

**Probation Evidence-Based Practices (EBP):  
Strategy for Effective Replication**

***Dr. Tony Fabelo***  
***Justice Center, Council of State Governments***

**Presentation to TDCJ Judicial Advisory  
Council**

**Austin, Texas**

***January 16, 2009***

# Overview

**EBP Model and Operational Challenges**

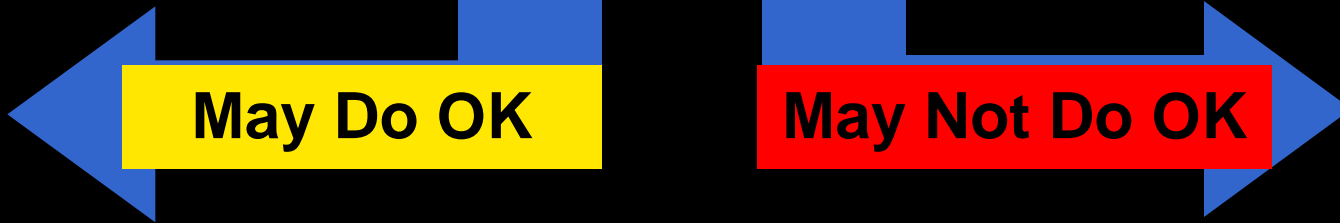
**Texas Model Development in Travis County**

**Test of Impact of EBP**

# EBP Probation in a Nutshell

1. Assessments protocols effectively identifies “swingers”

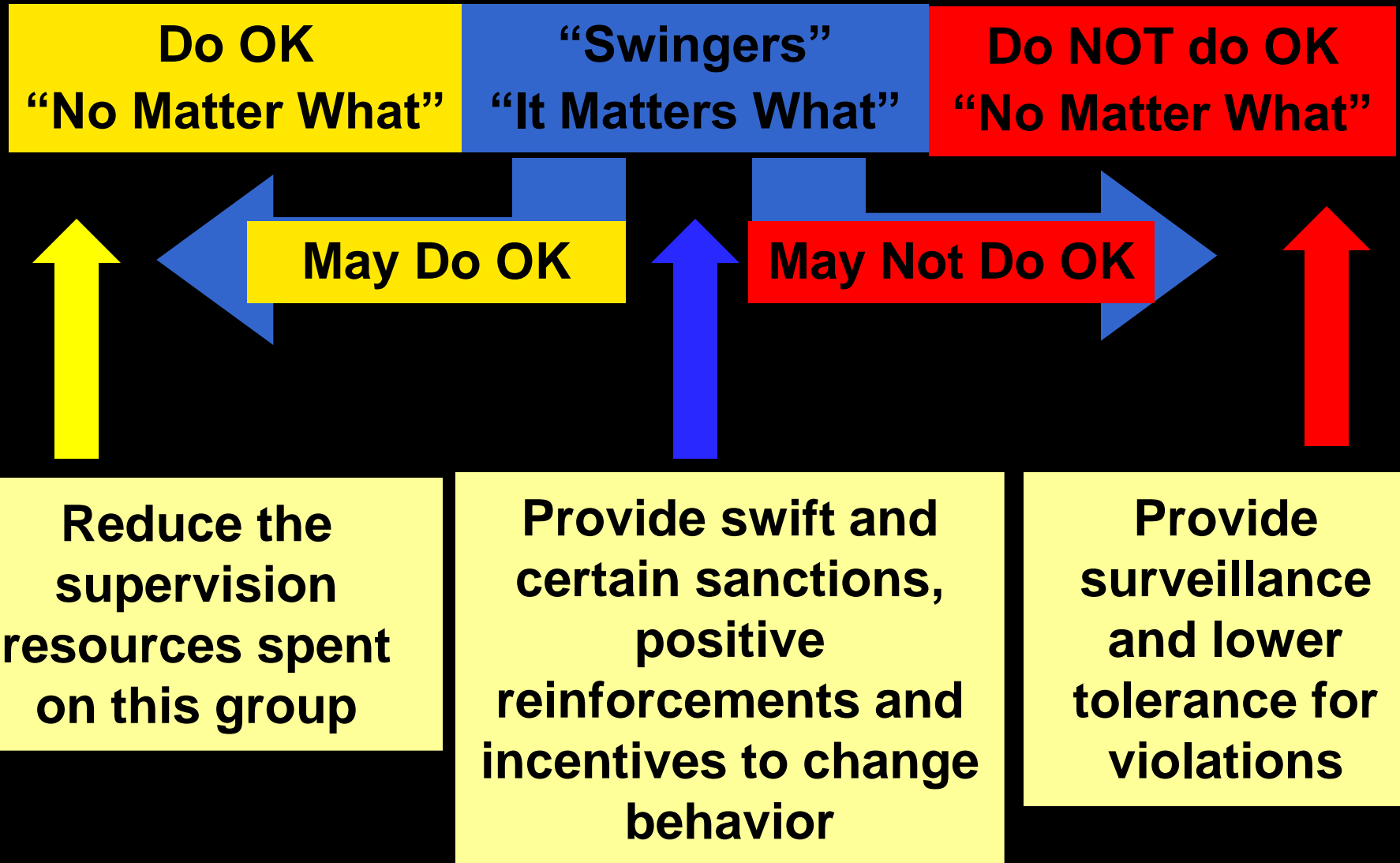
2. Supervision strategies effectively combine “treatment” “control” and “incentives”



