

YLS/CMI™ 2.0: Attitude/Orientation

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

High need in Attitude/Orientation: What does this mean?

Attitudes/Orientation is one of the **Big Four** predictors of reoffending and is also the domain young people have the most internal control over. Young people who have a high need in the Attitude/Orientation domain will often:

- Have attitudes that lead to criminal activity.
- Show hostility towards the justice system.
- Lack remorse/guilt about their offences/victims.
- Invalidate or reject non-criminal activities.
- Reject prosocial support.
- Defy authority.

How to address high need in Attitude/Orientation?

CBT based programs can help young people to change their thinking and behaviour.

Since the 1980s, pro-criminal Attitudes/Orientations have been addressed through [Cognitive Behavioural Therapy \(CBT\)](#). CBT works because it targets pro-criminal attitudes that lead to offending. Its effectiveness has been demonstrated in adults, young people, males, females, and those with cognitive disorders. To be effective CBT programs should be:

- **Supported by [training and supervision](#)** which includes opportunities to embed new skills.
- **Delivered** in a way that upholds the integrity of the program where possible (e.g. ART works best when delivered as a group program).
- **Individualised** for young people's needs (i.e. specific responsivity).
- **Able to teach new skills/cognitions** to [replace less functional thinking patterns](#).

What else needs to be addressed to facilitate change in Attitudes/Orientation?

Services can address causes of antisocial attitudes, specifically the *normalised behaviours*.

Young people surrounded by criminal behaviours are [more likely to engage in them](#). Service responses are [most likely to work well where family are involved and brought along on the journey](#) (e.g. ICM, [Family Led Decision Making](#)). Addressing these additional factors can enhance the young person's ability to change their attitudes and behaviours:

- Support for the family to provide a prosocial environment.
- Influence of the young person's cultural ecosystem.
- Presence of prosocial vs pro-criminal associates.
- [Identifying and addressing criminogenic thinking patterns](#)
- Involvement and ongoing commitment in prosocial Leisure/Recreational activities.
- For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, understanding cultural identity can also support change.

What if a young person won't engage in a change-oriented program?

Help young people engage by enhancing internal motivation and moving them along the readiness continuum.

For best outcomes, young people should be motivated to engage in [change-oriented programs](#), which can prove difficult when their attitudes are what's being addressed. When planned engagement strategies have been tried, revised/retried, and are still not working, Youth Justice has [statutory authority](#) to direct supervised young people to engage in programs and services that are likely to reduce their offending. While *voluntary engagement* is preferred, evidence has demonstrated that [non-voluntary engagement](#) can still deliver effective results. Understanding the stages of change and using [Motivational Interviewing](#) can support young people to be ready to engage in change oriented programs and services (refer to Engagement, Readiness and Motivation Service Response Guide).

What core programs address high Attitude/Orientation need?

Youth Justice core programs that address high Attitude/Orientation needs and are designed using a CBT basis include:

- Changing Habits and Reaching Targets (CHART)
- Re-thinking Our Attitudes towards Driving (ROAD)
- Young, Black and Proud (YBP)
- Black Chicks Talking (BCT)
- Aggression Replacement Training (ART)
- Transition 2 Success (T2S)
- Intensive Case Management (ICM)
- Girls... Moving On (GMO)

