



Ingredients of Evidence-based Crime Prevention

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Manitoba Justice

Manitoba 

Why Evidence-based?

- Since 1990's, there has been much focus on crime prevention
- Comprehensive reviews have taken place in UK, US, ICPC
- A renewed focus is now in place at the political, federal, provincial, municipal levels to do better with available resources
- Agencies are being asked to implement evidence-based initiatives
- Public pressure to see results

How the issue came about:

- UK – 1996 - conducted the Audit Commission – independent body to make sure gov't investments in health, community safety, etc were delivered effectively and efficiently.
- Their report ' Misspent Youth' concluded gov't resources & quality of life for youth would be maximized by investing in youth as opposed to police and CJS sanctions.



How the issue came about:

- The Home Office(1998), responsible for police, CJ & national security – conducted an extensive review – “Reducing Offending”
- Concluded - need long term social programs to target risk factors for crime with shorter-term initiatives to reduce opportunities for crime.



Lawrence Sherman

- In 1996, United States Congress directed a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of over \$3 Billion/yr in crime prevention grants
- Preventing crime more cost-effective than adding police officers or incarcerating more offenders;
- Some well-known programs (ex: police-led Neighbourhood Watch, drug abuse resistance education (D.A.R.E.), boot camps, & scared straight) showed no crime reduction; and
- Strategies to support communities, families, & schools, as well as a number of situational approaches - proven effective in significantly reducing crime.
- (Sherman et al. 1997 and 2002)

How the issue came about:

- 1999 – ICPC in Montreal, conducted an analysis of studies on the factors linked to crime & the impact of interventions.
- Concluded crime prevention is successful when addressing multiple risk factors & that gov't, schools, education, parents, recreation orgs, etc be involved in the diagnosis of the problem.
- Crime prevention has collateral spin offs – kids stay in school, social benefits for families & neighbourhoods, get jobs, etc.

What is an Evidence-based Initiative?

- Programs which have been evaluated using the strongest research design
- Randomized Controlled Trial
- Results had an impact on offending and crime



Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)

- Considered the most reliable form of scientific evaluation.
- Designed to eliminate biases & errors that can often compromise the validity of research results.
- Participants randomly assign to different groups:
 - those who will receive the intervention in question
 - those who will not
- Direct comparisons can be made on the outcomes of participants & non-participants, with a fair degree of confidence that different outcomes are the result of the intervention & not of pre-existing differences between the groups.
- RCT commonly used in the medical field & has also been important in determining “what works” to prevent crime, as noted above.
- “50”

Linking Community & Evidence-based Knowledge

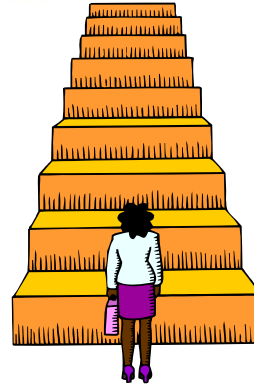
- Prevention happens in the community
- Communities know the intricacies of the neighbourhoods and residents
- Agencies are the front line workers
- Building the bridge



Risk Factors for criminal involvement/victimization:

- **Family**: Poor parenting & child-parent connection, family violence, welfare reliance, parental criminality
- **School**: truancy, low attachment, low grades
- **Drug & Alcohol abuse**
- **Peers**: negative association, foster/group home involvement
- **Neighbourhoods**: disorganized, transient, single parent households
- **Economy**: low income
- **Neuropsychological**: FASD, heredity, poor prenatal nutrition

Challenges



What are the challenges for agencies & gov'ts in implementing evidence-based initiatives?

- Do agencies have access to the evidence-based research?
- Adapting to cultural & local context – are the actions legitimate & acceptable to community?
- Replication - Does changing 1 variable affect the outcome(s)?
- What about innovation?
- Has the current work of agencies been evaluated?

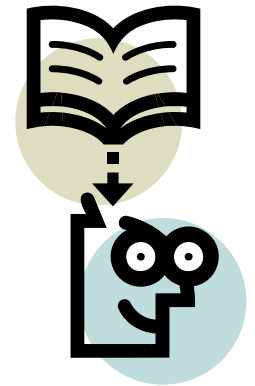
Challenges cont'd

- Enough human & financial resources
- Long enough project delivery time
- Political climate
- Significant time spent on fundraising
- Access to information to properly diagnose problem ex: crime stats
- If resources are low, how do we link intellectual know-how with evidence?

Where can you find information?

Information becoming more available:

- **Institute for Prevention of Crime**
www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/ipc/eng/ipc.asp
- **NCPC Fact Sheets**
www.publicsafety.gc.ca
- **Home Office**
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/
- **Blue Prints for Violence Prevention** –
reviewed over 600 evaluations
www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/



Where to find information cont'd?

