



# Navigating Challenges & Celebrating Success: The Journey of Establishing an Assessment Center

## Insights and Lessons from the Frontlines of Assessment Centers Nationwide

Starting an assessment center is a multifaceted endeavor that requires vision, collaboration, and resilience. In this publication, we delve into the experiences of four distinct assessment centers:

1. Shelby County, Tennessee Youth and Family Resource Center
2. Loudoun County, Virginia Youth and Family Resource Center,
3. Ada County, Idaho's The Bridge Youth and Family Resource Center, and
4. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania's Juvenile Assessment Center.

Each of these centers was born out of a unique set of circumstances, driven by the pressing need to address youth delinquency and support at-risk youth more effectively. From initial conceptualization to becoming operational, these centers navigated complex landscapes involving multiple stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, juvenile courts, mental health providers, schools, and community organizations. One of the primary challenges they faced was gaining buy-in from these diverse stakeholders, each with their own perspectives and goals.

The journey of operationalizing these centers had its challenges from engaging stakeholders to securing initial funding and developing sustainable plans. Reflecting on their experiences, the directors of these centers share what worked, what they would have done differently, and give advice to communities starting out.

Common themes include the importance of early and thorough engagement with stakeholders including youth, the need for a dedicated team from the outset, and the value of the Assessment Center frameworks to guide development. As these centers evolved, many found that their initial visions needed to be adjusted to align with practical realities and emerging needs. This publication aims to share their insights, shedding light on the resources they wish they had and offering guidance for others embarking on similar journeys.

Continue reading to learn about their unique experiences and insights.

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What you need to begin the process of developing your AC

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	SHELBY COUNTY YOUTH & FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (TN)	LOUDOUN COUNTY YOUTH AND FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (VA)	THE BRIDGE YOUTH AND FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER (ID)	PHILADELPHIA JUVENILE ASSESSMENT CENTER (PA)
<b>Years In Operation</b>	2 years	1 Year	1 year	6 months
<b>Area Served</b>	Rural, Suburban, Urban	Rural, Suburban	Urban, Suburban	Urban
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	County	County	County	City/County
<b>Who operates your AC</b>	Government: County Community Services	Government - County	Government - County	Government - City
<b>Funding Comes From</b>	County	County	State; County; Juvenile Justice	City Law Enforcement
<b>Is your Assessment Center 24/7?</b>	No	No	No	Yes
<b>Assessment Center Domain</b>	Prevention & Juvenile Justice	Prevention & Juvenile Justice	Prevention, Juvenile Justice, & Child Welfare	Juvenile Justice
<b>Type of Diversion</b>	Pre-arrest, pre- file, & Early Intervention	Pre-arrest	Pre-arrest & Early Intervention	Pre-arrest & Early Intervention
<b>How many youth do you serve per year?</b>	260	200	400	850 (6 months)
<b>Budget</b>	\$700,000	~\$500,000	\$506,500	~\$780,000 (civilian only)
<b>Staff</b>	~6	3.5	~5.5	9 Civilian
<b>Length of Planning Time</b>	5 years	1 year	1 year	6 years



# Origins of the Assessment Center Initiative

Assessment Centers are often created in order to address one or more of the following issues facing communities: (1) Increase in youth crime (2) The need to have system involvement to get services for youth and families (3) Lack of community coordination and collaboration (4) Frustration with lengthy case processing and lack of immediate response (5) Detention overcrowding and inappropriate use (6) Inappropriate use of law enforcement officers time and resources (7) Overall need for more prevention services and services for at-risk youth (8) Inequities in how youth and families access community resources. Below are the specific circumstances that led to the development of the Assessment Center in each of the communities:

## Shelby County Youth & Family Resource Center (TN):

The push for an Assessment Center in Memphis stemmed from the desire to **optimize law enforcement resources** and prevent youth from entering the justice system. The initiative was initially led by local law enforcement leaders who were inspired by the Miami-Dade Assessment Center. Recognizing law enforcement's reluctance to manage the center, the mayor was urged to take the lead on exploring its development in partnership with law enforcement.

## Loudoun County Youth and Family Resource Center (VA):

The community's decision to develop an Assessment Center stemmed from initial plans over ten years ago to construct a 60-bed juvenile detention center, which were revised due to a reduction in the number of youth being held in detention. The concept evolved into repurposing the space to be multi-purpose and better supporting youth and family needs before court involvement or detention use. Now the facility holds a 20-bed detention center, a 16-bed shelter for youth, and the Resource (Assessment) Center, fostering collaboration between the Juvenile Court Service Unit, county partners, and the community to provide support and address issues collectively.

