

Disclosure

This project is supported by Grant No. 15PBJA-22-GG-01205-BRND awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.



Executive Summary

Vela, an organization aiming to increase the availability of restorative justice by providing individualized consultation and support for qualitative and quantitative data collection, analysis and reporting, was contracted to carry out the Statewide Data Collection Assessment for the Data and Evaluation Project within the Vermont Statewide Equity through Data, Justice, Inclusion and Education (EDJIE) Initiative. The aim of this report is to identify ways to increase meaningful data regarding racial justice, equity and inclusion in the 21 state-funded Restorative Justice Centers (RJCs) and to develop metrics that track outcomes and help tell the story and impact of RJCs across Vermont.

The process that was used for this assessment aims to align with restorative justice principles by fostering dialogue and feedback. Interviews were conducted according to restorative justice, as well as innovation and design principles which put people first. The four statewide funders Office of the Vermont Attorney General, the Vermont Department of Corrections, the Vermont Department for Children and Families, and the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services) provide RJCs with funding to provide nine distinct program models. We utilized historical reports for background information and gathered information via video calls and emails. The evaluators met with the directors of 21 RJCs, and with the liaisons to the RJCs from all the state funders. The aim of these interviews was to learn what data collection processes are currently used, how each entity currently measures racial justice, equity and inclusion, how the RJC complies with required reporting, what is working well with data collection, analysis and reporting, and what the pain points are for the RJCs and funders. Since the majority of RJCs reported using case tracking methods and metrics beyond the funders' requirements, the evaluators also collected these additional data variables.

The SDCA confirms what RJCs and funders already know, despite the development of uniform position regarding racial injustice by the RJCs, currently it is impossible to measure racial equity in Vermont's restorative justice programs. These programs are operating in a complex data environment and RJCs are burdened by the processes they have had to create in order to comply with funders' reporting requirements. Even when they operate the same program as other RJCs with the same funding source, each RJC must create their own data systems for case management and evaluation. In addition, most programs have to double-entry all data to transfer their case data to funder reporting tools.

The assessment has five recommendations to guide the funders and RJCs on a path of creating a system to collect, analyze and report data in a less complex, more streamlined way. The recommendations are: (1) Modify Data Variables (2) Deploy Resources, and (3) Engage Third Parties to Maximize Insights, (4) Provide Resources to Collect, Analyze and Report on Data, (5) Develop Statewide Survey Tools.

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About this Report

Following the murder of George Floyd by police officers on May 25, 2020, the Restorative Justice Centers (RJCs) across Vermont agreed to work together to address the structural and institutional racism that has existed since the nation's founding. At this time in history, Vermont provides restorative justice services and its RJCs have an obligation to explore and address their role within the larger structure of racism and injustice. All RJCs adopted the three basic tenants of restorative justice amd a uniform position regarding racial injustice. The basic tenants of restorative justice are: 1. Harmful actions are violations of people and relationships; 2. Violations create obligations; 3. Restorative justice seeks to engage and support those who have been harmed or victimized.

Currently, there are 22 RJCs funded by the Office of the Vermont Attorney General, the Vermont Department of Corrections, the Vermont Department for Children and Families, and the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services which provide RJCs with funding to provide nine distinct program models.

In 2023, Vermont received funding from the Federal Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to start the Statewide Equity through Data, Justice, Inclusion and Education (EDJIE) Initiative. Vela, an organization aiming to Increase the availability of restorative justice by providing individualized consultation and support for qualitative and quantitative data collection, analysis and reporting, was contracted for the Data and Evaluation Project within the EDJIE Initiative. The aim of this report is to identify ways to increase the data regarding racial justice, equity and inclusion in the 22 state-funded RJCs, and to develop metrics that track outcomes and help tell the story and impact of RJCs across Vermont. This project is supported by Grant No. 15PBJA-22-GG-01205-BRND awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency and Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Several studies on racial justice in Vermont indicate that people holding marginalized identities are disproportionately referred, charged, and sentenced in the criminal justice system in Vermont. This Statewide Data Collection Assessment (SDCA) will provide information and analysis of statewide data collection and reporting practices. Recommendations provided in this report address how RJCs and their funders can prioritize the collection of data regarding race, ethnicity and other factors and streamline data collection and analysis. The outcome of these efforts will lead to a better understanding of how people of the global majority an dthose marginalized by our systems and institutions experience access and outcomes from the programs hosted by the RJCs. Given the evidence of inequality in the Vermont criminal legal system, it is crucial for those providing services, those providing funding and funding, as well as the citizenry of Vermont, to understand the current situation and maximize the equity of services in the future.

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www.vcjn.org/who-we-are

Methods

Information for the SDCA was collected from numerous sources. The process used for this assessment aimed to align with restorative justice principles by fostering dialogue and feedback. Interviews were conducted according to restorative justice, as well as innovation and design principles which put people first. Putting the people, or the interviewee, first means making sure that the interviewer follows the interviewee and is informed about what is most important for the person doing the work. Even though there was an outline of questions for the interviews, they were used only as a guide for a more spontaneous and encompassing conversation. The same approach will be implemented following the delivery of the SDCA. After soliciting feedback about the information in this report, it will be included as an appendix for the final report. The RJC stakeholders hold the most wisdom about their experiences with data collection; therefore, their responses to the content in this document are crucial.

The four funders provided historical reports for background information for the assessment. These reports are analyzed in the State Data Topography selection of this report. The remaining information was gathered via video calls and emails. The evaluators met with the directors of 21 RJCs, and with the liaisons to the RJCs from all of the state funders. The aim of these interviews was to learn what data collection processes are currently used, how each entity currently measures racial justice, equity and inclusion, how the RJC complies with required reporting, what is working well with data collection, analysis and reporting, and what the pain points are for the RJCs and funders. Since the majority of RJCs reported using case tracking methods and metrics beyond the funders' requirements, the evaluators also collected these additional data variables.

Data Through an Equity Lens

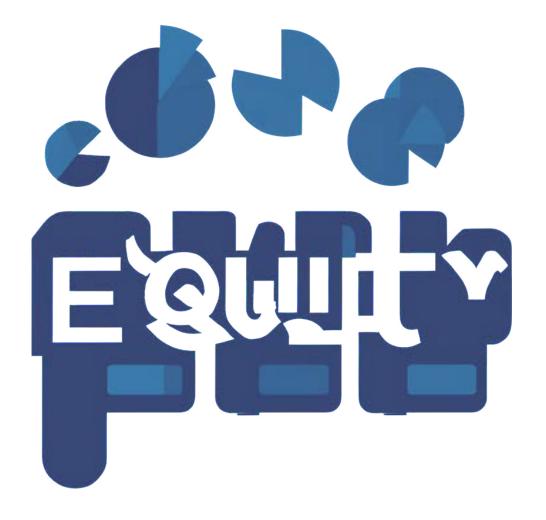
The EDJIE Initiative seeks to uncover and improve on the ways in which Vermont's Restorative Justice Programs achieve equity, justice, and inclusion. The Initiative recognizes the historical and systemic barriers that have perpetuated inequality. Achieving racial equity requires actively dismantling discriminatory policies and practices while promoting inclusivity and belonging for all.

The Statewide Data Collection Assessment (SDCA) is the first step in exploring the equity of access, experience, and outcome. By incorporating an equity lens—and particularly, a racial justice lens—into Vermont's guiding framework for Restorative Justice Programs, practitioners can better understand the impact of their programs and policies on diverse populations and work towards more equitable outcomes.

While fulfilling an organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals are important, this is not what we mean by looking at data through an equity lens. Instead, we seek to understand whether a program is actually delivering restorative justice—that is, making whole a community injured by crime and wrong-doing. From entry point to exit point, working towards equity means actively seeking to uncover and resolve any disparities in terms of access, experience, or outcome. Equity of access begins with understanding to whom the opportunity is offered; whether community stakeholders, together, actively

work to remove barriers to access; and whether justice system practitioners regularly and rigorously examine opportunities to expand access. Further, assessing equity of experience entails understanding whether participants of different backgrounds and identities have equitable experiences during restorative justice processes. If some groups feel more safe or respected than others, for example, this may be a sign that processes could be more culturally responsive. Finally, evaluating equity of outcome means understanding whether participants of different backgrounds and identities experience comparable outcomes as the result of their participation.

The EDJIE Initiative will help policy makers, program managers, and other community stakeholders uncover the best ways to produce usable data—to learn what decision points increase equity of access, improve user experiences, and increase positive outcomes. By acknowledging the role of race and ethnicity in shaping outcomes and experiences, organizations can better fulfill their mission of promoting social justice and improving the lives of all individuals.



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Program Landscape

Vermont's Community Justice Network comprises 21 Restorative Justice Centers (RJCs) that share a belief in the importance and efficacy of restorative responses to conflict and crime as an alternative to traditional criminal prosecution, punishment, and retribution. The RJCs are situated in 12 of Vermont's 14 counties and deliver a range of restorative justice and reentry programming to all 14 counties. The aim of the distribution of RJCs across the state is to ensure that all persons living in Vermont may be referred to an RJC to resolve their violation.

Each of Vermont's RJCs are funded by one or more of four state entities: the Office of the Vermont Attorney General (AGO), Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC), Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF), and Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services (CVVCS). Funding from AGO, DOC and SCF comes from the state legislature, while CVVCS funding is from two federal programs. While the RJCs receive funding from other sources and provide other services, the scope of the SDCA focuses on nine programs funded by the State. The table below identifies the funders and the programs they fund.

