

Webinar: Improving Outcomes for Young Adults in the Justice System

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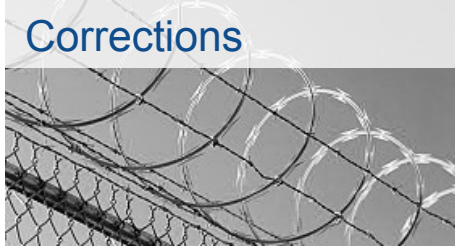
Improving Outcomes for Young Adults in the Justice System

A Review of Key Issues and Considerations

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The Council of State Governments Justice Center

Corrections



Courts



Justice Reinvestment



Law Enforcement



Mental Health



Reentry



Substance Abuse



Youth



National nonprofit, nonpartisan membership association of state government officials

Represents all three branches of state government

Provides practical advice informed by the best available evidence

Overview

Why Young Adults Need a Distinct Approach

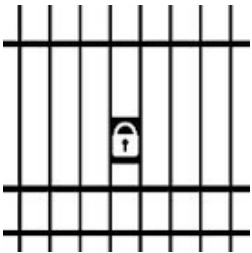
State Responses to Young Adults

Key Considerations for Criminal Justice Systems

There is Good Reason for Juvenile and Criminal Justice Leaders to Focus on Young Adults

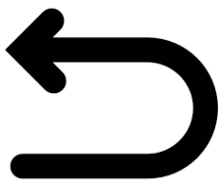


Young adults accounted for nearly **30 percent of arrests** in 2013, disproportionately for **serious offenses**



Young adults accounted for approximately **20 percent of incarcerated juveniles**

Young adults accounted for **more than 21 percent of prison admissions** in 2012, disproportionately these admissions are young men of color



76 percent of people under age 25 when released from prison were **rearrested within 3 years**

Young Adults are Developmentally Different From Youth and Older Adults

How Young Adults Are Distinct From Youth	How Young Adults Are Distinct from Adults
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ More cognitively developed⁷■ More vulnerable to peer pressure and other external influences■ More likely to engage in risky behaviors■ Seeking autonomy from families/caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ More impulsive■ Less able to control emotions■ Less likely to consider future consequences of their actions

Young Adults Have Distinct Needs

Low Levels of Education Attainment

- Less access to education, particularly post-secondary

Employment Challenges

- Fewer vocational skills and less job experience

Acute Behavioral Health Needs

- Certain mental health conditions emerge
- Substance use peaks

Transitioning to Independence

- Independent living and life skills
- Family relationships and caring adults

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Growing Number of Initiatives Focused on Young Adults in States and Locales Across the Country



Implemented **“Youthful Offender” policies** that protect young adults from the consequences of a criminal conviction

Established **specialized probation and parole caseloads** for young adults



Created **separate facilities** for young adults

Several Barriers Continue to Exist to Improving Outcomes for Young Adults



Evidence-based programs are **not well-tested** for young adults



Young adults **age out** of key service systems, and those systems are **not well aligned**



Disproportionately impacted by **collateral consequences** related to education, employment, and housing



Systems are not sufficiently **tracking outcomes** for this population

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Issue Brief Provides Recommendations to Support Young Adults

November 2015

Reducing Recidivism and Improving Other Outcomes for Young Adults in the Juvenile and Adult Criminal Justice Systems

INTRODUCTION

Researchers focused on brain development have found that 18- to 24-year-olds—also referred to as young adults—stand out as a distinct developmental group with heightened impulsive behavior, risk taking, and poor decision making.¹ Young adults are also frequently not connected to education or jobs—approximately 1 in 5 young adults (the majority of whom are black or Latino) were out of school and out of work in 2013.² These factors increase the odds that a young adult might come into contact with the justice system.³

Not coincidentally, law enforcement officials say that more often than not, when a violent crime is committed, it involves someone between the ages of 18 and 24. And it is people in this same age group that law enforcement officials say are especially likely to be repeat offenders.⁴

Of course, the overwhelming majority of young adults across the country are not involved in any criminal activity.⁵ And among those young adults who have committed a crime, most of these offenses are minor offenses.

