

Arkansas Justice Reinvestment Initiative

March 11, 2024

Legislative Recidivism Reduction Task Force Meeting



**Justice
Reinvestment
Initiative**
Arkansas

Overview

- 1** **An Introduction to
Evidence-Based Practice**
- 2** **Principles of Effective
Intervention**
- 3** **Next Steps and
Project Update**

By the end of this presentation, we hope that you'll have a better understanding of the following.



Evidence-based practice and the principles of effective intervention



How evidence-based practice can be used in facilities and in the community to reduce recidivism



Resources to implement those principles in a correctional setting

Evidence- Based Practice

“Evidence-based practice (EBP) is the objective, balanced, and responsible use of current research and the best available data to guide policy and practice decisions, such that outcomes for consumers are improved.”

National Institute of Corrections

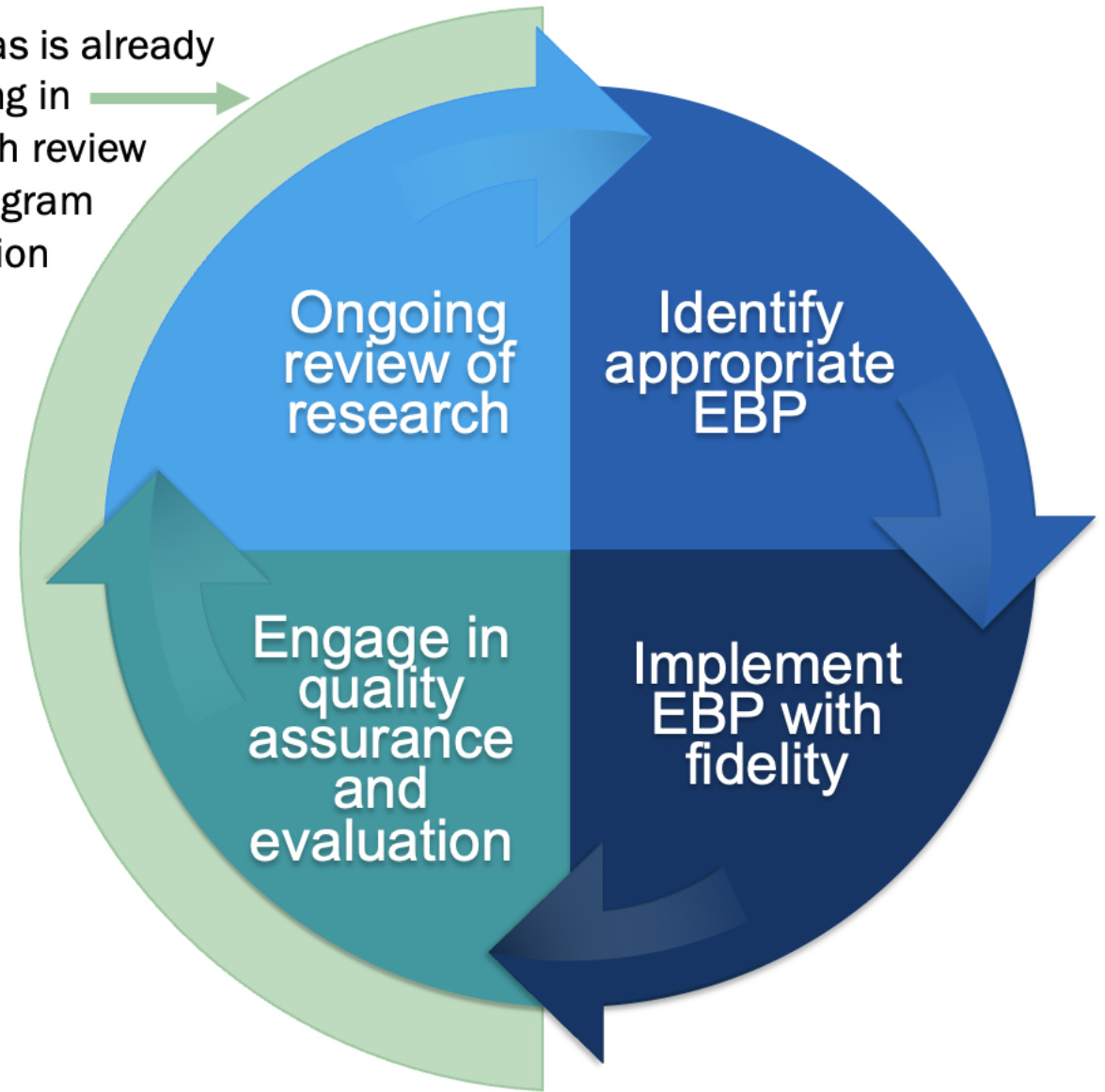
Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice, *Implementing Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Community Corrections*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, 2009).

Evidence-based practice focuses on approaches proven to be effective through empirical research rather than through anecdote or professional experience alone.

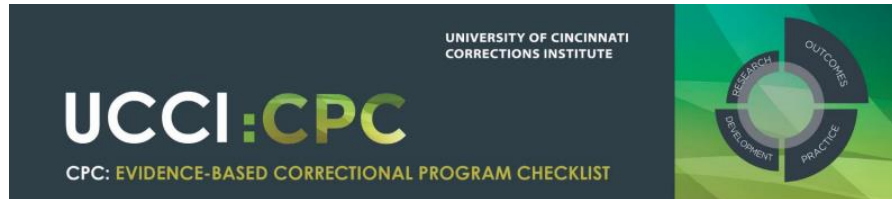


Using evidence-based practice is an ongoing process.

Arkansas is already engaging in research review and program evaluation



There are resources to identify effective evidence-based programs.