Funder	Programs
DOC	 Restorative Justice Intervention (Restorative Justice Panels/Circle Processes) Restorative Reintegration (Circles of Support and Accountability – CoSA and Resonative Navigation) Restorative Community Engagement (Community Dialogue/Awareness/Dispute
AGO	4. Court Diversion5. Youth Substance Use Awareness Safety Program (YSASP)6. Civil Driver's License Program
DCF	7. Tamarack/Pretrial Services Program 8. Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)
CVVCS	 Parallel Justice, Victim Advocacy and more depending on the agency and community needs

² www.vcjn.org/who-we-are

State Data Topography

The Data and Evaluation portion of the EDJIE Initiative begins with the Statewide Data Collection Assessment (SDCA). The SDCA was structured to support stakeholder understanding of where opportunities exist to advance equity in access, experience, and outcome.

The Assessment hopes to identify: (1) issues causing the complex data environment in RJCs; (2) barriers to the collection of data regarding equity for Vermont's RJCs; and (3) recommendations for how to resolve these two crucial issues.

The following sections are organized according to Vermont's RJCs' shared set of core Restorative Justice Principles discussed above: (1) Harmful actions are violations of **people and relationships**; (2) Violations create **obligations**; and (3) **Restorative justice seeks to engage and support those who have been harmed or victimized.** By anchoring to this set of core principles, readers may better understand how and why certain data metrics are or are not used to understand progress in light of these guideposts.

The first principle requires the exploration of the people and relationships impacted by the crime. Important questions include: Who was harmed and how were they affected by these harms? Who is responsible for these harms? How was the relationship damaged and how has the peace in the community been disrupted?

The second principle recognizes that these violations subsequently create obligations. The responsible parties have an opportunity to accept responsibility for their actions, understand the harm that was caused to others, and repair the damage to the relationships. The community has an opportunity to support both the responsible parties and harmed parties in their work towards a repaired and strengthened relationship. The community also has the role, particularly for youthful responsible persons, to provide opportunities for meaningful participation, pro-social skills development, and connection to caring and supportive adults. Important questions include: How were the obligations made known? How do stakeholders understand the damage to the relationship? What did community support of both responsible and harmed party look like? Were parties satisfied with the process?

The last principle indicates that the restorative justice model engages responsible persons, harmed parties, and community members in the process of putting things right. All parties are provided meaningful opportunities to participate, shape the process, and make decisions. This principle recognizes that those involved stakeholders are best suited to decide what it means to mend the situation. Making amends also includes follow-through and satisfaction with the outcome. Important questions include: In what ways were stakeholders engaged in the process of making amends? What were the outcomes of this engagement?

Using these principles to structure our report may also help stakeholders generate usable information for practicing continuous improvement, especially related to equity of outcomes for RJCs' services.

People and Relationships

The first of Vermont's Restorative Justice Principles focuses on the people and relationships impacted by the crime. This section examines data points related to who is responsible, who is harmed, and the specific dynamics of the harm that occurred.

About the Responsible Party

Restorative Justice Programs across the state collect basic demographic information about race/ethnicity, gender, and age of responsible persons. However, the race/ethnicity definitions used by the four funders are not completely aligned. Three race/ethnicity categories, Asian, Black or African American, and White/Caucasian were the same across the four funders. The AGO-funded agencies were the only programs to track American Indians separately from the American Indian/Alaska Native grouping used by the other funders. In addition, AGO is the only funder that does not separately identify Latinos and it is unclear where their numbers are counted. The AGO allows participants to self-identify their race/ethnicity without adhering to predefined categories to allow for the diversity in the ways people identify. The DOC-funded agencies were required to

track Middle Eastern/North African participants and do not have a separate category for individuals of multiple races.

The table shows the various race/ethnicity categories, as tracked by each funder regarding the responsible persons.



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AGO	DCF	DOC	CVVCS
Alaskan American	American Indian/Alaska Native	American Indian/Native American/Alaska Native	American Indian/Alaska Native
American Indian			
Asian	Asian	Asian	Asian
Black or African American	Black or African American	Black or African American	Black/African American
	Latino	Hispanic/Latinx	Hispanic/Latino
		Middle Eastern/North African	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Pacific Islander	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
White	White	White/Caucasian	White/Non-Latino/ Caucasian
Other Single Race			Some Other Race
Self-Identified Description		Self-Describe	
I wo or More Races	More Than One Race		Multiple Races
	Not Latino		
Chose Not to Identify		Prefer Not to Say	
Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	

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All 22 agencies included an option for responsible party respondents to indicate "non-binary" in the question about gender.

Beyond the basics of race/ethnicity, gender, and age, providers collected a wide range of other data about the responsible person. For instance, programs funded by the AGO, collected data on whether the participant:

- prefers a language other than English;
- has a drivers license;
- is employed;
- has stable housing; or
- demonstrates financial hardship, like recent loss of income or significant medical expenses.

CVVCS-funded agencies also collected information about the responsible party beyond the basic demographics, including whether participants were:

- deaf/hard of hearing;
- homeless;
- immigrants/refugees;
- LGBTQ; or
- veterans.

DCF-funded BARJ program collects extensive data about program participants by using the Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI). The YASI was designed to determine risk and pair youth with services based on risks and needs. In addition to the YASI targeted risk factors and protective factors, these RJCs must collect youth participant data on:

- current school and grade;
- custody status;
- learning needs/profile;
- drug testing results;
- pro-social factors, like clubs/sports involvement;
- work history; and
- barriers to success.

Other differences include reporting frequency and source data

- AGO uses a software system named Law Manager, allowing RJCs to input data daily. The AGO's office audits the data quarterly, and RJCs are required to provide bi-annual and annual reports.
- DCF reports quarterly on BARJ programs based on a spreadsheet filled out by RJCs.
- DOC reports monthly via a spreadsheet filled out by RJCs
- CVVCS reports quarterly federal data forms filled out by RJCs CVVCS-funded programs must comply with federal reporting required by the Victims of Crime Act and Violence against Women Act.

About the Harmed Party

The demographic data about the harmed party varies significantly and is frequently less robust than for the responsible parties. For example, DCF-funded and DOC-funded programs only report on the number of identifiable harmed parties, without demographic data. Through the Victim-Harmed Party Survey (in their Survey Monkey platform, this survey is called Court Diversion Survey), the AGO-funded programs track the number of surveys completed, whether the harmed party was younger than 18 years old, if the harmed party knew the responsible parties, whether the harmed party is best described as an individual, small-business owner, or representative of a company/organization.

Only CVVCS-funded programs report the same demographic information on harmed party participants as they do for responsible person participants. CVVCS also collect data on the number of harmed parties with disabilities and the number of harmed parties with limited English proficiency.

About the Harm/Crime

Across all programs, there is a wide range of data reported about the violation for which harmed parties and responsible persons are referred. For example, DCF-funded RJCs report on just the number of precharged youth, while the CVVCS-funded programs report on an extensive 25+ list they call Victimization Types. The table below shows what harm/crime data is reported by each funder.



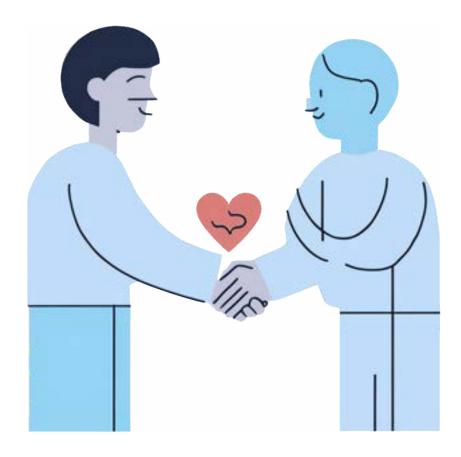
Funder	Report on:	
DOC	 type of referral: sentenced by the Court to Reparative Probation sentenced by the Court to Direct Reparative without Probation pre-adjudicated referral from law enforcement, school Resource Officer, or State Attorney other source such as schools and community referrals 	
AGO	All types of crimes referred, including if the crime involved:	
DCF	the number of pre-charged youth	
CVVCS	an extensive list of Victimization Types required for VOCA and VAWA funded programs, including: adult physical assault adults Sexuall Assault adults Sexually Abused as Kids arson bullying burglary child Physical Abuse or Neglect child Pornography child Sexual Abuse/Assault domestic and/or Family Violence DUI/DWI Incidents elder Abuse or Neglect hate Crime: racial, etc. human Trafficking: Labor or Sex identity Theft/Fraud/Financial Crime kidnapping (non-custodial + custodial) mass Violence (domestic/international) other vehicular victimization robbery stalking/harassment survivors of homicide tero rading victimization terrorism (domestic/international) violation of court (protective order) Other	

Fulfilling the Obligations

The second of Vermont's Restorative Justice Principles focuses on the obligations created by the violation. Obligations in restorative justice processes are typically made known through dialogue and facilitated discussions involving all parties affected by the harm. This can happen through restorative justice conferences, circles, or meetings where the responsible, harmed, and other relevant community members come together to discuss the impact of the violation and what steps need to be taken to repair the harm. This section examines data points collected by Vermont RJCs related to program activities and processes that are employed to fulfill the obligations created by harm, and how participants experience the processes themselves.

About the Process

Organizations report on a wide array of restorative justice program activities. For instance, CVVCSfunded sites are expected to report on the types of services, the number of times the services are provided, and what challenges were encountered in the process. The DOC-funded programs report on which of three programs were provided. The tables below show what data about the process is tracked by funding partners.



