



# What Works to Promote Reentry Success: Spotlight on Youth Convicted of Sex Offenses

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Council of State Governments Justice Center

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# JUSTICE CENTER

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS  
*Collaborative Approaches to Public Safety*

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**



# Second Chance Act Grantees



- Authorized by the passage of the Second Chance Act in April 2008
- The NRRC is a project of the CSG Justice Center and is supported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Department of Justice
- The NRRC provides individualized, intensive, and targeted technical assistance, training, and distance learning to support SCA grantees
- The NRRC has supported over 600 juvenile and adult reentry grantees since inception in 2009

# Overview

## What Works to Promote Reentry Success: Spotlight on Youth Convicted of Sex Offenses

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### Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission Experience

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### Research Overview

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### Ask the Expert

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# **Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission Experience**

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## **Research Overview**

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## **Ask the Expert**

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**ILLINOIS JUVENILE JUSTICE  
COMMISSION**

**IMPROVING  
ILLINOIS'  
RESPONSE TO  
SEXUAL OFFENSES  
COMMITTED BY  
YOUTH**

**Considerations  
for Law, Policy,  
and Practice**

# PRESENTERS

***Lisa Jacobs***

Vice-Chair, Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission  
Program Manager, Illinois Models for Change  
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***Robert Vickery***

Executive Director, Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission  
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***Judge George Timberlake***

Ret., Chair, Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission  
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# PA 97-0163

(EFFECTIVE JANUARY, 2012)

**Directs the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission to “study and make recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly to ensure the effective treatment and supervision of the specialized population of juvenile offenders adjudicated delinquent for a sex offense.”**



# IJJC

## ANATOMY OF A “SAG”

### Origins: Federal JJDP Act & Illinois Statute

#### Federal Role:

- Prepare 3 year / state juvenile justice plans
- Administer federal JJDP & JABG funds
- Ensure compliance with “core requirements”

#### In Illinois:

- Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission
- 25 members; gubernatorial appointment
- Fulfill all responsibilities of a SAG
- Analysis and recommendations on juvenile justice matters

# INTRODUCTION TO STUDY



Illinois passed its first sex offense registry laws nearly 30 years ago, when little research was available

Since 1999, the scope of such laws has included youth

Most Illinois youth adjudicated delinquent for sex offenses must follow adult sex offender rules and restrictions

However, new evidence identifies characteristics of youth with sexual behavior problems and interventions that are most likely to help

**This IJJC Report explores the new body of available research**

# METHODOLOGY

**Legal mapping and analysis**

**Surveyed relevant national data**

**Collected Illinois arrest, probation, detention, and incarceration data**

**Reviewed 256 probation and IDJJ case files to obtain case-level details not otherwise available in state data systems**

**Analyzed extensive social science research**

**Conducted stakeholder interviews**

# LEGAL MAPPING:

**Review and analysis of current Illinois and federal law, policy and practice governing juvenile sex offenses and juvenile sex offenders**

# DATA ANALYSIS:

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS: A CURRENT PROFILE OF YOUTH WHO SEXUALLY OFFEND IN ILLINOIS AND NATIONALLY