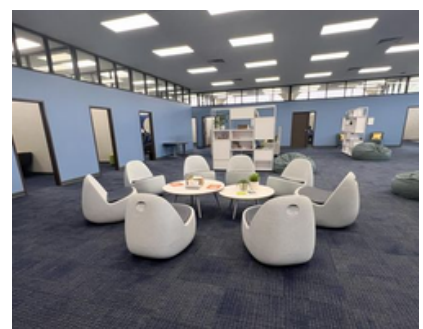
## The Bridge Youth and Family Resource Center (ID):

The Ada County juvenile justice community had been exploring iterations of Assessment Centers for many years, but State funding propelled them into making The Bridge a reality. In 2018, Idaho was determined to be out of compliance with the Deinstitutionalization of Status Offender Provision of the Act. Simply put, Idaho was detaining too many status offenders (as well as other low risk youth) in secure detention centers statewide. Through multi-system collaboration, the state released funding for communities to address this issue by establishing Assessment centers. Ada County focused initially on a partnership with law enforcement as a community diversion initiative, offering support to youth and families without formal legal ramifications.

## Philadelphia Juvenile Assessment Center (PA):

Facing challenges with the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) 6-hour rule stating that accused delinquent offenders may be held for processing no more than 6 hours, and due to busy police districts, the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) pursued the juvenile assessment center model in order to streamline arrest processing and enhance opportunities for diversion. This led the PPD and its partners to submit an application to the Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayor's Challenge to begin working on the process for creating an Assessment Center. When awarded, Philadelphia set out to address the unnecessary trauma inflicted on youth during the arrest process as well as optimizing law enforcement resources.

“**BE UNIQUE TO YOUR IDENTITY, CONTEXT, AND LOCATION, AND TO UTILIZE THE "VILLAGE," EVEN IF IT STARTS SMALL.**”  
-DORCAS YOUNG-GRIFFIN



Shelby County Youth and Family Resource Center



# Engaging Stakeholders and Overcoming Obstacles

The success of an Assessment Center depends on the engagement and ownership of key stakeholders. These stakeholders ideally represent both system and community rep. Those most commonly involved in the development of an Assessment Center include: impacted youth and families, law enforcement, courts, schools, child welfare, community advocates, and community service organizations. While the engagement of these stakeholders is critical on the onset of planning, a continuous effort engaging stakeholders is needed. Below details each site's stakeholder engagement successes and challenges.

## **Shelby County Youth & Family Resource Center (TN):**

The development of the Youth and Family Resource Center (YFRC) engaged key stakeholders, including the Memphis Police Department, Juvenile Court, the District Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office, and the school system. Additionally, the Memphis and Shelby County Crime Commission played a pivotal role, along with youth mental health providers, as well as youth and parents in the community. Even with these key stakeholders involved, the Center's leaders are continuously working to sustain and gain trust from stakeholders regarding the vision of the Assessment Center. With the planning of the YFRC spanning six years, changes in leadership and elected positions posed a significant challenge.

Engaging the community, public, and those outside of the "system stakeholders," is a constant priority of the center. The location of the YFRC, within a former, renovated library located within an impacted community, allows for them to more easily engage the community it serves.

## **Loudoun County Youth and Family Resource Center (VA):**

The development of the Loudoun County Assessment Center was primarily led by the Juvenile Court Service Unit. Stakeholders such as local health and human services departments and schools were consulted in its development, but there was no multidisciplinary planning team involved. While this centralized approach made decision-making easier, it also posed challenges. Without key stakeholders involved with structural and operational decisions, it has been more challenging to get buy-in from referral and support partners. This has also led to challenges in communication and getting youth and families timely access to services. Strengthening relationships with these external partners remains a priority for the Assessment Center in order to build a more comprehensive support network.

## **The Bridge Youth and Family Resource Center (ID):**

An obstacle for all Assessment Centers developing under the support of the State's Department of Juvenile Corrections was the extremely aggressive planning and implementation schedule. Due to time constraints with the State's solicitation process, there was limited opportunity for communities to secure buy-in from all the various stakeholders.