AGO	
Youth who participated in YSASP reported on whether:	 discussed substance abuse discussed impact of substance use on self discussed impact of substance use on others discuss reduction of substance use discussed ways to reduce risk of substance use referred to assessment with substance use counselor set up appointment with substance use counselor met with community volunteers/restorative panel process
Responsible persons complete a survey, and harmed Parties reported on whether:	 met with community volunteers and a staff person only (the person who committed the crime was not there) met with a staff person and the person who committed the crime spoke with a staff person gave a written statement chose not to participate or provide information wasn't contact about participating in the process given the opportunity to share how the crime affected me Responsible person took responsibility

DCF	
BARJ program reports on the following activities:	 restorative panel, circle, or restorative family group conference community service hours number of participating harmed parties Harmed parties provide written statement Harmed parties provide verbal statement school attendance monitoring of truant youth measure youth protective factors service learning project hours case management, including case coordination, one-on-one support to the youth/family, etc. restorative classes or skill development to youth or group of youth, including curriculum/structured work community outreach/prevention activities staff trainings restitution

DOC	
DOC-funded programs report on which of the following services were provided:	 community forums and trainings circle of support and accountability resource navigation re-entry panel or circle process education/class family conference

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cvvcs	
CVVCS-funded programs track the number of times the following were provided information and referral services about:	 criminal justice system victim rights other victim services other support services
advocacy/ accompaniment related to:	 emergency medicine forensic exam law enforcement interview individual performance of forensic exam immigration intervention with employer child/dependent care transportation interpreter services
emotional support or safety assistance related to:	 crisis intervention hotline/crisis line counseling on-scene response individual counseling support groups other therapy emergency financial assistance
shelter/housing services related to:	 emergency or safehome transitional housing relocation
criminal/civil justice system assistance related to:	 Criminal justice notification Victim impact statement Restitution Attorney for protection orders Attorney for family law issues Other emergency justice Attorney for immigration Prosecution interview Law enforcement interview Criminal advocacy Other legal advice

Experience of the Process It is important to understand how participants experience restorative justice processes in the moment. Only AGO-funded programs report on metrics regarding participants' reports of what happened in the process, and their satisfaction with the experience. Client satisfaction can be an important indicator of service quality and client-centeredness. The following chart shows the AGO metrics to illustrate the continuum of satisfaction.

Responsible youthful participants in AGO-funded programs reported on whether:

- Staff listened.
- Staff treated them with respect.
- Staff asked for their* thoughts.
- Restorative panel volunteers listened to my story.
- I was treated with respect during the panel meeting.
- The contract included my thoughts and ideas.

Harmed party participants in AGO-funded programs reported on whether:

- Diversion staff kept me well informed.
- Diversion staff cared about me and my situation.
- Needs were heard and met.
- I spoke with a staff person.
- I gave a written statement.
- I met with community volunteers, the person who committed the crime, and a staff person.
- I wasn't contacted about participating in the process.
- I was satisfied with how diversion handled the case.
- I was satisfied with the outcome.

Putting Things Right

The third of Vermont's Restorative Justice Principles is that restorative justice seeks to engage and support those who have been harmed or victimized. In restorative justice, this means that action is taken to repair the harm and provide safety. In this section, we look at how the funders and RJCs measure and track the outcomes of restorative justice programs.

The funder requirements were quite varied with the AGO-funded programs requiring the most information on three outcomes and six process outcomes. Initial outcomes are those related to what impact the program had on attitudes, knowledge, and skills. These are the expected outcomes that precede behavioral changes. For instance, in the case of the AGO program outcomes shown in the table below, a client may report that his knowledge of how to follow the plan to reduce substance use would precede the actual reduction in substance use. The table below shows several initial outcomes as reported by both parties. AGO-funded programs also reported on whether the responsible party completed the program successfully. The last column of the table shows the six process outcomes

tracked by the AGO-funded programs. Process outcomes are those measurable characteristics of how program activities are conducted.

AGO Programs	AGO Programs	AGO Programs
Initial Outcome	Outcome	Process Outcome
 Responsible persons reported on whether they can follow the plan to reduce substance use. 	 Responsible Persons completed the program successfully. 	 Average number of days from referral to intake by county.
 Responsible Persons reported on whether they can follow the plan to reduce risks of substance 		 Average number of days from referral to outreach by county + type of Harmed Parties.
 Youth reported on whether they felt they could successfully complete the 		 Average number of days from referral to outreach by county + type of Harmed Parties.
program.		 Number of closures by county + outcome.
• Harmed Parties reported on whether restitution covered losses.		 Number of closures by county + failure reason.
• Harmed Parties reported on whether the Responsible Persons took responsibility for their actions.		 Number of closures by county + treatment status.

The DCF's BARJ program reports on the number of youth who completed the restorative process. Intended accomplishments also included increased school attendance for truant youth and staying free of new criminal charges. The programs also reported on an initial outcome: the number of youth with increases in protective factors.

DOC-funded programs reported on the number of positive case closures and the number of failures to appear. Process outcomes included the number of days from referral to first panel meeting, as well as reason for case closure.

What's Missing?

Our evaluation shows that although RJCs are required to collect significant amounts of data, there are many gaps in the ability of these data points to measure Vermont's commitment to its restorative justice principles, racial justice, equity and inclusion. In addition, the wide variety of individual funder directives and data definitions mean that it is currently not possible to collate statewide impact of RJCs. In this section, we summarize the gaps in data collection, as well as discrepancies in the way data is collected that affect data comparisons.

Common Data Variables Related to People and Relationships

There are no common data variables that are required by Vermont's state funders of restorative justice programs. There are few common data variables for documenting who is participating in processes and the dynamics of the harm caused. Given the focus of this effort on racial equity, it is particularly important that funders have commonly agreed upon categories for race/ethnicity. The only categories of race/ethnicity that all funders agree upon are Asian, Black/African American and White. Most notably, one funder does not track Latino/Hispanic as a race/ethnicity category; there are several different ways of reporting more than one race/ethnicity that do not clearly overlap; and there are some minor reporting incongruities around Native American/Native Alaskan. Gender categories are aligned across funders.

We discovered that harmed parties are often left out of demographic data collection. We found BARJ and DOC-funded programs report only on the number of identifiable harmed parties, while CVVCSfunded programs report the same demographic information about their harmed and responsible participants as their responsible participants. The focus of detailed data collection on responsible parties limits the ability of funders and the State of Vermont to fully understand equity issues in restorative justice programming.

Without common data variables, RJCs as a group cannot compare data amongst themselves and statewide. These gaps also prevent individual RCSs from understanding racial and other dimensions of equity within their own programs.

Common Data Variables Related to Fulfilling the Obligations

There are also few common data points tracking the processes that are used to fulfill the obligations created by harm, or how participants experience those processes. While each of Vermont's RJC programs offers different services and uses different approaches, there is an opportunity to established shared language for basic program models as well as typical activities or tasks that happen within restorative justice processes (for instance, that the harmed person provided a statement or that the responsible person took accountability for the harm).

In addition, regardless of the process employed, all programs can and should measure the satisfaction of participants with the process. The satisfaction of the participants can be taken as an indicator of the ability of the methodology used by a RJC to meet participants' needs, the appropriateness of the

intervention and the centeredness of responsible and harmed parties. Only AGO-funded programs are collecting metrics regarding participant satisfaction. This data could provide a potential template for other funders, especially as there is no systematic way to determine overall outcomes. Asking program participants, including harmed and other participating community members, to comment on whether they were satisfied with their experience, if they would encourage family or friends to participate, and whether they would choose the opportunity again are helpful indicators of overall satisfaction.

Other indicators of satisfaction, such as feeling listened to, feeling treated with respect, being contacted in a timely manner, feeling like the resolution reflected input, would help to create a fuller picture of the restorative justice experience. Common data variables in this category could also help providers understand whether their theory of change is an effective approach and whether there is statewide alignment on how communities fulfill their obligations to both responsible and harmed parties. Finally, tracking these results by race/ethnicity will help stakeholders understand whether participants are experiencing the process equitably. In particular, understanding whether historically marginalized groups felt equally satisfied with the way in which they were engaged is critical to the state's objectives.

Common Data Variables Related to Putting Things Right

Finally, the state data topography is currently insufficient to answer global questions about whether restorative justice programs meet the needs of harmed participants, result in meaningful repairs, or lead to the healing of participants. Measuring these types of changes can certainly be difficult, but they are important to understanding whether the process has truly helped put things right. AGO-funded programs currently collect some outcome measures beyond satisfaction that may be helpful in determining whether the repairs made were sufficient to meet participants' needs. Other outcomes that may be considered - if feasible - include the reduction of trauma symptoms, an improved sense of safety, and the ability to document reduced community violence and harm, among others.

Ability of Data Variables to Assess Equity To reiterate, data collection and analysis according to a person's marginalized identities at key decision points are required to support the EDJIE Initiative's goals around racial justice, equity and inclusion. There are well-established methodologies to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal justice system including the regular examination of race/ethnicity data at key decision stages by all levels of justice system practitioners, beginning with law enforcement involvement. Arrest, pre-trial release/diversion, detention and prosecution, probation violation, and risk assessment data by race/ethnicity would also give stakeholders an idea of who has access to Restorative Justice programming by race/ethnicity. Making these data available regularly and publicly is an important step in uncovering where there could be opportunities for policy and/or procedural changes to advance the shared goal of racial equity. While incarceration and sentencing decision points are not relevant to restorative justice programming, the data regarding incarceration and sentencing decision points are essential to legal and correctional systems interested in fully understanding how to further goals around racial equity. For RJCs that operate programs that do not fit traditional criminal justice processes, the methodologies for assessing disparities must be modified, especially to answer the questions of whether some groups or people have the opportunity to

repair the harm that they inflicted on a community and restore relationships, while others with similar offenses do not.