**State data**

**National data**

**File reviews (256 Probation + IDJJ files)**

# RESEARCH REVIEW:

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CURRENT  
RESEARCH ON YOUTH SEXUAL OFFENDING

**Origins**

**Risks for reoffending & protective  
factors**

**Evidence-based responses**

# STAKEHOLDER INPUT: PERSPECTIVES OF A RANGE OF PROFESSIONALS

**Law  
enforcement**

**Court  
practitioners**

**Corrections  
staff**

**Evaluators**

**Treatment  
providers**

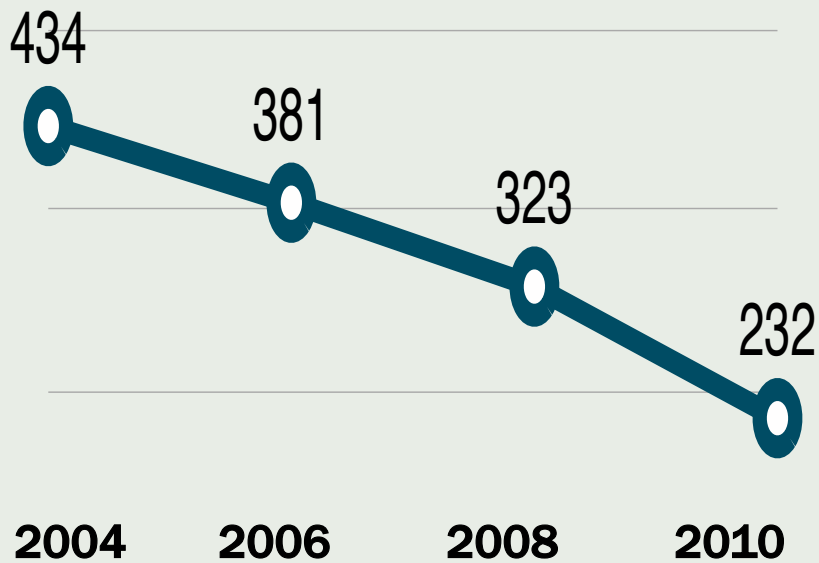
**Researchers**

# STUDY FINDINGS



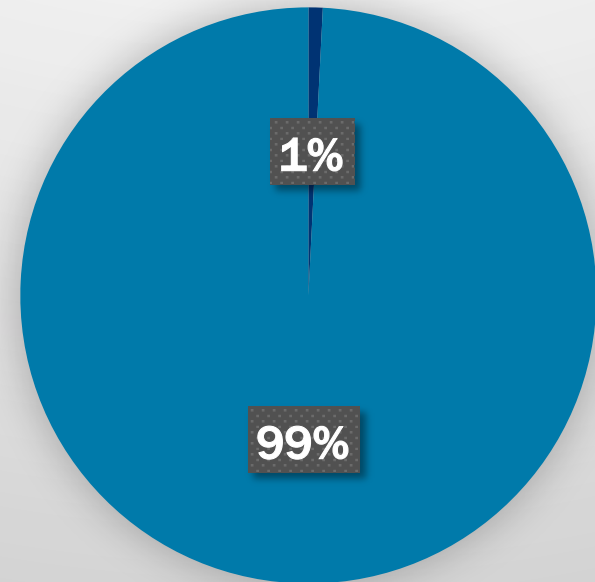
# FINDING 1: THE NUMBER OF YOUTH ARRESTED FOR SEXUAL OFFENSES IN ILLINOIS IS SMALL

Number of 10-16 year olds arrested in Illinois for Sex Offenses



Data Source: ISP CHRI

Arrests  
(2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010)



- Sex offenses (1,370)
- All other offenses (178,944)

## **FINDING 2: THE MAJORITY OF YOUTH ARRESTED FOR SEXUAL OFFENSES ARE VERY YOUNG**

**Half of youth arrested were 14 or younger;  
1 in 8 were 12 or younger**

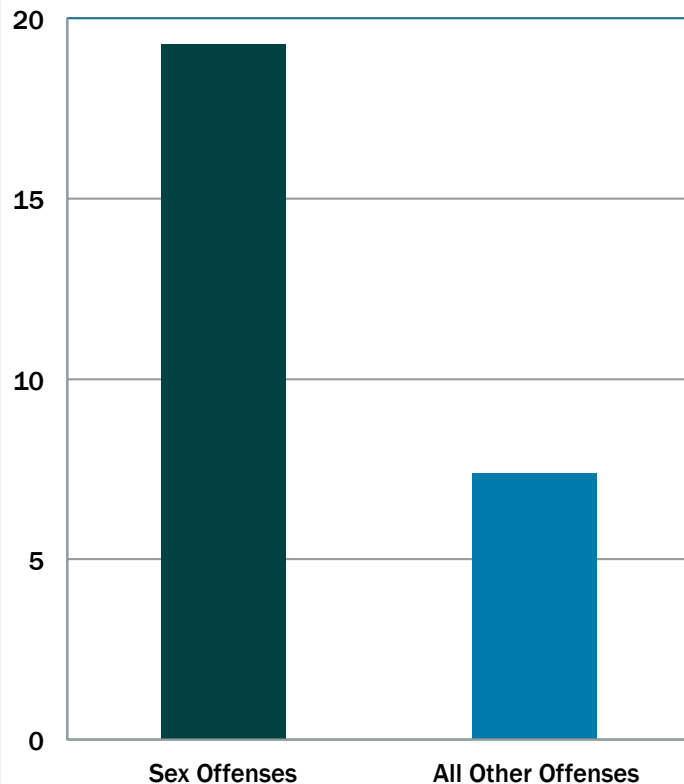
**Sexual abuse victimization rates range from 30%-46%, five times higher than those of adolescent non-sex offenders**

**95% of youth arrested for sex offenses in Illinois are male, whereas males comprise 78% of all other youth arrests**

**51% of youth arrested for sex offenses are white**

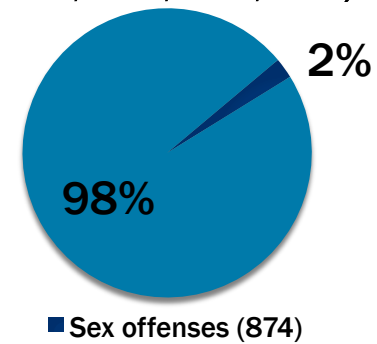
# FINDING 3: YOUTH INCARCERATED FOR SEX OFFENSES ARE A TINY PROPORTION OF FACILITY ADMISSIONS, AND ARE INCARCERATED LONGER THAN THEIR PEERS

