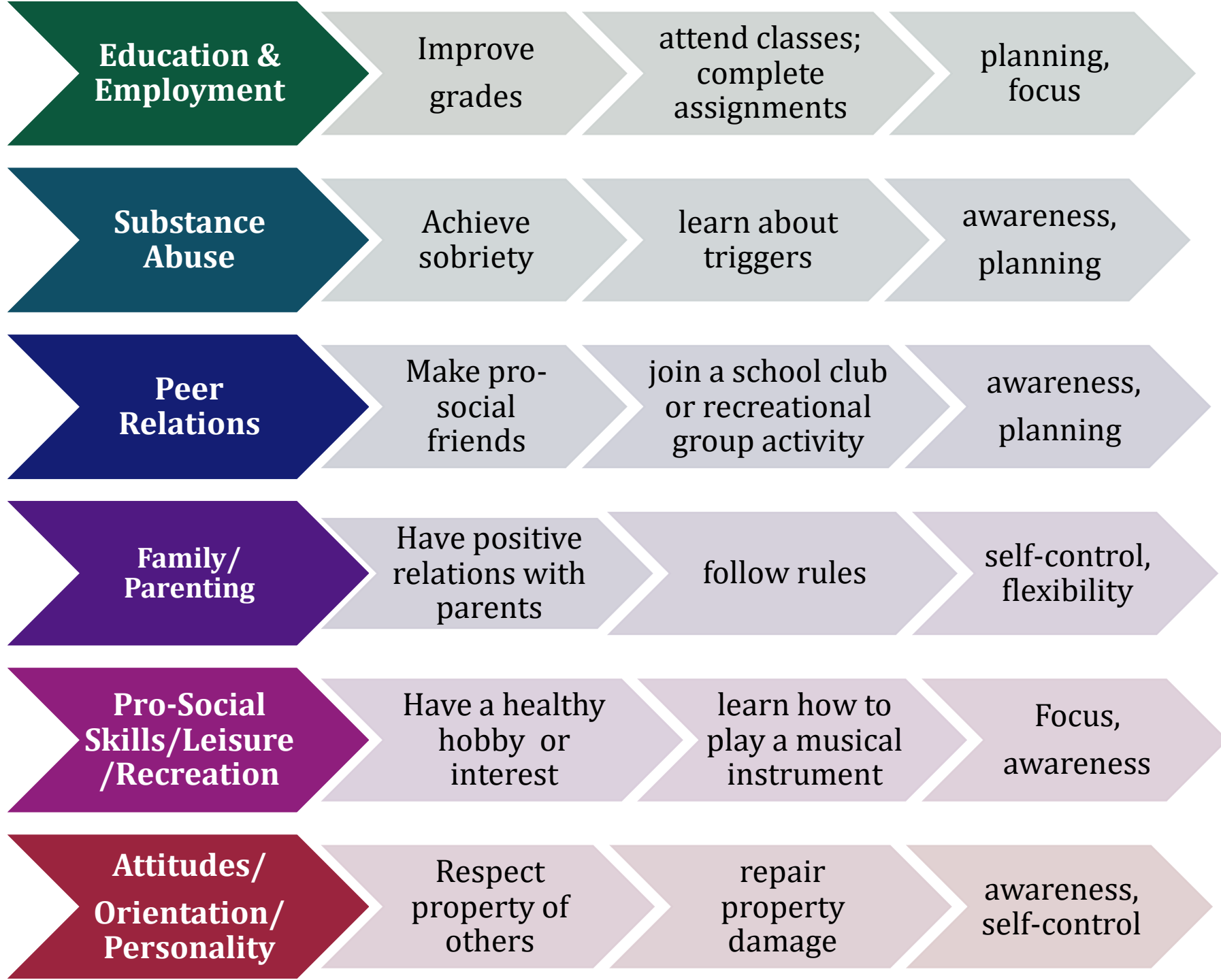
# Case Plan

---

JDTC teams use case plans to

- help youth and families set goals for behavior change and skills related to reducing risk/ needs
- make the goals individualized to the youth's situation, interests, and abilities (RNR)
- identify and connect youth to interventions that are designed to address the behavior and skills needed
- address/reduce any barriers to youth receiving interventions (e.g., transportation, availability) and to practicing skills
- regularly check in with youth and family about progress in learning and using skills

