

THE RECIDIVISM REDUCTION CHECKLISTS

A Resource for State Leaders and Corrections Agencies

Hosted by the National Reentry Resource Center

*In partnership with the Association of State Correctional Administrators
and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S.
Department of Justice*





the NATIONAL REENTRY RESOURCE CENTER

— A project of the CSG Justice Center —

www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org

- The resource center is continually updating its website with materials relevant to the reentry field.
- Please register for the monthly NRRC newsletter at: <http://eepurl.com/tsnaH>, and please share this link with others in your networks that are interested in reentry.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the National Reentry Resource Center. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, About, Library, Topics, Training & TA, Reentry Facts, and What Works. A search bar is located on the right side of the navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, the main content area is divided into several sections:

- Subscribe to our newsletter!**: A form with fields for Name and Email, and a Subscribe button.
- WELCOME TO THE National Reentry Resource Center**: A central text block stating: "The Resource Center, established by the Second Chance Act, provides assistance to the prisoner reentry field. We provide education, training, and technical assistance to states, tribes, territories, local governments, service providers, nonprofit organizations, and corrections agencies working on prisoner reentry."
- What's New?**: A list of recent updates, including: "The National Reentry Resource Center is Hiring!", "Register Now for Webinar: The Essential Elements of Reentry Webinar: Primary Care and the Transitions Clinic Approach", "Updated Version of Back to School: A Guide to Continuing Your Education after Prison Now Available", "Watch 'From Arrest to Homecoming--Addressing the Needs of Children of Incarcerated Parents' Webinar", and "Watch 'Local Governments Role in Reentry' Webinar".
- Audiences**: A list of target groups: States/Locals, Community and Faith-based Organizations, and People Returning Home.
- Tools & Resources**: A list of resources: Calendar, Funding, Reentry Service Directories, Program Examples, Second Chance Act, Forums/Networking, and Announcements.
- Popular Topics**: A list of topics: Housing, Substance Abuse, Juveniles, Employment, and Starting a Reentry Initiative.
- Announcements**: A list of recent news items: "National Reentry Resource Center Announces Two Upcoming Web Events", "Recognizing the Value of Peer Recovery Support", and "Justice Mapping Center Launches First National Atlas of Criminal Justice Data".

At the bottom left, there is a logo for the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), U.S. Department of Justice. A "View All Topics" link is located at the bottom right of the main content area.

Presenters

Moderator: **David D'Amora**
*Division Director, National Initiatives, Council of State Governments
Justice Center*

Panelists: **Dr. Gary Dennis**
Senior Policy Advisor, Corrections, Bureau of Justice Assistance

A.T. Wall
Director, Rhode Island Department of Corrections

Justin Jones
Director, Oklahoma Department of Corrections

Brigid Adams
Reentry Branch Manager, Kentucky Department of Corrections

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*Director of Research and Policy, Wisconsin Department of
Corrections*

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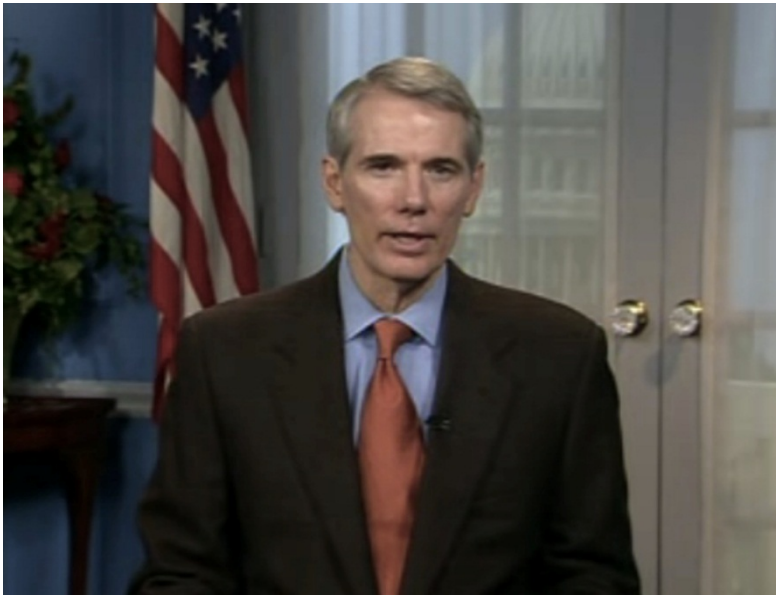
Additional Support for Recidivism Reduction Work

Questions & Answers

Project Overview

State Leaders' National Forum on Reentry and Recidivism

❖ Bipartisan Engagement



U.S. Senator Rob Portman (R-OH)

❖ Representation from all 50 states

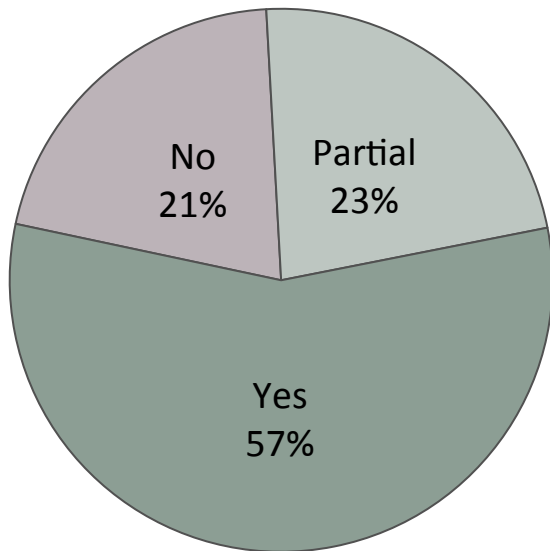


U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)

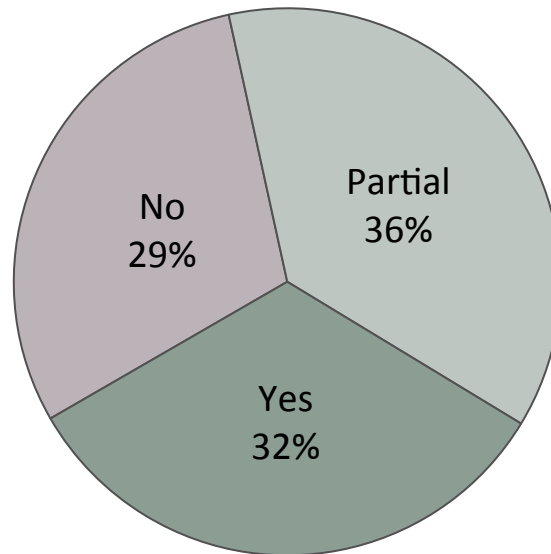
Takeaways from the Forum

Many states still face challenges with implementing practices that can help reduce recidivism