## Average Length of Stay at IDJJ Facilities

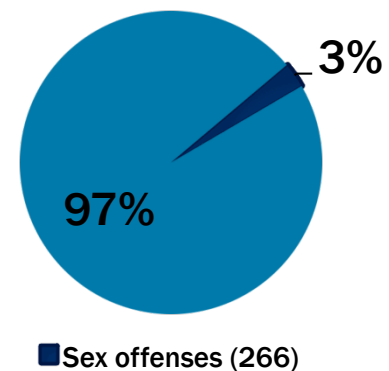


Source: IDJJ

## Admissions to Juvenile Detention Centers (2004, 2006, 2008, 2010)



## New Commitments to IDJJ (2004, 2006, 2008, 2010)



# FINDING 4: CHARGES DO NOT CONVEY THE NATURE, HARM OR SEVERITY OF UNLAWFUL SEXUAL CONDUCT BY YOUTH

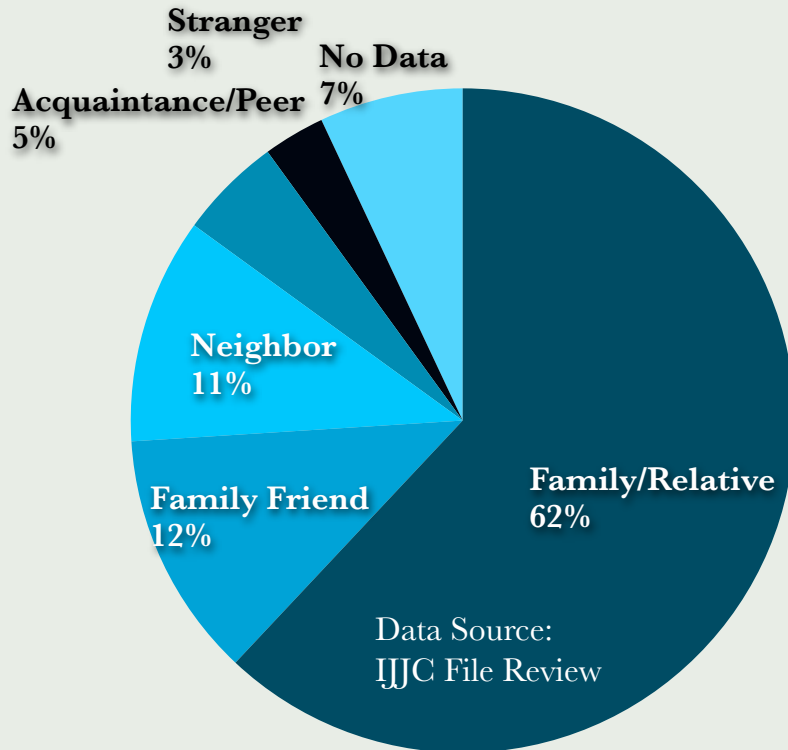
## 4 Broad Offense Categories:

- criminal sexual assault
- aggravated criminal sexual assault
- criminal sexual abuse
- aggravated criminal sexual abuse

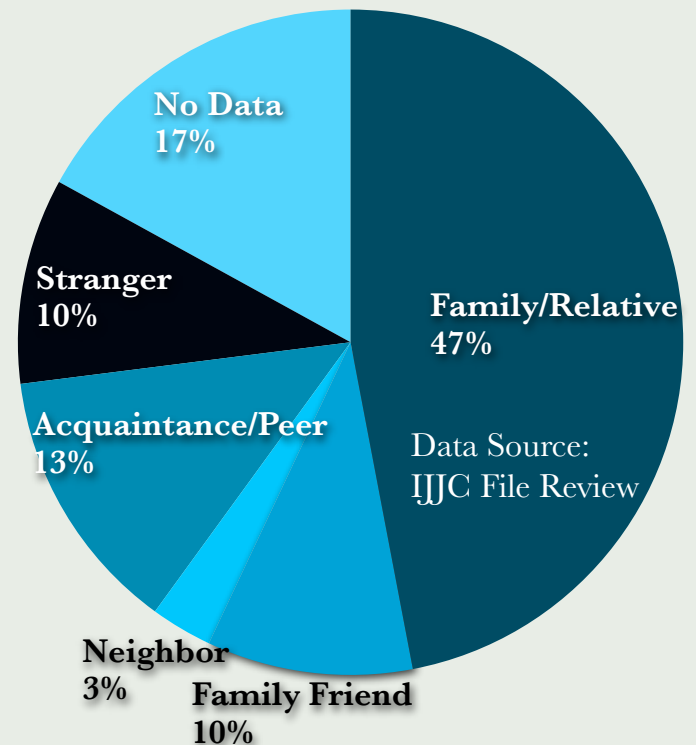
Youth labeled as “sex offenders” vary greatly

# FINDING 5: MOST YOUTH SEXUAL OFFENDING INVOLVES A FAMILY MEMBER OR A PERSON KNOWN TO THE YOUTH

Relationship of Probation Youth to Victim (N=179)



Relationship of Youth in IDJJ Facilities to Victim (N=79)



# FINDING 6: MOST YOUTH WHO SEXUALLY OFFEND DO NOT REPEAT THEIR HARMFUL CONDUCT AND RARELY BECOME ADULT SEXUAL OFFENDERS

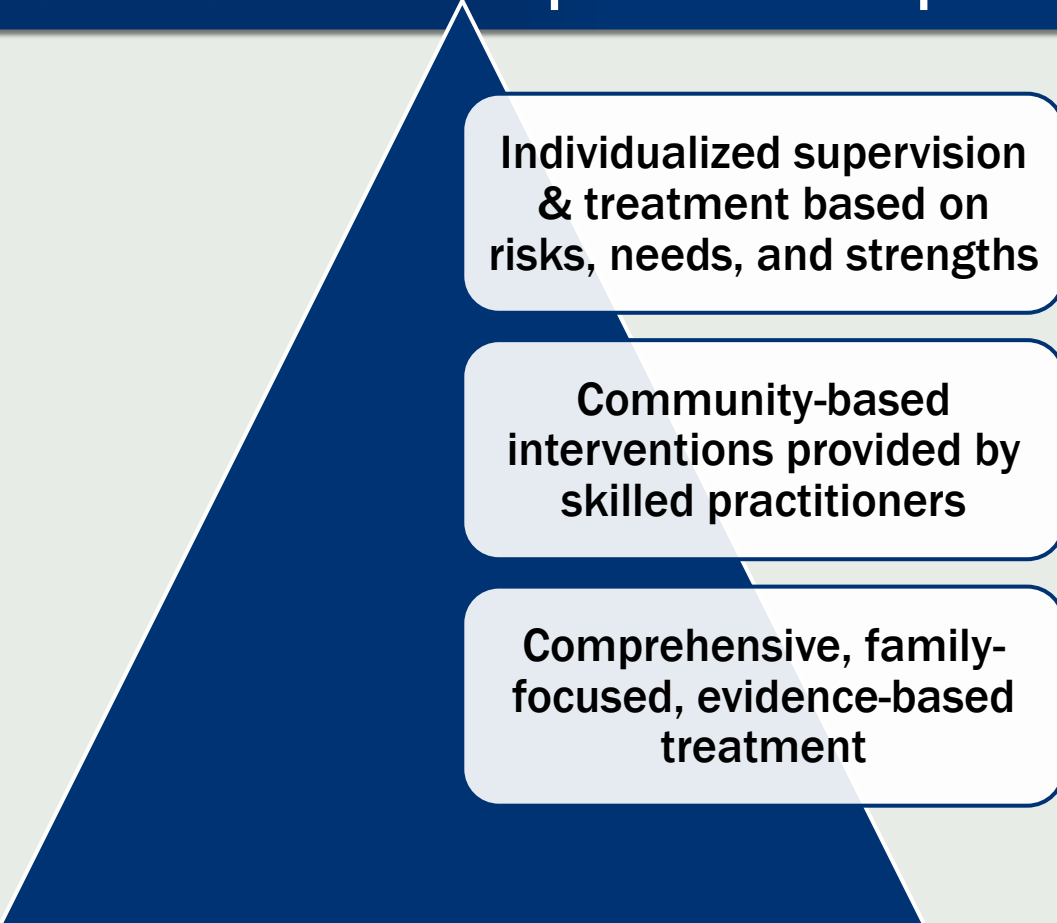
- ◆ **Meta-analyses demonstrate juvenile sexual recidivism is unlikely**

