



**BUILDING A FRAMEWORK,
SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES**

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT CENTER ASSOCIATION

THURSDAYS, APRIL 2021

1:00-3:00 CST



WHY WE ARE HERE

The inaugural National Assessment Center Association (NAC) Conference will convene Assessment Center staff and leaders as well as field experts and stakeholders interested in prevention and diversion to learn about research and best practice that supports the Assessment Center Framework. The Assessment Center Framework provides guidance and standards to consider when operating and governing their Centers and serving young people in their communities.

Assessment Centers were created in the early 1990s with the intent to divert youth from initial or further involvement in the justice system. Over the last 25 years the Assessment Center Model has grown organically across the United States. As of January 2021, there are over 80 Assessment Centers throughout the USA. However, there has been little support and guidance for Centers on a national level since the late 1990s and early 2000s.

The lack of support and guidance over the years has caused Assessment Centers to span operational and quality spectrums which, in turn, has created confusion around the model. The National Assessment Center Association (NAC) recognized this gap and, with support from Assessment Center directors, field experts, and youth with lived experience, has updated the Assessment Center Framework. This updated Framework is grounded in research and best practices. It identifies standards for Assessment Centers, criteria needed to achieve those standards, outputs, and suggested quality assurance measures. It also identifies short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes with the intention to create consistency among Centers across the United States and the ability to identify and advocate for a collective impact among Centers.

The updated Assessment Center Framework is comprised of five Core Components three of which are process components and two structural components. The Conference, spanning over 5 weeks, will cover each of the below Core Components in detail.

PROCESS CORE COMPONENTS

- 1. Single Point of Contact**
- 2. Screening & Assessment**
- 3. Case Management**

STRUCTURAL CORE COMPONENTS

- 4. Staff Support and Development**
- 5. Accountability**

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- ▶ **Assessment Center Staff and Leaders**
- ▶ **Stakeholders that work directly with Assessment Centers including those representing juvenile justice, education, child welfare, courts, and social services,**
- ▶ **Community stakeholders interested in furthering diversion and prevention efforts.**
- ▶ **Anyone interested in learning more about Assessment Centers!**

COST

MEMBERS: \$200

NONMEMBERS: \$300

OPENINGS & WELCOMES

Each day of the Conference will begin with a brief welcome provided by NAC Board Members and Staff. NAC Board Members and Staff include:



Moli Barker Cook
Executive Director

Board



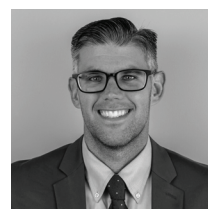
Kira Jukes
Chair



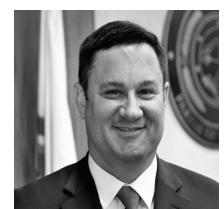
Bonnie Sultan
Vice-Chair



Mary Ann Pitnick
Treasurer



Andrew Misiak
Secretary



Joshua Campbell
Member



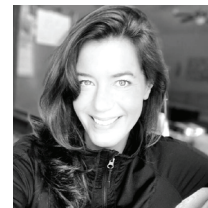
Denise Coleman
Member



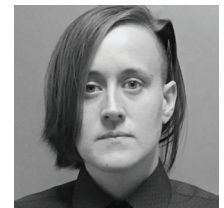
Morris Copeland
Member



Ronin Davis
Member



Kari Harp
Member



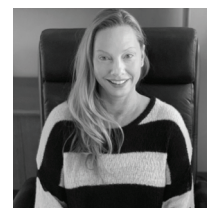
Kaelie McNeilley
Member



Fran Nigrello
Member



Kena Vassar
Member



Cheryl Wright
Member

AGENDA

FRAMEWORK CORE COMPONENT – SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT

APRIL 1, 2021 – 1:00 – 3:00 CST

Opening & Welcome – NAC Board & Staff

PRESENTERS:

Karli Keator – National Center for Youth Opportunity and Justice

Andrew Misiak – Juvenile Resource Center (Assessment Center); Ashtabula County, Ohio

Youth and families can have multiple needs and problems at one time. When a youth is struggling and behavior becomes a concern, our communities often send them directly to service providers who operate independently and within silos. There is little knowledge of other resources and services youth and families are or have been involved with and, in turn, youth and families end up entering the same services and systems repeatedly and experience “service fatigue.”