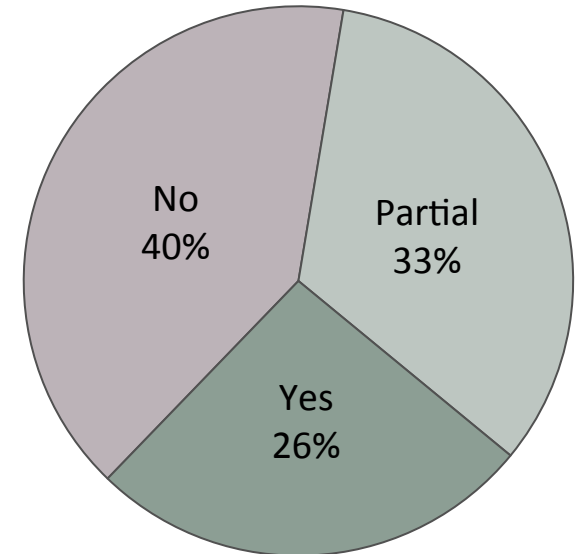
Normed and validated risk assessments are used to inform case management decisions



Case plans and programming address individuals' criminogenic needs



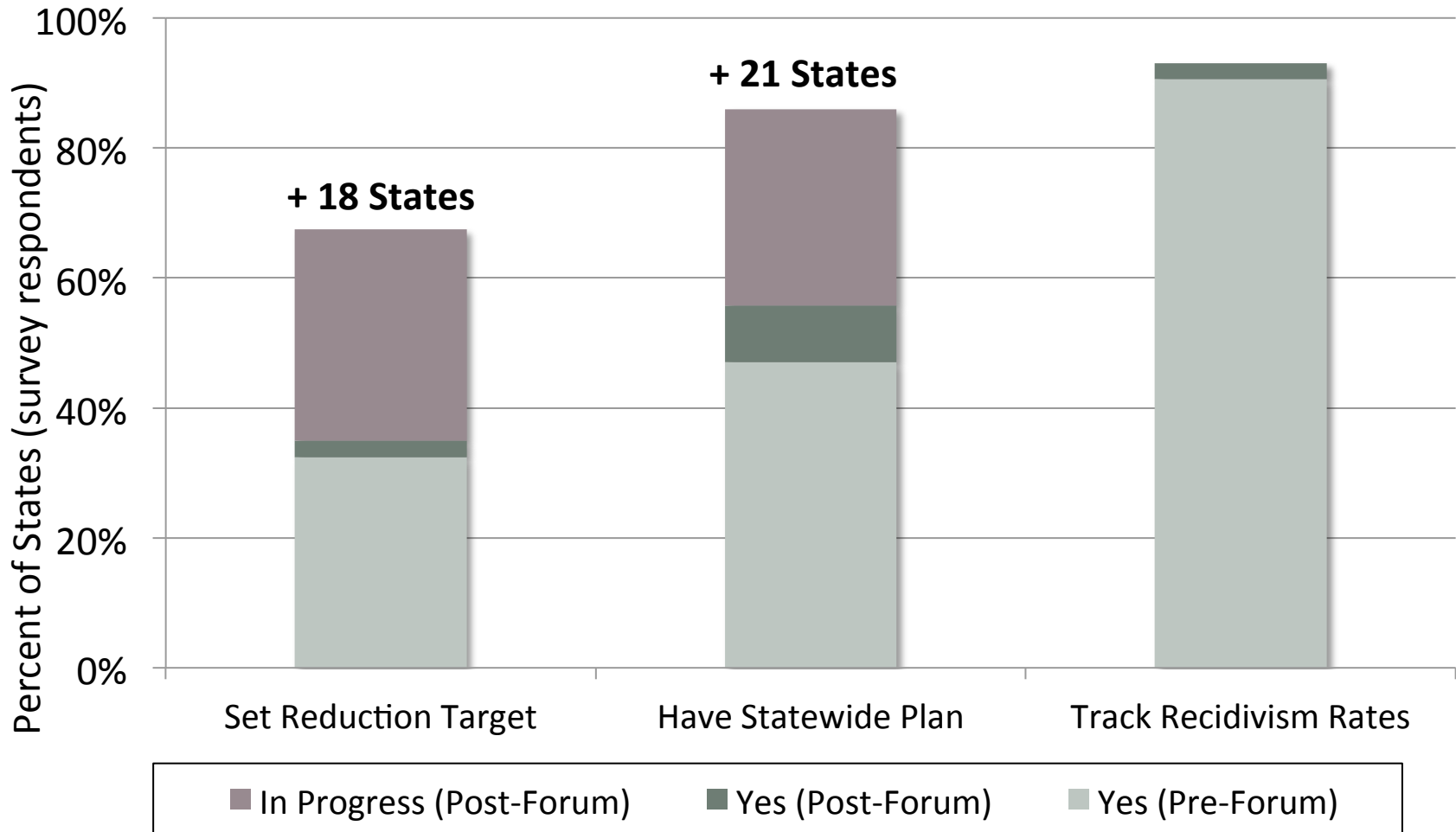
Responsivity factors are attended to and considered in program placement decisions



Charts shown average response rates to questions pertaining to the three topics shown in the Pre-Forum survey (n=38)