- Caledon Institute

www.caledoninst.org

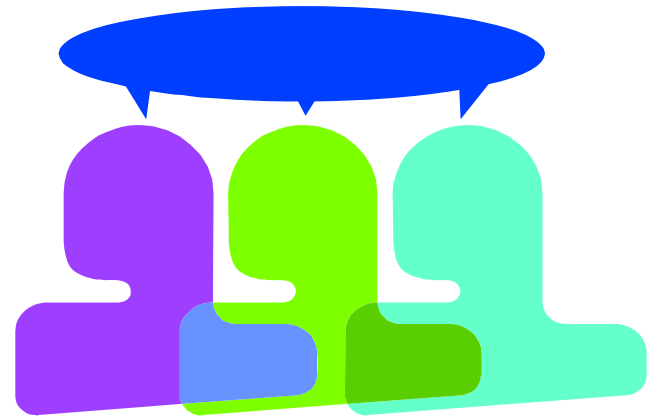
- Campbell Collaboration's Crime & Justice Coordinating Group

www.campbellcollaboration.org/CCJG/index.asp

Examples of what works:

THREE THEMES TO SHARE TODAY,

- Family-based
- Community-based
- School-based



FAMILY:



Triple P: Positive Parenting Support

- 25 yrs of research & evaluation
- Initial findings of Triple P in South Carolina showed significant results: reduction in child maltreatment cases, child out of home placements, child maltreatment injuries

www.triplep.net/

FAMILY:

Public health - Support for New Mothers

- Public health nurse visits new at-risk mothers at home
- Recommends one visit/week
- Reduced child abuse & neglect by 80%, maternal arrests by 69% & youth arrests by 66% through to age 15

(Duggan et al., 2004; Olds et al., 1998)



SCHOOL-BASED

Strong Heart Teaching Lodge - Mi'Kmaq First Nation Summary:

- Wrap around partnership initiative
- Increase protective factors – community engagement, participation in traditional healing & cultural activities
- Outcomes - significant reductions in drinking rates, binge drinking rates, drinking related problems, marijuana use

Gwich'in Tribal Council – Outdoor Classroom (NWT)

- Uses an outdoor camp, breakfast program, in-school program, Elders, life skills training, traditional learning
- Targeted anti-social behaviours
- 20% difference in monthly school attendance
- 75% of students increased grades

Gwich'in Tribal Council 867-777-4869

<http://www.crime-prevention-intl.org/>



SCHOOL-BASED



Quantum Opportunities:

- Promoting *high school completion* through incentives & tutoring
- Reduced high school dropout by 27%, increased attendance at post-secondary education by 26%, & reduced youth arrests by 71% over 4 years

(*Quantum Opportunities*: Hahn et al., 1994;
Lattimore et al., 1998)

COMMUNITY-BASED

Participate & Learn Skills (Pals):

- Children (5-15) in housing complex offered after school activities to improve skills – music, dance, non-sport activities.
- Increase pro-social attitudes & behaviours
- Decrease in criminal behaviour, increase in skill acquisition, & integration with wider community

(Jones & Oxford, 1989) Ottawa.

COMMUNITY-BASED

Youth Inclusion Program:

- Reducing social exclusion through intensive *youth inclusion* programming in literacy, mentoring, recreation, anger management, & dealing with gangs & drugs
- Has reduced school expulsions by 27%, youth arrests by 65%, & reduced overall crime in neighbourhoods by 16% to 27%

(*Youth Inclusion Program*: Morgan Harris Burrows, 2003)



Common themes:

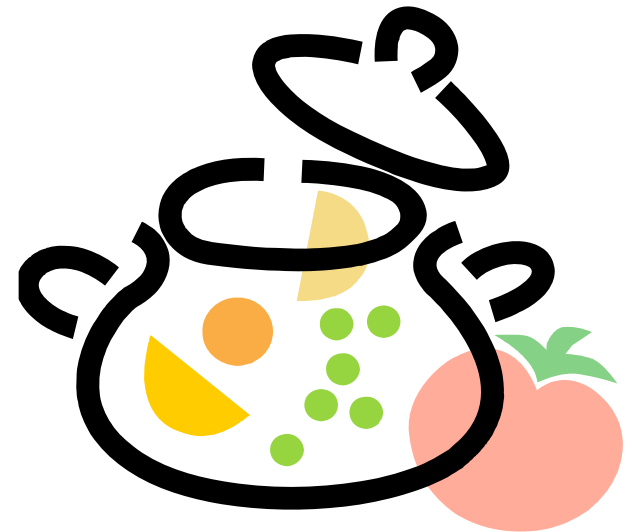
- Intensive interventions on limited number of people
- Involve the family
- If \$ is limited, focus interventions in small, carefully targeted areas
- Interventions targeted directly at children & parents rather than changing community institutions more effective
- Short-term programs won't make a lasting difference

Common themes cont'd:

- Programs should be based on reasonable evidence that it's likely to be effective
- Innovative programs need strong evaluation
- Utilize social development & situational strategies – address short-term & long-term impact

Some common ingredients

- Diagnosis of the problem
- Determine scope of action – narrow range or broad range
- Tackle multiple risk factors
- Build partnerships to support actions
- Proactive outreach
- Mentoring





Choices to make:

- Be mindful of relying on scarce or risky resources.
- Is the infrastructure there – how to build capacity?
- If replicating, need a balance between copying the successful end product and the intellectual process.
- Move towards impact evaluation as well as process evaluation.
- Evaluator is independent of implementer.

The beginning...

- This doesn't mean that all the work to-date has not worked.
- We know we need to do better.
- Continue to enhance partnerships between community & systems.
- Examples do exist.
- Move towards the common goal of safer communities.



Thank You.

- The information presented is based on numerous documents, researchers, etc.