Still, because this subset of individuals drives a disproportionately large share of criminal justice activity, they should be an important focus of juvenile and adult justice systems alike. (See box, “Young Adults in the Justice System,” which explains that both systems can have jurisdiction over this population.) But whereas considerable research exists demonstrating what strategies make it less likely an adolescent or, say, a 35-year-old adult will reoffend, similar research does not exist for young adults. Nor is it clear what strategies can

Young Adults in the Justice System

When someone between the ages of 18 and 24 commits a crime, neither the juvenile nor the adult criminal justice system is exclusively responsible for providing services and supervision to this individual. In every state, a person who commits a crime after age 18 is referred to the adult criminal justice system, and in some states that age can be 17 or even 16. Not, some states are considering raising the upper age limit of juvenile court jurisdiction beyond the age of 18.

At the same time, when a young person is adjudicated delinquent in the juvenile justice system, two-thirds of states⁶ allow them to remain under the supervision of the juvenile system through age 20 and, in some other states, up to age 24. Even if a young person commits a new crime while under community supervision within the juvenile justice system, it is possible that he or she may still remain in that system.

Because young adults can be involved in either the juvenile or adult criminal justice systems, policymakers and administrators in both systems should be focusing their attention on this important population and developing strategies to reduce recidivism and improve other outcomes for young adults.

Highlights how **young adults are distinct**

Identifies young adults’ distinct needs and **summarizes available research** on what works to address these needs

Provides recommendations for steps states can take to improve outcomes for young adults

Recommendation #1: Tailor Supervision and Services to Address Young Adults' Distinct Needs

Any strategy to improve outcomes for young adults in the justice system should include the following elements:

Targeted cognitive
behavioral approaches

Career pathways for
education and
employment

Targeted mental health
and substance use
treatment

Family involvement

Life skills training

Recommendation #2: Reduce Barriers Across Service Systems

Ensure individual service systems provide as much of a **safety net** as possible

Look across systems to ensure consistency in **eligibility** and alignment in **endpoints for care**

Address laws and policies that result in **collateral consequences**

Recommendation #3: Improve Data Collection and Reporting

Collect and report at least annually:

- # of young adults in the justice system
- detailed recidivism data, disaggregated by key variables

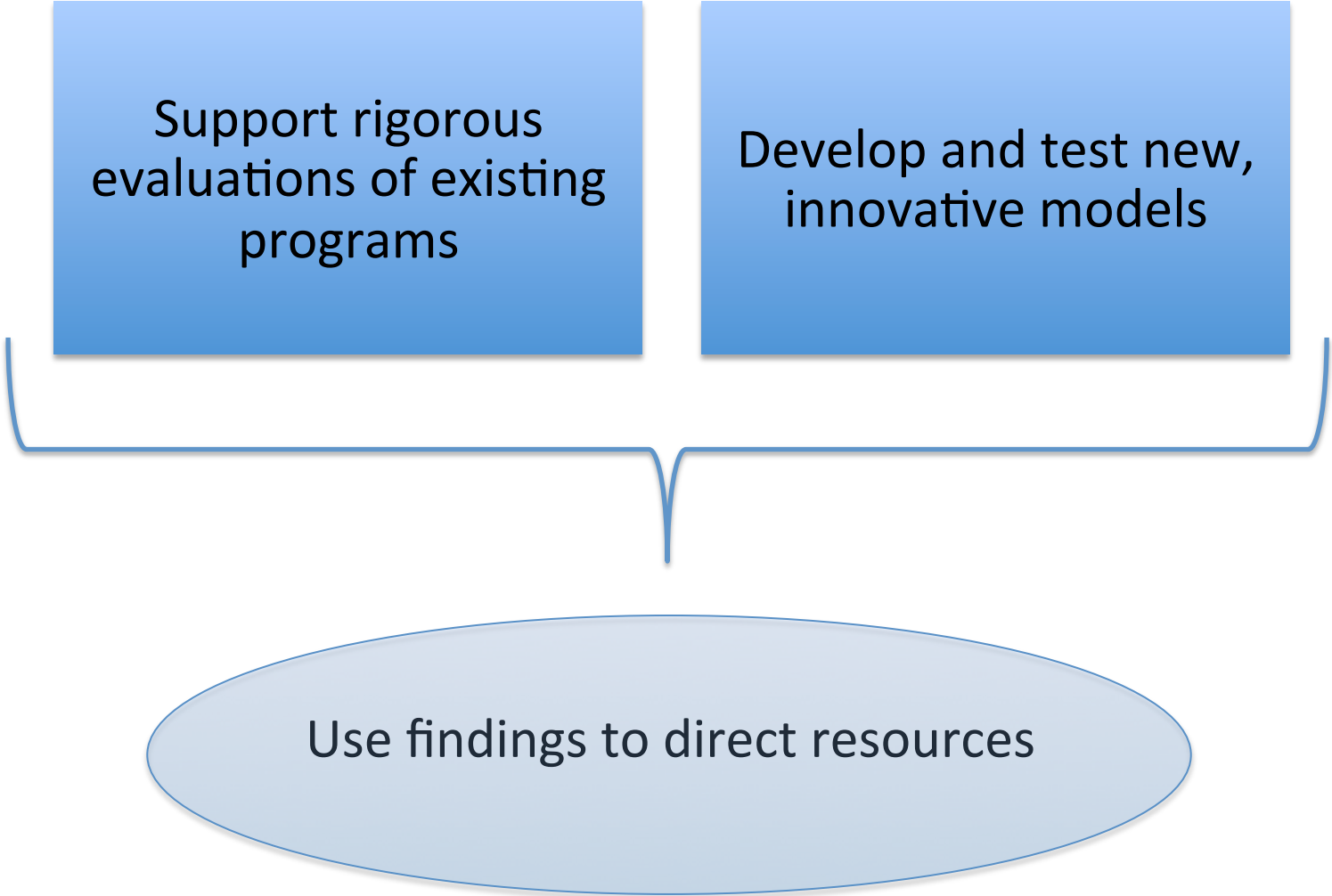
Connect juvenile and adult criminal justice data systems and **improve data sharing** among systems that serve young adults