This session will provide a comprehensive overview of how Assessment Centers can serve as a Single Point of Contact that integrates prevention and early intervention activities with youth and families, community, local police, juvenile justice, child welfare agencies, schools, and service providers.



FRAMEWORK CORE COMPONENT – SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

APRIL 8, 2021- 1:00 – 3:00 CST

Opening & Welcome – NAC Board & Staff

PRESENTERS:

Dr. Keith Cruise – Fordham University

Shawne Coonfare – Juvenile Assessment Center; Douglas County, Nebraska

The Assessment Center Framework advocates that every youth receive an initial broad-based screening to identify whether more in-depth assessment is needed. The initial screening identifies immediate risks and potential areas of need for follow up assessment. If a need is revealed, a more comprehensive assessment pertain-

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ing to that specific area is pursued. Comprehensive community-based assessments are essential to effectively address the risks and needs of at-risk youth and youth entering the juvenile justice system as either a dependent or delinquent (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1996). The more uniformity in procedures, tools, and training across systems and providers, the more effective and efficient an assessment center is in reaching their goal of enhanced coordination and reducing duplication of assessment services.

This session will explain how Assessment Centers can create an evidence-based screening and assessment system that aims to identify needs and drivers of behavior.



FRAMEWORK CORE COMPONENT - CASE MANAGEMENT

APRIL 15, 2021 - 1:00 - 3:00 CST

Opening & Welcome - NAC Board & Staff

PRESENTERS:

Molli Barker Cook - National Assessment Center Association

Michael Umpierre - University of Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice

Cheryl Wright - The Harbor, Clark County, Nevada



Case management is crucial for coordinating and monitoring multiple services and supports. It is the link between comprehensive assessment and effective, integrated service delivery. While the combination of services and supports will vary based on a youth and family's unique needs, there remains a need for support in navigating the various systems and services that are often unfamiliar to them.

This session will provide detailed information on how screening and assessment informs case management as well as how Assessment Centers can facilitate access to services and supports.



FRAMEWORK CORE COMPONENT - ACCOUNTABILITY

APRIL 22, 2021 - 1:00 - 3:00 CST

Opening & Welcome - NAC Board & Staff



TRESTLE
Expert Business Management Support for Nonprofits

PRESENTERS:

Sarah Troy - Juvenile Assessment Center - Colorado's 18th Judicial District

Karli Keator - National Center for Youth Opportunity and Justice

Assessment Centers have a responsibility to the youth and families they serve as well as their communities, staff, and partners to ensure they are achieving their goals and serving the best interests of youth, families, and communities. This session will articulate how information sharing, information technology & data collection, continuous quality improvement, and identifying community need can ensure Assessment Centers are accountable to themselves, the community, and the youth and families they serve.



FRAMEWORK CORE COMPONENT: STAFF SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

APRIL 29, 2021 - 1:00 - 3:00 CST

PRESENTERS:

Denise Coleman - San Francisco Community Assessment
and Resource Center

Kari Harp - Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center

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Closing: NAC Board & Staff

The work of assessment centers cannot take place without a fully equipped and supported workforce. This session will discuss the policies and practices that can advance and sustain workforce effectiveness, resilience, and safety.



CLOSING

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ASSESSMENT CENTER SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

The purpose of the self-assessment tool is to help Centers examine, review, and reflect on their current operations and to what extent those operations align with the Assessment Center Framework. It allows Centers to gauge not only where there is alignment, but also where opportunities exist for improvement and enhancement. Self-assessment tools can serve as goal-setting tools for organizations and help inform strategic planning and continuous quality improvement efforts.



