



**Assessment  
Fact Sheet**

# Criminal Thinking Scales

(see [www.ibr.tcu.edu](http://www.ibr.tcu.edu) for more information)

## TCU Criminal Thinking Scales (CTS)

The TCU CTS is a supplement to the TCU CJ-CESI and CJ-CEST and is designed to measure “criminal thinking” (Knight et al., in press). It was adapted from original work by Glenn Walters (1995) and from the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) "Survey of Program Participants" (available from the BOP Office of Research and Evaluation), with refinements made as part of studies conducted by TCU in collaboration with the BOP and National Institute of Corrections. The 6 CTS scales include entitlement, justification, personal irresponsibility, power orientation, cold heartedness, and criminal rationalization, which represent concepts with special significance in treatment settings for correctional populations.

**Evidence.** As part of a national collaborative study (CJ-DATS), a sample of over 3,266 clients from 26 programs (involving 5 Research Centers) was used to establish the reliability and validity of the CTS. The overall response rate was 92% of the eligible program participants. The scales contain an average of 6 items each, and require about 15 minutes to complete. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to verify the CTS factor structure and coefficient alpha reliabilities were computed as measures of internal consistency. A subsample of 322 clients was tested a week after the initial administration to examine the test-retest reliability.

The **client-level coefficient alpha and test-retest reliability** for each scale is reported below, summarizing general psychometric evidence for the credibility of this assessment. These results remained stable across gender and race-ethnic subgroups.

<b>Reliabilities</b>		
<b>Scales</b>	<b>Alpha</b>	<b>Retest</b>
Entitlement	.78	.69
Justification	.75	.70
Personal Irresponsibility	.68	.81
Power Orientation	.81	.75
Cold Heartedness	.68	.66
Criminal Rationalization	.71	.84

**Graphic Display and Interpretation.** Score profiles for the CTS, including mean scores and 25%-75% norms, are presented graphically on the next page. The CTS Scoring Guide found at the IBR website ([www.ibr.tcu.edu](http://www.ibr.tcu.edu)) explains scoring procedures for the scales, which range in value from 10-50 (midpoint of 30). The chart is created using the accumulated set of CTS assessments contained in the TCU/IBR data files and is updated periodically as an interpretive framework for individual and program level results. By plotting the averaged scores from a program into this chart, direct comparisons can be made with clients from other programs tested previously, and scale scores that fall above or below the middle 50% of clients can be identified. By re-administering the CTS over time, changes in client-level and program-level performance can be assessed for treatment planning and management.

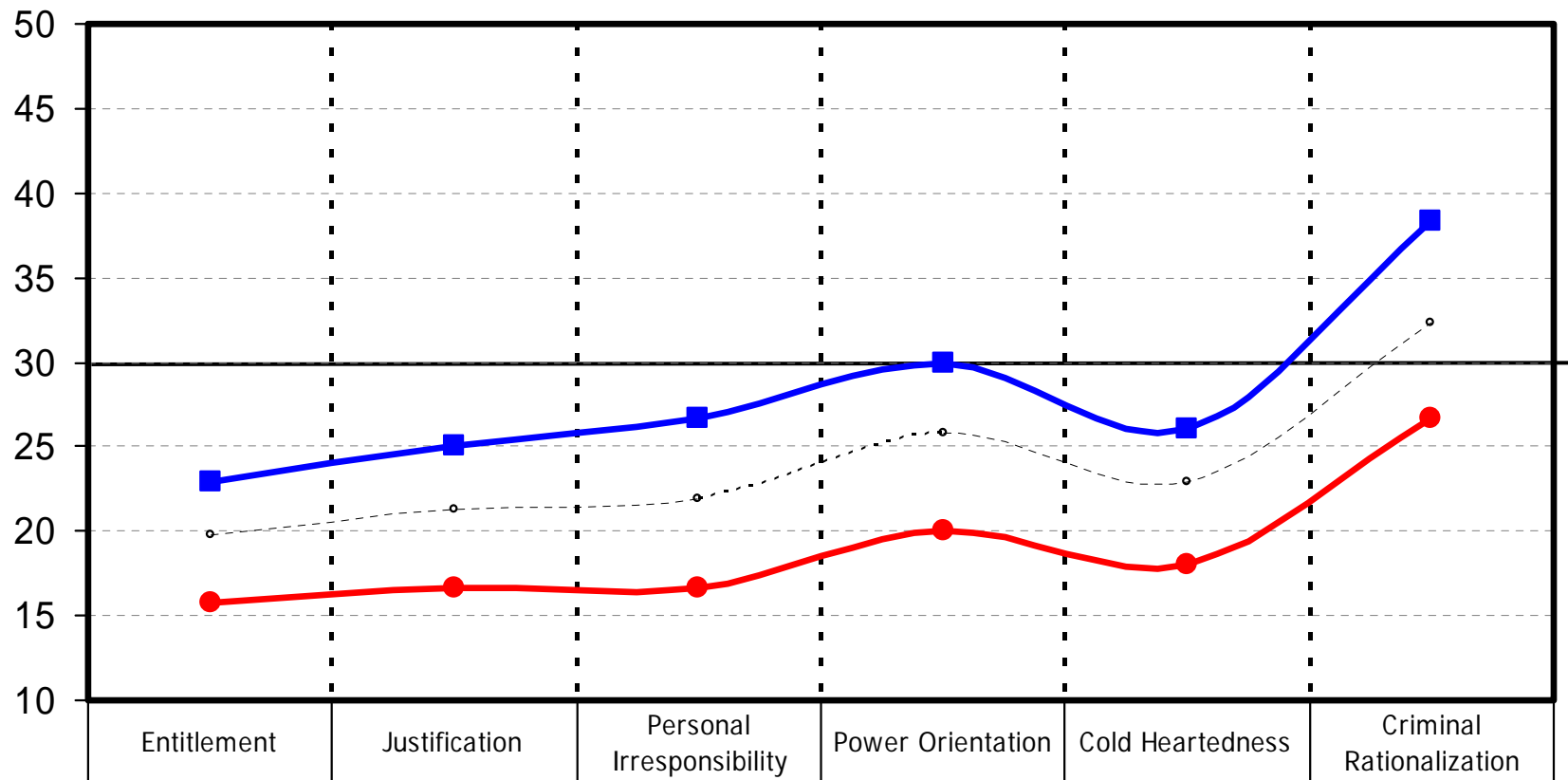
**Limitations.** The graphic display of CTS score profiles was calculated for total clients studied to date, which are highly diverse in socio-demographic characteristics, problem severity, correctional treatment settings, and therapeutic progress. Criminal thinking information based on additional specific subgroups is needed for better comparison norms, and work is in progress to make these refinements.

### **Key References**

- Knight, K., Simpson, D. D., Garner, B. R., Flynn, P. M., & Morey, J. T. (in press). The TCU Criminal Thinking Scales. *Crime & Delinquency*.
- Knight, K., Simpson, D. D., & Morey, J. (May, 2002). TCU-NIC Cooperative Agreement: Final Report, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth.
- Walters, G. D. (1995). The Psychological Inventory of Criminal Thinking Styles: Part I. Reliability and preliminary validity. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, *22*, 307-325

# Means & Norms for Offender Functioning

25<sup>th</sup>-75<sup>th</sup> Percentile CTS Score Profiles (N=3,266)



■— 75th %tile	22.86	25	26.67	30	26	38.33
●— 25th %tile	15.71	16.67	16.67	20	18	26.67
---○--- Mean Scores	19.74	21.3	21.88	25.76	22.93	32.32

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