Data from 2019, shown in the table below, might spark curiosity about how those 1,665 Black youth moved through the juvenile justice system. How many were eligible for Restorative Justice? Were there community supports that could have been strengthened that would have reduced their risk profile and made some youth of color eligible? This is one example of the kinds of questions policy makers, practitioners, and community stakeholders may ask as part of their effort to understand whether they are actively contributing to racial disparity and whether they are missing opportunities to strengthen a community-based response to the harm.

Chittenden County	Youth Race/Ethnicity General Population3	Youth Arrests FFY2017 - FFY2019
Black	1,665 (5.7%)	28.9%
White	25,645 (87.9%)	62.9%
Asian	1,752 (6%)	6.4%
Hispanic or Latino (of all races)	952 (3.3%)	1.6%
Two or more races		
Unknown		1.1%
Total	29,165	100%

Creating data collection and analysis mechanisms that produce regularly reported data will help stakeholders institute policies and procedures that assist in the movement towards equity. For example, having race/ethnicity data might show that certain sets of youth experience housing instability, lack employment and other protective factors that indicate increased likelihood of risk. For school age youth, similarly disaggregated data is likely to demonstrate instances of undiagnosed learning differences that affect their ability to meet the school attendance terms of their contract.

Resources for Data

Stakeholders in the Vermont Restorative Justice space should examine how funds by each program and each funder are allocated for data collection and analysis activities. What would it require to have more continuity? Are there opportunities for sharing resources? Are resources adequate for timely, meaningful, protected data that helps inform policies and practices?

³ Findings Related to Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Vermont's Youth Justice Response – 2019

Thus, beyond anecdotes, the funders lack structures to assess customer satisfaction and quality of services provided by the RJCs. ("<u>Customer satisfaction</u>" will be used in reference to the satisfaction of any program participant.)

The current data collection for AGO, DOC and BARJ focus on total number of people served and total number of completions. The reporting organized for this purpose would not support RJCs or Funders in achieving some of these aspirations.

Alignment of Data Variables with Core Principles & EDJIE Goals

The state data landscape also reveals an opportunity to better align data collection with Vermont's core principles. Currently, funders demonstrate different areas of emphasis in their data collection. For instance, we have illustrated how BARJ and DOC-funded programs report only on the number of identifiable harmed parties, while VOCA-funded programs report the same demographic information about their harmed participants as their responsible participants. AGO programs collect surveys tracking harmed party satisfaction, as well as other harmed party outcomes (for instance, whether the harmed party feels the responsible participants took responsibility for their actions). Currently, the state data landscape is insufficient to answer global questions about whether restorative justice programs meet harmed party needs, result in meaningful repairs, or lead to the satisfaction and healing of participants. In selecting common data variables, state funding agencies must take stock of which types of variables are required to measure their most essential aims.



RJC Funders' Data Practices

Despite RJCs presence across the entire state, RJC funders have not provided a uniform tool that meets the needs of all the RJCs for operating and administering their services. Interviews with the funders revealed disparate practices for data reporting, auditing, and software resources. Identifying how the funders are collecting data from RJCs and supporting RJCs with this effort will illuminate possible ways to make the data collection, analysis and reporting more streamlined and better structured to report on equity of outcomes for clients.

Data Collection Tools and Methods

Each funder collects data from the RJCs in different ways:

AGO: Law Manager, a software system which can be updated by RJC staff daily.
DOC: A spreadsheet, which is submitted individually by each RJC and aggregated by the DOC liaison.
DCF: A spreadsheet that was recently updated to accommodate data tracking and case management.
CVVCS: Forms provided by the federal government, as well as an online portal.

With the disparities in the data fields required as referenced in the *State Data Topography* section, as well as the distinctly different ways that data is collected by each funder, aggregating the impact of RJCs across the state of Vermont is extremely complex. Nevertheless, all the funders have been responsive to requests from the RJCs to adjust reporting tools to include information the RJCs find necessary to be included in reports.

One crucial data component is missing in most of the funders' reporting methodology: auditing. Auditing data is a crucial aspect of maintaining and reporting on data sets that are accurate and complete. Currently, only the AGO is providing data auditing services, a process in which AGO staff notifies RJCs of missing data or inaccurate data entry. These issues are reported back to the respective RJCs, and the RJCs enter data into missing fields and adjust any data entry mistakes. Human error plays a large role in generating inaccurate reports, and auditing is a necessary process to ensure that data that is reported is complete and accurate. It is important to acknowledge that auditing data entry is a costly and time-consuming process, and therefore the inability to audit data submissions from RJCs across all funders is understandable.

The Vermont Association of Court Diversion and Pretrial Services (VACDP) is the quality assurance program operated by the AGO. It utilizes directors of RJCs to visit other AGO-funded RJCs and complete a quality assurance assessment every three years. In this way, AGO ensures that RJCs are providing services with a consistent quality of service across the state. This is a model that other funders could adopt to assess program performance. Visiting RJCs for quality assurance purposes would provide funders with immense insights, given that only the AGO requires RJCs provide clients with surveys about their experience.

Key Stakeholders and Performance Indicators

The Vermont legislature is the primary stakeholder for the RJCs performance indicators for the AGO, DOC, and DCF funded RJCs. In contrast, CVVCS must answer to federal program managers of Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and Violence against Women Act (VAWA) funding that they distribute to RJCs.

AGO and DOC liaisons report that the questions they receive from the Vermont legislators are focused on how many people RJCs served and how many of those who were served completed their respective program. On the contrary, DCF liaisons to RJCs indicate that the legislators they report to are most interested in narrative summaries about the clients served.

Given that AGO, DOC and DCF are all based in Vermont and only provide services within the state, these programs have relative flexibility in terms of what are key indicators of success for the RJCs. The CVVCS funding is more proscriptive and inflexible. However, RJCs could collect data beyond the VOCA and VAWA reporting requirements if they believed it was worthwhile and within their capacity to do so.

Quantity versus Quality

With four statewide funders making restorative practices available across the state, Vermont has a strong commitment to making RJCs available to its residents. Unfortunately, when funders and legislators focus exclusively on the total number of people served, the principles of restorative justice and emphasis on equity are lost. It is critical to demonstrate how individuals are impacted by the services they receive from RJCs within their communities.

The current challenge is that Vermont either does not have the data to answer these questions or has the data but not the methodology to provide meaningful analyses. Without that data, funders cannot fully emphasize the important roles that RJCs have in the criminal justice system.

As we previously mentioned, only AGO has survey data about customer satisfaction with RJCs. With more data and insights about clients' experiences, for example with a goal to have Results Based Accountability (RBA) surveys completed by 95% of clients, state funders would be able to provide evidence to legislators about the benefits RJCs bring to their communities.

How Data Informs Practice of Restorative Justice

Funders reported two overriding purposes for their reporting requirements:

- (1) To provide data and information to state legislators or the federal government, and
- (2) To determine funding allocations to RJCs.

While these two reasons for collecting reports from RJCs are undoubtedly necessary, it is also important to provide any insights to RJCs about how to improve their programs and practices. While funders have been supportive in adapting their reporting tools per the requests for the RJCs, there are no performance indicators, beyond total number of people served, that funders can deduce from the

reports they request. By creating metrics and mechanisms that allow programs to have insight into the impact of their work, staff members can practice continuous improvement, be invested in the data collection process, and readily tell the story of their work.

The second issue of using data for funding allocations is a challenging one. Program performance indicators are needed to compile the total number of people served, equitable outcomes for clients of all demographics and social identities, survey responses from participants, and anecdotal information. Yet this information calls into question what may change in the relationships between funders and RJCs if additional key performance indicators (KPIs) are required in reporting. For example, how will the different areas of performance be weighted, and how will this data affect programs that do not meet the minimum requirements for their KPIs. Despite the complexity in getting a new system of reporting launched, involving multiple domains of performance and KPIs, the efficacy and equity of restorative practices should not be assessed only by total number of people served or anecdotal data.



RJC Data Practices

In addition to understanding the state data topography as established by the four state funders, it is important to understand RJCs' current practices and capacities related to data and evaluation. This section of the report explores the practices that Vermont's RJCs are currently using to collect, manage, and report the data requested by state funding entities, as well as any additional data they collect. Across these areas, the SDCA examines how the current capacities of RJCs to collect and manage data might influence present and future state evaluation efforts. Finally, the section explores program data practices and capacities from an equity lens, examining whether they enable individual RJCs and the State of Vermont to make necessary assessments about equity, diversity, justice, and inclusion.

Data Collection and Management

Our interviews with Vermont's RJCs revealed that there is little continuity or consistency in how the RJCs and funders approach data collection and management. There is little consensus outside of state funding requirements on what data to collect. Equally important, there are no standardized tools or common processes that RJCs can use for collecting the data elements identified by state funders. Finally, RJCs use a range of approaches for compiling and storing the required data.

Data Collection Tools and Practices

For most RJCs, data and evaluation activities are driven by state requirements. Approximately half (53%) collect no more data than what is required by their state funder (included in appendix). As a result, data collection primarily consists of program staff documenting elements of each case, such as case characteristics, participant characteristics, practices used, referrals made, and completion and closure information. Some RJCs develop their own intake forms and processes for gathering this data. These range from a half page form that captures only the most basic required information related to participant identity and contact information, to multi-page intake forms that capture detailed data on demographics, relationships, housing, employment, education, health, personal strengths and goals, legal history, and more.

