Short-Term Assessment of Risk & Treatability: Adolescent Version (START:AV)

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Risk Assessments Are Common

- Professionals often asked to assess violence risk
- Stressful decisions
- Led to development of tools
- Tools have benefits over unstructured judgments
Tools are Widely Used

% of U.S. States That Use Violence Risk Tools

National Center for Juvenile Justice (2012)
START:AV Has Several Key Features

Not just one type of risk but...

*Multiple risks*

- Harm to others and being harmed
- Victimization
- Violence
- Self-Injury
- Offending
- Suicide
Not just risk factors but...

**Strengths**

*Other side of the coin – a balanced perspective*
Not just a one-shot assessment...

Ongoing monitoring

Adolescents is a period of enormous change
Not just prediction but...

intervention-planning

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Goal is to guide efforts to reduce risk
Adapted from START, an Adult Tool
(Webster, Martin, Brink, Nicholls, & Desmarais, 2009)

> 5,200 START manuals, 8 translations, 42 articles
Adapted Using a Developmentally-Informed Approach

1. Developed Team
   - Original authors
   - Plus adolescent researchers/clinicians

2. Literature Review
   - Developmental principles
   - Added new items, revised anchors

3. Development
   - User Guide
   - Case examples and training materials
## Overview

### START:AV Items
- Individual domain
- Relationships/ environment
- Response to interventions

### Adverse Outcomes
- Harm to others/rule violations
- Harm to adolescent
Step 1: Gather Information

Much of it is information you likely already collect

Interview and records review

Includes example interview questions
Step 2: Assess Strengths & Vulnerabilities

**Strengths** – characteristics that may reduce risks

**Vulnerabilities** – characteristics that may increase risks

**Key and Critical** – items that are especially important
Step 3: Rate History & Future Risk

Recent & Prior History – occurred in past 3 months or prior to this

Risk Estimates – Low, Moderate, or High for each outcome

THREAT – imminent risk
Case Formulation – integrate info to form picture of youth

Scenarios – identify possible situations in which adverse outcomes may occur

Intervention Plans – address Vulnerabilities, build Strengths, etc.
**Step 5: Reassess & Refine Interventions**

**Reassess regularly** — such as every 3 months and at major life events (e.g., release)

**Refine interventions** — if interventions are not working, adjust strategies

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### START:AV Summary Sheet

| Name: ____________________________ | D.O.B.: __/__/____ (MM/DD/YYYY) | Sex: □ Male □ Female □ Other |
| Date of Assessment: __/__/____ (MM/DD/YYYY) | Deadline for Next Assessment: __/__/____ (MM/DD/YYYY) |
| Status: □ Institution/inpatient □ Community/outpatient □ Other □ Referral □ Admission □ Review |

#### Key Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Vulnerabilities</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>ADVERSE OUTCOMES</th>
<th>Future Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CASE FORMULATION

- 1. Violence
- 2. Non-Violent Offense
- 3. Substance Abuse
- 4. Unscreened Violence
- 5. Suicide
- 6. Self-Harm
- 7. Health Neglect
- 8. Case-Specific Outcome

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#### SCENARIOS

- 1. School and Work
- 2. Recidivism
- 3. Substance Use
- 4. Risk Assessment
- 5. Conduct
- 6. Impulse Control
- 7. Career
- 8. Mental/Cognitive State
- 9. Emotional State
- 10. Attitudes

#### INTERVENTION PLAN

- 11. Social Skills
- 12. Relationships - Caregiver/Adults
- 13. Relationships - Peers
- 14. Social Support - Adults
- 15. Social Support - Peers
- 16. Parental Functioning
- 17. Peers
- 18. Material Resources
- 19. Community
- 20. External Triggers
- 21. Insight
- 22. Plan
- 23. Medication Adherence
- 24. Treatability

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Signature Risk Sign: □ No □ Yes □ Sensitive
Acknowledgements

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