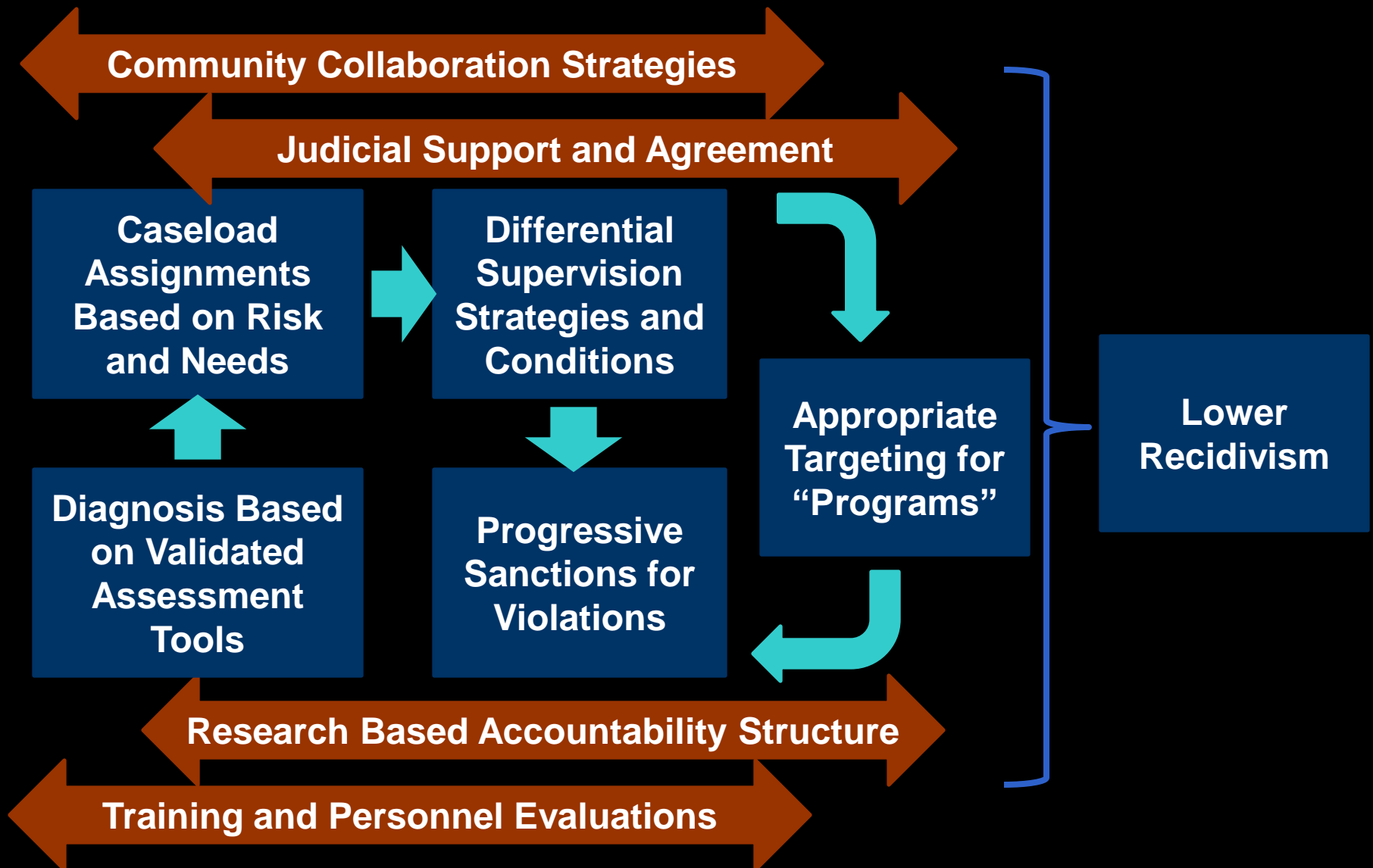
3. Programs and services standards

4. Collaboration with community partners

# EBP Operational Goals



# Organizational Model for EBP Implementation



# Operational Challenges

**Integrate all components of the EBP model in a seamless manner in the organization**

**Generate the support among key stakeholders for changing and maintaining the model over time**

**Generate the knowledge to show the fidelity of implementation and impact of the practices on public safety**

# Travis Project is a Collaborative Effort to Develop a Solid EBP Probation Model for Replication

Adult Probation (CSCD)

**Travis Community Impact Supervision (TCIS) Initiative**



**Community Justice Assistance Division (CJAD)**

**JUSTICE CENTER**  
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

# Overview

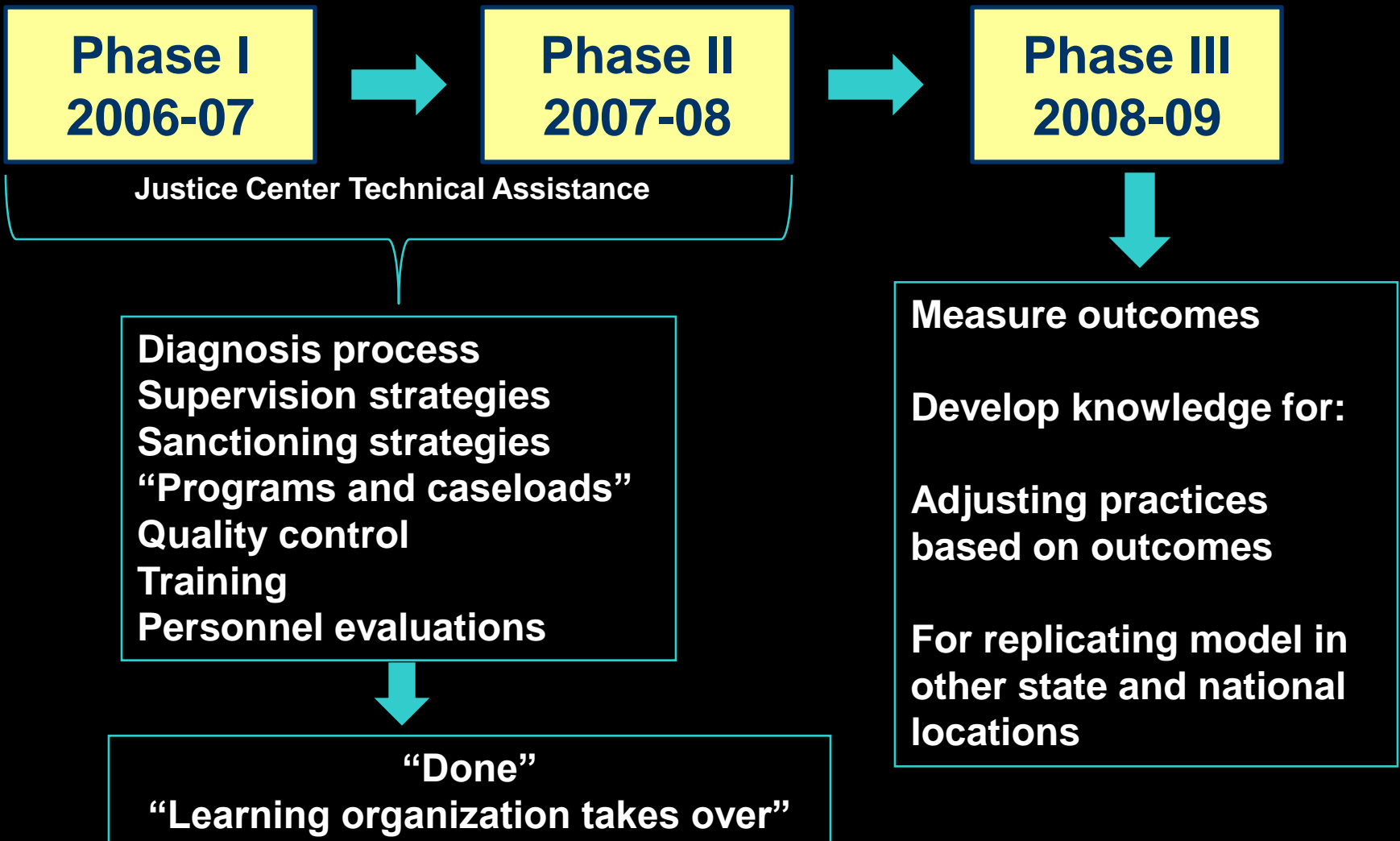
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# Methodical Changes Over Three Years



# Creating a Structure to Implement EBP: The “How To” Project Set-up

**Complete organization assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses to agree on needed organizational changes**

