

# *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 reduce 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-CSST)
  - 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

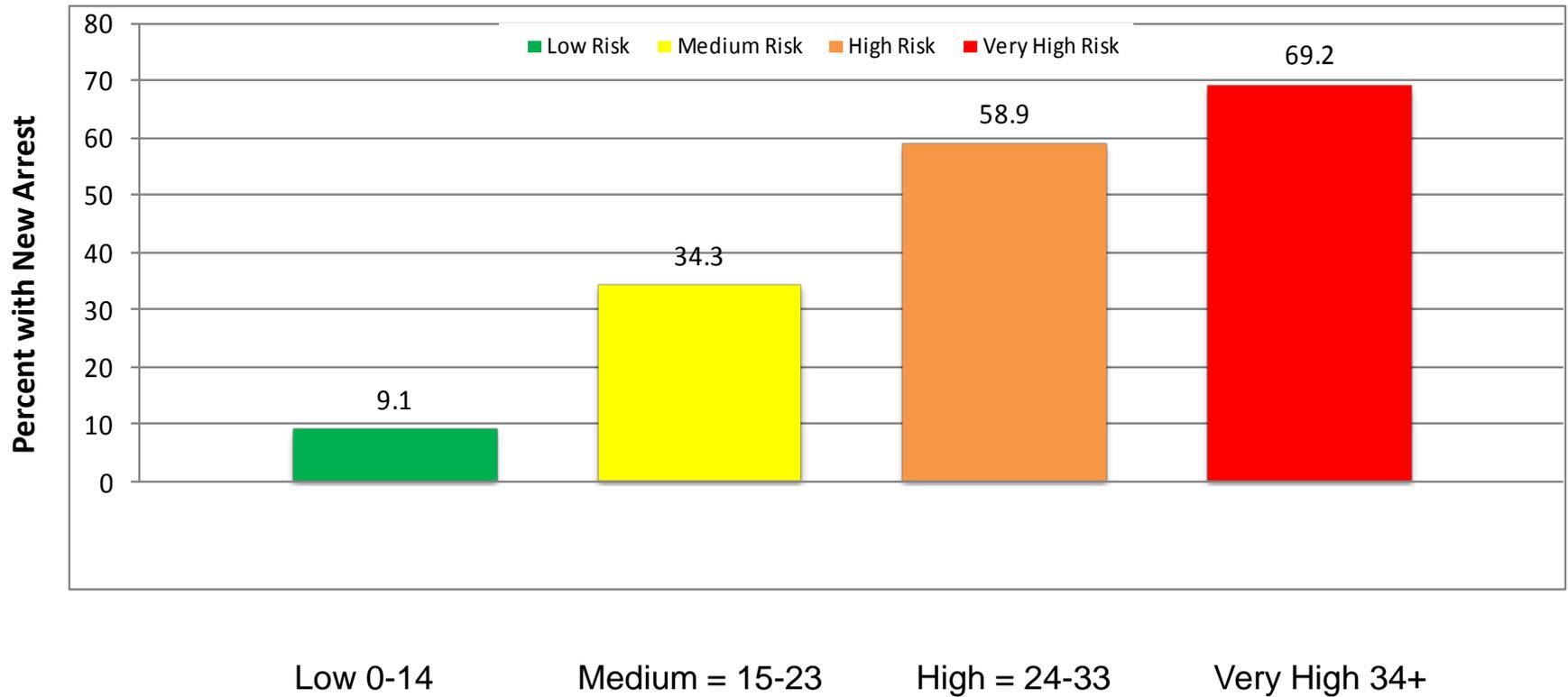
# There are two types of dynamic risk factors

- 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)



# Lesson 5

- Some times we fail because we provide intensive programs to the wrong offenders