Takeaways from the Forum

States are developing plans to reduce recidivism



The Recidivism Reduction Checklists

Legislative and Executive Policymakers

State Corrections Administrators

State Reentry Coordinators

<p>REDUCING STATEWIDE RECIDIVISM: CHECKLIST FOR LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE POLICYMAKERS</p>	<p>REDUCING STATEWIDE RECIDIVISM: CHECKLIST FOR STATE CORRECTIONS ADMINISTRATORS</p>	<p>REDUCING STATEWIDE RECIDIVISM: CHECKLIST FOR REENTRY COORDINATORS</p>																																
<p>Why should recidivism reduction be a state priority? All across the country, in bipartisan fashion, states have recognized that the most cost-effective public safety is to break the cycle of reincarceration for the thousands of individuals from prisons every year. Nearly every state is tracking recidivism rates, setting and implementing policies that have been shown to reduce re-offense rates and supervise. The benefits of these efforts are clear – communities are safer, the growth in state prison-related costs are slowing, and limited corrections funding is being redirected into effort long-term public safety.</p> <p>What are the key steps state policymakers can take to reduce recidivism?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make recidivism reduction a state priority and a key measure of successful corrections and reentry policy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a reentry task force representative of the many organizations that impact the reentry process in your state Develop a vision and mission statement that articulates the importance of recidivism reduction in your state Set a clear definition of recidivism, measure current recidivism rates within your state, and set reduction targets for specific programs or policy changes 2. Develop a plan to implement policies and practices that research has shown to reduce recidivism. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affirm corrections and reentry-related resources are focused on the individuals that are most likely to reoffend Fund evidence-based programs and services at levels that meet demand and ensure they are implemented effectively Authorize the adoption of community supervision policies and practices that promote successful reentry Review laws and policies to determine if they undermine the goals and benefits of recidivism reduction efforts and make modifications as necessary 3. Track progress and ensure accountability for results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review recidivism data on a regular basis and hold agencies and programs responsible for progress toward meeting targets Provide incentives to agencies or jurisdictions for implementing practices that effectively promote recidivism reduction goals Assess the recidivism reduction impact of reentry programs and use that information to inform budgetary decisions <p><small>* Based on results from a survey of state corrections departments conducted by the Council of State Governments Association of State Correctional Administrators in January 2012 * FEW Center on the States, 2011. <i>Kennedy Reformers Cut Recidivism, Costs: Broad Bill Enacts Evidence-Based Strategies</i>. Washington, DC, 2011.</small></p>	<p>STATE CORRECTIONS ADMINISTRATORS know that by focusing on reentry efforts can improve prison security by engaging individuals in programs that change their behaviors and can help reduce prison population growth and crowding.</p> <p>The following checklist is designed to help state corrections administrators comprehensiveness of their state's recidivism reduction policies by engaging with managers and staff overseeing reentry and community supervision effort from other state agencies or organizations that play a role in implementing reentry programs.</p> <p>Goal 1: Make recidivism reduction an agency priority and set reduction targets for specific programs or policy changes. <i>Defining success as meeting recidivism reduction targets and using goal-oriented management is essential for establishing buy-in throughout an agency. To this end, the following policies and procedures are critical:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Administrators develop formal partnerships with state agencies and order to build sufficient capacity in the community to meet recidivism reduction goals Policymakers and administrators agree on the definition of recidivism programs or policy changes that account for the target population for achieving those reductions Recidivism reduction goals are incorporated into the agency's vision policy priorities are determined by whether they contribute to program goals Practices that support recidivism reduction are incorporated into work descriptions and are included in staff job descriptions and performance evaluations <p>Goal 2: Focus resources on the individuals that are most likely to reoffend. <i>Recidivism reduction is only possible when services and treatments are focused on the individuals most likely to reoffend. To this end, the following policies and procedures are critical:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A risk assessment tool that has been normed and validated within the agency to measure every individual's risk of recidivating and their risk-related factors Risk and need assessments inform all case management decisions, including treatment referrals, release decisions, and conditions of community supervision Risk information is used to triage programming and supervision resources and dosage being reserved for higher-risk individuals Measures are taken to ensure that statutorily required program participation does not result in placements that undermine the risk and need assessment Prison staff, community supervision officers, and treatment providers are trained on how to use and interpret the assessment tools and quality assurance audits are conducted to ensure that assessments are performed correctly <p>Goal 3: Establish programs and practices in that have been shown to reduce recidivism and ensure they are implemented with fidelity <i>Reducing recidivism requires developing programs that are based in science and address the factors that make an individual more likely to reoffend. To this end, the following policy expectations are critical:</i></p>	<p>REENTRY COORDINATORS are uniquely positioned to ensure that the policies and practices that go into an effective recidivism reduction initiative are being implemented effectively, both in corrections settings and in the community. This checklist is designed to guide reentry coordinators oversight of these line-level activities – it lists key policy expectations that align with the goals of the corrections administrators' checklist, and can be used to record key information about implementation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implementation lead(s): It is not expected that the reentry coordinator can undertake all of this work alone – rather, they need to work closely with program managers, line staff supervisors, and other individuals with decision-making authority to ensure the policy expectations within this checklist are being implemented. 2. Implementation status: Once implementation leads are identified, the reentry coordinator should work closely with those individuals to assess the extent to which a policy expectation is being implemented (not at all implemented (N), not implemented, but planned (PL), partially implemented (P), or fully implemented (F)). <p>The checklist should be updated regularly and used to guide discussions between the reentry coordinator and corrections administrators about the different system-level and line-level changes that are necessary to realize recidivism reduction goals. Additional information on this checklist can be found at www.justicecenter.csg.org</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1072 778 1825 1071"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Goal</th> <th rowspan="2">Policy and Performance Expectations</th> <th rowspan="2">Implementation Lead(s)</th> <th colspan="3">Implementation Status</th> <th rowspan="2">Comments</th> </tr> <tr> <th>N</th> <th>PL</th> <th>P</th> <th>F</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Make recidivism reduction an agency priority and set reduction targets for specific programs or policy changes <i>Defining success as meeting recidivism reduction targets and using goal-oriented management is essential for establishing buy-in throughout an agency.</i></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Recidivism targets are ambitious, but realistic, and reflect input from the different individuals and organizations that will ultimately impact whether those targets are met</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Supervisors and managers are able to effectively communicate the value of recidivism reduction</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><small>N = Not at all implemented; NP = Not implemented, but planned; P = Partially implemented; F = Full implemented</small></p>	Goal	Policy and Performance Expectations	Implementation Lead(s)	Implementation Status			Comments	N	PL	P	F	1	Make recidivism reduction an agency priority and set reduction targets for specific programs or policy changes <i>Defining success as meeting recidivism reduction targets and using goal-oriented management is essential for establishing buy-in throughout an agency.</i>							Recidivism targets are ambitious, but realistic, and reflect input from the different individuals and organizations that will ultimately impact whether those targets are met							Supervisors and managers are able to effectively communicate the value of recidivism reduction					
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Checklists are available at nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/projects/checklists

Key Steps and Goals across the Checklists



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State Reentry Coordinators' Checklist