**Conduct strategic planning sessions to set three year organizational realignment plan**

**Set committee structure to manage process of change and empower staff**

**Set work plan structure with goals and timelines and implementation accountability benchmarks**

**Agree on administrative strategy to maintain to support process of change**

# The “How To” Project Set-up (cont.)

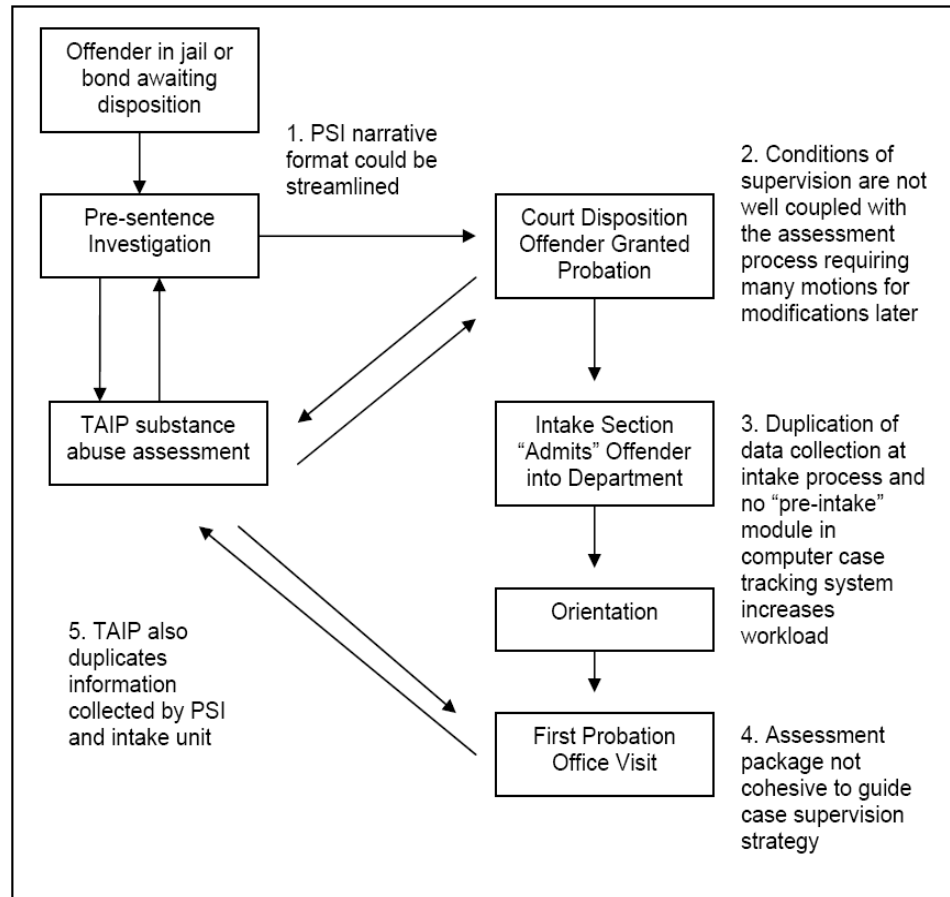
**Develop research/ analytical strategy to generate knowledge to support committee work**

**Conduct the needed research and evaluations**

**Conduct individual briefings and formal presentations with internal and external stakeholders**

**Monitor and document achievement of key benchmarks**

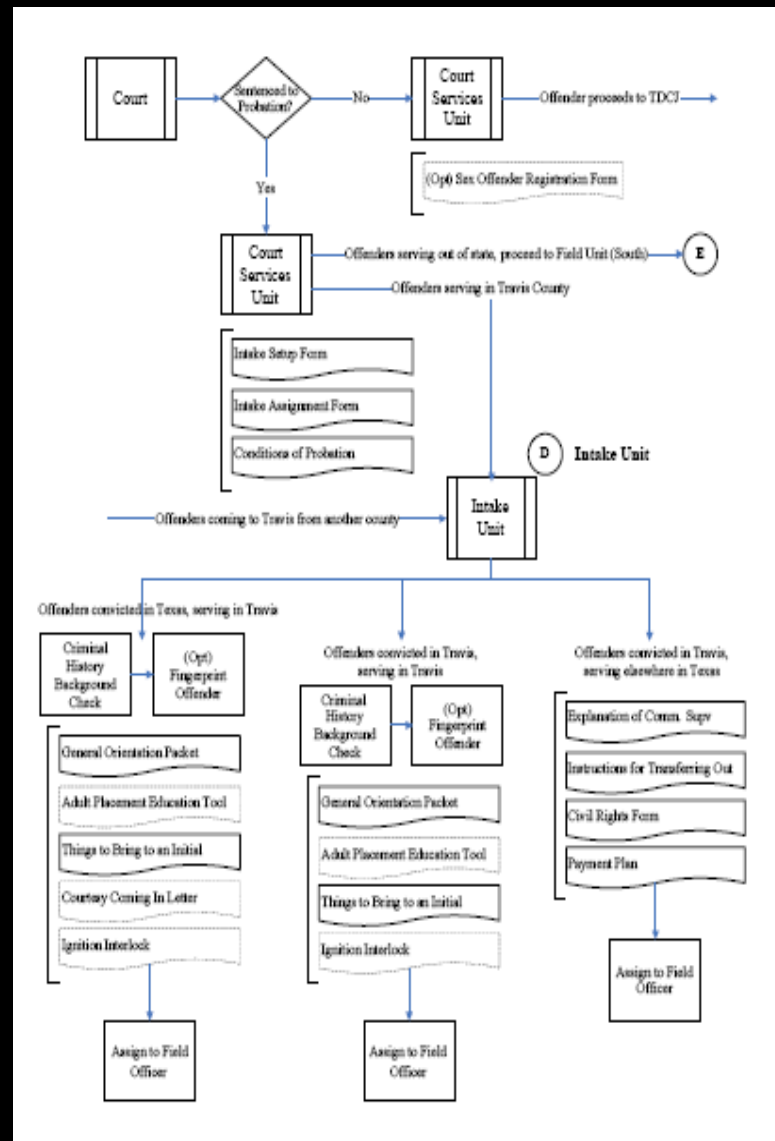
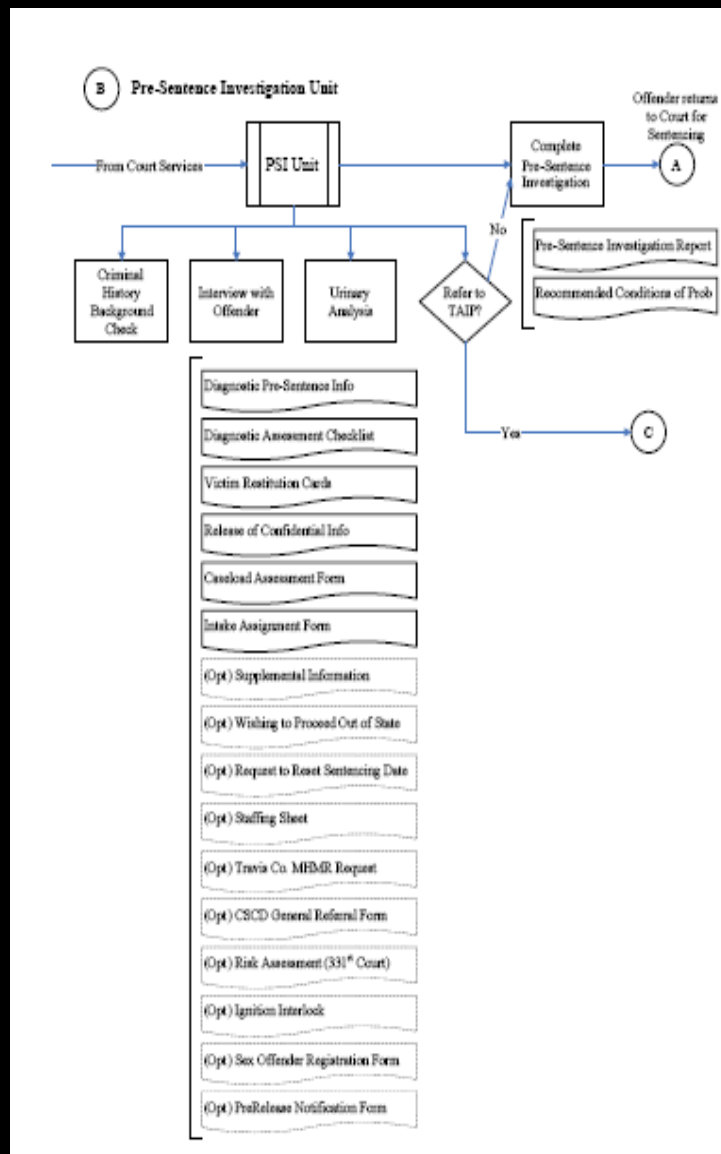
# We Changed the PSI and Intake Process that.....



