



**ILLINOIS
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NEWS

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ICJIA Releases New and Updated Web-Based Tools to Help Practitioners Address Behavioral Health Throughout the Criminal Justice System

CHICAGO—May 10, 2019: The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) today released new and updated web-based resource tools featuring evidence-informed and evidence-based practices to address mental health issues and substance use disorders across the criminal justice system.

[Mental Health Disorders and the Criminal Justice System: A Continuum of Evidence-Informed Practices](#) offers current research on programs and practices targeted to individuals with mental health disorders at various stages of the criminal justice system.

[Reducing Substance Use Disorders and Related Offending: A Continuum of Evidence-Informed Practices in the Criminal Justice System](#) offers a complete look at evidence-informed practices for addressing substance use disorders and substance misuse to guide local-level assessment, planning, and implementation efforts around SUD prevention and intervention.

Both continuums feature resources applicable at every criminal justice intercept, from early prevention to reintegration back into the community following time spent in jail or prison.

Practitioners are continually challenged to understand, access, and stay current on the ever-evolving research regarding justice-involved individuals with behavioral health needs. In response, ICJIA researchers reviewed hundreds of journal articles and technical reports and synthesized their findings in an interactive, easy-to-understand format.

“It is important to recognize that the vast majority of individuals with substance use and mental health disorders do not commit crimes and engaging in criminal conduct is not

indicative of having either disorder. However, when those with mental health or substance use disorders have contact with the system, it is incumbent on the criminal justice system to provide the most appropriate resources to prevent further involvement with the system,” said Acting Executive Director Megan Alderden, Ph.D. “Our hope is that this resource helps practitioners serve their clients.”

Evidence-informed and evidence-based practices are skills, techniques, or strategies that have accumulated supporting research through high quality, replicable, generalizable research. When used with fidelity, they offer the best strategies to enhance public safety and improve outcomes for those who are justice-involved.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration estimates mental health disorders are between three and six times more common among individuals involved in the criminal justice system compared to the general population. The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics indicates approximately 58 and 63 percent of adults in state prison and jail, respectively, have a substance use disorder compared to 5 percent of the general adult population. Adherence to evidence-informed and evidence-based behavioral health practices by criminal justice agencies and communities can improve lives, reduce offending, and lower costs to the criminal justice system, healthcare systems, and taxpayers.

ICJIA is dedicated to improving the administration of criminal justice through work in the areas of grants administration, research and analysis, policy and planning, and information systems and technology. Visit www.icjia.state.il.us.

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