Leaders of the Ada County development process expressed that they would have liked to engage more with the Department of Health and Welfare, prosecutors, and judges. However, with their focus on pre-arrest diversion, stakeholders like the Boise Police Department and the Boise School District have been instrumental in demonstrating the Assessment Center's effectiveness. Additionally, the Youth Crisis Center started through a similar grant opportunity has proven to be a significant partner with the Assessment Center to serve those youth who may need immediate crisis services. Ada County's Assessment Center then steps in to connect youth to community resources and case management after discharge from the crisis center.

## **Philadelphia Juvenile Assessment Center (PA):**

The initiative to develop an Assessment Center in Philadelphia was spearheaded out of the Managing Director's Office, Office of Criminal Justice who was awarded the Mayor's Challenge award, but in close partnerships with its citywide stakeholders. Key stakeholders engaged in its development included the police department, juvenile courts and probation, Defender's Association, District Attorney's Office, Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services, Department of Human Services, and the Mayor's Policy Office. One challenge has been that the planning phase of the Assessment Center spanned six years. Over that time period, changes in stakeholder leadership and a national pandemic have emphasized the importance of consistent advocacy and steadfast champions throughout the process.

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# Navigating Operational Challenges: From Concept to Execution

Once a local planning team has decided WHO (target population) the Assessment Center will serve and WHEN (decision point), the focus shifts on establishing operations. This includes developing MOUs with partners, selecting screening and assessment tools appropriate for the population, hiring staff, and developing policies and procedures. Below each site details some of the challenges and hurdles in the process of becoming fully operational.

## **Shelby County Youth & Family Resource Center (TN):**

In an interview with the former Director of Community Services, Dorcas Young Griffin, who provided oversight of the development process, she indicated that the most challenging aspect of becoming operational was “attempting to be everything to everybody”. Dorcas explained that stakeholders and community members had varying expectations of what the center's primary responsibilities would be, leading to an overextension of resources and efforts. Their initial approach tried to address every issue simultaneously and proved overwhelming and unsustainable. It became clear that taking on too much at once was not feasible and risked the center's stability and effectiveness.

For example, initially the thought was that law enforcement would directly transport youth to the Assessment Center to assist them with finding caregivers and coordinating release back into the community. The Center was also working to engage youth and families in the community before law enforcement involvement. Ultimately, it was decided that having law enforcement officers transporting youth to the center would hinder the community's ability to see the location as a trusting space and decided not to accept youth transported by law enforcement.

## **Loudoun County Youth and Family Resource Center (VA):**

Laura Caldwell-Aden, Juvenile Court Service Unit's Assistant Director, shared a couple of challenges faced when developing their Assessment Center. One was the research and selection of effective screening and assessment tools for the population the Center was expected to serve. The initial web-based tool selected has had several technical issues making it difficult to engage youth and caregivers. An additional challenge is the absence of a robust case management system that can provide every function desired by the Assessment Center staff.

## **The Bridge Youth and Family Resource Center (ID):**

One challenge that arose quickly after opening for The Bridge has been spatial limitations, says Amy Harig; Special Planning and Project Manager. In hindsight, they would have planned for a larger space as the center has quickly reached capacity.

An additional challenge has been the Assessment Center's status as a government agency which brings on specific legal and financial constraints. The difficulty in purchasing some items, and restrictions on accepting donations has empowered staff to seek creative ways to meet youth and family needs. For instance, the center relies on a foundation's earmarked grant support to the YMCA to get youth and families access to their services, and providing clothing and food has been outsourced.

## **Philadelphia Juvenile Assessment Center (PA):**

Opening the Assessment Center presented several challenges, including the need for a location with both secure and non-secure holding areas, which are costly to build. Before the pandemic, there appeared to be a budget allocation for this, and a site was selected. However, once the pandemic hit, funding for the site was eliminated as cities struggled to shift focus and resources to the crisis at hand.

As the planning team regrouped, knowing there was no longer funding to support a new build-out or long-term lease, they limited location options to former police divisions that already had secure holding areas built in. This presented new challenges related to designing a trauma-informed space and addressing the initial concerns of citizens residing in the neighborhoods where the center was to be located.

However, the team successfully engaged with neighborhood groups and secured an old police building. Despite having only two months and a limited budget to rehabilitate the space before the launch, they

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# Navigating Operational Challenges: From Concept to Execution (Continued...)

managed to make it work with the help of several partners, such as the Mural Arts Program. This program involved a restorative justice-focused group of youth who helped paint and put up massive images of murals from around the city.