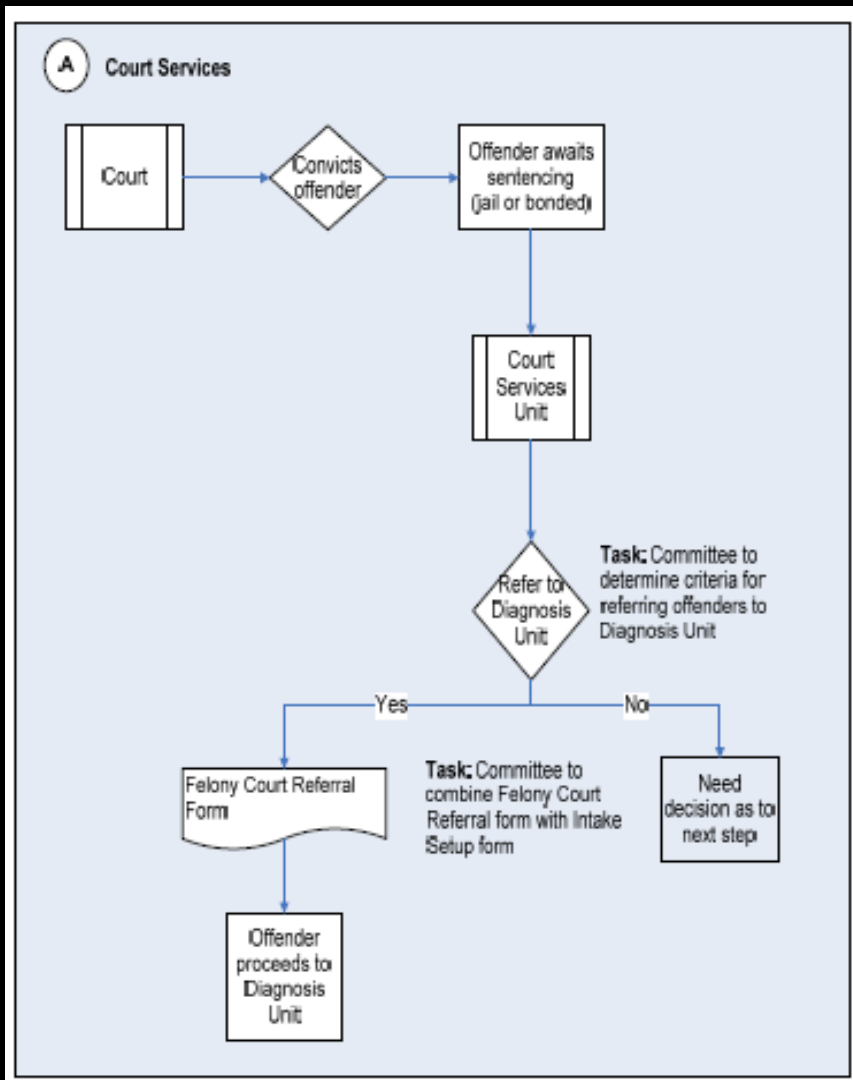
**....required offenders to show up in different places**

**.....made them submit duplicative information.....**

# ... And Involved Many Duplicative Forms.....



# With a Central Diagnosis Process.....



....that provides “one stop” for offenders

.....uses one set of diagnosis forms

.....is backed by an assessment process that uses scientifically validated tools

....and is administered by expert officers subject to centralized quality control....

# ...Creating a More Precise End Product....

## Before

### PSI

**A “biography” collected using inconsistent interview protocols, with the “story telling” affected by different writing styles and utilizing no proven diagnosis tools to assess offenders**

## Now

### Diagnosis Report

**Identifying the offender along risk and behavioral characteristics related to supervision success using proven assessment tools and with short narratives generated from assessment instruments**

# ....Using a Central Diagnosis Report .....





# ...with an Evidence Based Diagnosis Matrix....

The diagram illustrates an Evidence Based Diagnosis Matrix. It features a central table with 'Initial Risk' on the vertical axis and 'SCS Score - Classification' on the horizontal axis. The vertical axis is labeled 'Risk Score Results' with a double-headed arrow. The horizontal axis is labeled 'Criminogenic SCS Classifications' with a double-headed arrow. The table has four rows for Initial Risk (Low, Medium, High) and five columns for SCS Score - Classification (SIS, SIT, ES, CC, LS). The cells are color-coded: Low risk is yellow for SIS, SIT, ES and blue for CC, LS; Medium risk is yellow for SIS, blue for SIT, ES, and red for LS; High risk is red for all categories. A red checkmark is placed in the cell corresponding to Medium risk and CC classification.

Initial Risk	SCS Score - Classification				
	SIS	SIT	ES	CC	LS
Low	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Blue	Blue
Medium	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue (with red checkmark)	Red
High	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red

# .....Matched with Supervision Strategies

Yellow	Blue	Red
<p>Lowest reporting requirements</p> <p>No need for intensive discretionary programs</p> <p>Application of low to moderate responses to administrative violations using violation grid</p> <p>Incentives for early discharge</p>	<p>Increased reporting requirements</p> <p>Mix of visits to PO and home visits by PO as necessary</p> <p>Discretionary programs to address skill/emotional deficits, mainly drug treatment, anger management and cognitive programs</p> <p>More restrictive responses to administrative violations</p> <p>Incentives to move to "Yellow" on successful reassessment</p>	<p>Highest reporting requirements of all supervision levels, including field visits by probation officer</p> <p>Use of surveillance programs, supplemented by cognitive programs and other programs as needed</p> <p>Most restrictive and swift responses to administrative violations of all supervision levels</p> <p>Incentives to move to "Blue" on successful reassessment but cannot move to "Yellow"</p>
<p>Overrides Allowed Based on Policy</p> <p>Sex Offenders and DWI Offenders Classified "Outside" Grid</p>		