<b>Meta- Analysis</b>	<b>Composite Studies</b>	<b>Total Youth in Sample</b>	<b>Average Follow-up Period</b>	<b>Average Sexual Recidivism Rate</b>
Caldwell (2010)	63	11,219	59.4 months	7.1%

- ◆ **Interviewees corroborate there is low likelihood of sexual reoffending**
- ◆ **The vast majority of youth who have committed a sexual offense never repeat it**
- ◆ **Low recidivism of youth who sexually offend in Illinois reflects national studies**

# FINDING 7: RISK-RESPONSIVE TREATMENT EFFECTIVELY REDUCES SEXUAL REOFFENDING

**Studies show that treatment works.  
Successful interventions share specific and replicable features:**



**Individualized supervision  
& treatment based on  
risks, needs, and strengths**

**Community-based  
interventions provided by  
skilled practitioners**

**Comprehensive, family-  
focused, evidence-based  
treatment**

# FINDING 8: ILLINOIS' CURRENT YOUTH REGISTRATION PRACTICE DOES NOT ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY AND UNDERMINES TREATMENT

**Youth registries  
disrupt treatment  
and undermine  
the well-being of  
victims, families,  
youth, and  
communities**

**No persuasive evidence  
that Illinois' registry  
prevents victimization**

**"Labeling as 'juvenile  
sex offender' affects  
treatment because of  
the stigma, lost hope."  
– Residential treatment  
provider**

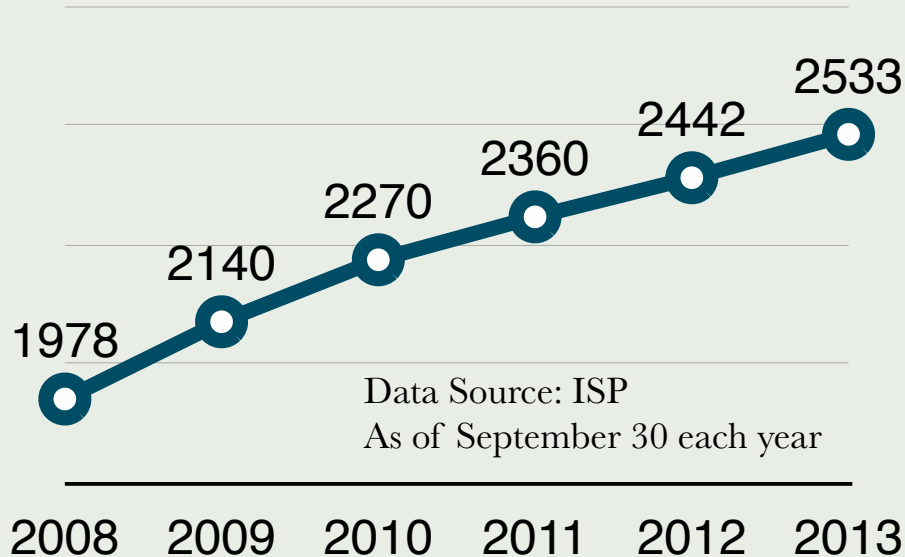
**No legal  
representation  
provided to resolve  
confusing directives**



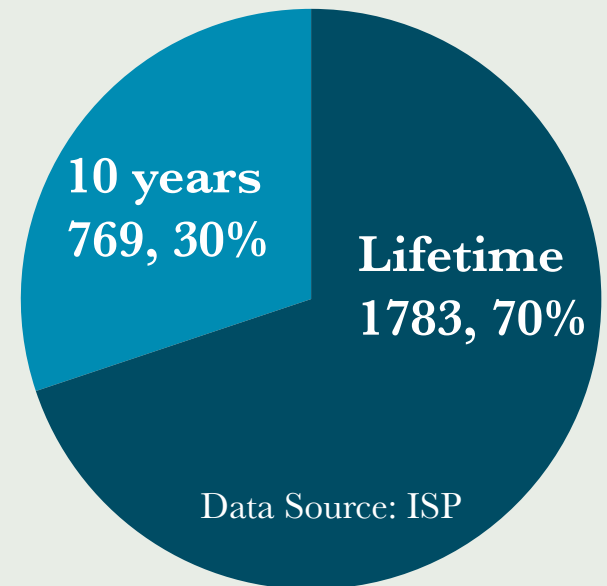
# FINDING 8: ILLINOIS' CURRENT YOUTH REGISTRATION PRACTICE DOES NOT ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY AND UNDERMINES TREATMENT