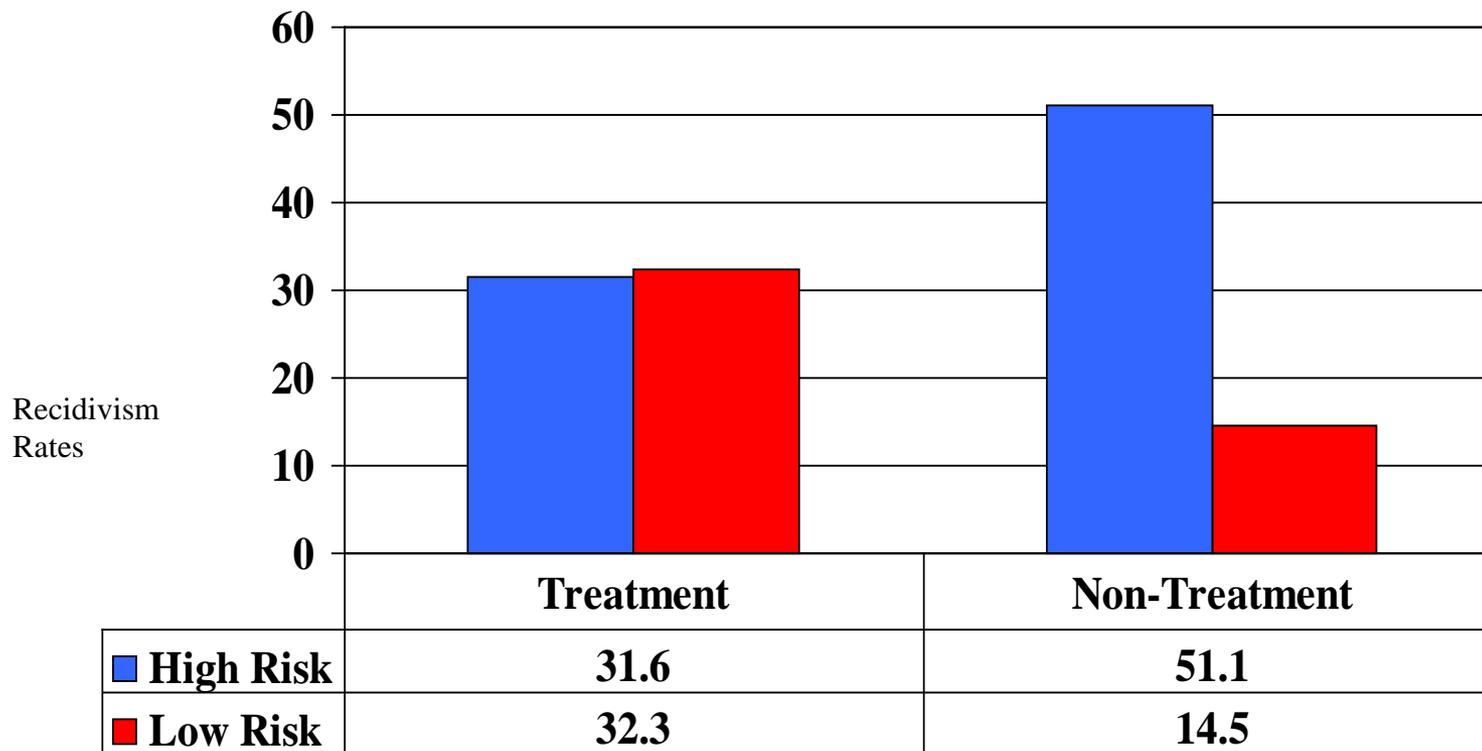
# Risk Principle

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



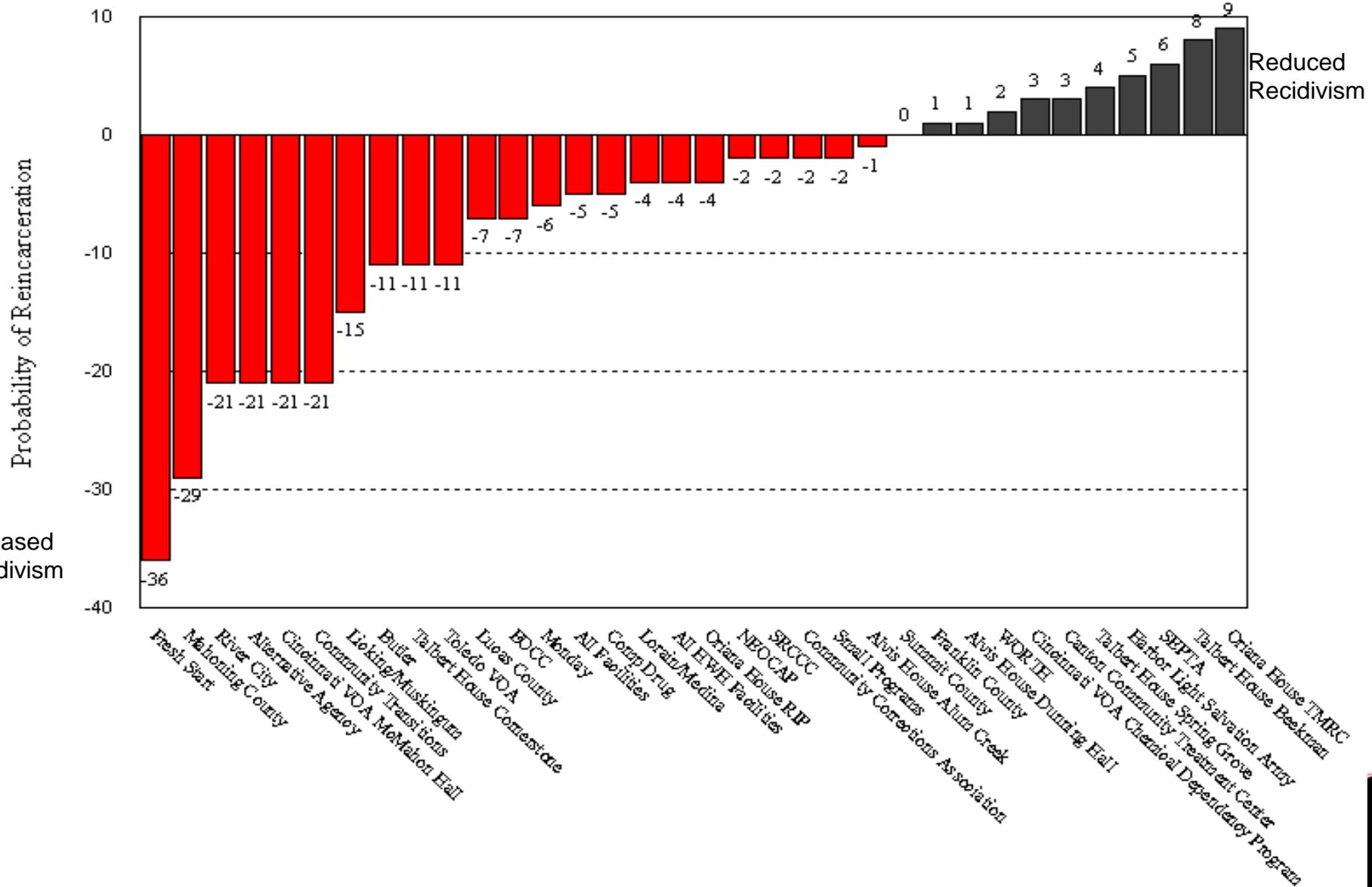
Bonta, J et al., 2000. A Quasi-Experimental Evaluation of an Intensive Rehabilitation Supervision Program., Vol. 27 No 3:312-329. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*

# 2002 STUDY OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMS IN OHIO

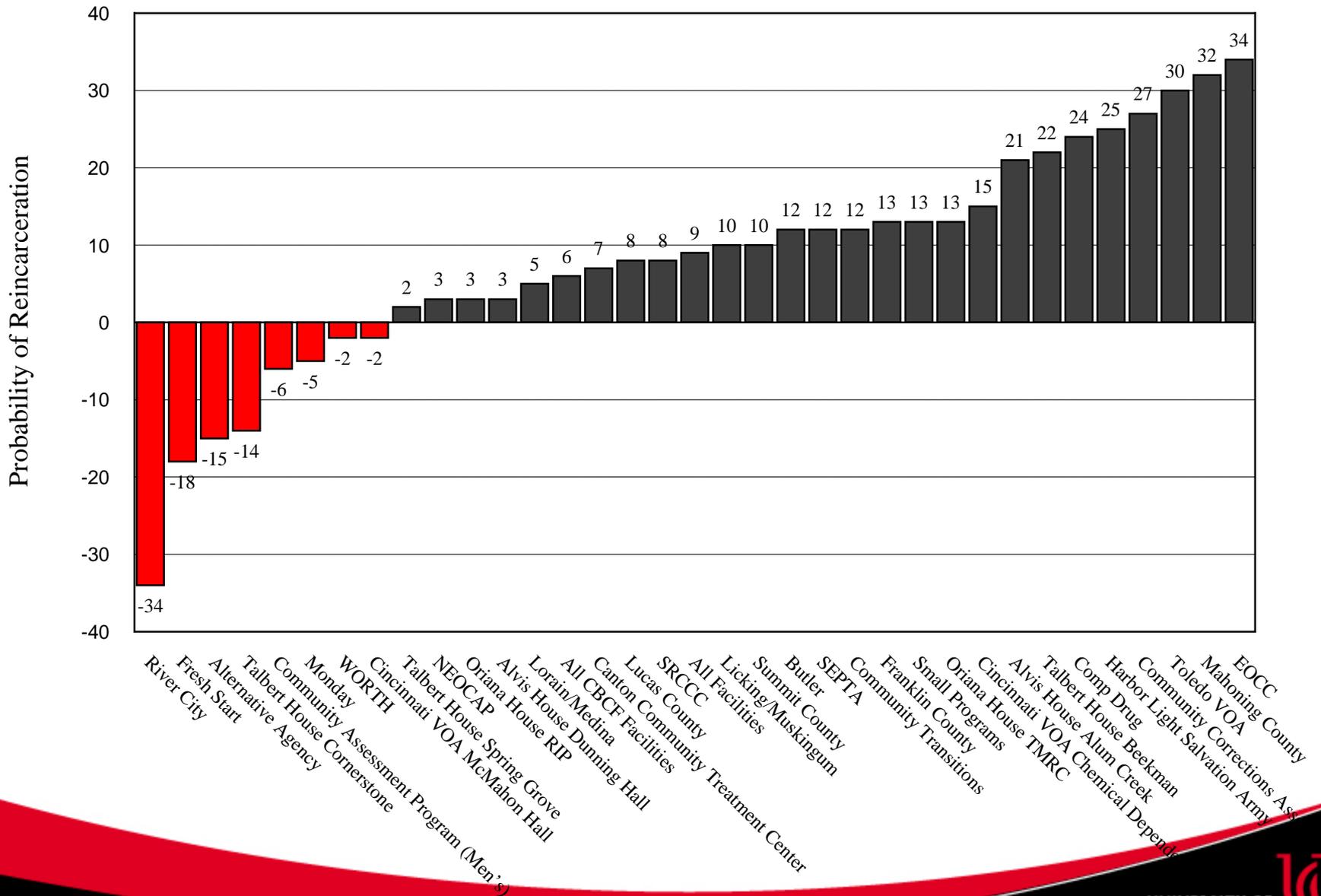
- **Largest study of community based correctional treatment facilities ever done up to that time**
- **Total of 13,221 offenders – 37 Halfway Houses and 15 Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCFs) were included in the study.**
- **Two-year follow-up conducted on all offenders**
- **Recidivism measures included new arrests & incarceration in a state penal institution**

Lowenkamp, C. and E. J. Latessa (2002). Evaluation of Ohio's Community Based Correctional Facilities and Halfway Houses. Center for Criminal Justice Research, University of Cincinnati.