# Activities Related to Diagnosis

Review of pre-sentence investigation process and paper flow

Validate risk assessment instrument

Design new diagnosis process and Central Diagnosis Report

Create and implement Central Diagnosis Unit in department

Get agreement from judicial stakeholders to adopt new process

Implement physical staff relocation and renovations

Redesign orientation process

Automate diagnosis process

Conduct time studies to fine-tune the time it takes to complete the diagnosis process

Reorganize intake process

Redesign intake process forms

# Activities Related to Supervision/Program Strategies

Redesign conditions of supervision and develop decision rules to adopt conditions

Conduct mapping analysis to understand potential of neighborhood based caseloads

Redesign supervision strategies to match diagnosis classifications

Inventory of programs

Redesign field interview protocols to allow for motivational interviewing techniques

Quality indicators for programs

Redesign format and protocol related to the development of supervision plans

DSHS MH, parole and probation integrated in one-stop service center

Redesign of documentation “chronos” to support new supervision strategies

Automate new forms

Strategy to reduce caseload in targeted areas

Adopt new sex offender treatment protocol and supervision strategy

# Travis MH Integrated Center



**Probation**



**MH Treatment**



**Re-Entry and Parole**

# Activities Related to Sanctioning Strategies

**Review absconder policies**

**Create Absconder Unit and new procedures to track absconders**

**Create Felony Revocation Staffing and Review Committee**

**Create a Technical Violators Docket**

**Develop progressive sanctions to match new diagnosis and conditions of supervision model**

**Develop progressive sanctions to match new diagnosis and conditions of supervision model**

**Develop new “risk based progressive sanctions and incentives” procedures manual**

**Get agreement on adoption of uniform sanction policy from judiciary**

**Review early termination procedures and increase referrals for early terminations**

# Activities Related to Training

Realign basic training to support TCIS principles

Train all staff on principles of Evidence Based Practices

Train officers on Motivational Interviewing and SCS

Train in cognitive programming

Comprehensive management and leadership training

# Activities Related to Accountability

Review of reporting requirements

Redesign automated reports

Design of new Outcome and Process Tracking Reports

Inventory of programs

Quality indicators for programs

Inter-rater reliability protocols and test implemented

Design new personnel evaluation form/policies



# New Domains for Personnel Evaluation

<b>Communication</b>	<b>Casework Application</b>
Verbal and Written Communication Skills	Report Addresses Criminogenic Needs Identified
Team Work and Collaboration	Effective Supervision Agreement
<b>Problem-Solving</b>	Effective Day-to-Day Supervision
Collects Data	Proper Use of Sanctions and Incentives
Identifies Problems	<b>Commitment</b>
Identifies and Considers Alternative Solutions	Supports Department's Mission and Values
Engages in Collaboration and Identifies Resources	Continually Develops Organization
Follow-up with critical issues	Champions New Initiatives
<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Evaluation Form is Tailored to Specific Staff Positions</b>
Enhances Self-Performance & Maintains Current Knowledge	Examples of Different Positions
Enhances Performance of Department	Probation Officers, Managers, Diagnosis Officers, Counselors

# Personnel Evaluation System

Evaluation Category	Total Tasks	Paperwork or Process Related Tasks	Casework Related Tasks
<b>Old System</b>			
Case Management	8	7	1
Contacts	3	1	2
Referrals	3	2	1
Financial	1	1	0
Computer/Documentation	4	4	0
Non-Compliance	5	3	2
Interpersonal Relations/Policy Adherence	6	5	1
Initiative	2	2	0
<b>Total, Old System</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7</b>
		<b>78%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>New System</b>			
Communication	6	3	3
Problem Solving	8	1	7
Initiative	5	2	3
Commitment	7	3	4
Casework Application	26	13	13
<b>Total, New System</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>30</b>
	<b>100%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>58%</b>

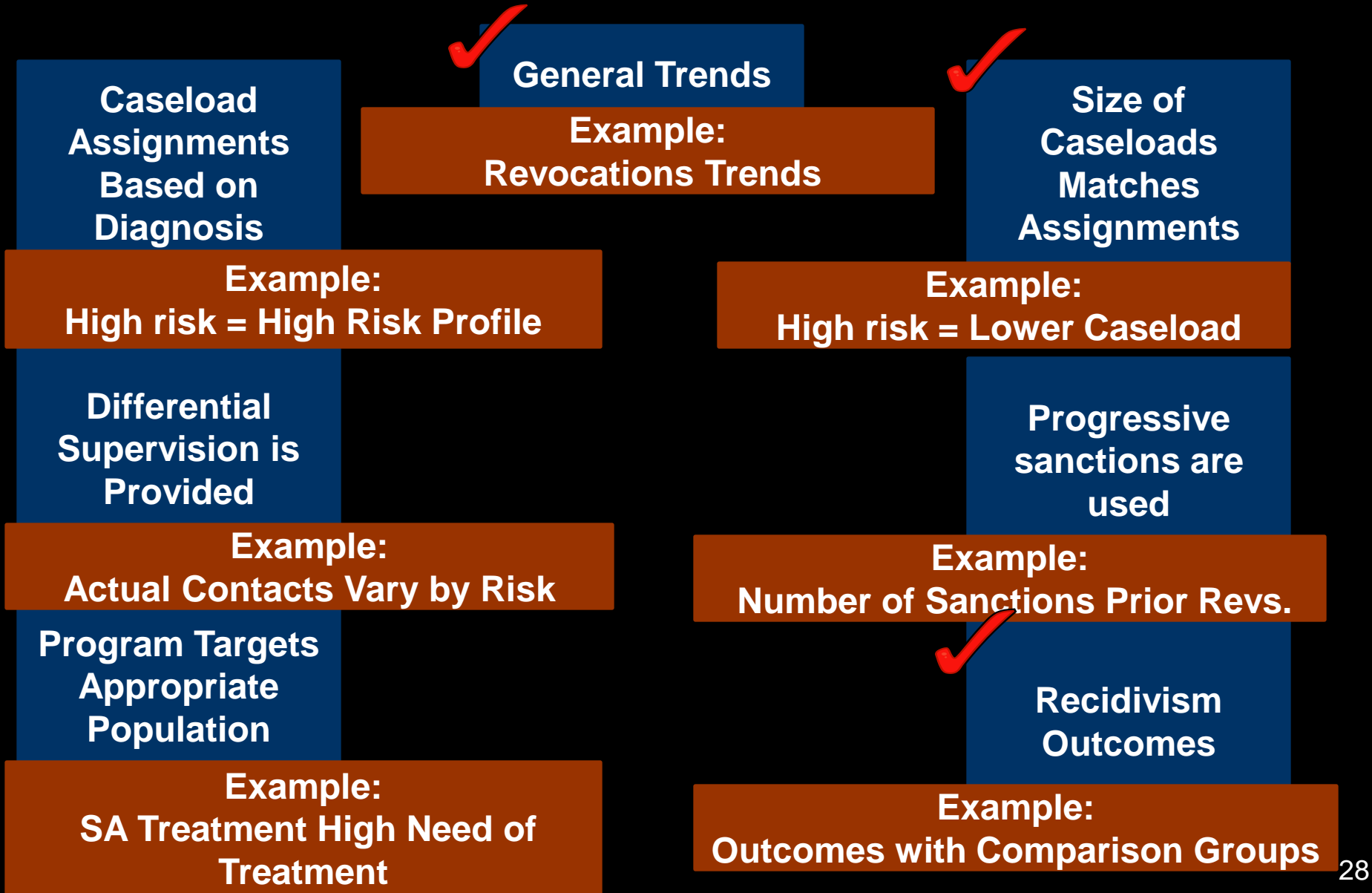
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# Show Me EBP Results with Numbers