RJCs also compile, store, and manage the data they collect in myriad ways, with 94% of programs using multiple physical and digital storage locations for program data. Data are stored in a combination of paper forms and files, Excel spreadsheets, Access databases, online survey products such as SurveyMonkey and SurveyMethods, and case tracking software products including Law Manager and Outcome Tracker. The majority (83%) of RJCs use data systems other than the statewide funder reporting system/documents to track and store data, requiring staff to double-enter data into the state reporting system.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys and Questionnaires

Because the participant experience is not emphasized in state reporting, more than half of RJCs (58%) do not collect any data directly from participants about their experience via surveys (included in appendix). Only the AGO funded programs are provided surveys by the funder to administer to clients. Some RJCs develop their own surveys and questionnaires to evaluate customer satisfaction for DCF, DOC and CVVCS funded programs. Surveys are often administered in hard copy, while others are web-based.

RJCs report that they have difficulty with clients completing or returning surveys about their experience. In 2023, survey response rates for AGO programs (the only programs for which response rates are available) averaged 4% for harmed parties and 6.75% for responsible parties.

	Surveys Administered	Total Responses	Response Rates
Harmed Party (Victim)	299	12	4.01%
Participant	1377	93	6.75%
YASAP	737	38	5.16%

AGO Survey Response Rates FY 2023

Data Reporting and Responsiveness

For almost all RJCs, the analysis and reporting of data is limited to required reporting for the state funders. Two RJCs indicated that they prepare other reports based on the requirements from other funders. Three others indicated that they do their own low-level analysis of data - mostly writing up success stories to provide highlights to the community (via news stories or social media) or to referral agencies (via email) in hopes of increasing referrals. Otherwise, the RJCs' understanding of their programs largely focuses on who is being served, how many people/cases, and for what types of charges.

While other data is required by state funders, limitations in reporting requirements and resources further impact what can be learned from these data. RJCs consistently reported that site-specific reports presenting data provided to their state funder were either unavailable or not useful in terms of understanding program impact or generating insights that might shape their program operations. Many RJCs indicated a strong desire for better outcomes reporting with quantifiable information showing their impact on clients. However, they currently lack the capacity to design and implement richer program evaluations on their own.

Capacity Gaps

Vermont's RJCs, like many other restorative justice programs across the country, generally operate in a scarce resource environment, relying heavily upon volunteers and elusive funding streams. They leverage small staffs and modest budgets to operate programs and complete necessary administrative requirements, including the state funder reporting requirements. There is little time to dream and build beyond these parameters.

Further, developing meaningful program evaluation requires specialized skill sets in devising tools and instruments, designing efficient and reliable processes for collecting data, conducting follow-up to promote good response rates, cleanly managing diverse types of data across cases, effectively analyzing data to answer key questions of interest, and composing accessible and engaging reports that convey the results of evaluation both internally (for program improvement) and externally (to communicate with stakeholder audiences). While some programs have tried to address data gaps by partnering with local colleges and universities, these partnerships vary in their success and sustainability.

Data Practices and Equity

This assessment intentionally applies an equity lens to understand Vermont's opportunities and limitations related to promoting greater equity of access, experience, and outcome for people who might benefit from restorative justice. The data practices of RJCs point to limits in terms of their capacity to ask and answer intentional questions about equity. First, we have identified gaps in the collection of data points that would allow RJCs to make equity assessments. Second, we have described how RJCs have limited time and expertise to analyze and make sense of data, much less be responsive to any patterns that are identified. For instance,

while RJCs may have the data to determine whether participants of certain identities are less likely to complete surveys, indicating possible disparities in how accessible or culturally responsive the instruments and collection processes are, they often lack the resources to try to fix this issue. It is important to ask whether current data reporting and dissemination strategies maximize our understanding of equity, given the information that is available.



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Data Aspirations

A question in the interviews with RJCs and Statewide Funder liaisons that seemed to invigorate all SDCA participants was: "What is aspirational for your data collection?" The good news is that liaisons from the funders provided many aspirations that overlapped with those of RJC staff. The funders and the RJCs appear to be in sync with each other in what they would like to see for the future of data and evaluation. At the same time, most interviewees cited lack of capacity for implementing and actualizing their aspirations. These aspirations will help inform Vela's next deliverable with RJCs regarding the development of data metrics and tools for each of the programs included within the scope of this project. The availability and implementation of survey tools and additional data analysis regarding equity could potentially factor into the discussions with and the education of legislators regarding the value and impact of RJCs across Vermont. This section will close with some aspirations for data analysis and reporting that may not yet have come to mind for RJCs in Vermont.

Funders' Aspirations

The themes of the aspirations from the funder interviews include: wanting to know more about the impact of the program on the client, ensuring that the goals of the program are being met, implementing surveys to receive feedback from clients about their experience in the program, and wanting to tell the story of the programs without being restricted by outside stakeholders' interests. The data collection and analysis aspirations for each funder are included below.

AGO

The representatives from the AGO are interested in topics such as:

- What duration do clients stay in treatment?
- Did clients make a meaningful connection with another person or the community?
- What outcomes could be shown via comparison of participants' pre- and post- surveys?
- How was the client impacted by the services they received?
- Is the program meeting its intended goals for serving clients?
- Any questions that have a community and relationship-based focus.
- Data which indicates that AGO funded programs are both doing meaningful work, as well as doing it with high quality.

One barrier to moving forward with developing ways to measure this aspirational data is uncertainty

that the legislature would consider data about RJCs beyond the total number of people served. This sense of collecting information that would not be considered by legislative stakeholders diminishes the motivation to make aspirational data collection a reality. The question then becomes, if the legislature is not interested in the more nuanced impacts of RJCs, what reasons would motivate the AGO and their RJCs to collect data?

DOC

The liaisons from the DOC emphasized their interest in collecting survey data in the Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework. They mentioned that this has been an idea for a long time, however the implementation across all DOC funded RJCs would be a complicated and time-consuming process. Another demotivating factor in implementing surveys is uncertainty that the legislature would be interested in any information beyond what is relevant to the legislation at any given time. Nevertheless, DOC liaisons are interested in knowing how well the RJCs they fund are doing and if anyone is better off as a result of receiving the services they fund. The DOC previously collected this type of survey information; however it has been several years since the DOC has required these surveys.

DCF

DCF, which funds the BARJ program, realizes that the information and stories they want to share about their program do not necessarily align with what stakeholders want to hear about the program. DCF must negotiate the conflicting reporting interests of the DCF, the RJCs and the legislators. With so many stakeholders to consider when deciding what to report, often the information conveyed about BARJ does not end up satisfying all these various stakeholders.

CVVCS

Reporting on services provided in order to maintain VOCA and VAWA funding is a detailed and timeconsuming task. Unlike the other three statewide funders who may adjust their funding requirements based on feedback from the RJCs or other stakeholders, the federal requirements CVVCS must comply with for reporting are not flexible. If other RJCs add new metrics and reporting requirements, it is not clear if CVVCS programs will choose additional metrics to their program evaluation that are not required for VOCA and VAWA.

Restorative Justice Centers' Aspirations

SDCA's RJC interview participants expressed many aspirations for data collection. Understandably, the individuals doing the work, living in the communities receiving restorative services, and recruiting and training volunteers to support this community-based effort are deeply invested in knowing the impact of their work. Without having to negotiate what is the most important information to provide to legislators, RJCs are very interested in knowing more about the impact of their work. Capacity and resources were barriers to making progress toward these data aspirations. Almost half of RJCs had reached out to a third-party for support in growing capacity for data collection, however these efforts were on a center-by-center basis. As an initiative to enable all RJCs to achieve their aspirations has not yet taken place, several RJCs have created their own surveys to use for internal feedback and programmatic insights. The RJCs' data aspirations below are organized according to the themes identified in introduction to the funders' data aspirations.

Staff of RJCs are wanting to know more about the impact of the programs on the clients. For example, are clients:

- more hopeful?
- *more integrated in and connected to their communities?*
- better off in more nuanced ways than just not recidivating?
- engaging in harm reduction behaviors, including if the client has reduced substance misuse?
- more likely to be employed, able to pay their bills, or transition out of unwanted homelessness?

Ensuring that the goals of the program are being met are important to RJC staff, they would like to see:

- qualitative change related to their mission and vision, specifically a number to know that their work is making a difference.
- how the work of programs is making a difference on clients and communities.
- recidivism rates for clients.
- information about the equity of their work and whether the outcomes are similar for all clients.
- *if there are discrepancies regarding equity across referral sources.*
- increases in social capital because of RJC programming.

Implementing surveys to receive feedback from clients, which will:

- make impact on clients quantifiable.
- enrich the data collected by RJCs so that they can report on more than just the total number of people served.
- collect survey information from harmed parties about their experiences.
- show impacts in Results Based Accountability framework.
- *inform RJC staff of the volunteer experience, including how volunteer experience impacts volunteer retention.*
- quantify the number of hours spent on cases by staff and volunteers.

