

## LOUISIANA MfC BRIEF

### **Fostering a Movement Towards Evidence-Based Screening, Assessment, and Treatment**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

In 2006, Louisiana was selected as the third state for the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Models for Change initiative. Models for Change is a juvenile justice reform initiative that seeks to create successful and replicable models of juvenile justice reform through targeted investments in selected states. Models for Change seeks to accelerate progress toward a more rational, fair, effective, and developmentally appropriate juvenile justice system. Models for Change seeks to advance reforms that effectively hold young people accountable for their actions, provide for their rehabilitation, protect them from harm, increase their life chances, and manage the risk they pose to themselves and to public safety.

To that end, a system founded on evidence-based practices is crucial to reform. Such a system must be able to: a) identify the variety of needs of youth who come in contact with the juvenile justice system through utilization of scientifically sound screening and assessment instruments; and b) refer youth to a range of evidence-based services to meet their identified needs. Successfully implementing a long-term, system wide movement towards evidence-based practices, while perhaps one of the most important reforms that a state or local jurisdiction can take on, is also one of the most challenging. Jurisdictions that take on this charge must address a number of complicated and interwoven challenges, including:

- the need for broad support and knowledge among a range of stakeholders at the state and local levels;
- the ability to provide for ongoing, continuous stakeholder education and awareness, in order to deal with changing leadership and agency personnel;
- lack of knowledge among stakeholders about the various evidence-based practices, and the potential "fit" of these practices with the local community's needs and resources;
- capacity to implement evidence-based practices within the local provider community;
- provider resistance to shifting from treatment-as-usual to an evidence-based practice, and to participate in fidelity and outcome monitoring processes;
- funding streams that may not be structured to encourage or support evidence-based practices;
- the need for policy development that ensures the preferred utilization of evidence based practices

This monograph, written by the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice and the Louisiana State University Health Sciences School of Public Health, describes the strategies and key accomplishments of the Models for Change efforts to advance the adoption and utilization of EBPs throughout targeted sites in Louisiana.

#### **TARGET AUDIENCE**

The monograph is meant to assist state administration, agency, court, juvenile justice system, parish, and region leadership in advancing evidence-based, promising, and research driven practices in their own area.

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

This monograph is available at <http://publichealth.lsuhsoc.edu/iphj/default.html> or by contacting [sphil2@lsuhsoc.edu](mailto:sphil2@lsuhsoc.edu).