The number of offenses has decreased, but Illinois' registry continues growing

Juveniles on the Illinois Sex Offender Registry 2008-2013



Juveniles on the Illinois Sex Offender Registry, December 2013



# RECOMMENDATIONS

For Law, Policy,  
and Practice

# STANDARDS AND TRAINING

**Develop and implement professional best practice standards and provide current, objective, and evidence-informed training for professionals who work with youth offenders and victims of sexual abuse.**

# EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS

**Equip courts and communities to intervene effectively with individualized, community-based, family-focused services and supervision.**

# REGISTRY

**Remove young people from the state's counter-productive sex offender registry and categorical application of restrictions and "collateral consequences."**

# TO ACCESS THE REPORT

<http://ijjc.illinois.gov/youthsexualoffenses>

# IMPLICATIONS FOR REENTRY PRACTICE

**Challenges getting youth released from correctional facilities (long lengths of stay)**

**Treatment is important – Is it available? Is it evidence-based?**

**Impact of registries and restrictions – They create barriers to successful reentry in areas like housing, education, and employment.**

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# **Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission Experience**

## **Research Overview**

## **Ask the Expert**

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# Research on Juveniles Who Commit Sexual Offenses

February 26, 2014

National Reentry Resource Center/  
Council of State Governments

# Contact Information

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  - [Chris.Lobanov-Rostovsky@state.co.us](mailto:Chris.Lobanov-Rostovsky@state.co.us)
  - 303-239-4447

<http://dcj.somb.state.co.us/>

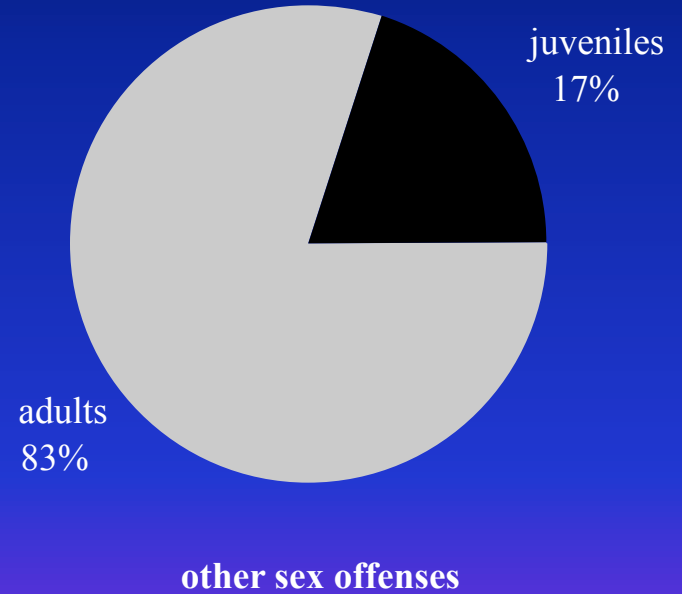
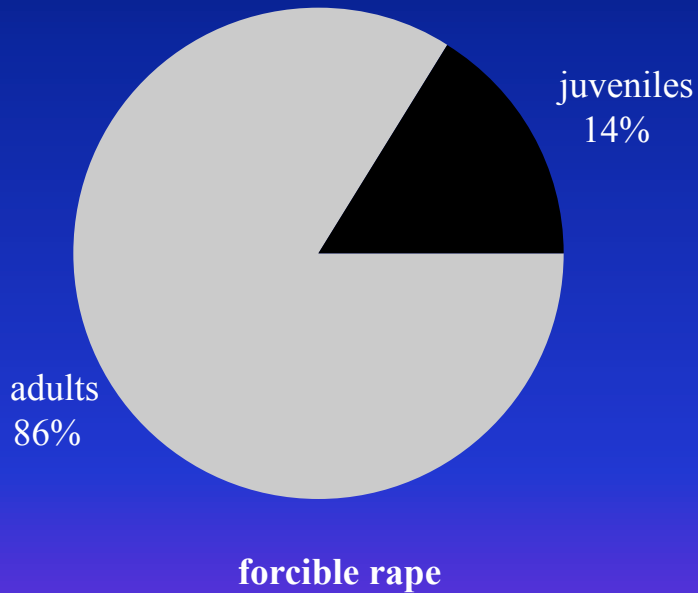
Thanks to the Center for Effective Public Policy  
for Use of Training Materials