Another ongoing challenge is the conversation around centralized versus decentralized centers. While neighborhood-based centers foster community engagement, they are costly to operate and staff 24/7, especially in larger areas. Currently, the center is operating as a centralized location and is working to engage with community stakeholders to explore other possibilities.

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**”...WE COULD HAVE DONE MORE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS TO ENSURE CITY LEADERSHIP AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS UNDERSTOOD THE MISSION AND GOALS OF THE WORK AS THE MODEL CAN BE COMPLEX TO UNDERSTAND...”**  
**- LISA VARON**

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*Loudoun County Youth and Family Resource Center*



# Reflecting on Hindsight: What Would We Do Differently?

Each of the four sites were asked to reflect back on the planning process and what, if anything, they would do differently.

## **Shelby County Youth & Family Resource Center (TN):**

Reflecting on the challenges faced, Dorcas Young Griffin shared that she would have done a few things differently. The first is that “I wish the National Assessment Center Association and its Framework would have existed during the initial planning phase,” says Dorcas. This would have significantly enhanced efficiency and organization in our planning efforts, preventing the need to reinvent the wheel. Also, having a team dedicated to managing the development of the Assessment Center in the initial phases would have been instrumental.

Additionally, Dorcas shared that they could have done more youth engagement from the beginning. There was a lack of youth engagement, and now efforts are being made to catch up and ensure that the youth voice is not merely tokenized but acted upon. Early and meaningful involvement of youth would have enriched the process and outcomes.

## **Loudoun County Youth and Family Resource Center (VA):**

Laura Caldwell-Aden shared her desire to have had a position dedicated to moving the work forward. Initially, Loudoun County only had Laura and a planning team, all of whom had many other job responsibilities. This was insufficient, and it would have been preferable to have someone dedicated full-time from the start.

Laura also wishes they would have done more stakeholder engagement, especially with the provider community, in the planning process. Lack of engagement and buy-in has caused some difficulties in conducting warm hand-offs. Their initial vision had the connection to community support going a lot quicker and smoother. Laura explained that they imagined a partnership with providers that would prioritize referrals coming from the center, but service provider capacity issues have prohibited this from happening. This has caused youth and families to be engaged in the Center’s case management process for about a month, waiting for the providers to engage.

## **The Bridge Youth and Family Resource Center (ID):**

Alison Tate, Ada County’s Director of Juvenile Services, explained that initially they were committed to serving law enforcement by operating 24/7 and allowing them to transport youth to The Bridge instead of the detention center. Alison reflected that they may have been “too certain” in their messaging to law enforcement, because that process likely requires a change in State law. Instead, The Bridge encourages law enforcement to refer youth to the Center and release them back to a caregiver. “Starting on a smaller scale would have been more manageable” says Alison. Now, The Bridge’s partnership with the local crisis center has allowed youth who cannot return home and are in crisis to be served in a more appropriate setting than detention.

## **Philadelphia Juvenile Assessment Center (PA):**

Reflecting on the process, “I think we could have done more external communications work to ensure that city leadership and, most importantly, community stakeholders understood the mission and goals of the work especially as it evolved.” says Lisa Varon; Deputy Director of Juvenile Justice Initiatives for the Office of Criminal Justice. Lisa went on to explain that the Assessment Centers Framework can be difficult for people to understand and are often confused with other parts of the system, especially by those not intimately involved with it. The lack of consistent messaging about changes to the planning process and the evolution of the work led to some misconceptions about its multiple goals and purposes. This made it harder to explain to new leaders amidst the several leadership changes we experienced.



# From Vision to Reality: How Our Assessment Center Evolved

We asked each of the site Director's if the current version of their Assessment Center aligned with thier original vision? If not, what has changed?

## **Shelby County Youth & Family Resource Center (TN):**

The first iteration of the Shelby County Assessment Center was operated by a local service provider. With the role of the Assessment Center in providing youth and families linkages to services, local leaders recognized the conflicts of interest in having a provider of services also serving as the connector to services. Shelby County moved to the second iteration recognizing the need for a neutral convener. The Center, now operated by Shelby County Division of Community Services, creates the conditions for youth to connect with necessary services by acting as a neutral facilitator. Over time, the center has continuously evolved to meet changing needs, learning to adapt while maintaining its core mission. The key lesson is to start as a neutral convener and clearly define core responsibilities to avoid becoming overwhelmed.