University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI) developed the Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) (and other similar tools) as a resource to evaluate the extent to which correctional intervention programs adhere to EBP, including the principles of effective interventions.

There are also various clearinghouses and program registries that help identify EBP:

- [Results First™ Clearinghouse](#)
- [Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center](#)
- [CrimeSolutions](#)
- [What Works in Reentry](#)
- [WSIPP](#)

Principles of Effective Intervention

Nine Principles of Effective Intervention

- 1** Assess risk, needs, and responsiveness.
- 2** Enhance intrinsic motivation.
- 3** Target interventions based on assessments and appropriate dosage.
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- 5** Ensure adequate investment in and access to proven programs.
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Adapted from Brad Bogue, *Implementing Evidence-Based Practice in Community Corrections: The Principles of Effective Intervention* (National Institute of Corrections and Crime and Justice Institute, 2004), <https://nicic.gov/implementing-evidence-based-practice-community-corrections-principles-effective-intervention>.

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P1

Assessing risk, needs, and responsivity (RNR) is essential to effective interventions and reducing recidivism.



RISK Focus the most intensive resources on individuals most likely to commit crimes to have the largest impact on recidivism.

NEED Focus on dynamic criminogenic needs directly associated with individual criminal behavior.

RESPONSIVITY Tailor interventions in a way to mitigate barriers for each individual.

P1

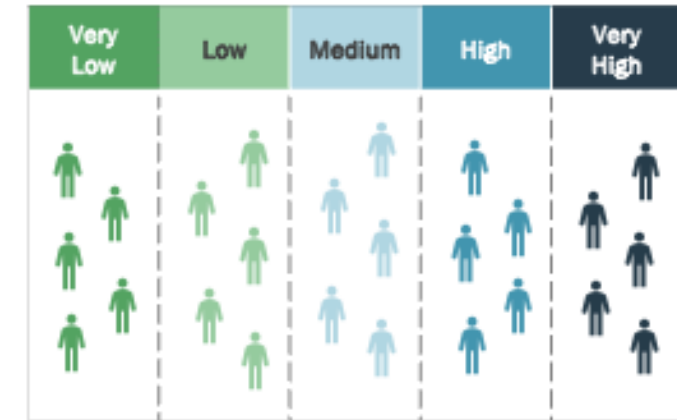
Determining risk levels allows for a more tailored and effective way of focusing resources and interventions.




Without Risk Assessment...



With Risk Assessment...

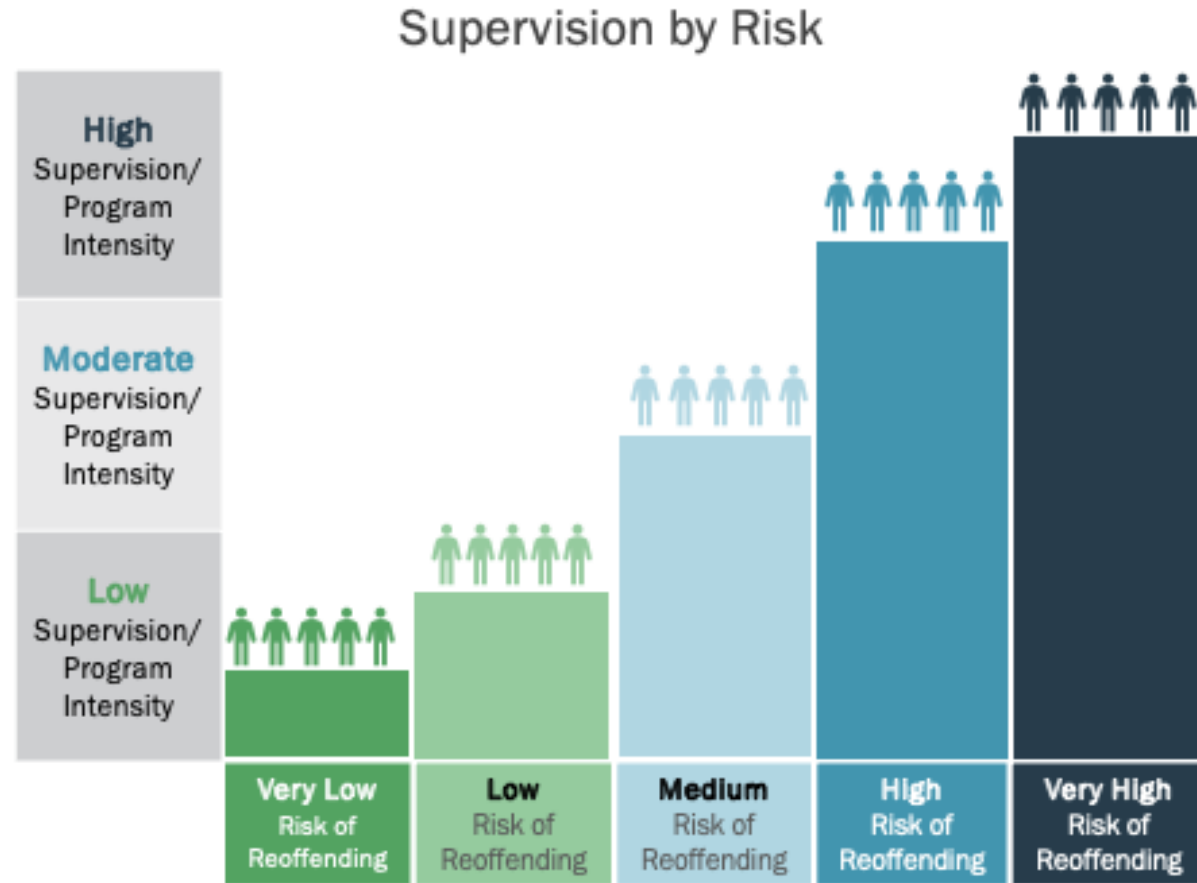


 **Risk level is not an indicator of:**

- ≠ Dangerousness
- ≠ Severity of offense
- ≠ Guarantee of reoffending or non-offending
- ≠ Offense-specific reoffending
- ≠ Level of need for services

P1

Focusing resources according to risk means that people at higher risk of future criminal behavior receive higher-intensity interventions.