# Travis Steepest Decline in Felony Revocations

## Test General Trends

Felony Revocations			
County	FY 2005	FY 2008	% Change 05-08
Bexar (San Antonio)	816	1,468	79%
Dallas	3,183	2,841	-10.7%
Harris (Houston)	3,549	3,067	-10%
Tarrant (Ft. Worth)	1,733	1,441	-16.8%
Travis (Austin)	1,052	846	-19.6%
State	24,126	24,028	0.4%

Source: Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Community Justice Assistance Division.  
Report to the Governor and Legislative Budget Board on the Monitoring of Community  
Supervision Diversion Funds, December 1, 2008

# Travis Lowest Revocation Rate Out of Population

## Test General Trends

Felony Revocation Rate (Felony Revocations Out of Total Felony Population Under Supervision)		
County	FY 2005	FY 2008
Bexar (San Antonio)	6.6%	11.1%
Dallas	11.6%	9.2%
Harris (Houston)	13.9%	12.6%
Tarrant (Ft. Worth)	15.2%	11.8%
Travis (Austin)	10.2%	9.0%
State	10.3%	10.0%

Source: Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Community Justice Assistance Division.  
Statistical Data File Provided to Justice Center, January 2008

# Travis Steepest Decline in Technical Revocations

## Test General Trends

Felony Technical Revocations			
County	FY 2005	FY 2008	Change FY05-08
Bexar (San Antonio)	478	854	78.6%
Dallas	2,174	1,515	-30.3%
Harris (Houston)	2,194	2,028	-7.5%
Tarrant (Ft. Worth)	1,012	761	-24.8%
Travis (Austin)	608	318	-47.7%
State Average	13,457	12,788	-4.9%

Source: Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Community Justice Assistance Division.  
Annual Statistical Data Spreadsheets, 2005 and 2007

# Travis Lowest % Technical

## Test General Trends

County	% Felony Technical Revocations of Felony Revocations			
	State Reports 2005	State Reports 2007	LBB 2005 Sample	LBB 2007 Sample
Bexar (San Antonio)	54%	56%	40%	46%
Dallas	67%	51%	60%	60%
Harris (Houston)	56%	57%	55%	64%
Tarrant (Ft. Worth)	50%	46%	53%	61%
Travis (Austin)	53%	38%	41%	37%
Sample Average	52%	50%	53%	56%

Source: Texas Legislative Budget Board, "Texas Community Supervision Revocation Project: A Comparison of Revoked Felons During September 2005 and September 2007" August 2008



# Travis Lowest Rate of Technical Revocations

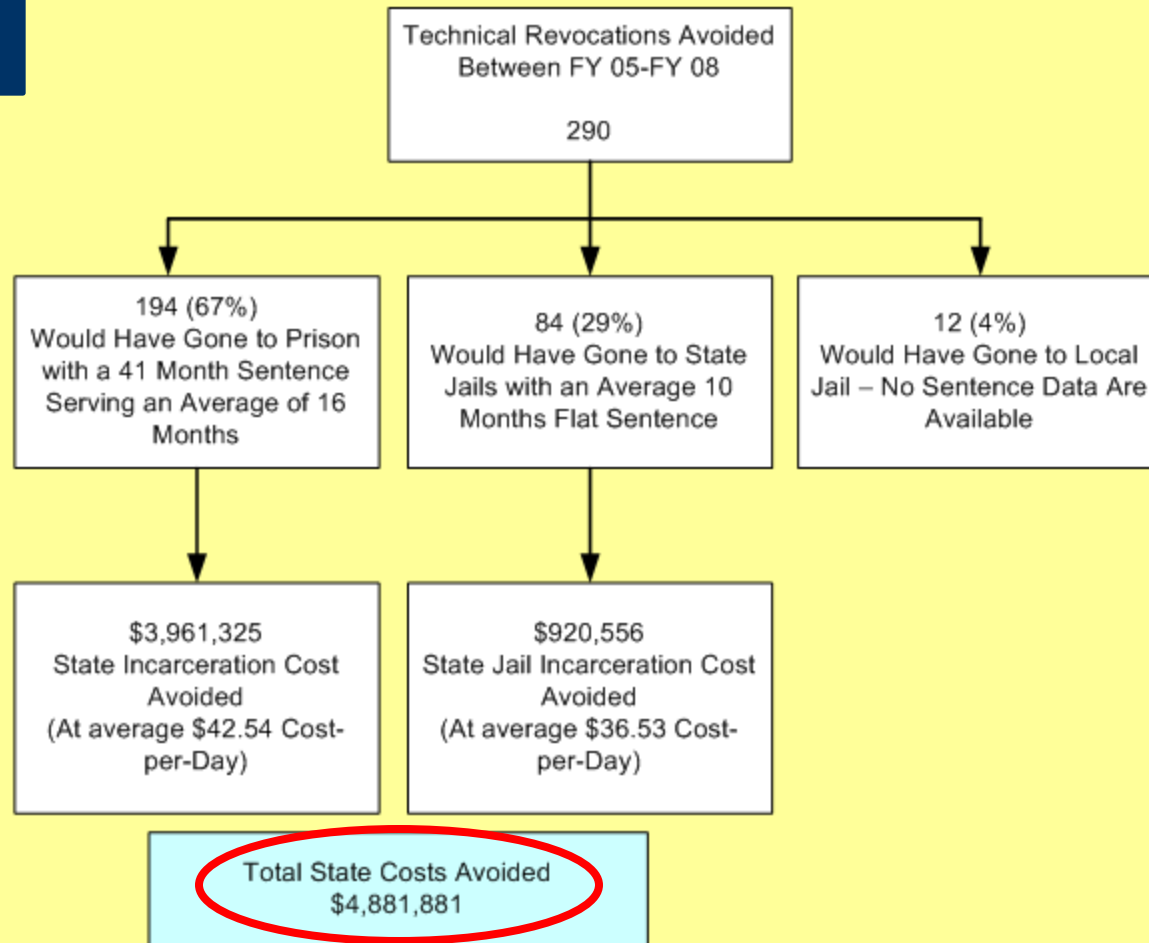
## Test General Trends

Felony Technical Revocation Rate (Felony Revocations Out of Total Felony Population Under Supervision)		
County	FY 2005	FY 2008
Bexar (San Antonio)	3.8%	6.4%
Dallas	7.9%	4.9%
Harris (Houston)	8.6%	8.3%
Tarrant (Ft. Worth)	8.9%	6.2%
Travis (Austin)	5.9%	3.4%
State	5.7%	5.3%

Source: Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Community Justice Assistance Division.  
Statistical Data File Provided to Justice Center, January 2008