# Treatment Effects for Low Risk Offenders



# Treatment Effects For High Risk Offenders



# 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



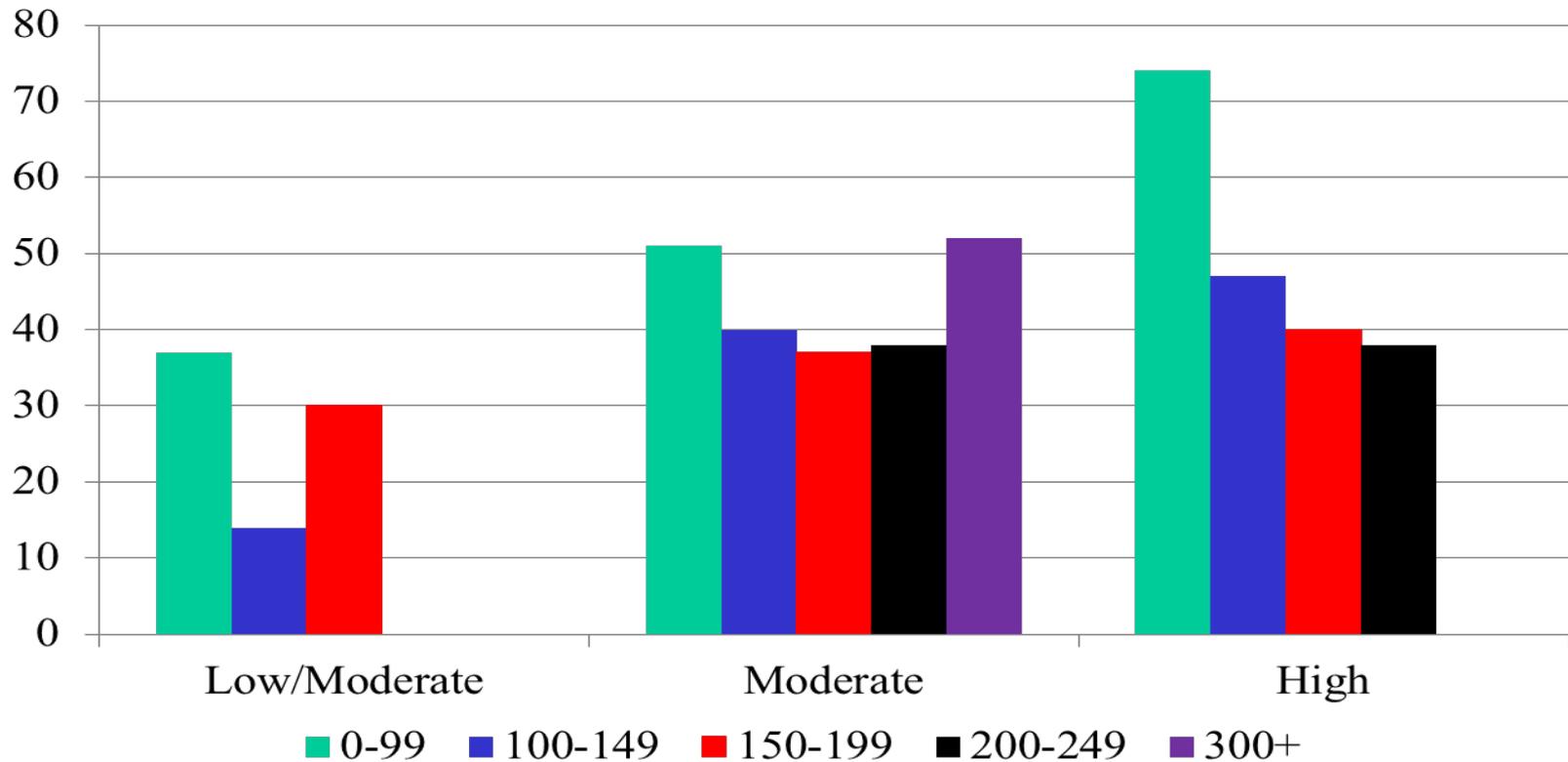
	Moderate	High
0-99	52	0
100-199	45	81
200+	42	57

Sperber, Latessa & Makarios (2013). Examining the Interaction between Level of Risk and Dosage of Treatment. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 40(3).

# 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



Makarios, Sperber, & Latessa (2014). Treatment Dosage and the Risk Principle: A Refinement and Extension. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*. 53:334-350.

# 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

Bucklen, K. & G Zajac (2009) But Some of Them Don't Come Back (to Prison!): Resource Deprivation and Thinking Errors as Determinants of Parole Success and Failure. *Prison Journal*, 89: 239-264.

# 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

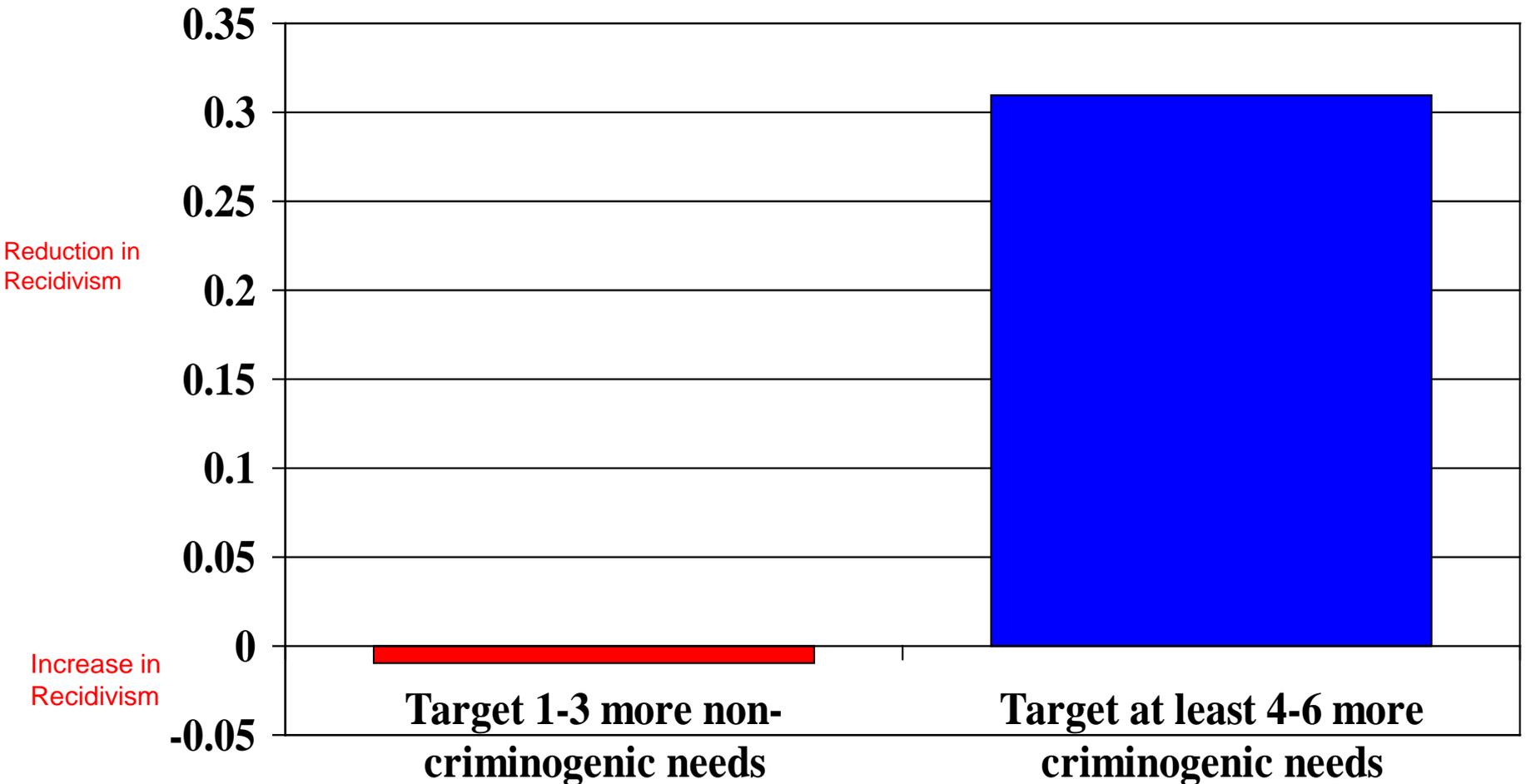
# Pennsylvania Parole Violator Study:

- 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



Source: Gendreau, P., French, S.A., and A.Taylor (2002). What Works (What Doesn't Work) Revised 2002. Invited Submission to the International Community Corrections Association Monograph Series Project

# 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 life style** (based on Psychological Inventory of Criminal Thinking Scale (PICTS))
- When compare 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.**

See: Prevalence of Criminal Thinking among State Prison Inmates with Serious Mental Illness. *Law and Human Behavior* 34:324-336, and Center for Behavioral Health Services Criminal Justice Research Policy Brief, April 2010. Rutgers University.

# 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

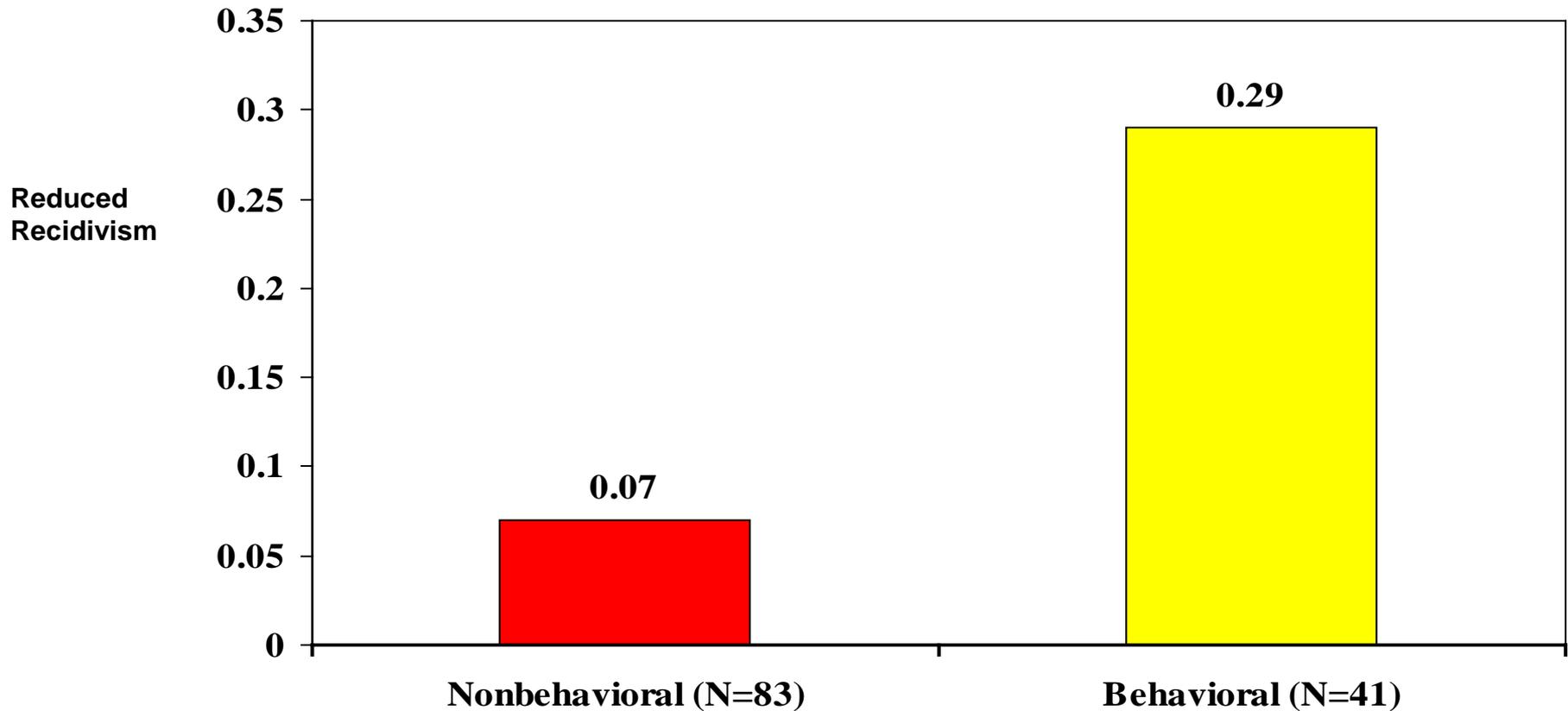
# Lesson 9

- 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



Andrews, D.A. 1994. An Overview of Treatment Effectiveness. Research and Clinical Principles, Department of Psychology, Carleton University. The N refers to the number of studies.