P1

Criminogenic needs are dynamic risk factors that are associated with a person’s risk of reoffending.



Dynamic risk factors	Potential needs to be addressed
Antisocial personality pattern	Build self-management skills, teach anger management
<u>Procriminal attitudes</u>	Counter rationalizations with prosocial attitudes/build prosocial identity
<u>Procriminal associates</u>	Replace with prosocial friends and associates
Substance use disorder	Reduce use; enhance alternatives to using substances
Family/marital stressors	Teach parenting skills; enhance capacity to care
Poor school/work performance	Enhance work/study skills and nurture interpersonal relationships at school or work
Few leisure or recreation activities	Encourage participation in prosocial activities, hobbies, and sports



P1

Risk and need should be determined through a validated risk and needs assessment tool.



Yields a more accurate prediction than unstructured clinical judgment



Guides the most efficient use of scarce resources



Helps inform case planning and management to ensure that individual criminogenic needs are met



Helps determine appropriate supervision intensity, case planning and management, programming requirements, and treatment referrals

P1

Treatment intervention works best when it is responsive, or tailored, to individual learning styles, motivations, abilities, and strengths.



General responsivity, the use of cognitive behavioral interventions, focuses on helping people manage problems by changing how they think and behave and is the most effective tool for changing behavior.

Specific responsivity refers to choosing and providing cognitive interventions that account for an individual's strengths, learning style, personality, motivation, and other demographic characteristics, including gender and race.

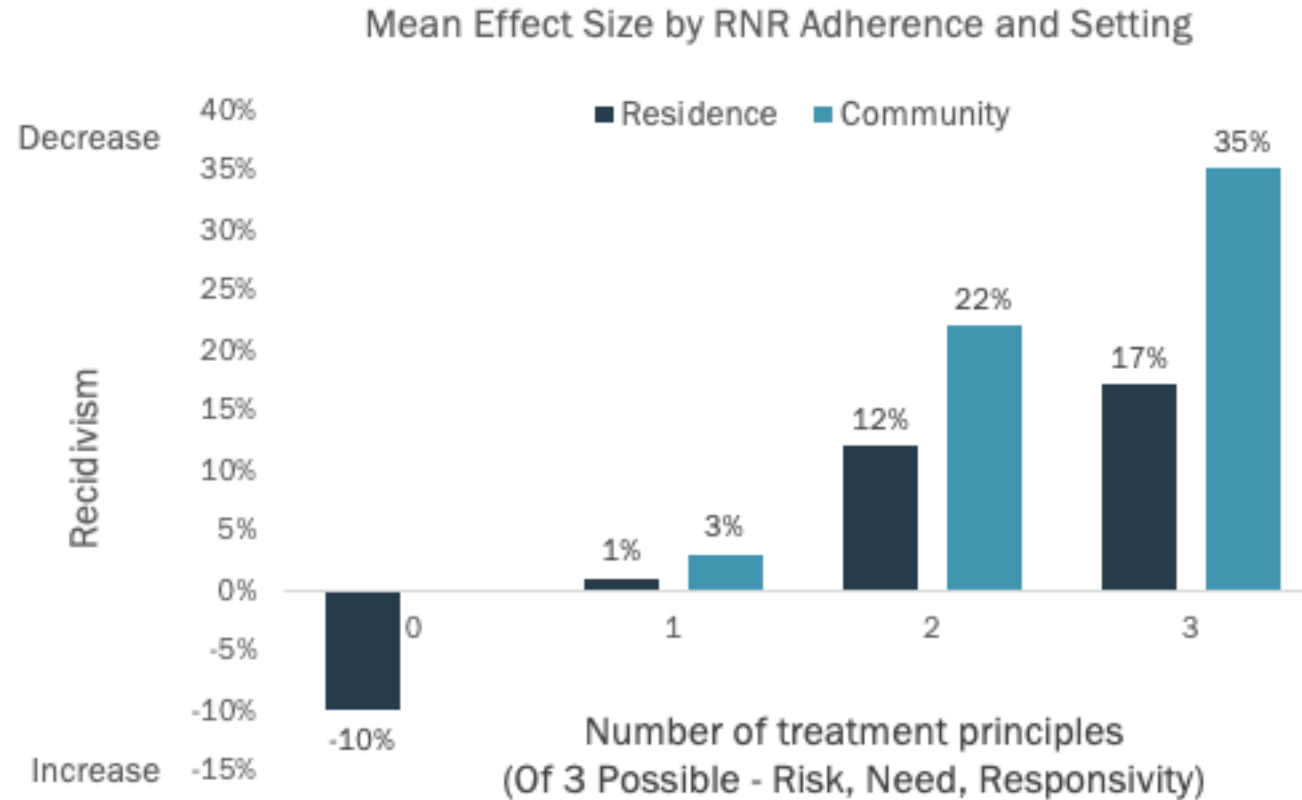
P1

Responsivity also means removing barriers that prevent individuals from fully benefiting from programming.



Examples of Potential Barrier	Responsivity-Informed Intervention
Limited literacy skills	Use assessments, offer remedial literacy programming, ensure any written programming occurs after reading skills are sufficiently strong enough to support comprehension
Mental health needs/ unresolved trauma	Offer medication management and engage in therapy/ trauma-informed counseling prior to other programming
Low intrinsic motivation	Require all staff to be trained in motivational interviewing
Lack of access to transportation	Ensure driver's license is obtained prior to reentry; offer virtual services

P1 Strong adherence to core RNR principles makes programs more effective at reducing recidivism.