Recommendation #4: Build the Knowledge Base of What Works

Support rigorous evaluations of existing programs

Develop and test new, innovative models

Use findings to direct resources



Key Considerations for Criminal Justice Systems to Reduce Recidivism for Young Adults

How should **court policies and practices** be adjusted to support young adults?

- Adjudication and disposition structure
- Existing transfer and youthful offender laws
- Determining sentence lengths

How will young adults be **supervised**?

- Community supervision
- Residential capacity and structure

How will **services be delivered**?

- Tailoring services to young adults' distinct needs
- Coordination across service systems

How should **state policies be adjusted** to meet the needs of young adults?

- Align age-out policies
- Minimize collateral consequences

How will **data be tracked and analyzed** to assess outputs and outcomes?

Thank You

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For more information, contact Emily Morgan, emorgan@csg.org



The presentation was developed by members of the Council of State Governments Justice Center staff. The statements made reflect the views of the authors, and should not be considered the official position of the Justice Center, the members of the Council of State Governments, or the funding agency supporting the work. Citations available for statistics presented in preceding slides available on CSG Justice Center web site.



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Roca 
LESS JAIL,
MORE FUTURE.

**Intervention Model
and
Performance Management System**



Why We Are Here

Roca's **Mission** is to disrupt the cycle of incarceration and poverty by helping young people transform their lives.

Roca's **Theory of Change** is that young people, when re-engaged through positive and intensive relationships, can change their behaviors and develop life, education, and employment skills to disrupt the cycles of poverty and incarceration.

Roca's **Target Population**

- Young men
- 17-24 years old
- Justice Systems Involved or Juvenile Justice Systems involved who are **assessed as high risk for long term adult criminal justice system involvement**
- No work history
- Not ready for change; cannot or will not participate in other programs

Frameworks For Change

Stages of Change

Change is a process that happens over time and in stages that include:

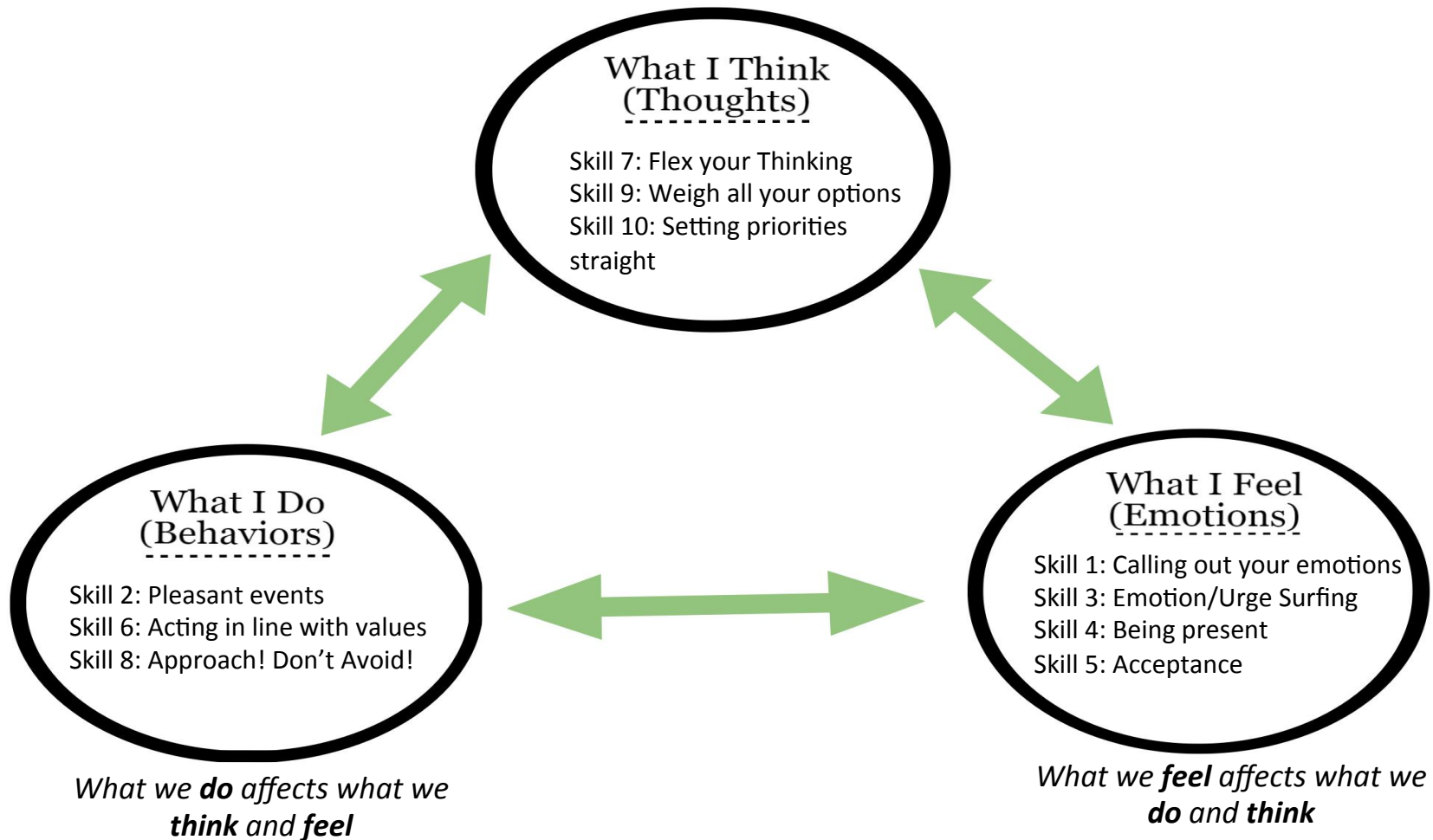
- Pre-Contemplation = NO
- Contemplation = MAYBE
- Planning = GETTING READY
- Action = ACTING DIFFERENTLY
- Sustaining = MORE THAN 51%

As change is often difficult for any of us, **Relapse** is often part of the process and can happen at any point.

Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT)

- CBT asserts that thoughts, behaviors, and emotions are interconnected
- Thus, CBT skills target thoughts, behaviors, or emotions in order to affect positive change on the other components (e.g., changing distorted thinking may lead to healthier emotions and more effective behaviors).

*What we **think** affects what we **do** and **feel**!*





Roca's Intervention Model

Roca's Intervention Model is a cognitive behavioral intervention that includes 4 strategic components:

Relentless Outreach & Follow-Up all the time

Transformational Relationships

- Youth Workers, Educators, Crew Supervisors
- All Staff

Programming (drop in, structured, formal)