# 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)

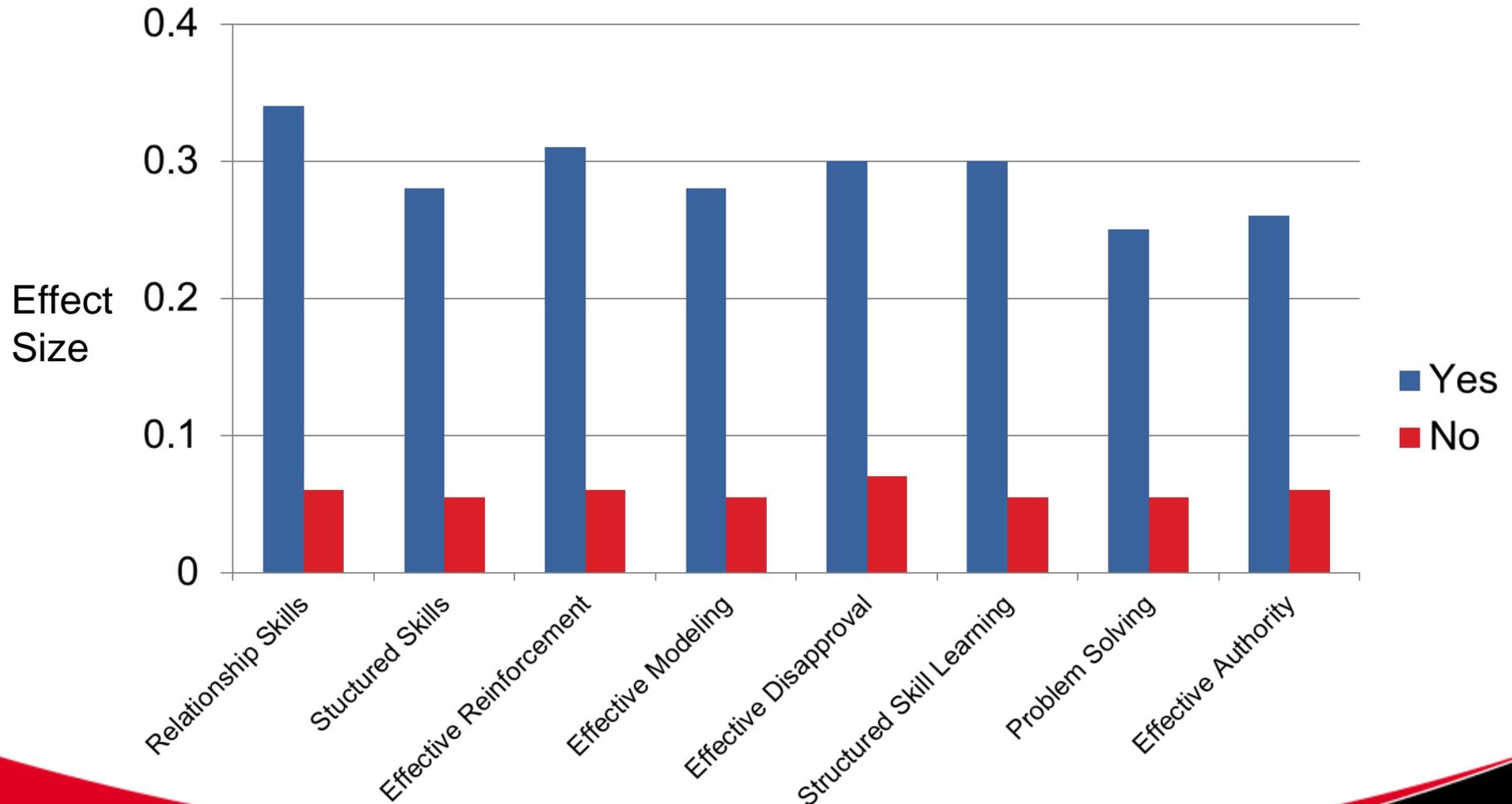
- Reviewed 58 studies:
  - 19 random samples
  - 23 matched samples
  - 16 convenience samples
- Found that on average CBT reduced recidivism by 25%, but the most effective configurations found more than 50% reductions

Landenberger, N. A., & Lipsey, M. W. (2005). The positive effects of cognitive-behavioral programs for offenders: A meta-analysis of factors associated with effective treatment. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 1: 451-476.

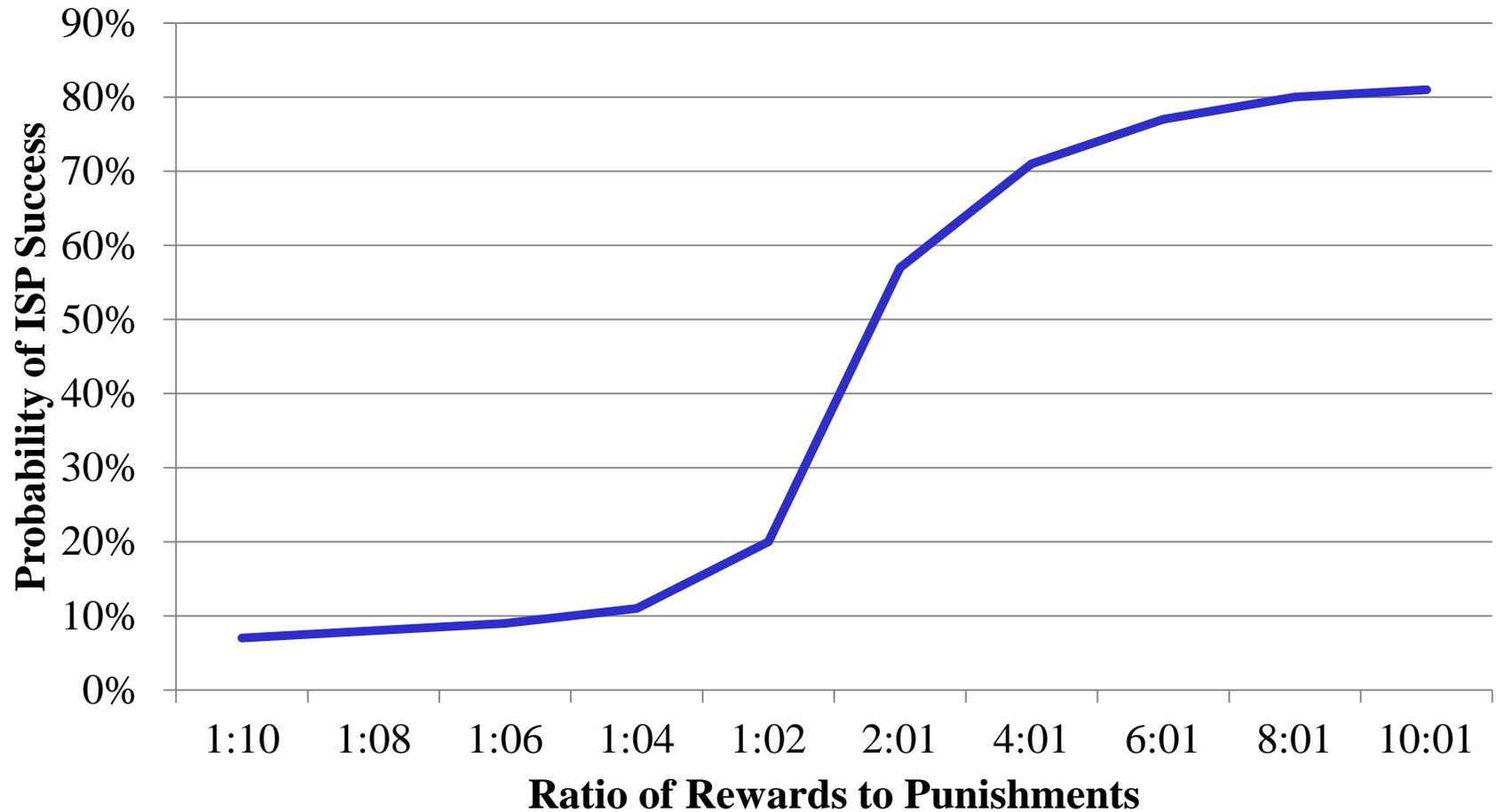
## Significant Findings (effects were stronger if):

- 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



## Ratio of Rewards to Punishments and Probability of Success on Intensive Supervision



Widahl, E. J., Garland, B. Culhane, S. E., and McCarty, W.P. (2011). Utilizing Behavioral Interventions to Improve Supervision Outcomes in Community-Based Corrections. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 38 (4).

# List of Rewards and Sanctions

## Sanctions

- Verbal reprimand
- Written assignment
- Modify curfew hours
- Community service hours
- Restrict visitation
- Program extension or regression
- Electronic Monitoring
- Inpatient or outpatient tx
- Detention time

## Rewards

- Verbal praise and reinforcement
- Remove from EM
- Level advancement
- Increased personal time
- Approved special activity
- Fees reduced
- Approve or extend special visitation

Widahl, E. J., Garland, B. Culhane, S. E., and McCarty, W.P. (2011). Utilizing Behavioral Interventions to Improve Supervision Outcomes in Community-Based Corrections. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 38 (4).