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P2

Building intrinsic motivation has been shown to be an effective strategy for behavior change.



WHY FOCUS ON INTRINSIC MOTIVATION?

Motivation can be affected by both internal and external factors, but internally motivated change (or intrinsic motivation) has been shown to last longer.

HOW TO BUILD INTRINSIC MOTIVATION?

- **Motivational Interviewing** uses specific techniques to help individuals tap into their own values and goals and overcome ambivalence about change.
- The goal should be to **build** the desire to change within the individual rather than find a way to convince the individual to change due to external forces.

Nine Principles of Effective Intervention

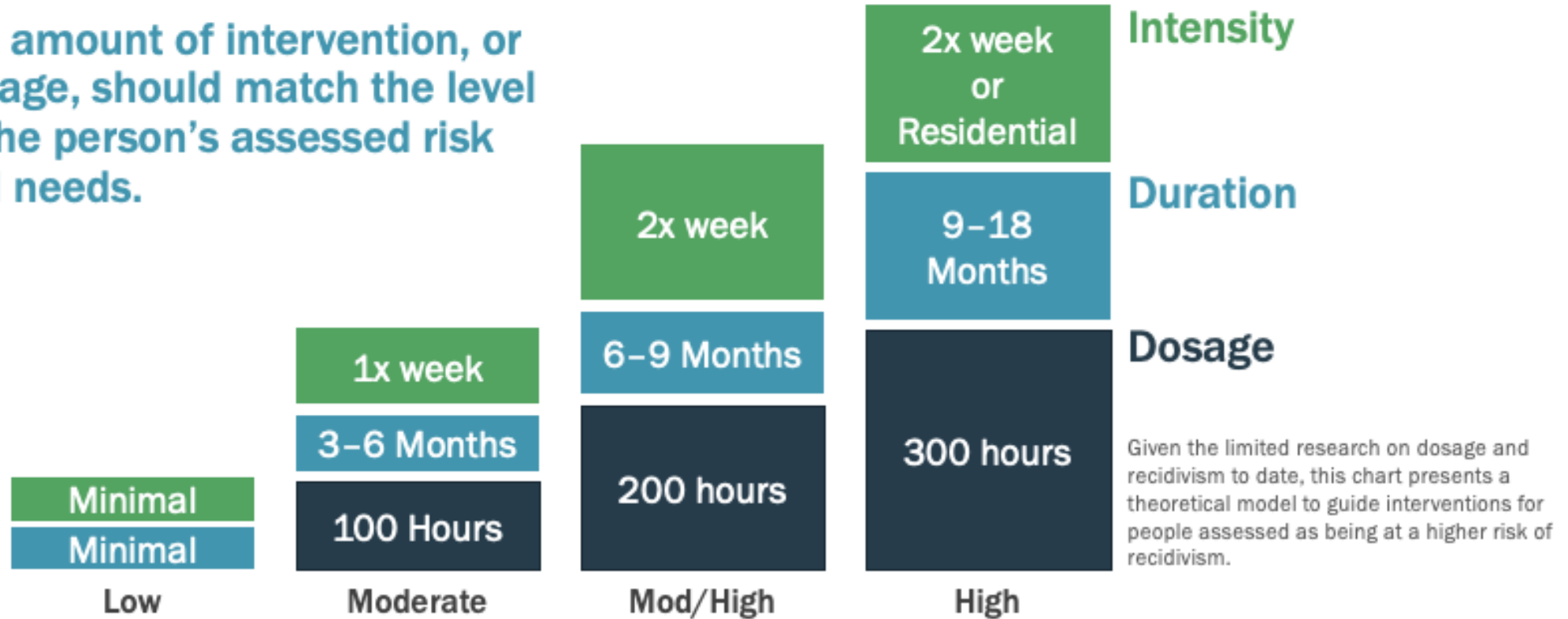
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P3

Target the right people and focus the highest-intensity resources on people at the highest risk of recidivating.

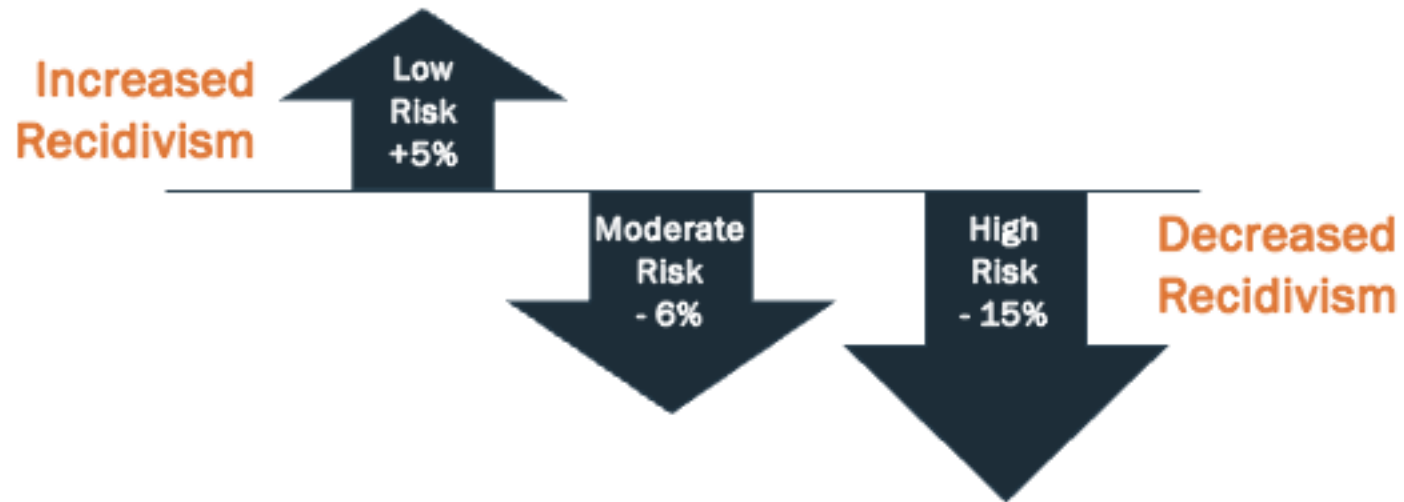
The amount of intervention, or dosage, should match the level of the person's assessed risk and needs.