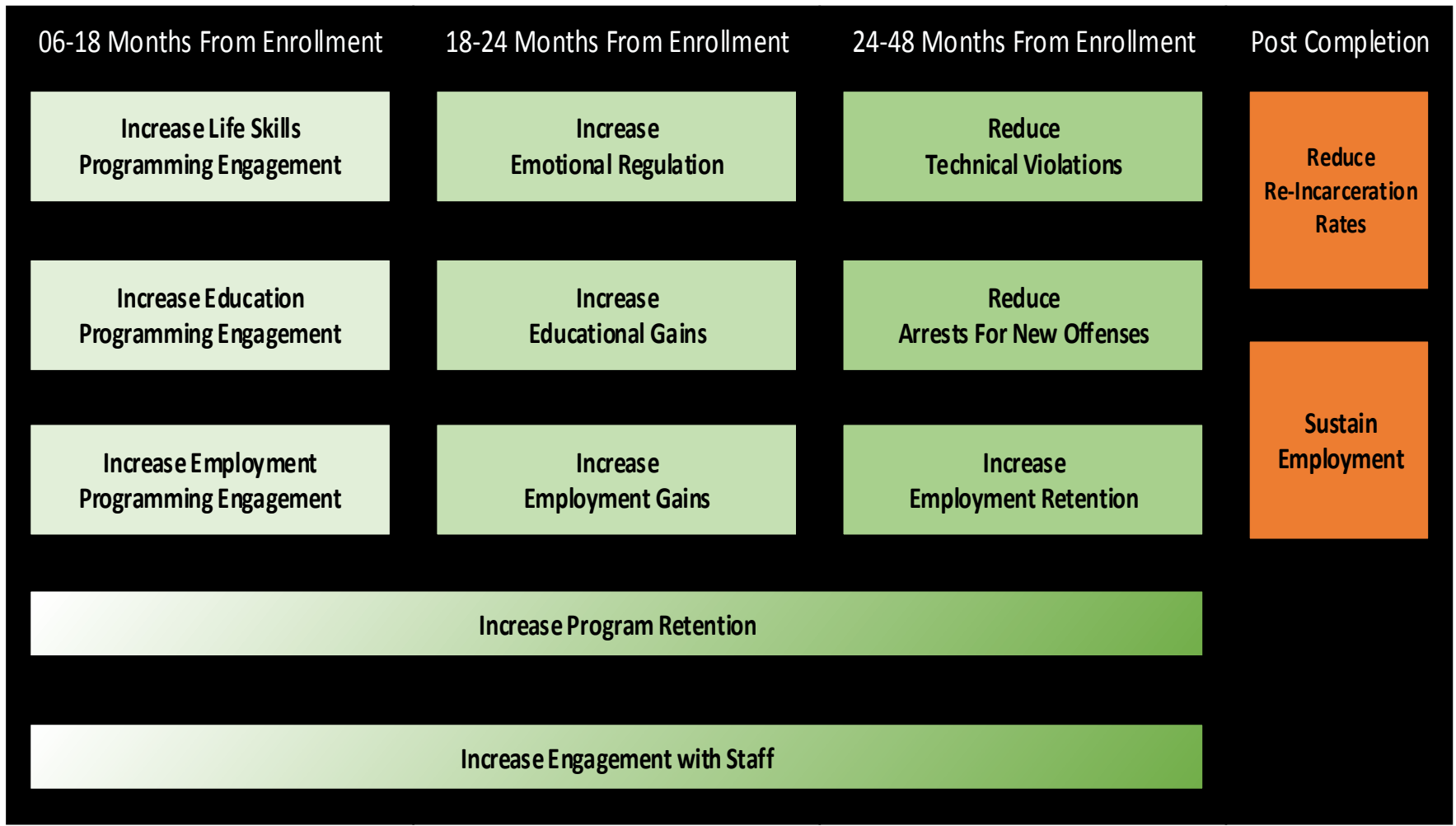
- Life Skills (CBT, Healthy Habits, Circles)
- Education/Pre Voc (Literacy, HSE, ESL, Pre-Vocational Training)
- Employment (Transitional Employment, Workforce Readiness, Job Placement)

Work with **Engaged Institutions**

- Formal and Informal Systems Change



Results Framework





Data Collected

- Central Intake / Risk Assessment
- Baseline and Follow-Up Roca Change Assessments
- Staff Caseloads
- Staff Engagement
- Programming Engagement
- Workforce Readiness Assessments
- Educational Assessments
- Educational Attainments
- Employment Records
- Criminal Involvement Records
- Staff Supervisions



FY15 Intermediate Outcomes

In FY15, Roca served **659** participants across three sites in Boston, Chelsea, and Springfield Massachusetts.

- **84%** or 556 out of 659 of participants enrolled were still actively engaged

Of those enrolled 21 months or longer:

- **84%** or 153 out of 182 were placed in unsubsidized employment. (76% remained employed)
- **92%** or 131 out of 143 who had the opportunity to retain employment for 90 days successfully did so.
- **87%** or 118 out of 136 who had the opportunity to retain employment for 180 days successfully did so.

Of those enrolled 24 months or longer:

- **93%** or 155 out of 166 did not get arrested for a new offense
- **98%** or 163 out of 166 did not get incarcerated for a new offense



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