# 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 Manger interaction

**Effective Practices in  
Correctional Supervision  
(EPICS)**

# Structure of EPICS Meeting

## SESSION OVERVIEW

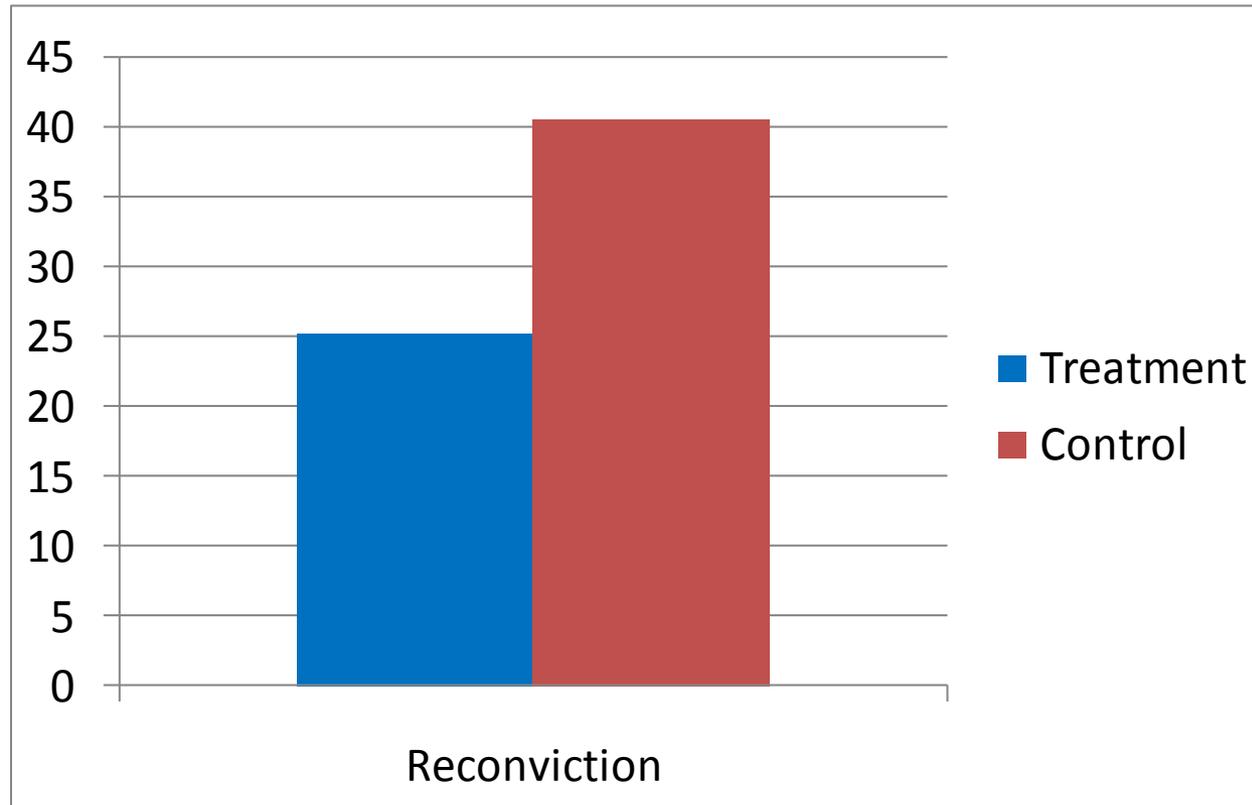
- Each session should be structured in the following way:
  1. Check-In
  2. Review
  3. Intervention
  4. Homework

# Rationale for EPICS

Preliminary Data from Canada:

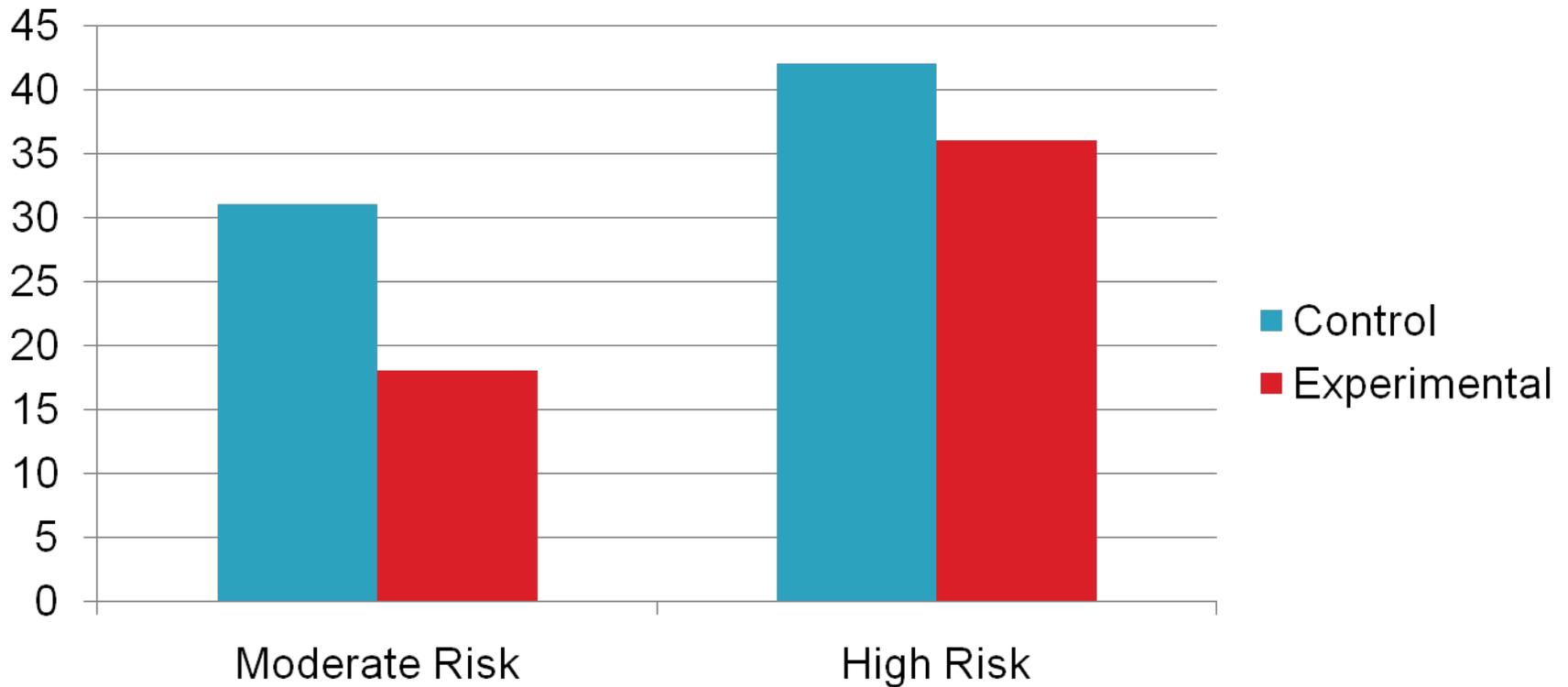
- Trained officers had 12% higher retention rates in comparison with untrained officers at six months.
- Also found reductions in recidivism