## **Loudoun County Youth and Family Resource Center (VA):**

Building on previous themes, initially local leaders envisioned that Youth and Family Resource Center staff would help families connect more quickly and efficiently with the appropriate services. However, the process has been slower and more complex than anticipated. Laura Caldwell-Aden states that center staff are "continually learning about the population, resources, and how to best utilize referrals."

## **The Bridge Youth and Family Resource Center (ID):**

Initially, leadership anticipated a need for more clinical assessments for youth and families. Upon opening, the center shared masters-level clinicians with another program, but over time, they recognized this level of expertise wasn't always essential. They shifted towards hiring staff without a clinical background to work directly with youth and families, but made sure to have at least one masters-level clinician on staff for when high-level, complex need cases arose.

## **Philadelphia Juvenile Assessment Center (PA):**

Lisa Varon explained that the vision for the juvenile assessment center in Philadelphia was a centralized center for arrest processing by civilians, diversion opportunities, co-location with system partners to create efficient processes for youth and families. They also envisioned voluntary walk-in services for families who needed support for their children and didn't want system involvement to be the only way to receive such support. Given the delays in program launch due to the pandemic and the myriad bureaucratic hurdles that have to be overcome in order to launch a Citywide program operating 24/7 involving youth with justice system contacts, the group focused first on centralizing arrest processing and pre-arrest diversion and intends to evolve to include walk-in voluntary services and co-location with other system partners.





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“START SMALL AND DO THE BEST WE CAN.”  
-ALISON TATE  
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# Securing Funding and Ensuring Sustainability: Strategies for Developing Your Assessment Center

## **Shelby County Youth & Family Resource Center (TN):**

Shelby County provided the initial funding for the Assessment Center in the amount of \$500,000 from the county's general fund and has provided that level of support annually thus far. Additionally, the center receives approximately \$1 million to cover staffing through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which is secured through 2026. In-kind support has been provided to the Center through partnerships including the previous mayor of Memphis, which facilitated the provision of an old library for the center, with renovation costs being the primary expense. There are local conversations happening to explore the use of other recently vacated public spaces for expansion as well. Sustainability of the center is always at the forefront of leadership's mind and is a continuous effort.

## **Loudoun County Youth and Family Resource Center(VA):**

Initial funding for the Assessment Center was secured through the county's strategic revamp of the juvenile detention center which went from building a 60-bed detention facility to a 20-bed facility. This allowed officials to strategize on different uses for the space which ultimately included a youth shelter and the Youth and Family Resource Center, in addition to the detention center. Funding for staff is provided through the Juvenile Court Service Unit, repurposing two probation officers from "back-end" to "front-end diversion."

## **The Bridge Youth and Family Resource Center (ID):**

Funding for all Idaho's Assessment Centers was provided by the Governor's Office and the Idaho Legislature, and administered through the Community, Operation, and Program Services Division at the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections. The initial year of funding was \$6.5 million dollars to establish and implement Assessment Centers in Idaho. A second year of funding (\$4.1 million) was awarded to help with sustainability of the original eight centers, and add rural replication sites in Idaho. The State Legislature awarded the Idaho Juvenile Corrections Department \$350,000 for FY25 (July 1, 2024) to continue to support centers Statewide. These funds were awarded through a competitive grant process.

The initial award from the Juvenile Corrections Department to Ada County was about \$609,000 which was used to purchase and furnish a modular facility and train staff. Staffing costs are supported by the County by reassigning staff who were working with youth on the back-end (i.e., probation) to work with youth preventatively through the Assessment Center.

## **Philadelphia Juvenile Assessment Center (PA):**

The initiative originally received a \$1 million grant from the Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayors Challenge, which was fully allocated to planning, training, and site development. The City's General Fund offers operational support for the Juvenile Assessment Center's civilian side of the operations and is included in the City's 5 year plan. (Note: The Philadelphia Police Department allocates personnel to the Assessment Center as well however this is not reflected on page 2).

Assessment Center leaders are also in conversation with local philanthropic organizations who have expressed interest in funding aspects of the center to ensure its sustainability.

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# Utilizing Supports: Helpful Resources and Ongoing Needs

## **Shelby County Youth & Family Resource Center (TN):**

In our interview, Dorcas Young Griffin emphasized the importance of leaning on others and building relationships with peers in the field, limiting the need to reinvent the wheel. She also expressed her appreciation for the NAC's Assessment Center Framework, wishing it had been available when she first started.