P3

Mixing individuals with different risk levels harms low-risk individuals.

Average Difference in Recidivism by Risk for Individuals in Ohio
Halfway Houses, 2006–2007



P3

Ignoring the risk principle can increase recidivism for people assessed as low risk.

People who are assessed as low risk:



Can stop committing crime with minimal intervention in many cases



Have positive patterns of behavior that can be disrupted by intensive services and supervision



Have been shown to learn more ingrained criminal behaviors and have an increased likelihood of recidivism when put with higher-risk individuals

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P4

The responsiveness principle should also guide timing and sequencing of interventions.

In facilities

Interventions should be given such that they build upon one another.

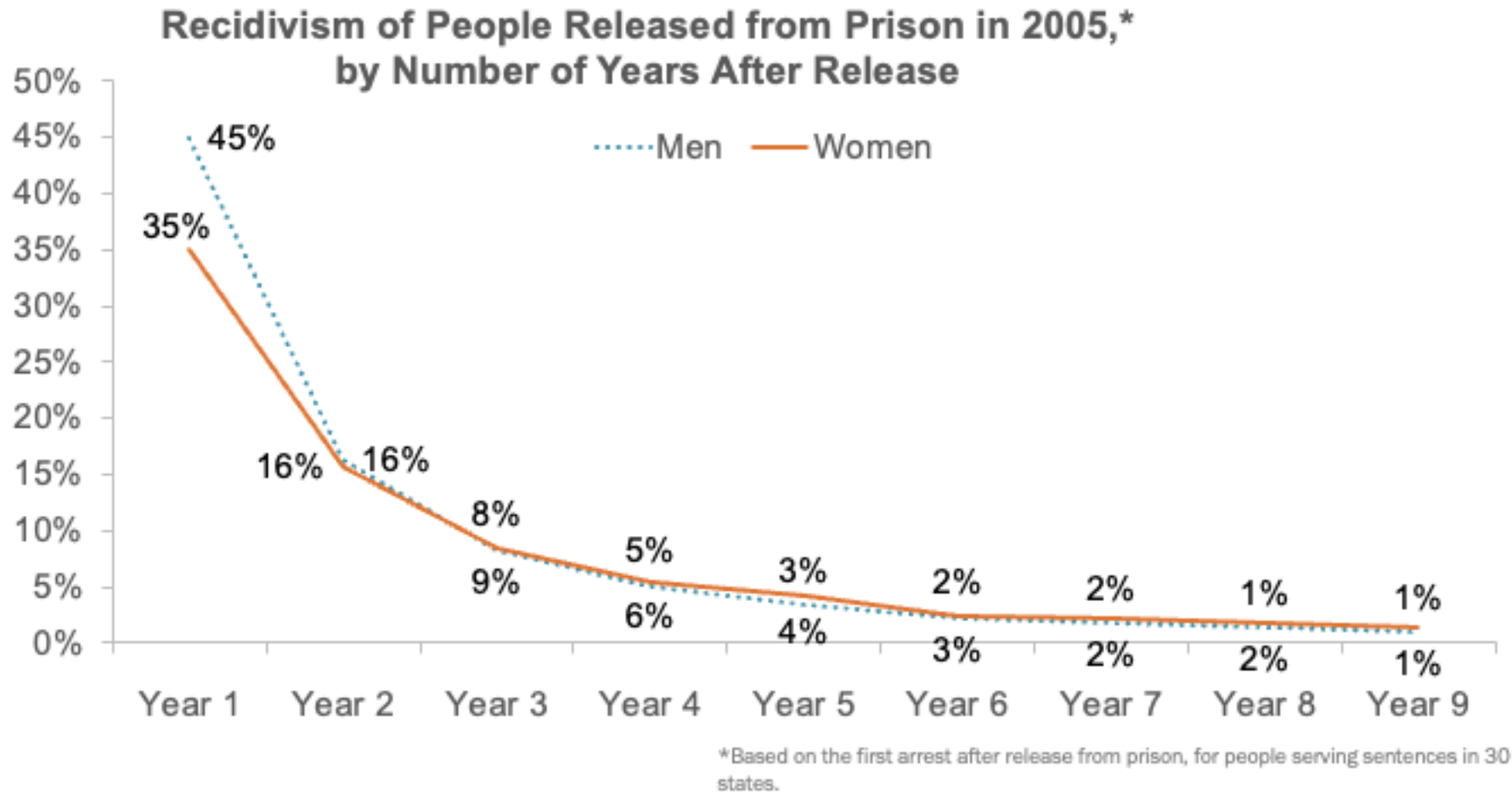
Offering programming around the end of an individual's sentence has been shown to reduce recidivism.

In the community

Intensity of supervision and supports should be greatest during the period of greatest risk and decrease over time.

