

## YLS/CMI™ 2.0: Personality/Behaviour

This brief aims to provide information for all Youth Justice staff about what works for young people when addressing assessed need in the Personality/Behaviour domain of the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI™) 2.0.

### High need in Personality/Behaviour: What does this mean?

Personality/Behaviour is one of the [Big Four](#) predictors of reoffending. It is one of the domains young people have the most opportunity to change, as it results from internal thoughts and feelings and external stimuli. This domain captures a wide range of **individual personality traits** (e.g. self-centredness, short attention span, low frustration tolerance) and **behaviours** (e.g. need for excitement, aggression, lack of empathy, history of rule breaking) that are most predictive of reoffending. Young people with high need in the Personality/Behaviour domain of the [YLS/CMI™](#) may:

- Think they are superior to others and have inflated self-esteem.
- Be physically or verbally abusive.
- Have difficulty in maintaining attention or completing tasks.
- Display difficulty dealing with frustration and anger.
- Lack remorse or avoid responsibility for their actions.

Some features of the Personality/Behaviour domain are indicators of **psychiatric conditions**, such as [Conduct Disorder](#) or [Oppositional Defiant Disorder](#). However, antisocial personality patterns are not limited to these psychiatric diagnoses. If a psychiatric illness is suspected, a referral should be made to a qualified practitioner. Youth Justice clients, especially [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people](#), may experience added barriers to receiving formal diagnoses and treatment and [additional support](#) may be needed.

### How to address high need in Personality/Behaviour?

#### Support [Emotional regulation \(ER\) and impulse control \(IC\)](#).

Addressing the Personality/Behaviour domain helps young people to regulate their emotions, which enables them to better manage their behavioural responses and reduce antisocial behaviours. To address this domain Youth Justice staff can:

- Deliver core programs and services that target Personality/Behaviour needs (see below).
- Identify and [address criminogenic thinking patterns](#)
- Use [Cognitive Behavioural Therapy \(CBT\)](#) principles – (i.e. changing the way someone thinks to change their behaviours.)
- Build self-management skills in young people.
- Where needed, seek support from mental health professionals to address any psychiatric conditions that may be impacting impulse control/emotional regulation.

## What can we do?

### Tailor service responses to specific problematic behaviours or behaviours hindering service delivery.

- **Cognitive Behavioural Therapies (CBT)**: CBT is a proven effective response for addressing criminogenic thinking patterns and antisocial behaviours. Programs that draw on CBT (e.g. CHART) attempt to change individuals' thoughts and personality patterns to drive change in their behaviours.
- **Aggression Replacement Training (ART)**: Individuals who offend tend to be more aggressive, demonstrated by their lack of consideration for others. Programs that teach aggression replacement (e.g. ART) may include these strategies:
  - Anger control training – Identify triggers, recognise bodily signs and cues of rising anger, develop anger reducers (e.g. counting backwards, deep breathing), and use social skills in place of aggression (e.g. listening, discussing the issue, asking for help).
  - Moral education – Challenge *Thought Traps* (e.g. self-centred thinking, assuming worst, blaming others, minimising behaviour) to increase moral reasoning/victim empathy.
- **Impulse control**: Impulsivity can make programs like CHART or ART difficult to engage with. Combat impulsivity through programs (e.g. ERIC) that teach strong decision-making skills, mindfulness (slowing down and identifying what is making them want to act impulsively), and resilience (redirecting thoughts, responding to body cues, and seeking support).

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, culturally specific programs may also support behavioural change.

### Should problem behaviours be addressed before a young person is sentenced?

**Yes. A sentenced outcome is not required to address specific behaviours.**

**Program delivery** – Programs target thoughts and behaviours related to offending rather than specific offence types, and therefore can be delivered regardless of a finding of guilt. However, program delivery can also be informed by previously finalised matters (such as violent offences). Other contextual information can be used to inform service responses, such as behavioural incidents, pre-sentence reports, and the YLS/CMI™ sub-components.

**Promoting engagement** – Antisocial personalities are a specific responsivity factor that may hinder engagement in programs and services. ERIC is an excellent precursor to other change-oriented programs (e.g. ART, CHART) and may be considered to build readiness for pre-contemplative/non-compliant young people.

### What core programs address high need in Personality/Behaviour?

- Changing Habits and Reaching Targets (CHART)
- Emotional Regulation and Impulse Control (ERIC)
- Re-thinking Our Attitudes towards Driving (ROAD)
- Young, Black, and Proud (YBP)
- Aggression Replacement Training (ART)
- Intensive Case Management (ICM)
- Girls... Moving On (GMO)