**Risk  
Needs  
Domains  
Behavior  
Goal  
Case  
Plan  
Activities  
Skills**



# JDTC Phase Requirements

---

JDTC teams use phase requirements to provide structure to their program; phase requirements also provide structure to a youth's process for changing behavior and developing skills and activities associated with being law abiding, being accountable, being persistent, and being engaged:

- Attend court (weekly/bi-weekly)
- Meet with PO (weekly/bi-weekly)
- Participate in substance use treatment/ behavioral health intervention
- Attend school and learn/perform at expected grade level
- Reduce or stop substance use
- Take drug tests
- Engage in community service
- Engage in pro-social activities

# Evidence-Based Treatment

---

JDTC teams use evidence-based treatments to provide interventions specifically designed to change youth behavior associated with engaging in delinquency and using substances; the interventions, delivered by professionals with special training, teach and help youth practice skills relevant to reducing undesired behavior and increasing desired behavior:

- FFT
- MST
- CBT
  - Aggression Replacement Therapy
  - Moral Reconation Therapy
  - Reasoning and Rehabilitation
- DBT

# Case Staffing

---

JDTC team uses case staffing to

- provide regular, timely, consistent and ongoing oversight of each youth's progress with behavior change through skill building
- recognize, support, and reward desired youth behavior
- trouble shoot/address barriers, difficulties, or lack of progress with behavior change and skill building
- discourage, redirect, or limit undesired behavior



# Family Engagement

---

JDTC teams seek engagement with family members:

- on case plan development and the identification of individualized goals, meaningful incentives and sanctions for their child
- in court to learn how youth are doing with behavior change, goals, and skill development, what is working as well as what is not, what different or additional assistance is needed
- at home to provide day-to-day supervision, care, and support to their child
- with treatment to support their child to participate in treatment/behavioral health interventions and skill building and to undertake skill building/strengthening themselves

# Skill Building In Practice

# Small Group Activity

Break into groups of 3-4 individuals for a discussion of skills that are the focus of the next 4 slides

- Follow the guidance on each slide for the discussion topic and exchange of ideas and strategies

- Elect one spokesperson from your group to share your ideas

# Exercise 1: Case Plan-Related Skill Building

1. State a behavior that is expected of youth in your program.
2. Identify a skill that youth need to have to engage in that behavior.
3. State an intervention or activity that the youth could have in their case plan to help them learn and practice the skill.
4. State how the youth's progress with this skill could/would be shared at case staffing.

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY

# Exercise #1 Report Out

# Exercise 2: Treatment Plan-Related Skill Building

1. State a mental/behavioral health goal that your treatment provider would focus on with program youth.
2. Identify a skill that the provider would help the youth learn or practice in order to reach the goal.
3. State how a provider would let the team know how the youth was doing in learning/practicing the skill.

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

# Exercise #2 Report Out

# Exercise 3: Integrated Case Plan/Treatment Plan Skill Building

---

1. Identify a behavioral goal that would be included in a case plan AND is also a treatment goal.
2. Identify a skill needed to achieve this goal.
3. Discuss how the PO and treatment provider could/would collaborate to reinforce activities and learning for youth to build this skill.



# Exercise #3 Report Out

# Exercise 4: Family Engagement in Skills Building

1. Identify a skill that would be in a youth's case plan OR treatment plan.
2. Discuss how the team/specific team members would engage parents/siblings to support their child/sibling in learning or practicing this skill.
3. Discuss how family engagement in supporting their youth with building this skill could or would be shared at case staffing.

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND

# Exercise #4 Report Out

# Action Items

---

- As a wrap up to our skill building session, please share your answer to the slido question that follows:

**Drawing on what you learned today,  
state one thing you will START doing to  
help strengthen your team's approach  
to skill building with youth.**

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

# Available Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) for Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts

---

- **Request specific and individualized TTA via TTA360 for:**
  - Faculty support for statewide drug court conferences
  - JDTC Operational Tune-Ups
  - Targeted online training/strategic support
- **Join an Interactive JDTC Listserv**
- **Receive Quarterly JDTC Newsletters**



# NADCP

**National Association of  
Drug Court Professionals**

# NCJFCJ

*est. 1937*

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

[WWW.NCJFCJ.ORG](http://WWW.NCJFCJ.ORG)

# THANK YOU!

**Martha-Elin Blomquist, Ph.D.**

**[Mblomquist@ncjfcj.org](mailto:Mblomquist@ncjfcj.org)**

**Elisha Harris**

**[Eharris@ncjfcj.org](mailto:Eharris@ncjfcj.org)**