P4

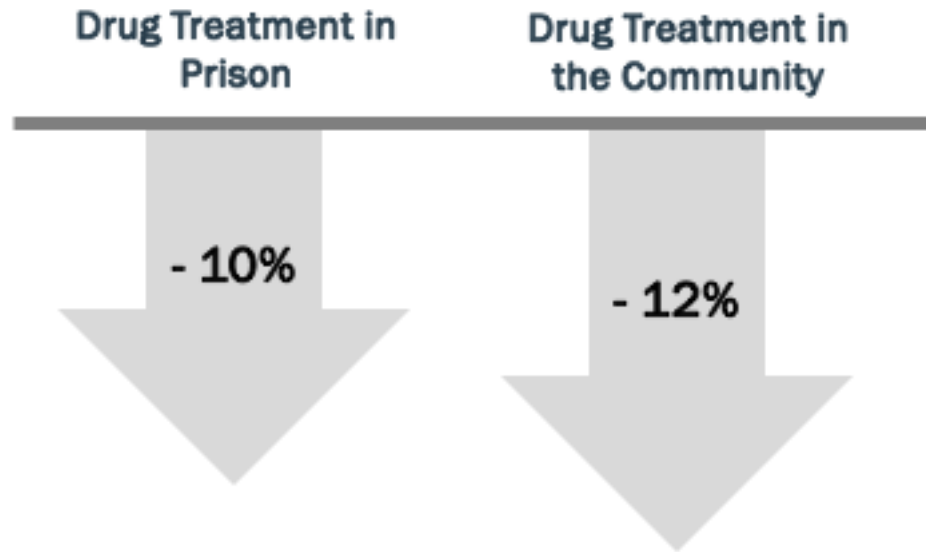
Interventions should be focused on the first year following release from prison.



P4

Programming delivered in the community is essential and can be more effective, and less expensive, than programming in prison.

Impact on Recidivism Rates



2016 Federal Annual Average Total Cost Per Person



“Benefit-Cost Results,” Washington State Institute for Public Policy, accessed February 19, 2021, <https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost?topicId=2>; “Incarceration Costs Significantly More than Supervision,” United States Courts, accessed February 19, 2021, <https://www.uscourts.gov/news/2017/08/17/incarceration-costs-significantly-more-supervision>.

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P5

Access to adequate and effective programs in prisons and in the community is essential.



Programs should use **cognitive behavioral approaches** regardless of area of focus (e.g., criminal thinking, substance use, sex offender).



Skill building with structured skills practice is an essential component of effective programs.



Systems should prioritize **gender-responsive** services and **trauma-informed** approaches.

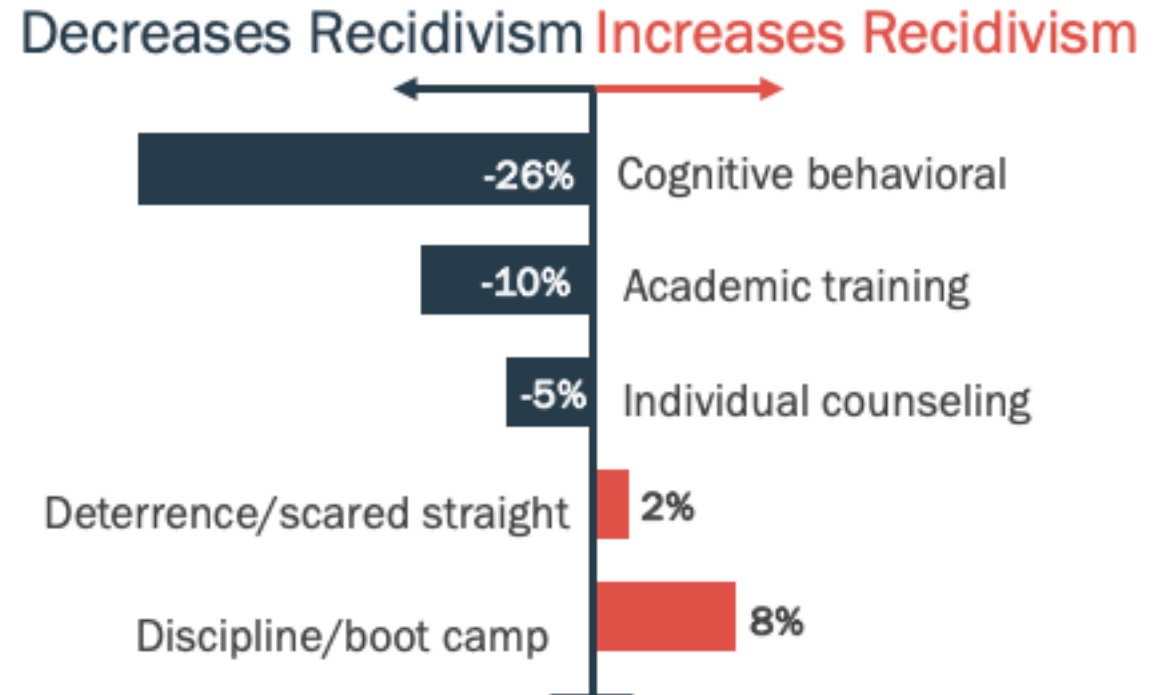


All programming should be provided with attention to **responsivity factors**.

P5 Not all programming is effective programming.

Cognitive behavioral approaches, when implemented with fidelity, are more effective at reducing further criminal behavior than any other intervention, and some interventions may increase recidivism.

