Name of Tool	Women's Risk/Needs Assessment
Category	General Risk Assessment (Awaiting Validation)
Author / Publisher	National Institute of Corrections/University of Cincinnati (NIC/UC)
Year	2011

Description

• The Women's Risk/Needs Assessment is designed to assess both gender-neutral (e.g. criminal history) and gender-responsive (e.g. self-efficacy) factors in females who have offended (Van Voorhis, Bauman and Brushett, 2012). The gender-responsive factors are: relationship support and conflict, parental involvement and stress, self-efficacy, prior physical and sexual trauma, housing, safety, mental health and anger/hostility. The gender-neutral items are: past and current substance abuse, criminal history, employment and financial stability, educational strengths and needs and antisocial attitudes (Beppre and Salisbury, 2016).

• The current assessments include; (1) the full instrument, Women's Risk/Needs Assessment which contains separate forms for pre-release, probation, prison settings and (2) the Women's Supplemental Risk/Needs Assessment ('Trailer') which is designed to supplement existing gender-neutral risk/need assessments such as the Level of Service Inventory (LSI) (Van Voorhis, Bauman and Brushett, 2013).

• The Trailer is not a screening version of the full assessment, rather, it is solely comprised of the gender-responsive factors contained within the full assessment which is used to supplement other validated risk assessment tools (Van Voorhis, Bauman and Brushett, 2013).

• As part of the assessment, individuals are interviewed. After that, they complete a self-report survey assessing additional gender-responsive factors (Brushett, 2013).

Age Appropriateness

18+

Assessor Qualifications

No assessor qualifications specified at present.

The University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute offers a 3 day training course in the administration of the WRNA and a 1 day booster course for those who have already the training which is customised for each individual site through survey feedback. Training courses are also offered in training the trainers, agency-wide training and quality assurance. Web-based individualised orientation and consulting sessions are available to agencies interested in learning more about the adoption of the WRNA.

Tool Development

- The assessment is based on prior literature relating to the trajectories of offending in female populations (Wright, Salisbury and Van Voorhis, 2007; Van Voorhis et al., 2010).
- The tool forms a response to the issues raised within the literature in terms of the gender-specific factors that increase the likelihood of offending in females: histories of victimisation and abuse, relationship problems, mental health issues, substance abuse, self-efficacy/confidence, poverty and parental stress (Van Voorhis et al., 2010).
- Many of the items contained in the assessments were developed by the members of the Women's Issues Committee of the Missouri Department of Corrections in collaboration with researchers at the University of Cincinnati (Van Voorhis et al., 2008).
- The gender-neutral factors are based on existing risk assessments such as the LSI.
- Preliminary studies have investigated the construction and validation of the items presented within the tool (Van Voorhis et al., 2010; Wright, Salisbury and Van Voorhis, 2007).
- Wright, Salisbury and Van Voorhis (2007) - low to moderate associations found (correlations coefficients ranging from r=0.9 to r=.20) between the composite and subscale and item scores with institutional misconduct amongst incarcerated females. Moreover, their results showed that gender-responsive needs (r=.27 to r=.34) in some cases performed slightly better than gender-neutral ones (r=.23 to r=.33) when predicting institutional misbehaviour.
- The WRNA-T improved the predictive validity of the LSI-R by providing a means for screening the gender-responsive needs documented in the LSI-R. AUCs ranged from .55 to .77 for six months and .79 for 12 months for the LSI-R on its own. When the WRNA-T was added, predictive validity improved from .55 to .77 for outcomes at six months and .59 to .80 for twelve month outcomes (Van Voorhis, Bauman and Bruschett, 2013).

General Notes

- The aim of this tool is to provide a structured assessment that will identify and link women to meaningful programs and services (Van Voorhis et al., 2010). • Current use of the assessment requires a written agreement with the University of Cincinnati's Office of Intellectual Property (Bauman, personal communication, February 2012).
- van Voorhis, Bauman and Bruschett (2013) found that the use of the WRNA-T to supplement the LSI-R in Rhode Island made it a stronger predictor of risk.
- For further information, please visiT http://www.uc.edu/womenoffenders.html or e-mail enquiries to Ashley Bauman (ashley.bauman@uc.edu) or John Schwartz (john.schwartz@uc.edu).