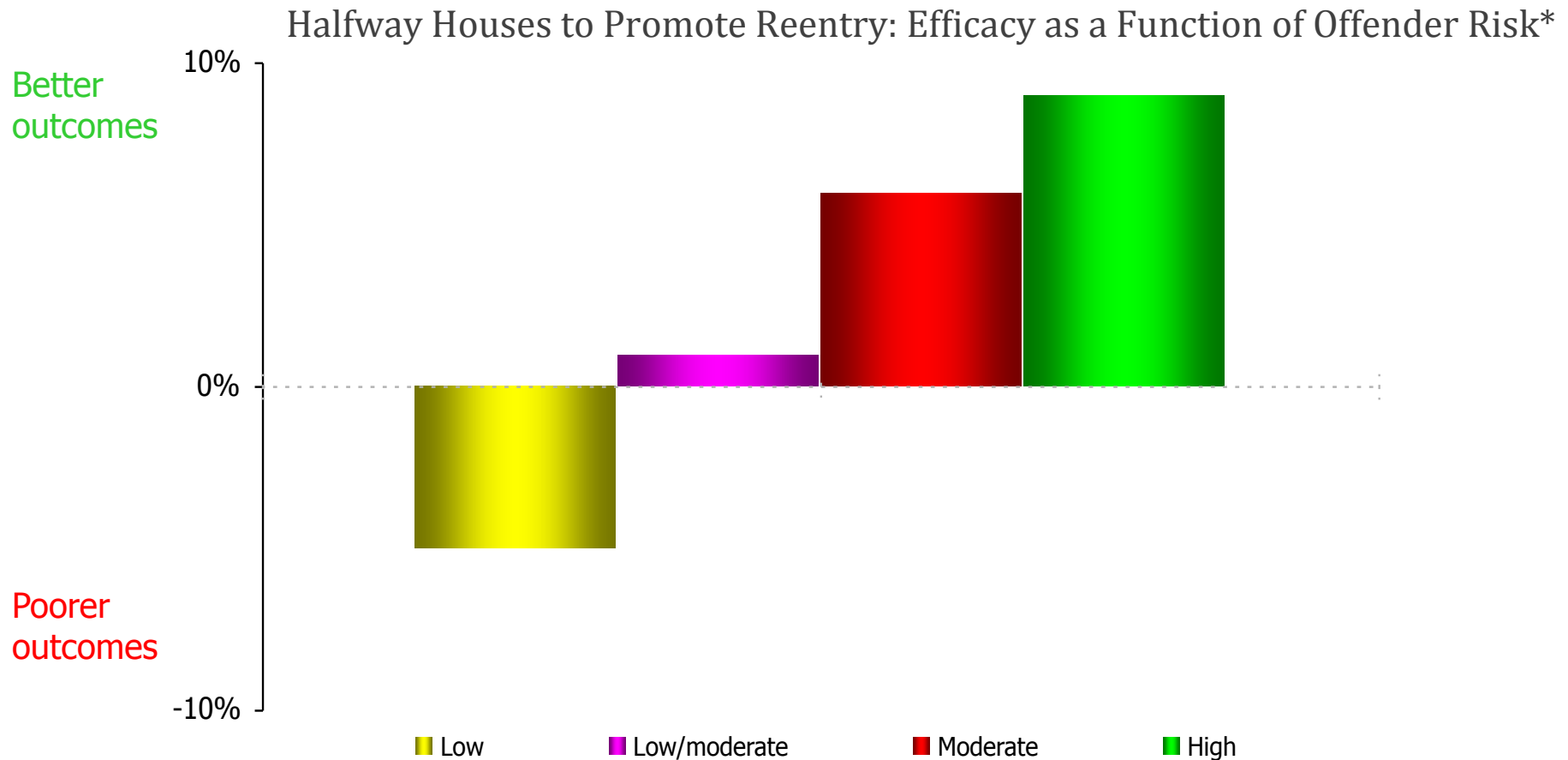
Content

The Goals:

1. Make recidivism-reduction an agency priority and set reduction goals for specific programs or policy changes
2. Focus resources on the individuals who are most likely to reoffend
3. Establish programs and practices that have been shown to reduce recidivism and ensure they are implemented with fidelity
4. Implement community supervision policies and practices that promote successful reentry
5. Measure recidivism-related outcomes and establish a reporting process that promotes accountability for results

Research Behind the Goals

Focusing on Higher Risk Individuals

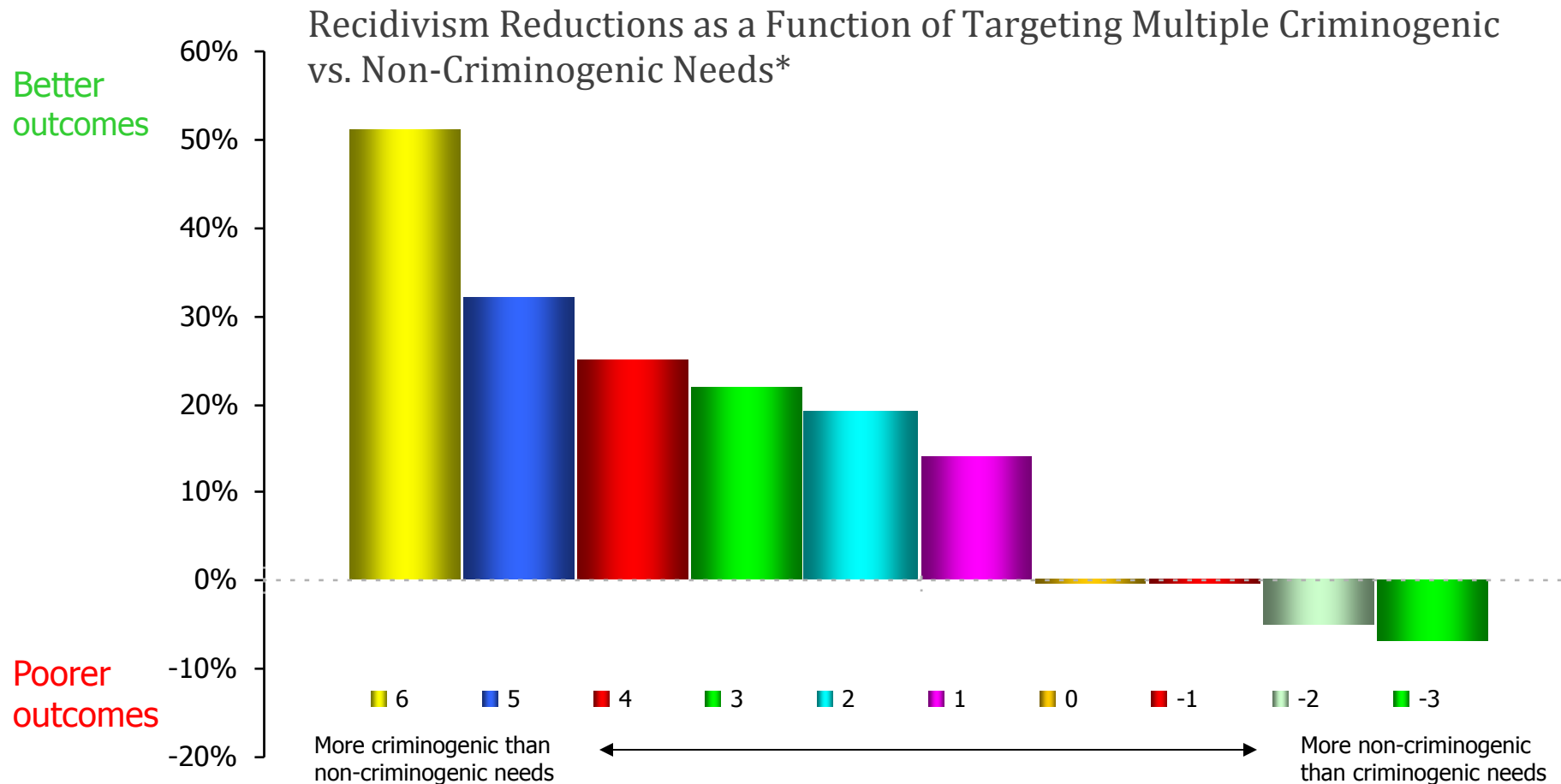


* Approx. 3,500 offenders placed in halfway houses, compared to 3,500 not placed in a halfway house

(Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005b)

Research Behind the Goals

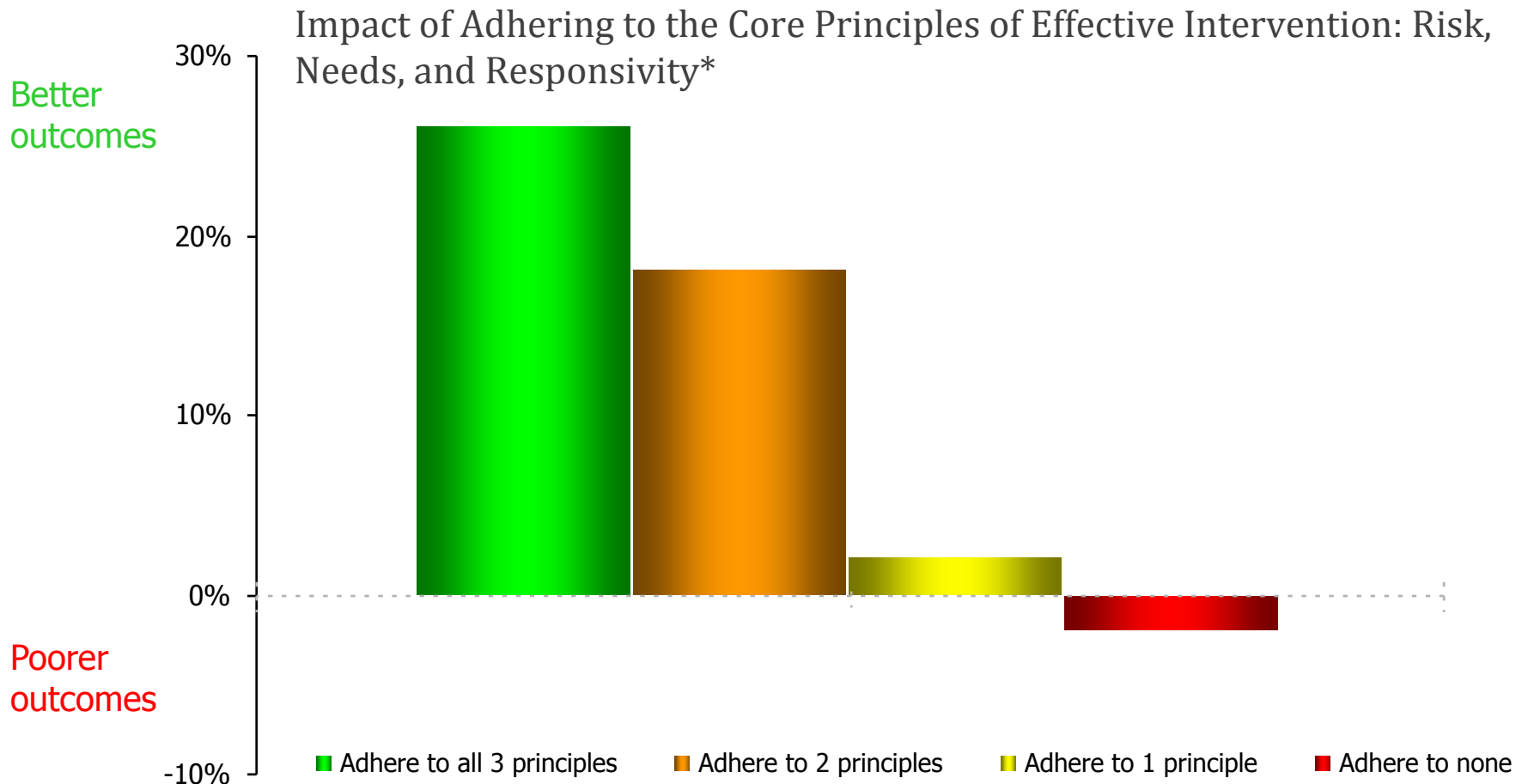
Addressing Criminogenic Needs



(Andrews, Dowden, & Gendreau, 1999; Dowden, 1998)

