



Youth Reformation System

Using knowledge to improve outcomes

OYA Recidivism Risk Assessment (ORRA) FAQs/talking points

What is the ORRA tool?

The OYA Recidivism Risk Assessment (ORRA) tool predicts the likelihood a youth will recidivate, or reoffend, with a felony conviction or adjudication within 36 months of commitment to probation or release from OYA close custody.

Who uses the ORRA tool?

ORRA scores can be generated automatically within Oregon's statewide Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) for youth in any of these population groups:

- Those placed on county probation;
- Those committed to OYA probation;
- Those released from OYA close custody; or
- Department of Correction youth released to post-prison supervision from an OYA close custody

Members of Oregon's juvenile justice community can access JJIS and see the ORRA score for a particular youth – providing an important tool in helping to determine appropriate supervision levels, services needed, and placement for each youth committed to OYA custody.

What do the ORRA scores mean?

The ORRA score or equation produces a numeric score between 0 and 100 for each youth who is assessed. An ORRA score near 0 means the youth is very unlikely to recidivate, while a score near 100 means the youth is highly likely to recidivate. For example, an ORRA score of 20 means the youth has a 20 percent chance of recidivating; an ORRA score of 80 means the youth has an 80 percent chance of reoffending.

How is the ORRA tool used?

- **Placement and treatment decisions** – Knowledge of a youth's ORRA score and treatment needs is one tool to help make decisions about appropriate supervision levels, treatment needs and placement for each youth.
- **Parole decisions** – Used in conjunction with other information about a youth, ORRA scores can be used to help gauge a youth's readiness for transition back into a community setting.
- **Program evaluations** – Using ORRA scores and other demographic information, juvenile justice experts can make informed decisions about overall effectiveness of treatment

programs, improve programs, and identify youth most likely to benefit from specific services.

- **Sentencing practices** – Having information about a youth’s risk to recidivate is one important tool in helping to decide sentencing, improve youth outcomes and protect the public.

How is ORRA of value?

Research shows that positive youth outcomes are higher when youth are placed in the least restrictive environment in which they can best achieve their treatment goals. ORRA helps inform decision makers about what would be the least restrictive setting – but also the most effective and with public safety as a key factor – for specific youth. ORRA also helps the agency reserve the most intensive supervision for youth at the highest risk levels and most severe crimes.

How are ORRA scores derived?

There are 12 variables factored into developing an ORRA score for youth in OYA care and custody:

- Prior felony drug or alcohol referral
- Prior weapon offense referral
- Age at start (the age at the youth’s release from close custody or start of probation)
- Prior criminal mischief referral
- Total prior misdemeanor referrals
- Total prior theft referrals
- Prior delinquency adjudication
- Total prior drug or alcohol referrals
- Current sex offense disposition
- Total prior runaway referrals
- Total prior felony referrals
- Male (males are 2.68 times more likely to recidivate than a female youth, if all other factors are identical)

The original data for the tool was derived from disposition records of more than 19,000 unique youth under OYA care or custody during a nearly five-year period (2005-2010).

A youth’s ORRA score alone does not serve as a decision point; instead, the score is used as an important piece of evidence-based research that helps inform juvenile justice decision makers as they determine the best strategies to help youth go on to lead productive, crime-free lives.

For more information, contact:

- Jim Kramer, 503-508-0520 (cell)
- Shannon Myrick, 503-302-7207 (cell)