# Two year Recidivism Results from Canadian Study



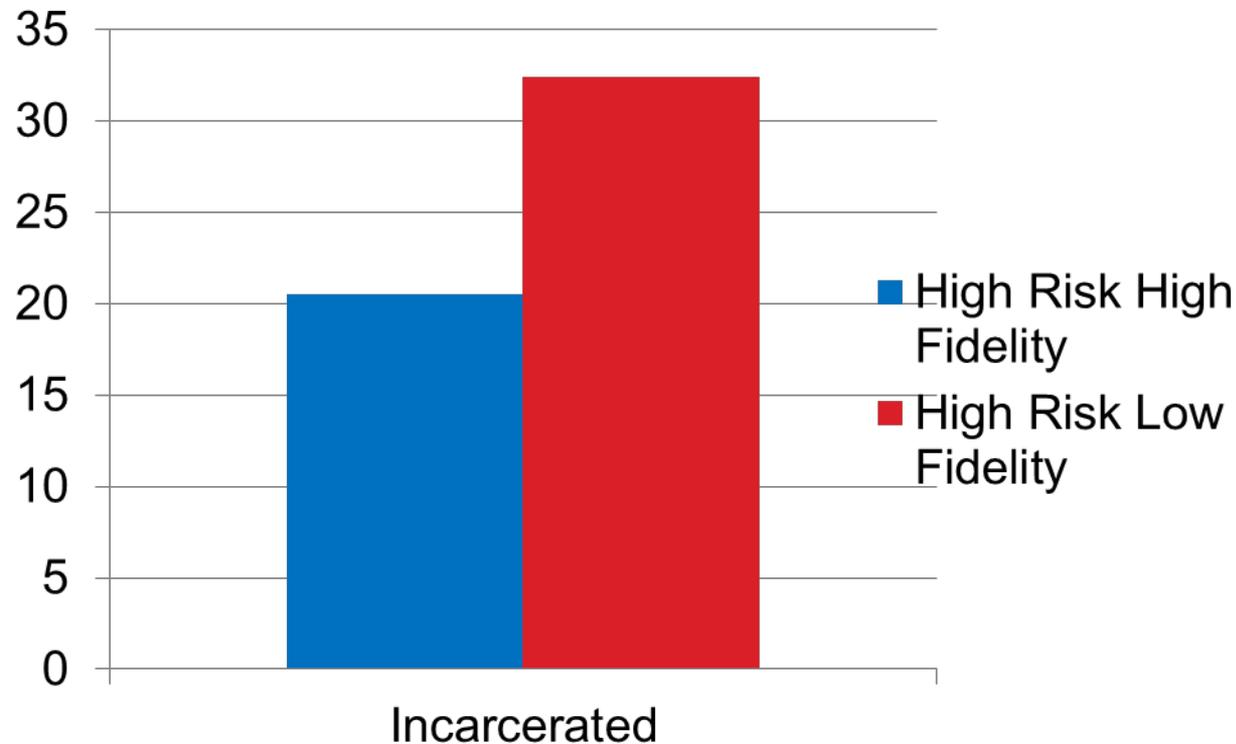
Bont, et al, (2010) The Strategic Training Initiative in Community Suopervision: Risk-Need-Responsivity in the Real World. Public Safety Canada.

# Findings from Federal Probation Sample



Robinson, Vanbenschoten, Alexander, and Lowenkamp, *Federal Probation*, Sept. 2011.

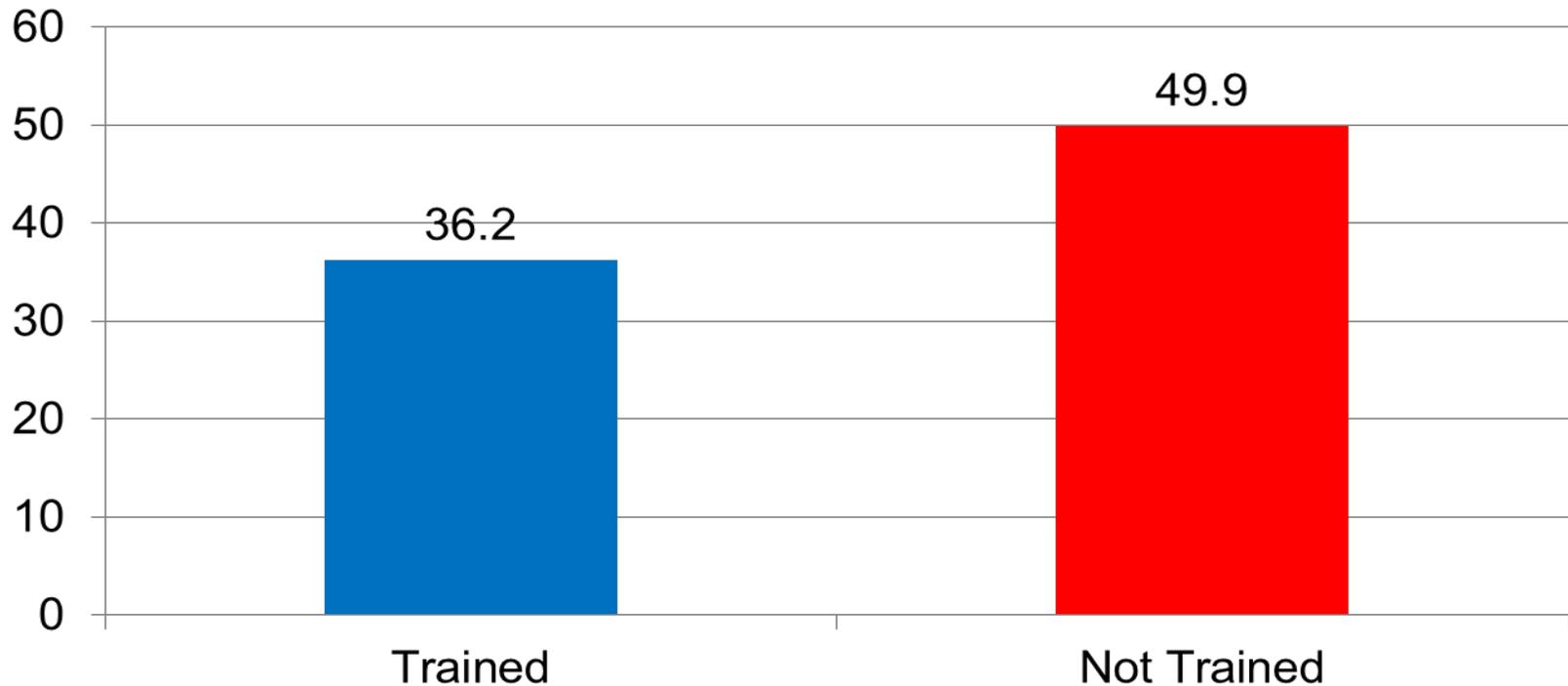
# Recidivism Results from Ohio Study looking at Fidelity and High Risk Offenders



Latessa, E., Smith, P., Schweitzer, m., and Labrecque, R. (2013). Evaluation of the Effective Practices in Community Supervision Model (EPICS) in Ohio. School of Criminal Justice, University of Cincinnati.