Research Behind the Goals

The Risk, Need, Responsivity Principles

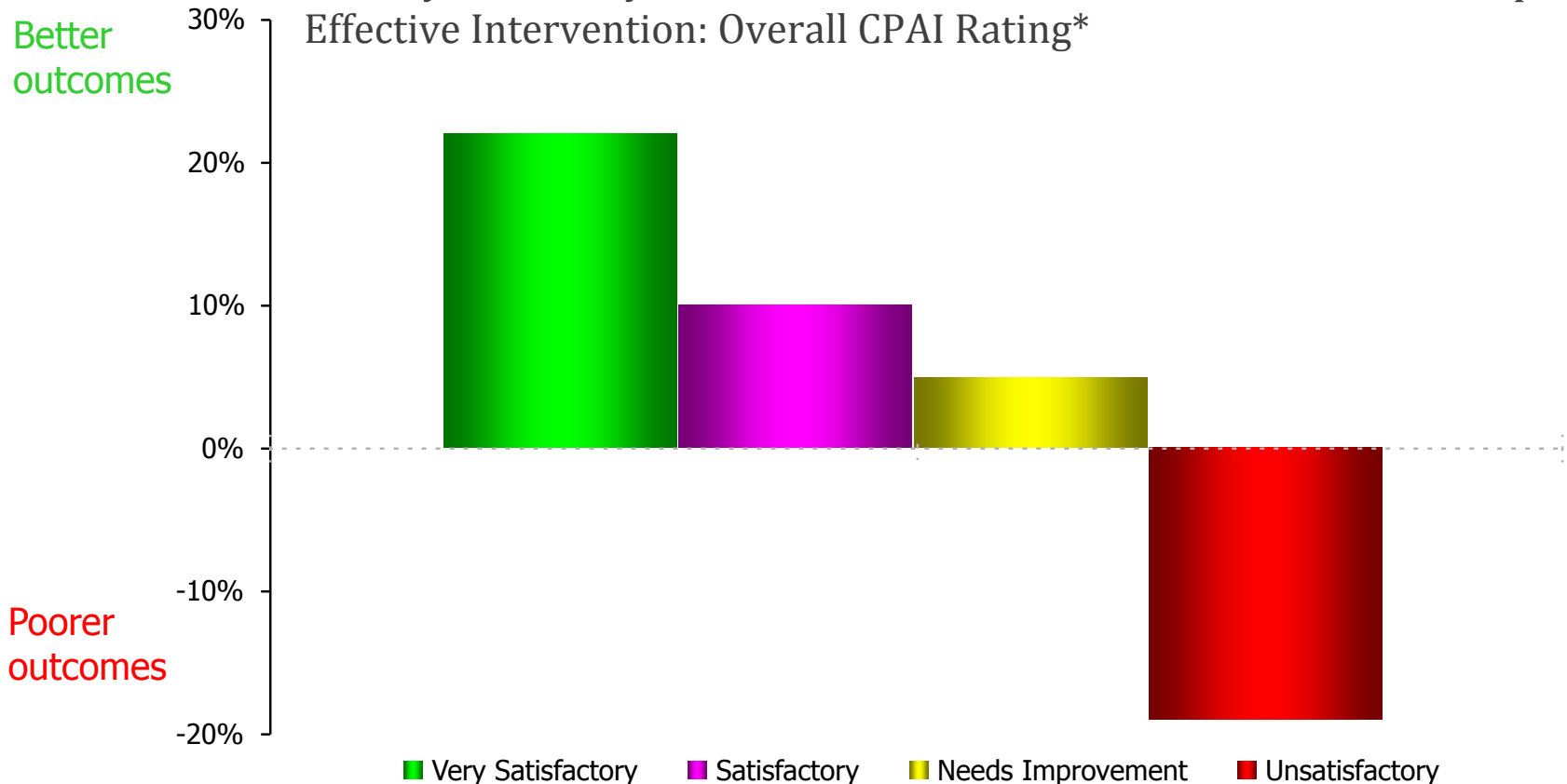


* meta-analysis of 230 studies (Andrews et al., 1999)

Research Behind the Goals

Program Quality and Fidelity

Efficacy of Halfway Houses as a Function of Adherence to the Principles of Effective Intervention: Overall CPAI Rating*

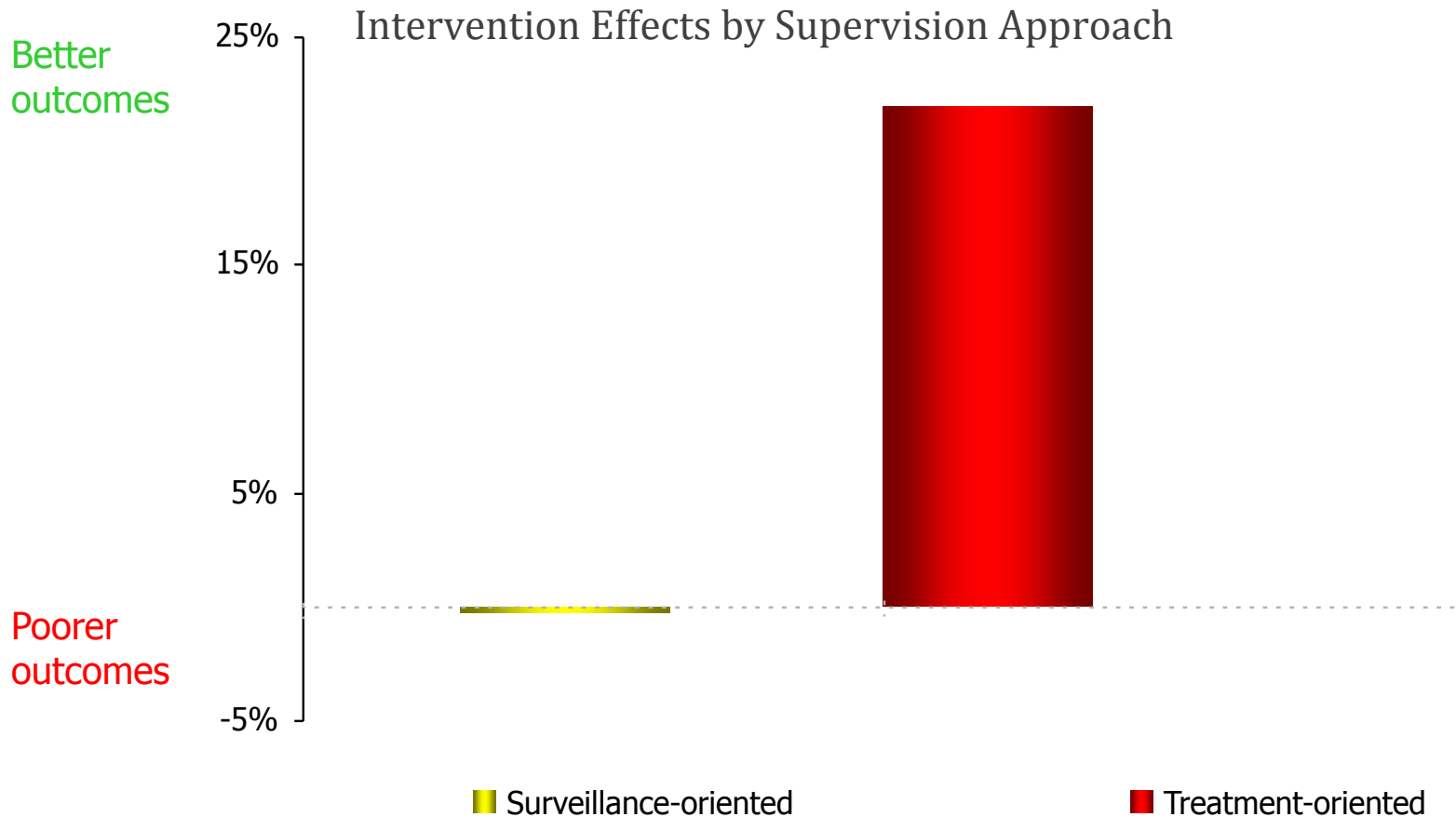


* Approx. 7,300 offenders placed in halfway houses, compared to 5,800 not placed in a halfway house

(Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005a)

