

Building Brighter Futures

Tools for Improving Academic and
Career/Technical Education in the
Juvenile Justice System

A Pennsylvania Example

TOOL IV: PACTT Data Measures

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PACTT Data Measures

After extensive review of research studies of juvenile justice academic and career and technical education (CTE) programs, Research for Action (RFA) worked with PACTT staff and affiliates to determine what data to collect. They concluded that the following data elements would best position them to assess the short- and long-term success of PACTT interventions.

I. Input and Context

A number of contextual factors, including characteristics of the facility, program and participants, may influence the effectiveness of educational and CTE programs for juvenile offenders. Such background information about the youth provides a basis for analyzing and understanding the effects of the program on the population it serves. The following contextual factors for both PACTT affiliate facilities and youth are also captured in the PACTT database.

Data on Inputs and Context: Collected When Youth Enroll at a PACTT Facility

Facility Characteristics: Open, Secure, Maximum Secure; Age and Gender Served; Youth Population (Delinquent / Dependent)

PACTT Program Characteristics: Academic Programming Offered: Formal High School/Middle School Education; CTE Classes Offered; CTE Certifications Offered; Online-learning Opportunities; Accelerated Learning Offered; Post-Secondary Learning Opportunities; Work Experience; Site-based Literacy and Numeracy Assessments

Youth Characteristics: Unique Identifiers (Social Security Number; Juvenile ID Number; PA Information Management System Number); Admission Date; Date of Birth; Grade Level; Youth Level of Service (YLS) Level; Education/Employment YLS Level; Home School District; Referring County; Total Credits Earned; Keystone Passage; High School Diploma or GED; Special Education Status; Employability Soft Skills Completed in Previous Commitment at PACTT Facility

II. Supports and Practices

The following data points look at supports and practices of juvenile justice educational programming, to support the long term assessment of the effectiveness of educational interventions and the status of educational program implementation.

Data on PACTT Supports and Practices: Collected While Youth are Enrolled in a PACTT Facility

Academic Records Received (Y/N), Date Received

Work Experience

Special Education Records Received (Y/N), Date received

Additional Tutoring Supports

IEP Reviewed (Y/N), Date Reviewed

Employability Soft Skills Training Received

Academic Classes

Literacy and Numeracy Test Performance

CTE Courses

Transition Planning

III. Exit Outcomes

The following outcomes, collected when youth leave a facility, provide an account of progress youth made during their time in a PACTT facility or in any juvenile justice facility. The literature review RFA conducted indicates that successful accumulation of academic credits and skills while a youth is committed increases the likelihood of the youth attaining positive short- and long-term outcomes.

Exit Outcomes Data: Recorded When Youth Leave a PACTT Facility	
Exit Date	On-Grade Level Status
Credits Earned by Subject Area	Total hours of work experience
CTE Courses Completed	Industry Certifications Earned
Keystone Exam Performance – Date Take; Pass/Failure Algebra I; Biology; Literature	Number of Employability Soft Skills Competencies Completed
High School Diploma or GED earned	Existence of Transition Plan
Exit Literacy/Numeracy Assessment Performance	Youth Possession of Key Documentation – Birth Certificate; Photo ID; Social Security Card; W4 and I-9 Forms

IV. Short-Term Outcomes

Short-term outcomes can be observed at the time of case closing. RFA selected these data points because the studies reviewed suggest that returning to school, having strong school attendance, positive behavior once in school, passing major courses like Math and English, and graduating from high school, including from a CTE high school or earning a GED, and being employed in the teen years, particularly between ages 17 and 25, are predictive of reduced recidivism and economic self-sufficiency.

Data on Short-Term Outcomes: Collected at Case Closing by Probation	
Number of Credits Accepted by Home District	Employment Status
Grade Level on Entry to Home District	Length of Time Employed
High School Diploma Earned	Reduction in YLS Risk Level
GED Earned	Re-Arrest or Re-Commitment
Average Daily School Attendance Rate	Postsecondary Enrollment Status
Grades in Math and English	

V. Long-Term Outcomes

The effectiveness of PACTT and initiatives like it should ideally be analyzed to assess long-term outcomes. Evaluators will need to track outcomes for 5-10 years to assess whether the initiative has led to sustained desistence of criminal behavior and economic self-sufficiency.

Data on Long-Term Outcomes	
High School Graduation	Economic Self-Sufficiency
Postsecondary Enrollment and Graduation	Recidivism