# Cost-Savings Significant (Sentencing)

## Test General Trends



Source: Cost-per-Day from Legislative Budget Board, "Criminal Justice Uniform Cost Report, FY 2004-2006", January 2007; Average sentence from Legislative Budget Board, "Texas Community Supervision Revocation Project: A Comparison of Revoked Felons During September 2005 and September 2007", August 2008; no data to estimate jail sentences and costs

# Jail Days Impacted by Fewer Violations

## Test General Trends

County Jail Incarceration of Probationers with Motions to Revoke Probation

Fiscal Year	Number of Probationers	Total Days in Jail	Total Cost (at \$24 Per-Day)	Average # of Days/Client
2007	2,823	111,339	\$2,672,136	39
2008	2,632	95,225	\$2,285,400	36
Change 07 to 08	-191	-16,114	-\$386,736	-3
% Change	-6.8%	-14.5%	-14.5%	-8.3%

Source: Travis County. Number of clients with a county jail booking data in the fiscal year and number of days within fiscal year that the clients spent in county jail. Cost-per-day is a blended average jail cost provided by the Travis County Sheriff's Planning and Budget Office

# Travis Places and Revokes Higher Risk Population

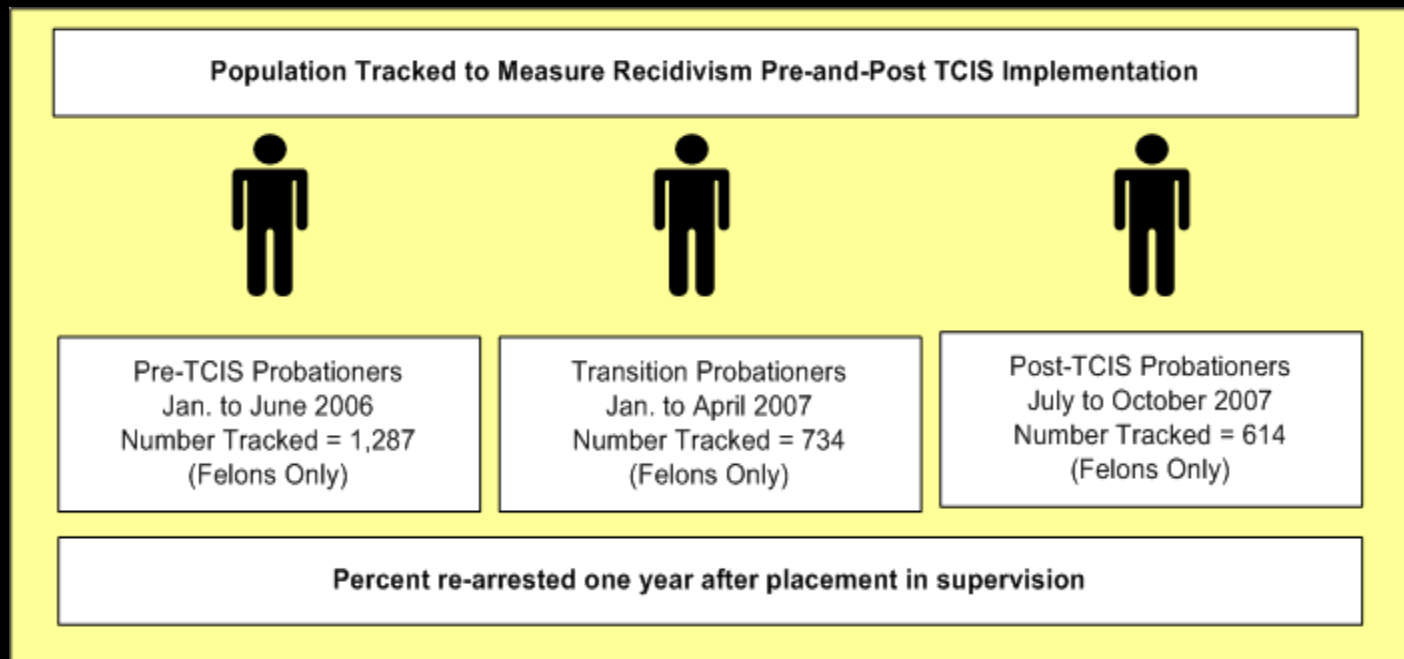
## Test General Trends

County	% of Cases at Probation Intake Classified as Maximum Supervision State Profile 2007	% of Cases at Revocation with Maximum Risk Assessment at Intake – LBB 2007 Study Group
Bexar (San Antonio)	37%	36%
Dallas	46%	58%
Harris (Houston)	23%	20%
Tarrant (Ft. Worth)	32%	44%
Travis (Austin)	66%	82%
State -Five County (LBB) Average	36%	44%

Source: Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Community Justice Assistance Division, "FY 2007 Offender Profile Placements" January 2008 and Texas Legislative Budget Board, "Texas Community Supervision Revocation Project: A Comparison of Revoked Felons During September 2005 and September 2007" August 2008

# Research on Outcomes in Process

## Test Recidivism Outcomes



# After TCIS, Percent High Risk Increased

## Test Recidivism Outcomes

Risk Classification at Initial Probation Placement			
Risk Level	Pre-TCIS Jan. to June 2006 N= 1,287	Transition Jan. to April 2007 N=734	Post-TCIS July to Oct. 2007 N=614
Low	12%	11%	6%
Medium	29%	30%	27%
High	59%	58%	67%

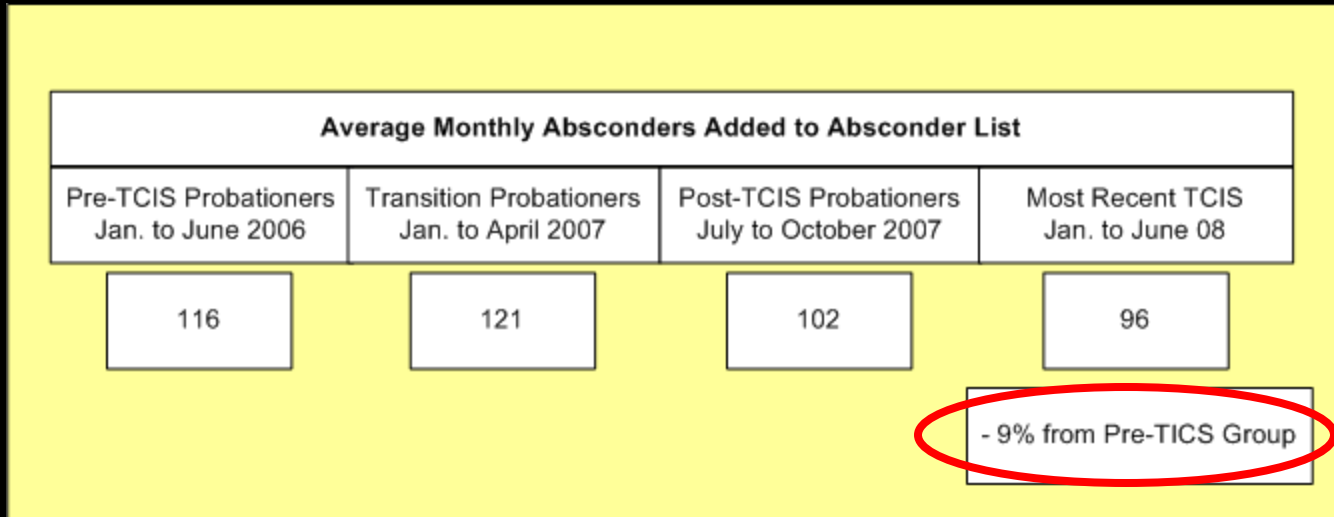
# One-Year Re-arrest Rates Lower After TCIS