Recommended Aspirations

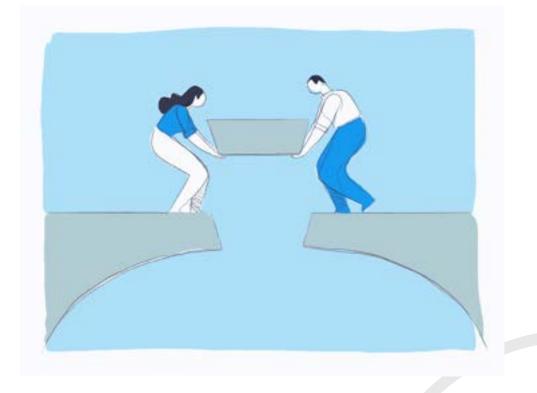
We have identified some additional possibilities for data collection, analysis and reporting beyond those already imagined by the RJCs and state funders. Given that there is data that has been consistently collected over the years, that information could be analyzed to identify meaningful outcomes. For example, since ethnicity, age, gender identity and completion rate has been recorded for nearly all clients, this data presents an opportunity to evaluate the baseline equity that marginalized individuals have experienced in RJC programs. Similarly, programs can gain useful insight to learn if the amount of time passed between the date of the incident and the data the client received services impacts the likelihood of a client successfully completing the program. The same type of analysis could be completed for how long the client is in the program or completing their reparative agreement. In short, we encourage RJCs to identify what data they have collected over time to manage their caseload and find opportunities within that "basic RJ program data" to identify whether there are equitable outcomes.

Other metrics that are essential to RJCs' operations include volunteer retention, volunteer competency, customer satisfaction, and parity of social identities when providing services. We encourage restorative justice programs to look at all aspects of program operations, in addition to customer satisfaction. Just as an employee may receive a 360 degree review from all of their colleagues, restorative programs should consider that many factors across the administrative, volunteer management, scheduling, etc. can influence the quality of services an RJC provides to its community.

Gaps Between Aspirations and Current Data Practices

Achieving these data aspirations will require changing what type of data is collected and how it is collected. For instance, the SDCA interviews revealed that funders and RJCs would like to collect better survey data. This will require the creation of a survey, administration of the survey to the program participants, and ensuring a meaningful completion rate of the survey (approximately 90% of participants).

RJCs and Funders communicated detailed and poignant aspirations, however no interview provided a plan for how to achieve these data aspirations. The gaps between current practice and aspirational practice are rooted in capacity and scale. Implementation of these data aspirations will be complicated and time consuming. In addition, RJCs and funders must find the motivation to put in the time and effort to achieve their data aspirations. Even if legislative interest is lacking. It is resoundingly clear that the RJCs and the funders both are interested in data and outcomes beyond what is currently reported. The next step is to develop a mechanism to make this happen.



Recommendations

The SDCA confirms what RJCs and funders already know, that Vermont's restorative justice programs are operating in a complex data environment and RJCs are burdened by the processes they have had to create in order to comply with funders' reporting requirements. Even when they operate the same program as other RJCs with the same funding source, each RJC has to create their own data systems for case management and evaluation. In addition, most programs have to double-entry all data to transfer their case data to funder reporting tools. For these reasons, it is currently not possible to assess racial equity in indivdual program and on a statewide basis.

The following recommendations are intended to support RJCs and funders in measuring their alignment with Vermont's Restorative Justice Principles and creating a less complex, more streamlined way to collect, analyze and report on data. Each recommendation below includes a rationale.

Modify Data Variables

Create Common Data Variables to Use Across All Funders

o There is little synchronization across funders in terms of the data points collected or the way they are measured. Common data variables across all state funders will enable RJCs to track data more efficiently. In addition, implementing common data variables will enable Vermont restorative justice stakeholders to aggregate the equity of outcomes for all restorative justice programs. With different fields for ethnicity, for example, it is not possible to demonstrate the impact of DOC and AGO efforts combined. The ability to aggregate data will enable programs to be able to use one tracking system for their data, and it will also give the RJCs and funders the ability to report on the collective impact of all of the restorative justice practices across the state.

Align Data Variables with Restorative Justice Core Principles

o Currently, the data requested from the RJCs does not give funders the ability to assess the successful delivery of Vermont's restorative justice Core Principles. Even when using a framework for evaluations, such as Results Based Accountability, it is crucial that the evaluations provide information about whether the services are achieving their intended purpose and operating under the principles of restorative justice. Without this information, RJCs cannot understand client needs, etc. It is necessary for RJCs to craft participant surveys to better understand the impacts of the programs and identify where there are opportunities for improvements.

Deploy Resources

- Set up Systems to Assess Equity
 - O Achieving the goals of the EDJIE initiative requires RJCs and funders to evaluate programs with an equity lens. More specifically, the data collected must enable programs to determine whether people of different identities are able to access

their programs equally, whether they have equitable experiences in those programs, and whether they benefit from outcomes at comparable rates. New structures for data collection, analysis and reporting related to case management and participant surveys are necessary to determine if there is equity across RJCs' programming. Ensuring individuals across all demographics experience similar outcomes and customer satisfaction will give restorative justice stakeholders the insights sought by this Initiative.

Provide Resources to Collect, Analyze and Report on Data

o The lack of human and financial resources to collect and analyze data in a uniform way across RJCs is a driver of many of the limitations described in this report. For RJCs to have responsibility to provide similar programs across the state, the resources for these programs must support this effort. The most cost-effective way to do this is to create tools for statewide use that can be utilized by all programs and funders. Such a complete statewide data system would include: 1) data collection tool for case management, 2) survey metrics, 3) survey collection tool, 4) resources for analyzing case management their programs, including in data and evaluation, is a critical component of building overall community capacity to provide a community-based response to harm and repair.

Develop Statewide Survey Tools

o For there to be more survey data collected about participant satisfaction and outcomes, RJCs must decide on a consistent way to administer surveys. Developing a participantcentered procedure implemented by all RJCs for collecting survey information will improve survey response rates and provide restorative justice stakeholders insights into the equity of RJC programs according to the participants.

Engage Third Parties to Maximize Insights

• Utilize Historical Data to Create a Baseline

o Despite the inconsistency of data fields, funders already have a large amount of data that could be examined through an equity lens. RJCs already have client outcomes and demographics have been recorded for at least several years as part of basic case management programmatic data. Investigating this data from an equity lens could give RJCs insights into their baseline performance regarding equity. Funders already have the information necessary to analyze existing data by race/ethnicity at key decision points to understand where there are areas that warrant further examination. Even more, the data could be aggregated across the four funders through data analysis software. Efficiently aggregating, analyzing and gathering insights from volume amount and type of data would require specialized tools and skillsets.

Delegate/Out-source Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting Tasks

o Restorative agency managers must maintain an immensely wide range of competencies, of which data analysis and reporting is often an outlier. The wide range of skills that successful restorative agency managers and coordinators possess tend to focus on relationships, leadership and communication. As technology advances and the field of restorative justice continues to rapidly grow, restorative justice agency leaders are required to learn an entirely new set of skills to maximize the reporting about their impacts. Vela affirms restorative leaders, including those of RJCs, that being able to analyze, interpret, visualize and disseminate data is too complex of a skill set for agency leaders to take on in addition to their other responsibilities. In the spirit of restorative justice principles, RJC leaders should be able to spend more time cultivating and maintaining relationships, and less time with increasingly complex reporting. Therefore, our recommendation is that RJCs outsource their data analysis, etc. so that the most meaningful impacts of the work are available to stakeholders and restorative leaders can maximize their time in their areas of strength.

Based on our analysis of the data requested by the funders, interviews with the funder Liaisons to RJCs, and RJC managers and directors, Vermont is well positioned to meet the objectives of the EDJIE Initiatives Data and Evaluation objectives by implementing these recommendations. In doing so, Vermont is poised to further advance its role as a national leader in the implementation of restorative justice programs.