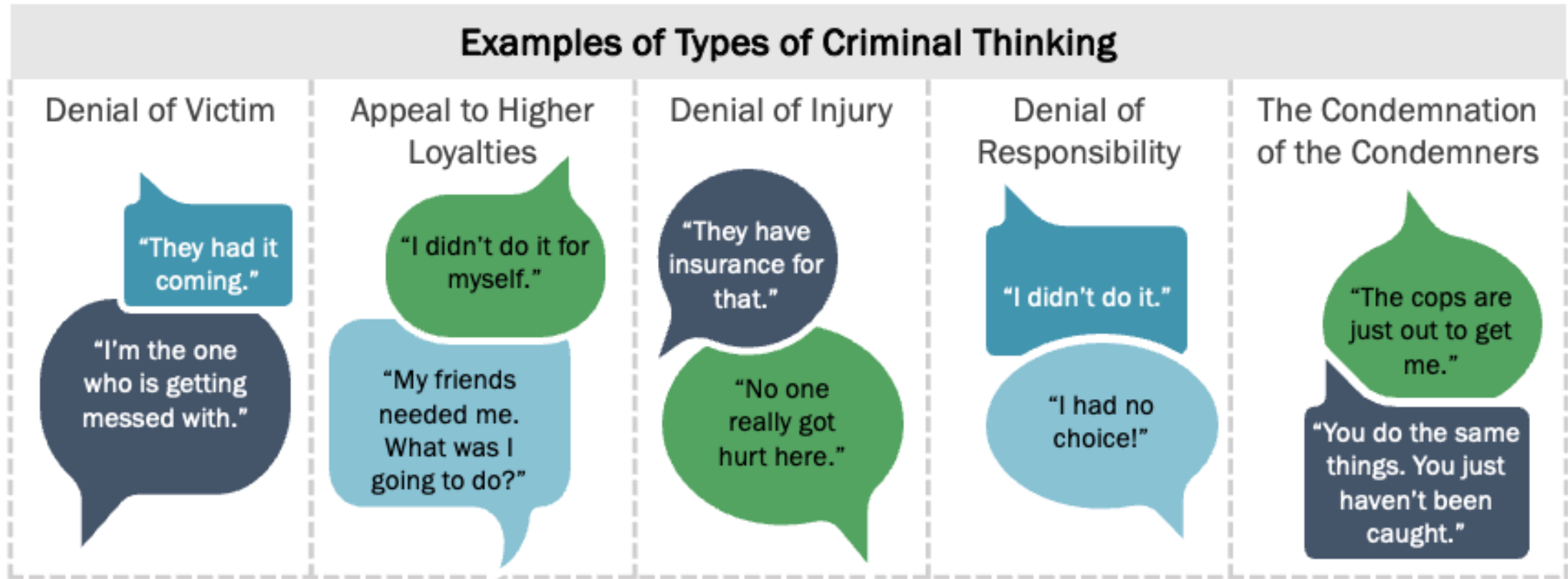
Changes in Recidivism by Program Type



Mark Lipsey, "The Primary Factors that Characterize Effective Interventions with Juvenile Offenders: A Meta-Analytic Overview," *Victims & Offenders: An International Journal of Evidence-Based Research, Policy, and Practice* 4, no. 2 (2009): 124-147; James Bonta and D.A. Andrews, *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct, 6th Ed.* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 182, 345.

P5

Cognitive behavioral interventions should address criminal thinking for people assessed as being at a high risk of recidivism.



P5

Quality of staff, training, and development all impact outcomes.

A meta-analysis of 58 studies of CBT showed that high-quality treatment implementation was associated with larger recidivism reductions.

Corrections and supervision agencies should conduct initial **staff training** on curricula by appropriately **trained or licensed individuals** as recommended by the program developer.

Agencies should also conduct annual staff training on **evidence-based practice and service delivery** for participants in a correctional setting.

New staff should be required to **attend and complete** all necessary training **prior to facilitating** services.

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P6

To facilitate positive behavior change, case planning goals should focus on the needs that are identified through validated assessments.

Condition Setting

Tailor special conditions to need areas identified as “high risk” or as a “significant problem.”

Case Planning

Focus case planning goals on identified criminogenic need areas to proactively address needs prior to violation behavior.

Programming/Referrals

Ensure that programming addresses criminogenic needs.

There are many services that are not designed as evidence-based programs but are still important components of a comprehensive treatment plan.

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P7

Punishment alone does not effectively achieve long-term behavior change.

Incentives should be used **4x** more often than **sanctions** to promote and sustain behavior change.

- Imposed rewards and sanctions must be meaningful to the person receiving them.
- Punishment **stops** behavior but doesn't replace it with appropriate behavior.
- It is important to reinforce desired behaviors so those continue after punishment discourages undesired behavior.
- All staff should be trained in the use of the behavioral management system so that skills and strategies learned in treatment are consistently reinforced.

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P8

Prosocial support for individuals in their communities upon reentry or while on supervision can provide positive reinforcement of desired new behaviors.

Examples of prosocial supports:

- Collaborative comprehensive case plan for reentry
- In-reach by community-based treatment providers to establish relationships
- Relapse prevention plan; use of peer recovery support if applicable
- Engagement with supportive family friends, community resources (including employment, education, housing, treatment providers)

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P9

Measure outcomes, provide feedback, and use data to inform actions.

RESEARCH

Correctional leadership, management, supervisors, and officers all need access to **timely data** showing how actions impact outcomes.



- Follow trainings with staff coaching, and tie knowledge and performance expectations to job descriptions and performance evaluations.
- Institute quality assurance and continuous quality improvement processes.
- Conduct program evaluations on a regular basis to ensure quality and effectiveness.
- Evaluate how data is used to improve outcomes.

P9

Use data to drive agency decisions, incentivize staff to adopt effective practices, and inform policymaking for better outcomes.



Adopt a data system that tracks day-to-day practices and outcomes and that transforms data from stale reporting into a real-time catalyst for measuring and managing change.



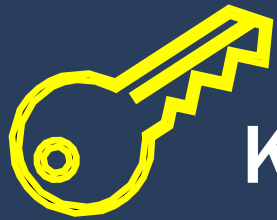
Monitor staff proficiency in use of evidence-based practice and create feedback loops to staff about what is working well to improve outcomes.