## Test Recidivism Outcomes

Percent re-arrested one year after placement in supervision				
Percent Rearrested One Year Later By Risk Level	Pre-TCIS Jan. to June 2006 N= 1,287	Transition Jan. to April 2007 N=734	Post-TCIS July to Oct. 2007 N=614	% Change in Rate Pre-TCIS to Past-TCIS
Low	26%	10%	6%	-77%
Medium	26%	18%	13%	-50%
High	34%	35%	31%	-9%
Overall	29%	26%	24%	-17%

# New Absconders Declined After TCIS

## Test Recidivism Outcomes





# Research in Progress

## General Trends

Example:  
Revocations Trends

✓ Caseload  
Assignments  
Based on  
Diagnosis

Example:  
High risk = High Risk Profile

✓ Differential  
Supervision is  
Provided

Example:  
Actual Contacts Vary by Risk

✓ Program Targets  
Appropriate  
Population

Example:  
SA Treatment High Need of  
Treatment

✓ Size of  
Caseloads  
Matches  
Assignments

Example:  
High risk = Lower Caseload

✓ Progressive  
sanctions are  
used

Example:  
Number of Sanctions Prior Revs.

Recidivism  
Outcomes

Example:  
Outcomes with Comparison Groups

# Reports and Documentation

- Travis Community Impact Supervision: An Incubator Site to Improve
- Better Diagnosis and Supervision
- Guiding Justice Through Instruments, Tools, and Processes
- Assessing Success in Probation Programs
- Thinking About Neighborhoods and Communities
- Resource Requirements for Forms, November 2005
- The Logistics of Central Diagnosis, January 2006
- Outcome Tracking and Management
- Travis County Central Diagnosis Report to the Board of Supervisors
- Measuring Program Effectiveness and Management
- Strengthening Supervision of Offenders With

- ### Organizational Assessment of Travis County
- Community Supervision and (CSCD), Facing the Challenge of Implementing the Travis County (TCIS) Model, August 2005
  - Strategic Planning Session: Community Impact Supervision, 12, 2005
  - Flowchart of Present PSI and Related Forms, November 2005
  - Travis CSCD Flowchart of O Intake/Assignment, December 2005
  - Analysis of Strategies for Computerized Data Reporting, Diagnosis Committee, January 2006
  - Analysis of Strategies for Computerized Data Reporting, Diagnosis Committee, Addendum, January 2006
  - Template to Guide Development of Strategies, Supervision Committee, January 2006
  - Proposed Strategy for Quality Control Committee, January 2006
  - Conceptual Agreement to Study Supervision Strategies Temporarily, Diagnosis Committee Work Group, January 2006
  - Comparison of Key Characteristics of Absconding with Felons under Supervision, January 17, 2006
  - Comparison of Key Characteristics of Absconding with Misdemeanor Supervision, January 17, 2006

- Conceptual Agreement on Central Diagnosis Assessment Form Development Strategy, Diagnosis Committee, February 7, 2006
- Travis County Risk Score Validation and Related Analysis, Report One, March 27, 2006
- Travis County SCS Pilot Study, Report One: Analysis of Preliminary Data for Review by Department, April 10, 2006
- Travis County SCS Pilot Study, Report Two: Analysis of Revised Data, April 13, 2006
- Travis County SCS Pilot Study, Report Three: Supplemental Analysis of Selected Supervision Variables, April 17, 2006
- General Update and Review of Central Diagnosis Process Research, April 25, 2006
- Pending Steps to Complete Central Diagnosis Assessment Form, Diagnosis Committee, March 3, 2006
- Travis County Risk Score Validation Study Group: Review of Absconder Issue Report Two, March 27, 2006
- Travis County Risk Score Validation: Updated Analysis with Additional Cases Report Two, June 1, 2006
- Project Overview & Central Diagnosis Process, Report to County Attorney, June 1, 2006
- Travis County Risk Score Validation: Updated Analysis with Additional Cases Report Two, June 2, 2006
- Annual Report Statistical Tables and Methodology, August 2007

# Key Reports Accessible to All

@[http://www.co.travis.tx.us/community\\_supervision/TCIS\\_Initiative.asp](http://www.co.travis.tx.us/community_supervision/TCIS_Initiative.asp)

## *Justice System Practices that Work Conference - June 29, 2006*

- o [Conference Agenda](#)
- o [Ed Latessa Presentation](#)
- o [Eric Cadora Mapping Presentation](#)
- o [Eric Cadora Mapping Presentation](#)
- o [Dr. Geraldine Nagy and Dr. Tony Fabelo Presentation](#)

### Reports

- o [2008 TCIS Progress Report](#)
- o [2007 TCIS Progress Report](#)
- o [Incubator I - TCIS: An Incubator Site to Improve Probation](#)
- o [Incubator II - Better Diagnosis: The First Step to Improve Probation Supervision Strategies](#)
- o [Incubator III - Guiding Justice Decisions with Risk Assessment Instruments](#)
- o [Incubator IV - Assessing Supervision Needs: A Profile of the Travis Probation Population](#)
- o [Incubator V - Thinking About Location: Orienting Probation to Neighborhood Based Supervision](#)
- o [Incubator VI - Resource Report: Central Diagnosis Assessment Forms](#)
- o [Incubator VII - The Logistics of Implementing a Central Diagnosis Unit](#)
- o [Incubator VIII - Outcome Tracking Reporting for Improving Probation Management Strategies](#)
- o [Incubator IX - Measuring Process Efficiency to Improve Probation Management Strategies](#)
- o [Incubator X - Strengthening the Management and Treatment of Sex Offenders While on Probation](#)
- o [Incubator XI - TCIS Two Year Department Reassessment](#)

# National Exposure

STREAMLINING AND  
STRENGTHENING  
ASSESSMENTS WITH  
EVIDENCE-BASED  
PRACTICES:

THE TRAVIS COUNTY  
EXPERIENCE

Perspectives



Tony **Fabelo**, Ph.D. and Geraldine F. **Nagy**, Ph.D.

American Probation and Parole Association

43

*Perspectives*

Fall 2008

# National Reports to Guide Replication Pending

**“How to” reform probation  
along EBP blueprint based  
on Travis experience  
Spring 09**

**Travis case study with  
outcomes  
Summer 09**

The image shows a screenshot of the Justice Center website on the left and two report covers on the right. The website header features the Justice Center logo with a star and the text 'THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS'. A navigation menu on the left includes links for Home, About Us, National Projects, Services, Resource, Media, and Government. The report covers are blue with white text. The top cover is titled 'Improving Responses to People with Mental Illnesses' and 'Strategies | Law Enforcement'. The bottom cover is titled 'Improving Responses to People with Mental Illnesses' and 'The Essential Elements of a Specialized Law Enforcement-Based Program'. Both covers feature logos for the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and the Justice Center.

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# Thank You



<http://www.justicecenter.csg.org/>

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