# Federal Bureau of Investigation (2009)

1,820 forcible  
rapes

7,799 other  
sexual  
offenses

# Arrests: Adults vs. Juveniles

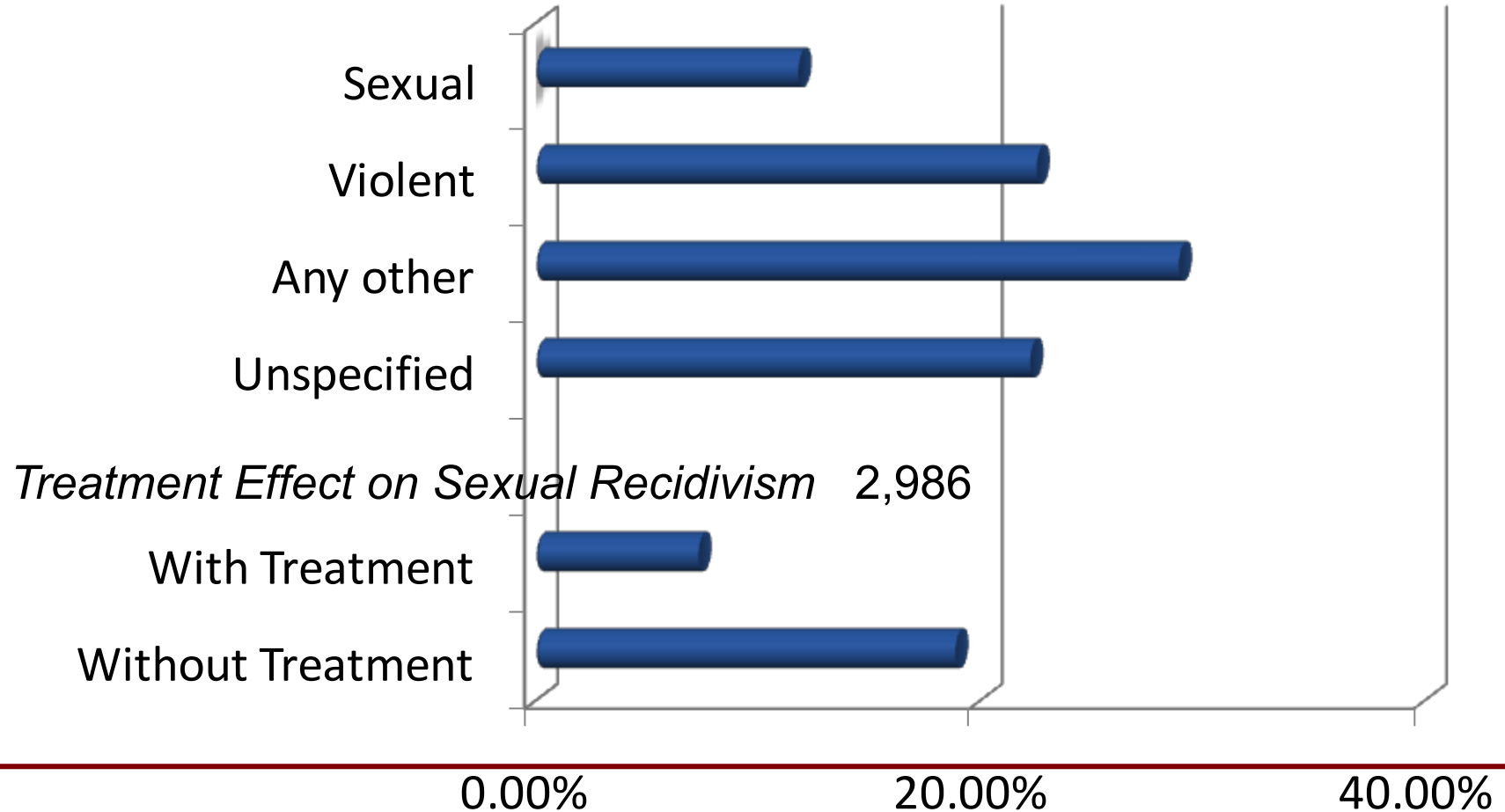


(FBI, 2009)

# Recidivism Rate

*Reitzel and Carrbonell (2006) 33 Published /Unpublished Studies  
of 4805 M; 530 F*

59 months



# Recidivism Rate

Follow-up  
period

Sample  
size

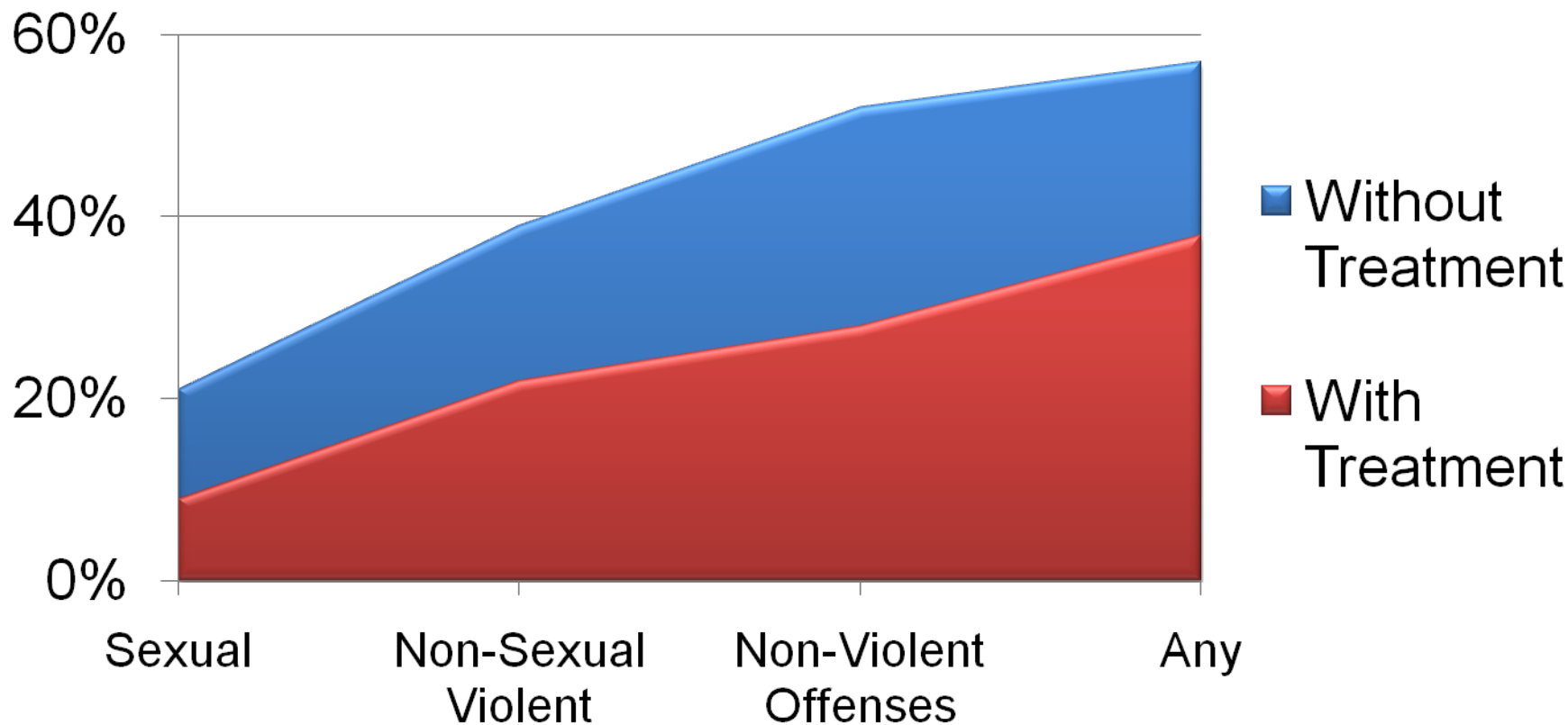
*Worling, Littlejohn, and Bookalam (2010)*

