What Works and What Doesn’t in Reducing Recidivism - Some Lessons Learned from Evaluating Correctional Programs

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Lesson #1

- Everyone says they are Evidence Based
Evidence Based – What does it mean?

There are different forms of evidence:

– The lowest form is anecdotal evidence; stories, opinions, testimonials, case studies, etc - but it often makes us feel good

– The highest form is empirical evidence – research, data, results from controlled studies, etc. - but sometimes it doesn’t make us feel good
Evidence Based Decision Making Requires

1. Assessment information
2. Relevant research
3. Available programming
4. Evaluation
5. Professionalism and knowledge from staff
Lesson 2

• Some things don’t work
Some so called “theories” we have come across

• “Offenders lack creativity theory”

• “Offenders need discipline and physical conditioning theory”

• “Offenders need to change their diet theory”

• “Treat them as babies & dress them in diapers theory”

• “We just want them to be happy theory”

• “Male offenders need to get in touch with their feminine side theory”
Other things that don’t work
Ineffective Approaches

- Programs that cannot maintain fidelity
- Programs that focus on non-criminogenic factors
- Classes focused on fear and other emotional appeals
- Shaming offenders
- Drug education programs
- Non-directive, client centered approaches
- Talking cures
- Self-Help programs
- Vague unstructured rehabilitation programs
- “Punishing smarter”
Lesson 3

• Almost anything you want to fix starts with assessment
Assessment helps us…

- Meet the risk and need principles – “who” to target and “what” to target
- Can help reduces bias
- Helps us know if interventions have worked
One Example of a New Generation Offender Risk Assessment Tool: IRAS

- Indiana Risk Assessment System
  - Community Supervision Assessment Tool (IRAS-CST)
  - Community Supervision Assessment Screening Tool (IRAS-CSSST)
  - Reentry Tool (IRAS-RT)
To understand assessment one needs to consider types of risk factors.
Dynamic and Static Factors

• Static Factors are those factors that are related to risk and do not change. Some examples might be number of prior offenses, whether an offender has ever had a drug/alcohol problem.

• Dynamic factors relate to risk and *can change*. Some examples are whether an offender is currently unemployed or currently has a drug/alcohol problem.
According to the American Heart Association, there are a number of risk factors that increase your chances of a first heart attack

- Family history of heart attacks
- Gender (males)
- Age (over 50)
- Inactive lifestyle
- Over weight
- High blood pressure
- Smoking
- High Cholesterol level
There are two types of dynamic risk factors

• Acute – Can change quickly

• Stable – Take longer to change
Lesson 4

• If you want to reduce recidivism focus on the offenders most likely to recidivate
Example of Risk Level by Recidivism for a Community Supervision Sample (males)

- Low Risk: 9.1%
- Medium Risk: 34.3%
- High Risk: 58.9%
- Very High Risk: 69.2%

Percent with New Arrest:
- Low 0-14
- Medium = 15-23
- High = 24-33
- Very High 34+
Lesson 5

• Some times we fail because we provide intensive programs to the wrong offenders
Risk Principle

As a general rule treatment effects are stronger if we target higher risk offenders, and harm can be done to low risk offenders.
Intensive Treatment for Low Risk Offenders will Often Increase Failure Rates

- Low risk offenders will learn anti social behavior from higher risk
- Disrupts pro-social networks
- Increased reporting/surveillance leads to more violations/revocations
### Study of Intensive Rehabilitation Supervision in Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Non-Treatment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Risk</strong></td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>51.1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Low Risk</strong></td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>14.5</td>
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2002 STUDY OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMS IN OHIO

• Largest study of community based correctional treatment facilities ever done up to that time

• Total of 13,221 offenders – 37 Halfway Houses and 15 Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCFs) were included in the study.

• Two-year follow-up conducted on all offenders

• Recidivism measures included new arrests & incarceration in a state penal institution

Treatment Effects for Low Risk Offenders

Increased Recidivism

Reduced Recidivism

Probability of Recarceration

-36 -29 -21 -21 -21 -15 -7 -7 -6 -5 -4 -4 -2 -2 -2 -2 -1 0 1 1 2 3 3 4 5 6 8 9

-40 -30 -20 -10 0 10

River Street, Alternative VOA, McAlpin Fall, Middletown, Liberty, Buechler, Hillsboro, HCOC, Mary, Locustville, All Facilities, All EWEB Facilities, SRCOC Community Corrections, Albrecht House, Summit County, Franklin County, WORC, Cincinnati Community Treatment Center, Farber House Salvation Army, Albrecht House, Spring Grove, McAlpin Fall, Summer House.
Lesson 6

• Sometimes we fail because we do not provide enough treatment
The question is: What does more “intensive” treatment mean in practice?