Research Behind the Goals

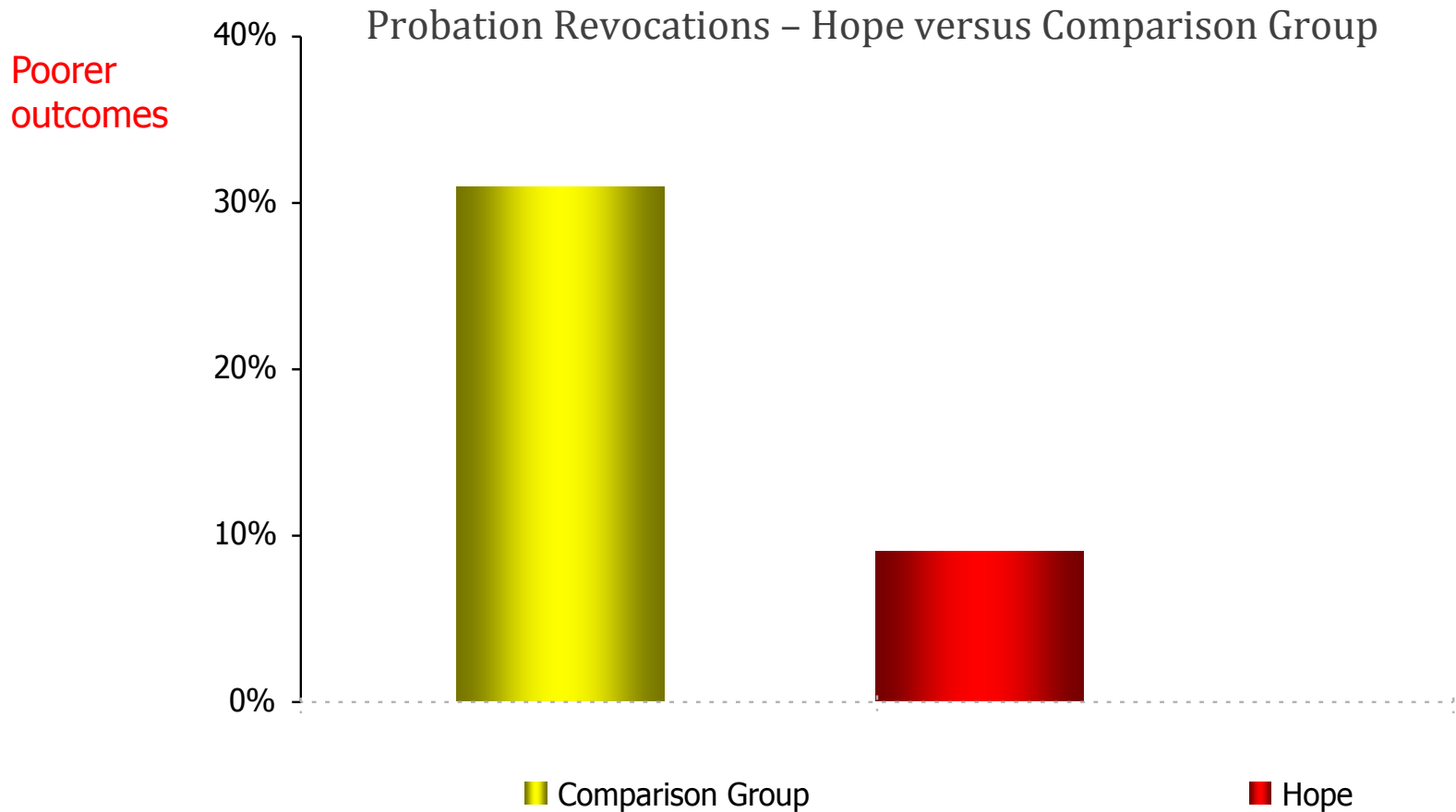
Treatment-Oriented Approach to Supervision



(Aos et al., 2006)

Research Behind the Goals

Swift and Certain Sanctions Model



(Aos et al., 2006)

Principles that Underlie the Checklist Goals

1. Focus on changing offender behavior
2. Management must be goal- and data-driven
3. Staff must receive appropriate and on-going training
4. There must be quality assurance, oversight and accountability to assure fidelity to programming

Panel Discussion – Checklist Content

Principle 1: Changing Offender Behavior

Examples from State Reentry Coordinators' Checklist:

Goal 2: Moderate- and high-risk individuals are assessed to determine which dynamic criminogenic risk factors need to be addressed through programming

Goal 3: Prison- and community-based programs are designed to effectively address the factors that make individuals more likely to recidivate and enhance responsiveness to treatment

Goal 4: Positive reinforcements and incentives are incorporated into the supervision process and used appropriately to encourage positive behavior changes

Panel Discussion – Checklist Content

Principle 2: Goal- and Data-Driven Management

Examples from State Reentry Coordinators' Checklist:

Goal 1: Supervisors and managers are able to effectively communicate the value of recidivism reduction to front-line staff

Goal 5: Data on short-term outcomes are collected to indicate progress toward recidivism-reduction goals, such as changes in individual attitudes, behaviors, or responsiveness to services

Goal 5: Supervisors and managers hold performance management meetings with staff to discuss data findings, identify areas that need improvement, and reward staff for progress

Panel Discussion – Checklist Content

Principle 3: Staff Training

Examples from State Reentry Coordinators' Checklist:

Goal 2: Prison staff, probation and parole officers, and community-service providers are trained to perform assessments and to use the results to inform case management plans

Goal 4: Community supervision officers are provided training in communication techniques that promote intrinsic motivation for positive change (i.e., enhance responsivity)

Goal 4: Community supervision officers are trained to understand and respond effectively to the special needs of individuals with mental illnesses, substance use disorders, or co-occurring disorders

Panel Discussion – Checklist Content

Principle 4: Quality Assurance, Oversight, and Accountability

Examples from State Reentry Coordinators' Checklist:

Goal 2: Supervisors observe assessment processes to ensure staff are conducting and using assessments correctly and observations are reflected in staff performance evaluations

Goal 3: Program-quality assessment tools (such as the correctional program checklist) are conducted on at least an annual basis and used to improve program implementation

Goal 4: Supervisors review recommendations for revocation before they are approved in order to ensure they are warranted, based the seriousness and type of the offense and risk level of the individual

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Implementation Lead

In order to effectively implement the checklist, reentry coordinators need assistance from key personnel:*

- Administrators of the agency
- Mid-level management and Program managers
- Front-line supervisors
- Training staff
- Staff directly involved in reentry coordination—institutional staff and parole officers
- Human resource staff
- Research staff

**Staff involved should have some level of decision-making authority*

Operationalizing the Checklists

Implementation Status

Once key personnel are identified, the reentry coordinator should work closely with those individuals to assess:

If policy or performance expectations are currently being implemented

- (N) Not implemented at all
- (PL) not implemented, but planned
- (P) partially implemented
- (F) fully implemented

Once checklist is complete

- The checklist should be updated periodically
- Results should inform administrators of needed policy and practice changes
- Agencies should develop a plan to address deficiencies with timelines