20-year

148

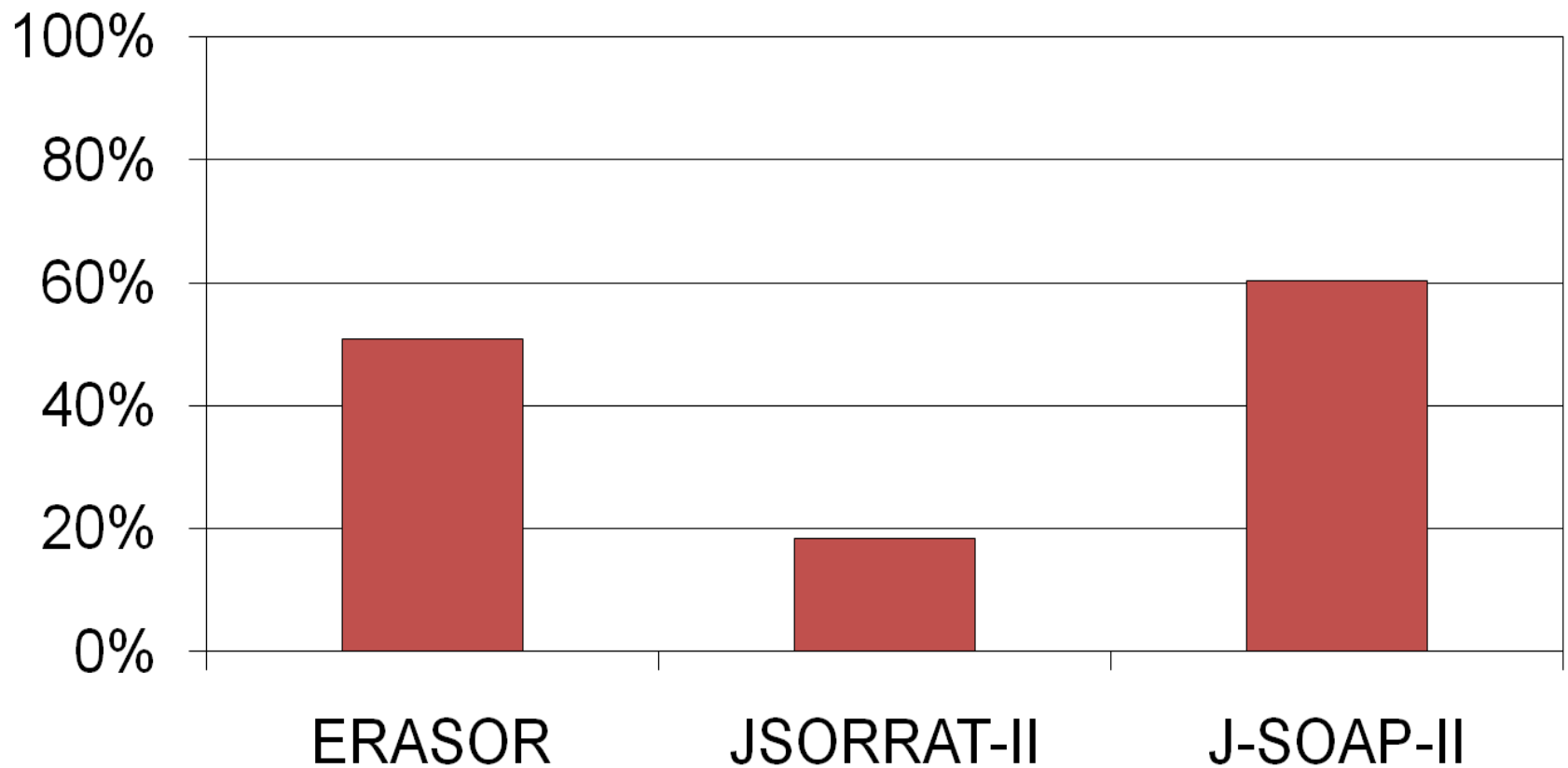
*Treatment Group: (58) Minimum 10 months treatment*