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Appendix

AGO	Source Document		Response Rate	CCVS/VOCA	Source Document	BARJ			
# of surveys completed by victim	victim harmed party survey (court diversion survey on Survey Monkey)	by site 233 completed Q3 YTD				Total # served			
responsible person successful program completion	victim harmed party survey	by site 2	0 8.6%			# new cases	BARJ referral form	reported quarterly	
responsible person <18 years	victim harmed party survey	by site 2	0 8.6%			# new at-risk cases	BARJ referral form	reported quarterly	
victim knew responsible person before crime	victim harmed party survey	by site 2				# new adjudicated youth cases	BARJ referral form	reported quarterly	
diversion staff kept me well informed	victim harmed party survey	by site 2	0 8.6%			# new truancy cases	BARJ referral form	reported quarterly	
diversion staff cared about me/situation	victim harmed party survey	by site 2				# new youthful responsible person cases	BARJ referral form	reported quarterly	
given opportunity to share how the crime affected me	victim harmed party survey	by site 2				# pre-charge cases		reported quarterly	
needs were heard and met	victim harmed party survey	by site 2				# youth referred by the court for services	Court form 124	reported quarterly	
restitution covered my uninsured losses	victim harmed party survey	by site 2				# cases transferred to another BARJ		reported quarterly	
restitution received was appropriate	victim harmed party survey	by site 1				# successful program completion and case closed		reported quarterly	
responsible person took responsibility for their actions	victim harmed party survey	by site 2				# unsuccessful program completion and case closed		reported quarterly	
was satisfied with how diversion handled the case	victim harmed party survey	by site 20				# panels, circles, group conferences convened		reported quarterly	
was satisfied with the outcome	victim harmed party survey					# community service hours completed		reported quarterly	
How did you share views and participate? Met with community volunteers, the person who committed the	victim harmed party survey	by site 3	1 13.3%			# service learning project hours completed		reported quarterly	
crime, and a staff person	L.					# victims involved		reported quarterly	
Met with community volunteers and a staff person only (the person who committed the crime was not there)						# hours case management completed (case coordination, 1-1 support, etc.)			
Met with a staff person and the person who committed the crime						# hours restorative classes or skill development			
Spoke with a staff person						# YASI pre-screens completed			
Gave a written statement						# hours staff training			
Chose not to participate or provide information						# hours community outreach/prevention activities			
Wasn't contacted about participating in the process									
Category of crime	victim harmed party survey	by site 2	3 9.9%			# youth complete restorative process		reported annually	
Type of victim	victim harmed party survey	by site 1	9 8.2%			# community service hours completed		reported annually	
						# participating victims		reported annually	
Age of responsible person	participant survey	by site 11	9 99.2%			# victims participating in restorative process		reported annually	
Diversion or Tamarack	participant survey	by site 12				# victims providing written statement		reported annually	
Staff listened to me.	participant survey	by site 12				# victims providing verbal statement		reported annually	
Staff treated me with respect.	participant survey	by site 12				# truant youth with increase in school attendance		reported annually	
Staff asked for my thoughts.	participant survey	by site 12	0 100.0%			# youth no new criminal charge during contract year		reported annually	
Feel I can successfully complete program.	participant survey	by site 12	0 100.0%			# youth with increase in protective factors	indicated on YASI; tracked on BARJ closu form	reported annually	
Met with community volunteers/restorative panel process.	participant survey	by site 12	0 100.0%			# at-risk youth served		reported annually	
Restorative panel volunteers listened to my story.	participant survey	by site 12	0 100.0%			# adjudicated youth served		reported annually	
I was treated with respect during the panel meeting.	participant survey	by site 12				# truant youth served		reported annually	
The contract included my thoughts and ideas.	participant survey	by site 12	0 100.0%			# youthful responsible persons served		reported annually	
						# pre-charge youth served		reported annually	
						# court-referred youth served	Court form 124	reported annually	
Age	YSASP survey	by site 3							
staff listened	YSASP survey	by site 3							
staff treated with respect	YSASP survey	by site 3							
discussed substance abuse	YSASP survey	by site 3				amount of restitution collected			
discussed impact of SU on self	YSASP survey	by site 3				current school, grade			
discussed impact of SU on others	YSASP survey	by site 3				custody status			
discussed reduction of SU can follow plan to reduce SU	YSASP survey	by site 3 by site 3				who youth living with 504/IEP			
discussed ways to reduce risk of SU	YSASP survey YSASP survey	by site 3 by site 3				drug testing			
can follow plan to reduce risks of SU	YSASP survey	by site 3				curfew check			
referred to assessment with SU counselor	YSASP survey	by site 3				school attendance monitoring			
staff helped to set up appointment with SU counselor	YSASP survey	-	2 100.0%			restitution letter of apology			
						restitution monetary			
						restitution community service			
# of referrals by county and division									
						YASI risk factors			
						YASI protective factors			
Referrals by race, by program, by division, by county	288	3 89.3%		Race of new referrals		YASI risk score			
Alaskan America	<mark>1</mark>			American Indian/Alaska Native		American Indian/Alaska Native			
American India	<mark>1</mark>			Asian		Asian			
Asia	<mark>1</mark>			Black/African American		Black/African American			
Black or African America	<mark>1</mark>			Hispanic or Latino		Latino			
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islande	r 🛛			Native Hawaiian/Oth Pacific Islander		Pacific Islander			
Other Single Rac	e			White Non-Latino/Causcasian		White			
Self-identified description	1			Some Other Race					
Two or More Race	S			Multiple Races		More than one race			
White				Not Reported					
Chose Not to Identif				Not Tracked		Not Latino			
Unknow						Unknown			
Blan	<mark>k</mark> 6%	%							
						clubs/sports youth involved			
						work history/current employment			
Referrals by age, by program, by division, by county	287	9 89.2%		Age of new referrals		future plans/interests			
10 to 1	5			0-12		youth strengths			
16 to 1	7			13-17		barriers to success			
18 to 2	1			18-24		services involved with youth			
18 to 2				10-24					
22 to 2	5			25-59		targeted action steps			

	DOC		
	500		
quarterly quarterly	# reparative new cases # reparative total cases	monthly monthly	by site by site
uarterly	# reparative cases rejected	monthly	by site
uarterly	# reparative cases failure to appear	monthly	by site
quarterly	# reparative cases failure to complete	monthly	by site
uarterly	# reparative cases positive closure	monthly	by site
uarterly	# reparative other closure	monthly	by site
uarterly uarterly	# reparative cases open	monthly	by site
uarterly	# direct reparative new cases	monthly	by site
uarterly	# direct reparative total cases	monthly	by site
uarterly uarterly	# direct reparative cases rejected # direct reparative cases failure to appear	monthly monthly	by site by site
uarterly	# direct reparative cases failure to complete	monthly	by site
	# direct reparative cases positive closure	monthly	by site
	# direct reparative other closure	monthly	by site
	# direct reparative cases open	monthly	by site
	# criminal new cases	monthly	by site
nnually	# criminal total cases	monthly	by site
nnually nnually	# criminal cases rejected # criminal cases failure to appear	monthly monthly	by site by site
innually	# criminal cases failure to complete	monthly	by site
innually	# criminal cases positive closure	monthly	by site
nnually	# criminal other closure	monthly	by site
nnually	# criminal cases open	monthly	by site
innually			
nnually			
annually	RJ panel volunteer hours	monthly	by site
innually	New RJ panel volunteers	monthly	by site
	Total RJ panel volunteers # identifiable victims	monthly	by site
	# identifiable victims # victims contacted	monthly monthly	by site by site
	# grant funded victims contacted	monthly	by site
	# other funded victims contacted	monthly	by site
	Type of Service Received		
	COSA=Circle of Support + Accountability		
	NAV=Resource Navigation		
	PANEL=Reentry Panel or Circle Process		
	ED=Education/Class FAMILY=Family Conference		
	American Indian/Native American/Alaska Native		
	Asian		
	Black or African American Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		
	Hispanic/Latinx		
	White/Caucasian		
	Prefer not to say/Unknown		
	Self-describe Middle Eastern/North African		
	Age at Referral		
	Referral Type	Contonand by the Or 11	
		Sentenced by the Court to Reparative Probation	
	Reparative with Probation		
	Direct Reparative without Probation	Sentenced by the Court to Direct Reparative without Probation Pre-adjudicated referral from law enforcement, School Resource	

AGO	Source Document	N - Q3 YTD	Response Rate	CCVS/VOCA	Source Document	BARJ	
26 and older				60 and Older		safety concerns with youth or family	
illogical	350	10.8%		Not Reported		plans for contact with family	
				Not Tracked		details of services expected	
eferrals by gender, by program, by division, by county	3157	100%		Gender of new referrals			
Man				Male		identified male	
Woman				Female		identified female	
Nonbinary	·			Other		identified non-binary	
Chose Not to Identify Self-identified description				Description Other Required Not Reported			
Unknown				Not Tracked			
Blank							
Illogical Court	6	0%		Referring Offense			
				Adult Physical Assault			
nteks useisklas ku sessen ku division ku sountu				Adult Sexual Assault			
ntake variables by program, by division, by county				Adults Sexually Abused as Kids Arson			
Language Preference	476			Bullying			
English				Burglary			
Other Choice				Child Physical Abuse or Neglect			
Blank	. 13	2.7%		Child Pornography			
License	477			Child Sexual Abuse/Assault Domestic and/or Family Violence			
Yes				DUI/DWI Incidents			
No				Elder Abuse or Neglect			
Blank		9.9%		Hate Crime: Racial, etc.			
				Human Trafficking: Labor			
				Human Trafficking: Sex			
Employment Full-Time	477			Identity Theft/Fraud/Financial Crime Kidnapping (non-custodial)			
Part-Time				Kidnapping (custodial)			
In DCF Custody	•			Mass Violence (Domestic/Internat)			
Public Assistance				Other Vehicular Victimization			
Retired				Robbery			
Unemployed		00.00/		Stalking/Harassment			
Blank	. 111	23.3%		Survivors of Homicide Victims Teen Dating Victimization			
				Terrorism (Domestic/Internat)			
Housing	477			Violation of Court (Protective) Order			
Stable				Other (Explain)			
Not Stable	•			Other			
Blank	50	10.5%		Unknown			
				Special Classification			
				Deaf/Hard of Hearing			
Additional Reduction Reason	477			Homeless			
Homelessness				Immigrants/Refugees/Asylum Seekers			
Parent Non-Payment Public Assistance				LGBTQ Veterans-Estimated by agency			
Recent Loss of Income				Victims w/ Disabilities			
Recent Release from Incarceration				Victims w/ Limited English Proficiency			
Significant Medical Expenses				Other (Explain)			
Under DCF custody							
Unemployed/No Income Other				Type of Services Provided			
NA				# individuals who received:			
Blank		70.6%		info about criminal justice syste	m		
				info about victim rights, et	<mark>ic.</mark>		
Average Number of Days from Referral to Intake				referrals to other victim serv			
by County		106.9		referrals to other support service	vs		
				# individuals who received: advoc/accomp: emergency med	4		
				advoc/accomp: forensic exar			
				law enforcement intervie			
				individual advoca	<mark>cy</mark>		
Closures by program, by division, by county				performance of forensic exa			
				immigration assistance intervention w/ employer, et			
Victim type by program, by division, by county	233			child/dependent care as			
Individual				transportation as			
Large Corporation				interpreter service			
Small Business Owner				302 # of times services were provided:			
Government Entity				crisis intervention (in-perso			
School Non-Profit Organization				hotline/crisis line counselir on-scene response			
No Victim				individual counselir			