Use data to inform decision-making related to training, programming, and implementing new practices and to assess and address areas of agency culture that prevent progress.



Use data to measure the implementation, fidelity, and impact of evidence-based practice and agency policies in affecting behavior and reducing revocations.



Key Takeaways

- Using evidence-based practice is effective in reducing recidivism.
- The risk-needs-responsivity model should guide programming decisions within the correctional system.
- Too many interventions with low-risk individuals or too few, or the wrong interventions with high-risk individuals can yield poor results.
- Interventions are more effective and less costly when done in the community, when appropriate.
- A commitment to EBP requires
 - Fidelity in implementation,
 - Regular program evaluation, and
 - Ongoing review of research.

Next Steps and Project Update

Next Steps



Drilling down in programming assessments to identify areas of strength and weakness regarding EBP

- What is working well and adheres to the Principles of Effective Intervention?
- What areas of programming are not evidence-based?
- What is missing and why?



We will answer these questions through original qualitative and quantitative analyses that build on the work already being done.

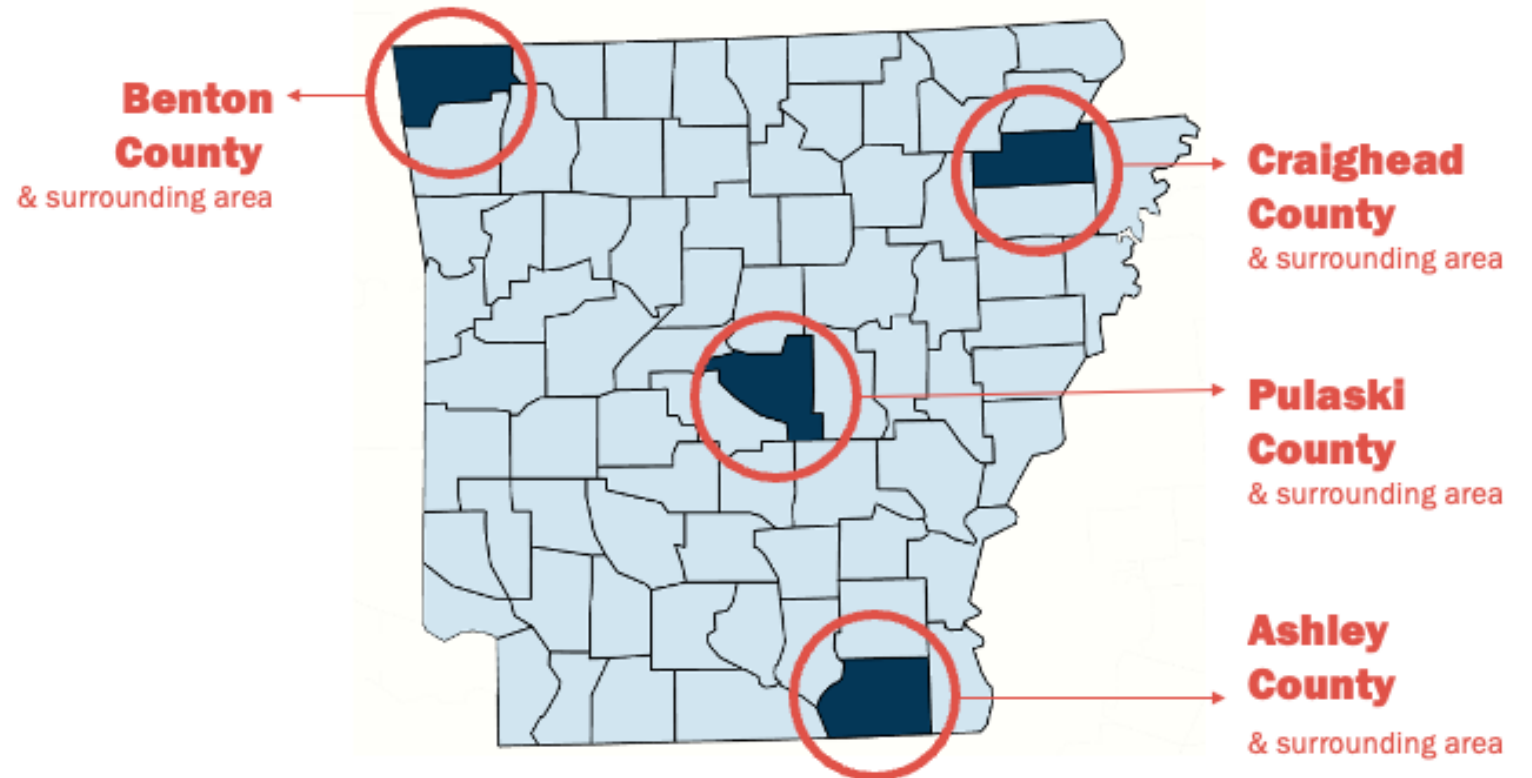
Having timely access to state data is critical to the success of this project.



Justice Reinvestment Data Requests		
Data Requested	Source	Status
Court Case Dispositions	Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)	DUA approved; awaiting upload of data
Arrest and Disposition Information for Felonies and Misdemeanors	Arkansas Crime Information Center (ACIC)	DUA Sent
Probation Supervision; ADC Admissions and Releases	Arkansas Department of Corrections (ADC)	DUA signed; awaiting upload of data

CSG Justice Center staff will be conducting regional site visits to get a better understanding of what's happening around the state.

So far, CSG Justice Center staff have met with working group members, reentry programs, workforce officers, and are eager to connect with even more people from across the state.



Thank You!

Join our distribution list to receive updates and announcements:

<https://csgjusticecenter.org/resources/newsletters/>

For more information, please contact Estrella López at elopez@csg.org.



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