

What is a SPEPable service?

A **SPEPable service** is a service or program delivered to juvenile offenders that can be identified through the SPEP™ classification process as an example of a type of service or program shown to be effective for reducing recidivism in the research on which the SPEP assessment process is based (the SPEP™ Service Classification Guide identifies the and describes the qualifying SPEP™ service types).

For a service to be “**SPEPable**” it must meet the following conditions:

- **Be considered a therapeutic service**

- Therapeutic services are those oriented toward facilitating constructive internalized and sustained changes in behavior. *Examples include skill building approaches and various counseling modalities.*
- Control-oriented services are NOT SPEPable. These are based on approaches involving externally imposed discipline, surveillance, or deterrence strategies shown in the research to have little effect or negative effects on recidivism. *Examples include Scared Straight type prison visitation programs and boot camps with few therapeutic components.*

- **Be supported by sufficient research evidence of effectiveness**

The research on which the SPEP™ is based must meet the following criteria:

- The research sample includes juvenile offenders;
- An experimental or high-quality quasi-experimental research design is used;
- At least one recidivism outcome is reported in a form that allows its magnitude to be represented statistically;
- There must be multiple qualifying research studies that support any service or program type for it to be included in the SPEP™.

Examples of services that are therapeutic in nature without sufficient research include animal assisted interventions such as equine therapy and dog training programs. While programs such as these may have positive effects, there is not yet sufficient evidence that meets the SPEP™ research criteria.