## **Loudoun County Youth and Family Resource Center (VA):**

Despite occasional limitations in attending the NAC's monthly Director Circle meetings, Laura finds it invaluable in learning from her peers. Additionally, she was able to access the NAC's comprehensive list of screening and assessment tools in their quest to narrow down to a preferred tool. That said, Laura expressed a desire for the field to develop a more comprehensive screening and assessment tool that looks at all aspects of youth and family needs.

## **The Bridge Youth and Family Resource Center (ID):**

Alison Tate, Ada County's Director of Juvenile Services, has found immense value in the NAC's comprehensive library of resources detailing various assessment centers, their functions, and staffing. Alison expressed a desire to build on the existing library of resources to create materials that would streamline center operations and provide a solid foundation for developing and implementing best practices.

Jason Stone, Division Administrator for the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections Community, Operations, and Program Services Division states that the training and technical assistance provided by the NAC was "absolutely instrumental in all our centers successes. The accessibility of the highest level of expertise and shared resources through the NAC network was invaluable."

## **Philadelphia Juvenile Assessment Center (PA):**

Lisa Varon expressed the significant value of being a NAC Member and connecting not only with her peers, but facilitating direct interactions between leaders. Matching stakeholders (i.e., law enforcement to law enforcement) to discuss the Assessment Center model can effectively cultivate champions who advocate for and expand the initiative's reach. Additionally, being able to reach out to other jurisdictions to learn about some of their processes such as what databases they used, how they addressed specific issues, or what their centers layout looked like was a big value add. Lisa would like to continue to learn more from Assessment Centers serving large, urban jurisdictions on their application of best practices.

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“THE DIRECTOR'S CIRCLE HAS BEEN AN  
INVALUABLE RESOURCE”  
-LAURA CALDWELL-ALDEN  
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# National Assessment Center Association (NAC) Support to Developing Assessment Centers

## Ways We Support:

The National Assessment Center Association (NAC) can serve a resource to communities in their efforts to develop an Assessment Center that is responsive to local needs and gaps.

For more information about our support, visit our website or follow us on social media for the latest events and updates.



[nacassociation.org](https://nacassociation.org)



[molli@nacassociation.org](mailto:molli@nacassociation.org)



NAC LinkedIn



NAC Instagram  
[@nacassociation](https://www.instagram.com/nacassociation)



NAC Facebook

**Technical Assistance:** All but one of the sites highlighted in this publication received technical assistance from the NAC during their planning and development process. The NAC provides a full spectrum of support to communities adopting the Assessment Center Framework. Technical assistance can assist communities in forming the planning group, data and stakeholder-informed intervention mapping, asset mapping, and operationalizing the Assessment Center Framework. Technical assistance is also offered to both developing and established Assessment Centers to enhance data capacity and craft an individualized continuous quality improvement plan that aligns seamlessly with the Assessment Center Framework. To learn more about technical assistance, visit our website or email us at [molli@nacassociation.org](mailto:molli@nacassociation.org).

**NAC Membership:** Communities developing Assessment Centers are encouraged to become a member of the NAC. Membership allows access to specific resources like the monthly directors circle, the resource library, and trainings. It also provides opportunities to network with Assessment Center colleagues from around the country.

**Assessment Center Framework & Self-Assessment Tool:** In 2021, with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and State Justice Institute, the NAC engaged a diverse advisory committee to create the Assessment Center Framework. The Framework is grounded in research and best practice and allows Assessment Centers to operate under a set of core components and standards. The Framework supports the Assessment Center network to have consistency in measuring impact.

In conjunction with the Framework, the NAC created a self-assessment tool. The tool was developed to provide Assessment Centers with the opportunity to examine, review, and reflect on their current operations and to what extent those operations align with the Assessment Center Framework.

Both the Framework and the self-assessment tool can be used to guide the planning and developing of an Assessment Center.

**COMING SOON! Assessment Center Planning Guide:** The NAC has developed an Assessment Center Planning Guide to support local communities in developing an Assessment Center that is responsive to local community needs and processes. The guide is designed to promote discussions on best practices, help local planning teams navigate essential decisions, and anticipate potential challenges in implementation. It will aid in identifying key partners and stakeholders, determining the target population for the Assessment Center, establishing a referral process, and addressing critical considerations. Check our website for the release of the planning guide scheduled for Fall of 2024.