

## Benefits of the SDM<sup>®</sup> Model

### For Leadership



- Prioritizes use of resources
- Ensures statutory compliance
- Provides data to inform policy and guide resource development

### For Managers and Supervisors



- Provides framework for continuous quality improvement (CQI)
- Ensures implementation fidelity
- Assists with workload management
- Provides strategies for supervision and coaching

### For Workers



- Prioritizes information gathering
- Improves transparency in decision making
- Provides tools for talking with clients
- Maintains service standards

### For Families

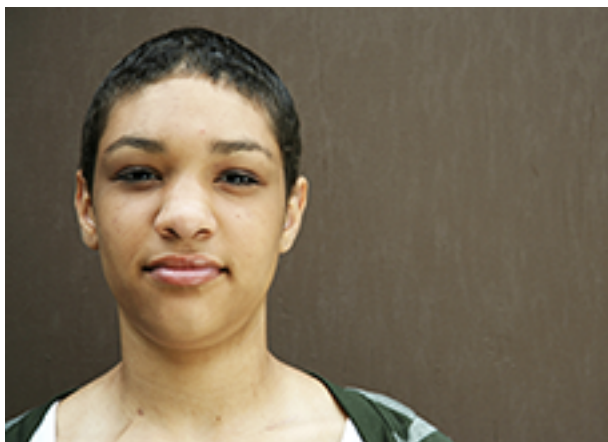


- Ensures fair and equitable assessments
- Provides common language for conversations with workers
- Improves consistency of decisions that affect them
- Improves case planning

# The Structured Decision Making® System for Juvenile Justice

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) works to improve outcomes for our society's most at-risk individuals, including youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Toward this goal, NCCD engages with and provides solutions for caseworkers, probation officers, courts, families, law enforcement agencies, schools, and community-based organizations.

NCCD helps our clients answer their questions with the data they already have. These solutions typically involve the use of data and analytics to lead system improvement efforts. Our analysts go beyond the numbers to collaborate with agency decision makers and staff, helping them to improve long-term outcomes including youth well-being and community safety. Our analysts also provide technical assistance and consulting to support ongoing accountability and quality improvement processes, illuminate agency decision structures and service populations, and improve practice to achieve strategic goals.



## The Structured Decision Making® Model for Juvenile Justice

The Structured Decision Making® (SDM) model for juvenile justice is an evidence- and research-based system that identifies the key points in the life of a juvenile justice case and uses structured assessments that are valid, reliable, equitable, and useful. The model includes the following:

- **Detention screening instruments** identify the likelihood of a youth committing a future offense during a specific and short period of time: before the adjudication hearing. This information helps determine whether a secure setting should be considered while a youth awaits an initial custody hearing.
- **Actuarial risk assessments** structure decision points, helping agencies know where to allocate resources and target interventions. NCCD works with jurisdictions to design and implement actuarial risk assessment instruments to help make decisions about juvenile cases following adjudication. These decisions involve determining the disposition of a case and whether a youth can be safely diverted from the juvenile justice system.
- A **disposition matrix** is used to promote consistency and equity in dispositional recommendations according to the severity of the current offense and risk of future offending. This ensures that youth in similar situations will have similar and appropriate decisions at their case disposition.



- Once appropriate sanctions and programs have been determined, post-disposition decisions and case management tools are used to inform ongoing supervision and decisions relevant to the care and well-being of juvenile justice system-involved youth. Examples of post-disposition decisions and case management tools can include the following: a response matrix, which guides

probation and/or parole officers on available sanctions and rewards for youth currently being supervised in the community; and a custody and housing assessment that helps staff decide how to group youth to ensure the protection of all detained youth and helps to alert staff to any special needs youth may have.

## We'd Like to Talk With You

For more information on working with NCCD, contact Chris Scharenbroch, Associate Director of Research Analytics, at [cscharenbroch@nccdglobal.org](mailto:cscharenbroch@nccdglobal.org) or (800) 306-6223.