Panel Discussion – Using the Checklists

Outreach and Education: Checklists outline key components of effective reentry practices and recidivism reduction strategies

- Checklists can be guides to educate the public on reentry efforts and recidivism reduction strategies
- Checklists can be used to educate legislative or executive policymakers on policy and funding priorities needed to advance recidivism reduction goals
- Checklists can be used to educate administrators, management, and frontline staff on the key components of effective reentry practices and recidivism reduction strategies

Panel Discussion – Using the Checklists

Assessment: Checklists are used as an assessment tool to gauge comprehensiveness of reentry practices

- Checklists provides an opportunity to inventory current policies, procedures, and practices, and identify gaps
- Checklists are designed to record information and progress on implementation of a comprehensive reentry strategy
- Checklists provide an opportunity for agencies to assess if data are being collected accurately, reliably, and have utility

Panel Discussion – Using the Checklists

Strategic Planning: Planning efforts can be guided by checklists at both the policy and administrative level

- Checklists provide a framework for developing long-term reentry procedures and recidivism reduction strategies
- Checklists provide a thorough framework for policy and procedure development at the agency level
- Checklists provide a framework to develop long-term planning for staff development, hiring practices, and evaluation

Panel Discussion – Using the Checklists

Oversight: Checklist can assist with oversight of a reentry initiative and recidivism reduction effort

- Checklists can be used as an auditing tool to inform administrators on status of efforts and realign resources if necessary
- Checklists can be used as an agency quality assurance tool
- Checklists can be used to develop and retool staff performance evaluations to capture desired practices

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Audiences

- States/Locals
- Community and Faith-based Organizations
- People Returning Home

Tools & Resources

- Calendar
- Funding
- Frequently Asked Questions
- National Criminal Justice

Recidivism Reduction Checklists

Overview

The recidivism reduction checklists are a user-friendly, source of information on the many policies and practices that go into a comprehensive, effective reentry initiative. There are three checklists, each tailored to a specific audience:

- Executive and Legislative Policymakers 
- State Corrections Administrators 
- State Reentry Coordinators 

These checklists can help familiarize state leaders with key issues related to recidivism reduction, and help them honestly evaluate strengths and weaknesses in their reentry efforts through enhanced communication and coordination.

The Recidivism Reduction Checklists

Each checklist's intended audience is described below. To view a checklist, click on an audience.

Project Background




The recidivism reduction checklists build upon the December 8, 2011 State Leaders' Forum on Reentry and Recidivism. During this forum, state leaders began developing recidivism reduction goals, designing plans to achieve those goals, and identifying ways to track progress.

In a follow-up survey with forum participants, it became clear that state leaders would benefit from additional guidance on best practices and tools for enhancing communication with policymakers, state corrections directors, and reentry staff. The recidivism

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The Recidivism Reduction Checklists

Each checklist's intended audience is described below. To view a checklist, click on an audience.

Executive and Legislative Policymakers' Checklist 	State Corrections Administrators' Checklist 	State Reentry Coordinators' Checklist 
This checklist is targeted at policymakers in the executive or legislative branches and their staff as well as other reentry champions outside of corrections.	This checklist is targeted at directors, secretaries, and commissioners of state corrections departments, including probation and parole.	This checklist is targeted at high-level staff members that manage reentry efforts within corrections departments.

Getting Started

What is included in the checklists, and how do they align with one another?

- ▶ The checklists include actions related to measuring recidivism and setting reduction targets: policies and practices that research has

additional guidance on best practices and tools for enhancing communication with policymakers, state corrections directors, and reentry staff. The recidivism reduction checklists are designed to meet those needs.

An example of how DOCs can use the checklists:

- ▶ **Quarterly**, the reentry coordinator updates the State Reentry Coordinators' Checklist by facility and briefs the corrections director on the status of implementation.
- ▶ **Semi-annually**, the corrections director and reentry director use the State Corrections Administrator's Checklist to assess key areas that need to be enhanced through department-wide

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- ▶ The checklists include actions related to measuring recidivism and setting reduction targets; policies and practices that research has shown to reduce recidivism; and administrative practices that are necessary for ensuring data-driven accountability for results. The checklists present similar information, but with varying levels of detail to meet the needs of distinct audiences.
- ▶ The policies and practices in the executive and legislative policymakers' checklist fall under three key steps, while the policies and practices in the state corrections administrators' and state reentry coordinators' checklists are organized by five common goals. These key steps and goals align to ensure that all stakeholders have a common understanding of the key policy components that impact recidivism.

that need to be enhanced through department-wide policy changes.

- ▶ **Annually** or as needed, the corrections director and reentry director use the Executive and Legislative Policymakers' Checklist to brief the governor's staff and members of the legislature on progress with implementation and any policy or budgetary needs.

Key Steps and Goals across the Checklists



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How should the checklists be used?

- ▶ **Outreach and education:** These checklists succinctly outline the key facets of effective reentry policy and can be used by corrections leaders to easily brief legislative or executive policymakers and their staff on best practices.
- ▶ **Assessment:** Policymakers and corrections staff can use the checklists to assess the comprehensiveness of their recidivism reduction efforts. The reentry coordinators' checklist is specifically designed for recording information about implementation.
- ▶ **Strategic planning:** Whether at the policy or administrative level, strategic planning can be greatly informed by the checklists. Each checklist provides a framework for developing a thorough, long-term plan for addressing recidivism.
- ▶ **Oversight:** For corrections administrators or reentry coordinators overseeing reentry initiatives, the checklists can be used as a tool for periodically auditing reentry efforts across the department.

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Where can I get additional information?

- ▶ Click here for a glossary of key terms and concepts used in the checklists
- ▶ Many of the recidivism reduction strategies in the checklists are based on the Risk, Need, Responsivity principles for changing offender behavior. More information on these principles can be found at: <http://www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/announcements/principles-of-recidivism-reduction>
- ▶ The following resources provide additional information related to the checklists' content: Report of the Re-Entry Policy Council:
 - ◊ Report of the Re-Entry Policy Council ⁱ
 - ◊ The National Summit on Justice Reinvestment and Public Safety ⁱⁱ
 - ◊ A Ten-Step Guide to Transforming Probation Departments to Reduce Recidivism ⁱⁱⁱ
 - ◊ Increasing Public Safety Through Successful Offender Reentry ^{iv}
 - ◊ Putting Public Safety First: 13 Parole Supervision Strategies to Enhance Reentry Outcomes ^v

Acknowledgements:

On April 16, 2011, a group of corrections directors, state policymakers, and researchers came together to discuss strategies for addressing the challenges identified during the December 8, 2011 Statewide Recidivism Reduction Forum. The recidivism reduction checklists were conceptualized through this collaborative

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