• Most studies show that the longer someone is in treatment the greater the effects, however:

• Effects tend to diminish if treatment goes too long
Just starting to see research in corrections examining the dosage of treatment needed to achieve effect
2010 Dosage Study of 689 Offenders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-99</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-199</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200+</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>57</td>
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Results from 2014 Study

• We expanded sample

• Hours examined by increments of 50

• Looked at low/moderate, moderate, and high
2014 Dosage Study involving 903 offenders

Provide Most Intensive Interventions to Higher Risk Offenders

• Higher risk offenders will require much higher dosage of treatment
  – Rule of thumb: 100-150 hours for moderate risk
  – 200+ hours for high risk
  – 100 hours for high risk will have little effect
  – Does not include work/school and other activities that are not directly addressing criminogenic risk factors
Lesson 7

- Everyone thinks they are an expert in criminal behavior
Andrews and Bonta’s Major Set of Risk/Need Factors

1. Antisocial/procriminal attitudes, values, beliefs & cognitive emotional states

2. Procriminal associates & isolation from anticriminal others

3. Temperamental and anti social personality patterns conducive to criminal activity including:
   - Weak socialization
   - Impulsivity
   - Adventurous
   - Restless/aggressive
   - Egocentrism
   - A taste for risk
   - Weak problem-solving/self-regulation & coping skills

4. A history of antisocial behavior
Major Set of Risk/Need Factors

5. Familial factors that include criminality and a variety of psychological problems in the family of origin including Low levels of affection, caring, and cohesiveness

6. Low levels of personal, educational, vocational, or financial achievement

7. Low levels of involvement in prosocial leisure activities

8. Substance Abuse
Study by Bucklen and Zajac of parole violators in Pennsylvania found a number of criminogenic factors related to failure.

Pennsylvania Parole Study
Social Network and Living Arrangements
Violators Were:

• More likely to hang around with individuals with criminal backgrounds
• Less likely to live with a spouse
• Less likely to be in a stable supportive relationship
• Less likely to identify someone in their life who served in a mentoring capacity
Pennsylvania Parole Study
Employment & Financial Situation
Violators were:

• Less likely to have job stability
• Less likely to be satisfied with employment
• Less likely to take low end jobs and work up
• More likely to have negative attitudes toward employment & unrealistic job expectations
• Less likely to have a bank account
• More likely to report that they were “barely making it” (yet success group reported over double median debt)
Pennsylvania Parole Study
Alcohol or Drug Use
Violators were:

• More likely to report use of alcohol or drugs while on parole (but no difference in prior assessment of dependency problem)

• Poor management of stress was a primary contributing factor to relapse
Pennsylvania Parole Study
Life on Parole - Violators:

• Had poor problem solving or coping skills
• Did not anticipate long term consequences of behavior
• Acted impulsively to immediate situations
• More likely to maintain anti-social attitudes
• Viewed violations as an acceptable option to situation
• Maintained general lack of empathy
• Shifted blame or denied responsibility
Pennsylvania Parole Violator Study:

- Successes and failures did not differ in difficulty in finding a place to live after release.

- Successes & failures equally likely to report eventually obtaining a job.
Lesson 8

Offenders are not usually higher risk because they have a risk factor... they have multiple risk factors.
Targeting Criminogenic Need: Results from Meta-Analyses

Reduction in Recidivism

Increase in Recidivism

Target 1-3 more non-criminogenic needs

Target at least 4-6 more criminogenic needs

Criminal Thinking and Mental Illness*

Morgan, Fisher, Duan, Mandracchia, and Murray (2010) studied 414 adult offenders with mental illness (265 males, 149 females) and found:

- **66% had belief systems supportive of criminal lifestyle** (based on Psychological Inventory of Criminal Thinking Scale (PICTS))

- When compared to other offender samples, **male offenders with MI scores similar or higher than non-mentally disordered offenders**.

- On Criminal Sentiments Scale-Revised, **85% of men and 72% of women with MI had antisocial attitudes, values and beliefs** – which was higher than incarcerated sample without MI.