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

## Odds of Recidivism



Chadwick, DeWolf and Serin (2015). Effectively Training Community Supervision Officers, *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 20: 1-13

# 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

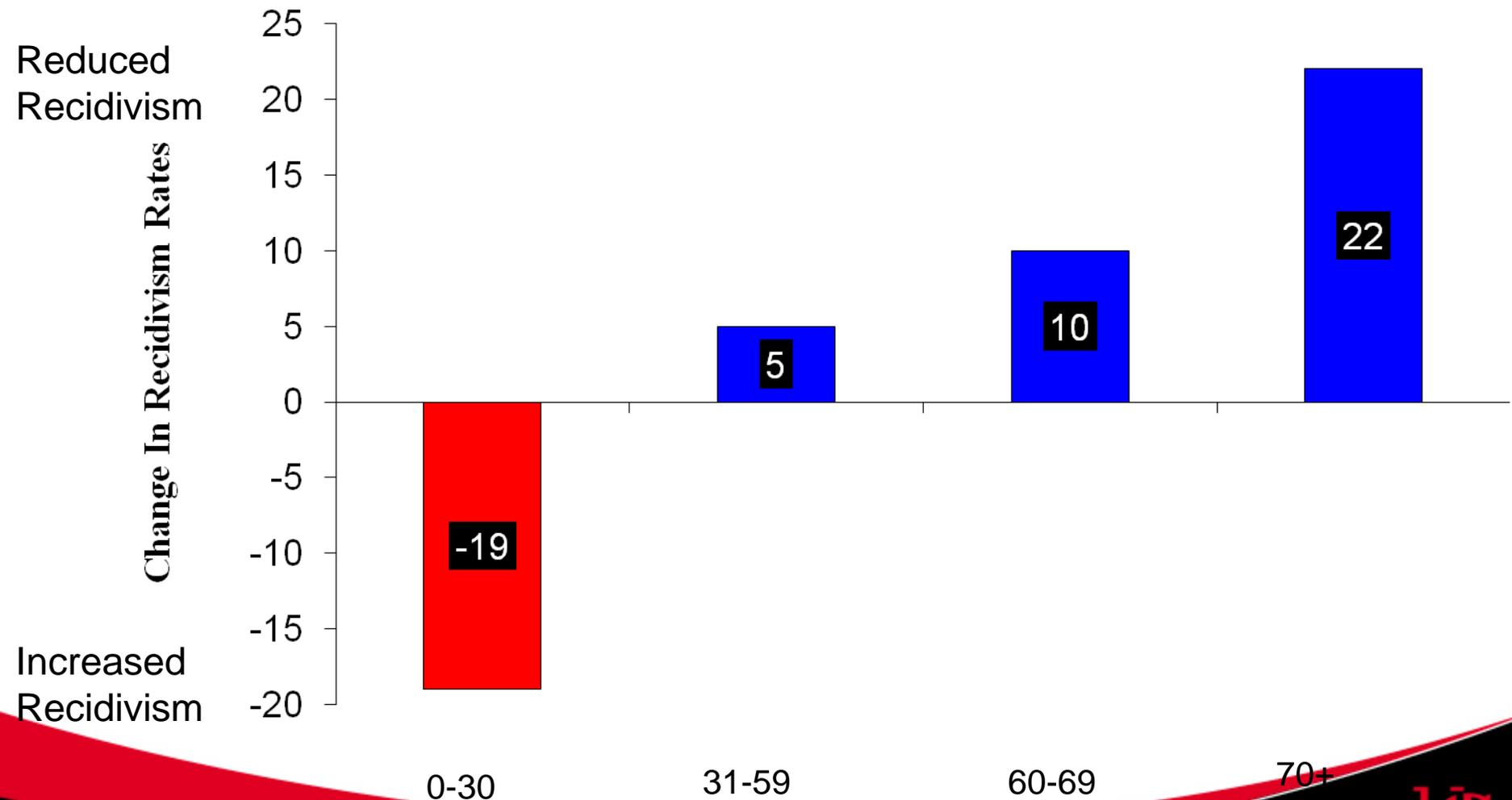
# Several large studies we have conducted have helped us identify characteristics of effective programs

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

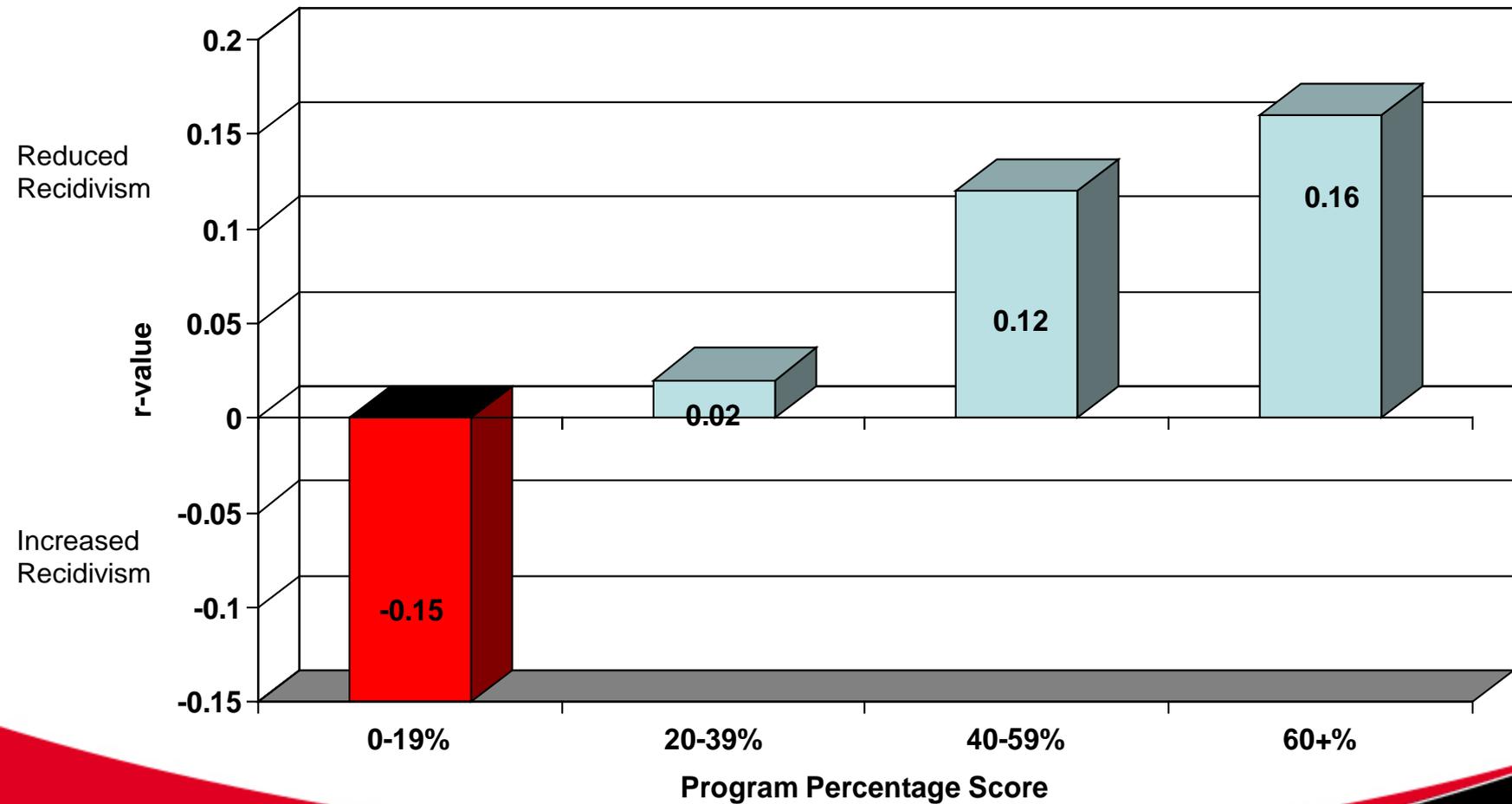
# Program Integrity and Recidivism

- 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



# Program Integrity—Relationship Between Program Integrity Score And Treatment Effects for Community Supervision Programs



Thank you