DOC			
		Cases referred from P&P or TH providers to prevent	
	P&P/TH	providers to prevent reincarceration	
		All others DI Devisit second and	
	Other	All other RJ Panel cases not listed above and not funded by another source like diversion,	
		tamarack, etc.	
Date of Referral			
Date of 1st Panel Meeting			
Date of Closure Reason for Closure			
Reason for Closure			
Successful Completion			
Return			
Ferminated			
Withdrew			
ack of Engagement			
Transferred Max			

AGO	Source Document	N - Q3 YTD Response Rate	CCVS/VOCA	Source Document	BARJ	
			other therap			
Average Number of Days from Referral to Outreach			emergency financial ass	st.		
by County and Type of Victin	1		emergency shelter or safehor	ne 🛛		
			transitional housing	ng		
Median Number of Days from Referral to Outreach			relocation ass	<mark>st.</mark>		
by County and Type of Victin	1		criminal justice notification	<mark>on</mark>		
			victim impact statement as	<mark>st.</mark>		
			asst. with restitution	<mark>on</mark>		
Engagement of Victims All	233		attorney asst. w/ protection orde	rs		
by County	<u>/</u>		attorney asst. w/ family law issue	es		
No Response			other emerg justice-related as	<mark>st.</mark>		
Call w/ Case Manager Shared in RJ Process	3		attorney asst. w/ immigration	<mark>on</mark>		
Letter/Impact Statement shared in RJ Process	3		prosecution interview advo	oc l		
Chose Not To Engage	2		law enforcement interview advo	<mark>oc</mark>		
RJ Panel w/ Participan	t		criminal advoca	<mark>cy</mark>		
Meeting w/ Case Manager Only			other legal advice/ couns	el 🛛		
RJ Panel w/out Participan	t					
Meeting w/ Participant & Case Manage	r i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i					
			Unmet requests for service			
Closure by County and Outcome			Explanation: Unmet req for shelter			
Closure by County and Failure Reason			Do you do formal feedback surveys			
Closure by County and Treatment Status			Number of surveys distributed			
			Number of surveys completed			
			Narrative: challenges you have faced			
			Narrative: services you could not provide			

DOC	
200	

	AGO	VOCA	BARJ
ABOUT THE responsible person	Race/Ethnicity by program, division + county	Race of new referrals	race/ethnicity
	Age by program, by division + by county	Age of new referrals	age
	Gender by program, by division + by county	Gender of new referrals	gender
	Language Preference	Special classification	current school, grade
	License		custody status
	Employment		who youth living with
	Housing		504/IEP
			drug testing
			curfew check
			school attendance monitoring
			YASI risk factors
			YASI protective factors
			YASI risk score
			clubs/sports youth involved
			work history/current employment
			future plans/interests
			youth strengths
			barriers to success
			services involved with youth
			targeted action steps
			safety concerns with youth or fam
			plans for contact with family
ABOUT THE CRIME	Category of crime	Referring offense	
ABOUT THE VICTIM	# surveys completed by victim		
	victim knew responsible person before crime		
	type of victim by program, division + county		
	kind of engagement of victims by county		
victim reported whether	diversion staff kept me well informed		
	diversion staff cared about me/situation		
	given opportunity to share how the crime affected		
	me		
	needs were heard and met		
	restitution covered my uninsured losses		
	restitution received was appropriate		
	responsible person took responsibility for their actions		
	Met with community volunteers, the person who committed the crime, and a staff person.		
	Met with community volunteers and a staff person only (the person who committed the crime was not there).		

	DOC
	race/ethnicity
	age
	gender
ily	
	Type of case
	Referral type

	AGO	VOCA	BARJ	DOC
	Met with a staff person and the person who			
	committed the crime.			
	Spoke with a staff person.			
	Gave a written statement.			
	Chose not to participate or provide information.			
	Wasn't contacted about participating in the			
victime actinfaction	process. was satisfied with how diversion handled the case			
	was satisfied with the outcome			
BOUT THE PROCESS [What Happened, Quality]	staff listened	types of services provided	restitution letter of apology	type of services received
youth reported whether	staff treated with respect	# of times specific services provided	restitution monetary	
	discussed substance abuse	narrative on services could not provide	restitution community service	
	discussed impact of SU on self	narrative on challenges faced		
	discussed impact of SU on others			
process items	discussed reduction of SU			
	discussed ways to reduce risk of SU			
	referred to assessment with SU counselor			
	staff helped to set up appointment with SU counselor			
	Met with community volunteers/restorative panel process.			
	Staff listened to me.			
	Staff treated me with respect.			
	Staff asked for my thoughts.			
	Feel I can successfully complete program.			
	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,			
	Restorative panel volunteers listened to my story.			
	I was treated with respect during the panel			
	meeting.			
	The contract included my thoughts and ideas.			
	Met with community volunteers, the person who committed the crime, and a staff person.			
victim reported whether	Met with community volunteers and a staff person only (the person who committed the crime was not there).			
	Met with a staff person and the person who committed the crime.			
	Spoke with a staff person.			
	Gave a written statement.			
	Chose not to participate or provide information.			
	Wasn't contacted about participating in the process.			
	diversion staff kept me well informed			
	diversion staff cared about me/situation			

	AGO	VOCA	BARJ	DOC
	given opportunity to share how the crime affected me			
	needs were heard and met			
	restitution covered my uninsured losses			
	restitution received was appropriate			
	responsible person took responsibility for their actions			
OUTPUTS [What Happened, Quantity]	# youth served	# youth served	# youth served	# youth served
his can tell the story of what happened in the process	# victims served	# surveys distributed	# new at-risk cases	# RJ panel volunteers
Always # of times something happened		# surveys completed	# new adjudicated youth cases	# RJ panel volunteer hours
		# individuals served by category	# new truancy cases	# identifiable victims
		# individuals served by category	# new youthful responsible person cases	# victims contacted
		info about criminal justice system		# grant funded victims contacted
				# other funded victims contacted
			# youth referred by the court for services	
			# cases transferred to another BARJ	
		referrals to other support servs	# panels, circles, group conferences convened	
		# individuals who received:	# community service hours completed	
		advoc/accomp: emergency med	# service learning project hours completed	
		advoc/accomp: forensic exam	# victims involved	
		law enforcement interview	# hours case management completed (case coordination, 1-1 support, etc.)	
		individual advocacy	# hours restorative classes or skill development	
		performance of forensic exam	# YASI pre-screens completed	
		immigration assistance		
		intervention w/ employer, etc.	If he same the second state of the second stat	
		child/dependent care asst.	# community service hours completed	
			# participating victims	
		interpreter services		
		# of times services were provided:	# victims providing written statement	
		•	# victims providing verbal statement	
			amount of restitution collected	
		on-scene response		
		individual counseling		
		support groups		
		other therapy		
		emergency financial asst.		
		emergency shelter or safehome		
		transitional housing		
		-		
		relocation asst.		
		criminal justice notification		

	AGO	VOCA	BARJ	DOC
		victim impact statement asst.		
		asst. with restitution		
		attorney asst. w/ protection orders		
		attorney asst. w/ family law issues		
		other emerg justice-related asst.		
		attorney asst. w/ immigration		
		prosecution interview advoc		
		law enforcement interview advoc		
		criminal advocacy		
		other legal advice/ counsel		
UTCOMES [What Changed]				
youth reported	can follow plan to reduce SU		# successful program completion and case closed	positve closure
Aspire to collect information that the victim felt they were treated with respect			# unsuccessful program completion and case closed	failure to appear
	successful program completion		# youth complete restorative process	# days referral to 1st panel meeting
	average number of days from referral to intake by county		# truant youth with increase in school attendance	reason for closure
	average number of days from referral to outreach by county + type of victim		# youth no new criminal charge during contract year	
	average number of days from referral to outreach by county + type of victim		# youth with increase in protective factors	
	closure by county + outcome			
	closure by county + failure reason			
	closure by county + treatment status			

Topic Area	Description	Percent of RJCs
Equity of Access	Identified what data would be required to determine equity of access to RJ programs	100.0%
Aspirational Data	Identifies metrics they'd like to be able to report on but are unable to report on due to capacity or lack of access to information (failure to return surveys, no access to state's attorney & LE records, etc.)	94.4%
Data Systems	Multiple [digital or physical] locations for storing data	94.1%
Duplicative Data Entry	Uses a system other than state funder system to manage cases, and inputs data into state funder system only for reporting purposes	83.3%
Challenges with Survey Completion	Reports that clients will be given a survey and not complete or return the survey about their experience	71.4%
Seeking Support for Data	Employs third party for support for data collection/analysis/reporting(grant funder, online survey collection tool, colleges for data collection/analysis)	63.2%
Survey Collection	NO Regular Survey Data Collection	57.9%
Quantitative	Collects and Analyzes quantitative Data beyond State Funder requirement	47.1%
Qualitative	Collects and Analyzes Survey Data beyond State Funder requirement	44.4%
Survey Collection	Collects survey informatoin before providing services	42.1%
Duplicative Data Entry	Transfers data from paper forms to digital storage location	33.3%
Equity of Outcomes	Reports on Equity of Outcomes for Responsible Persons	0.0%
Equity of Outcomes	Reports on Equity of Outcomes for Victims	0.0%