Conclusion

• Criminal Thinking styles differentiate people who commit crimes from those who do not independent of mental illness

• Incarcerated persons with mental illness are often mentally ill and criminal

• Needs to be treated as co-occurring problems
Lesson 9

- We can change offender behavior – we just need to go about it the right way
Effective Correctional Interventions

- Use behavioral approaches: Structured social learning with cognitive behavioral treatment
- Focus on current risk factors
- Action oriented
- Staff follow Core Correctional Practices
Results from Meta Analysis: Behavioral vs. Non-Behavioral

Most Effective Behavioral Models

• Structured social learning where new skills and behaviors are modeled

• Cognitive behavioral approaches that target criminogenic risk factors
Social Learning

Refers to several processes through which individuals acquire attitudes, behavior, or knowledge from the persons around them. Both modeling and instrumental conditioning appear to play a role in such learning.
The Four Principles of Cognitive Intervention

1. Thinking affects behavior

2. Antisocial, distorted, unproductive irrational thinking can lead to antisocial and unproductive behavior

3. Thinking can be influenced

4. We can change how we feel and behave by changing what we think
Meta-Analysis of Cognitive Behavioral Treatment for Offenders by Landenberger & Lipsey (2005)

- Reviewed 58 studies:
  19 random samples
  23 matched samples
  16 convenience samples

- Found that on average CBT reduced recidivism by 25%, but the most effective configurations found more than 50% reductions

Significant Findings (effects were stronger if):

- Sessions per week (2 or more) - RISK
- Implementation monitored - FIDELITY
- Staff trained on CBT - FIDELITY
- Higher proportion of treatment completers - RESPONSIVITY
- Higher risk offenders - RISK
- Higher if CBT is combined with other services - NEED
Core Correctional Practices and Recidivism

Effect Size

- Relationship Skills
- Structured Skills
- Effective Reinforcement
- Effective Modeling
- Effective Disapproval
- Structured Skill Learning
- Problem Solving
- Effective Authority

# List of Rewards and Sanctions

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<tr>
<th>Sanctions</th>
<th>Rewards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Verbal reprimand</td>
<td>• Verbal praise and reinforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Written assignment</td>
<td>• Remove from EM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Modify curfew hours</td>
<td>• Level advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community service hours</td>
<td>• Increased personal time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Restrict visitation</td>
<td>• Approved special activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Program extension or regression</td>
<td>• Fees reduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Electronic Monitoring</td>
<td>• Approve of extend special visitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inpatient or outpatient txt</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Detention time</td>
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Applying Core Correctional Practices in a Community Correctional Setting
Traditional Officer-Offender Interactions are often not Effective because:

- They are too brief to have an impact

- Conversations focus almost exclusively on monitoring compliance conditions (and therefore emphasize external controls on behavior rather than developing an internal rationale for pro-social behavior)

- Relationship is often more confrontational and authoritarian in nature than helpful

- What is targeted is not always based on assessment

- More areas discussed = less effective
We are currently training on a new model of PO and Case Manager interaction.

Effective Practices in Correctional Supervision (EPICS)
Structure of EPICS Meeting

SESSION OVERVIEW

- Each session should be structured in the following way:
  1. Check-In
  2. Review
  3. Intervention
  4. Homework
Rationale for EPICS

Preliminary Data from Canada:

- Trained officers had 12% higher retention rates in comparison with untrained officers at six months.

- Also found reductions in recidivism
Two year Recidivism Results from Canadian Study

Findings from Federal Probation Sample

Recidivism Results from Ohio Study looking at Fidelity and High Risk Offenders

Meta Analysis: POs Trained in Core Correctional Practices (i.e. EPICS): Effects on Recidivism

We are Currently Piloting a New Version: Effective Practices for Community Support (EPICS for Influencers)

• Designed to identify those people in the offender’s life that want to help them stay out of trouble and train them on some of the core skills taught in EPICS.

• Includes training of coaches to provide on-going support
Why EPICS for Influencers?

• Build a pro-social network with some actual skills to help offenders avoid risky situations

• Increase “dosage”

• Research shows that relapse prevention programs that trained significant others and family members in cognitive-behavioral approaches were three times as effective as programs that did not.
EPICS for Influencers is Designed for:

- Mentors
- Coaches
- Family Members
- Friends
- Faith Based Organizations
- Reentry Coalitions
- Law Enforcement
- School Officials
- Significant others
EPICS-I

• Pilot Sites include:
  – LA County Jail Reentry Program
  – Hamilton County (Cincinnati) Reentry Coalition
  – Portsmouth, OH Juvenile Truancy and Mentoring Program
Lesson 10

• Doing things well makes a difference
Several large studies we have conducted have helped us identify characteristics of effective programs

- 45,000 offenders (adult and juvenile)
- 450 programs (community, residential, & institutional)
Program Integrity and Recidivism

• The more of the programs follow the research the greater the reduction in recidivism
Program Integrity—Relationship Between Program Integrity Score & Treatment Effects for Residential Programs

- Reduced Recidivism
- Increased Recidivism

Change in Recidivism Rates

0-30: -19
31-59: 5
60-69: 10
70+: 22
Program Integrity—Relationship Between Program Integrity Score And Treatment Effects for Community Supervision Programs

Reduced Recidivism

Increased Recidivism

Program Percentage Score

-0.15

0.02

0.12

0.16

0-19%

20-39%

40-59%

60+%
Thank you