*Comparison Group: (90) Assessment only, refusers, and drop outs*



# RISK INSTRUMENTS

Programs for Adolescent Males (n = 408)



**McGrath, Cumming, Burchard, Zeoli & Ellerby (2009) Safer Society Survey)**

# Suggested Recidivism Risk Factors for Youth Who Have Sexually Offended

**Family instability**

**Poor parent-child relations**

**Association with delinquent peers**

**Antisocial attitudes, values**

**Social isolation**

**Prior sex offenses**

**Number, type of victims**

**Deviant sexual arousal**

**Sexual preoccupation, compulsiveness**

**Treatment non-compliance/termination**

(see, e.g., Worling & Langstrom, 2006)



# 2010s: Treatment Approach for Juveniles Who Commit A Sex Offense

Based on Evaluation: Treatment Needs and Risk

Differential Typologies of Juveniles

- Juvenile Delinquency Focus in Many Cases
- Avoid Labeling as a Sex Offender

Individualized Treatment Plan

Use of Various Treatment Modalities

- Group, Individual, and Family Systems (MST)

Strengths-Based and Protective Factors (Approach Goals)

- Avoid Punitive Treatment Approach
- Confrontation Leads to Negative Outcomes
- *Marshall et al., 1999*

# Outcomes of Supervision Approaches with Juvenile Justice Populations

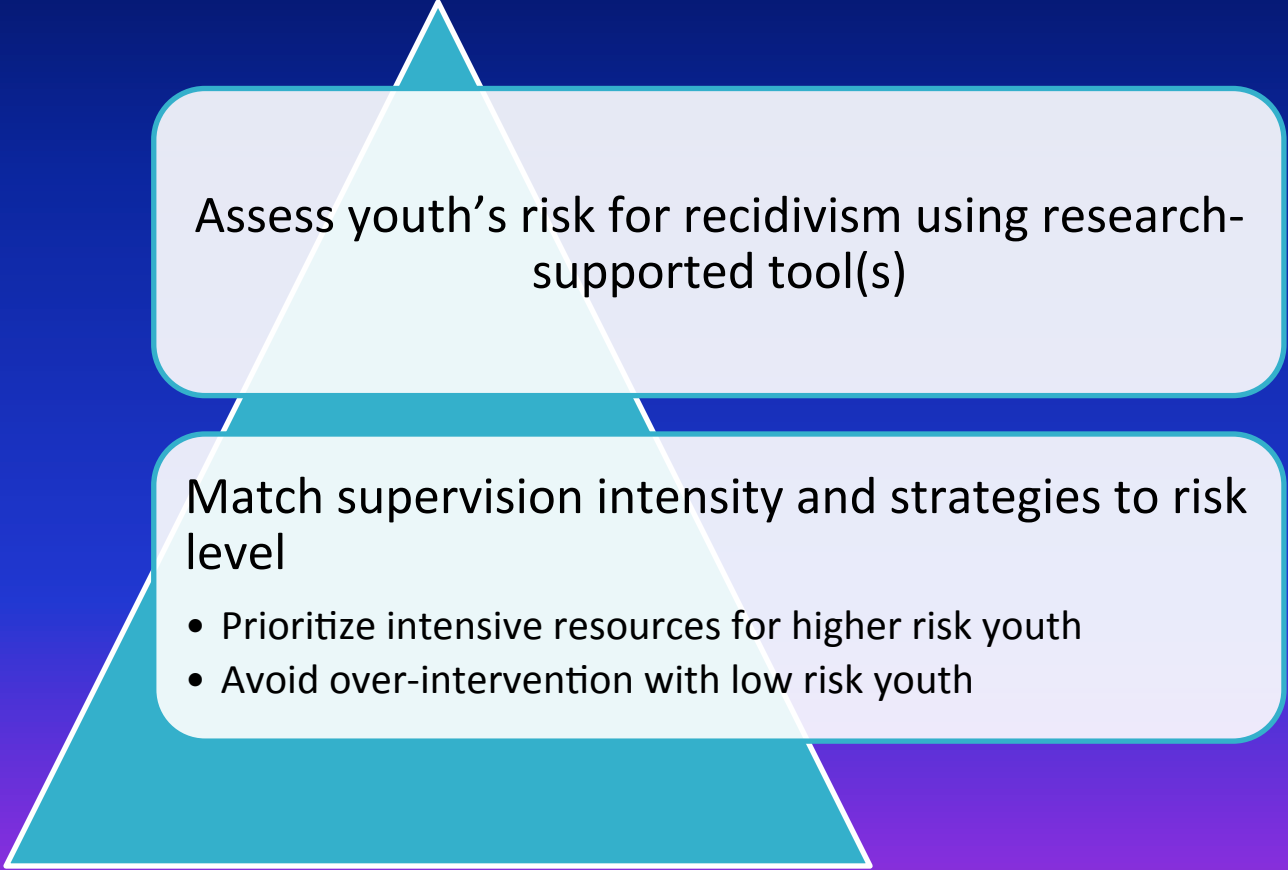
Surveillance, monitoring, & punishment: Very limited impact on recidivism

Balance of surveillance, monitoring, & treatment: Significant reductions in recidivism

(Aos et al., 2001; Smith et al., 2002)

# Maximizing Supervision Outcomes via Evidence-Based Principles

## Risk Principle



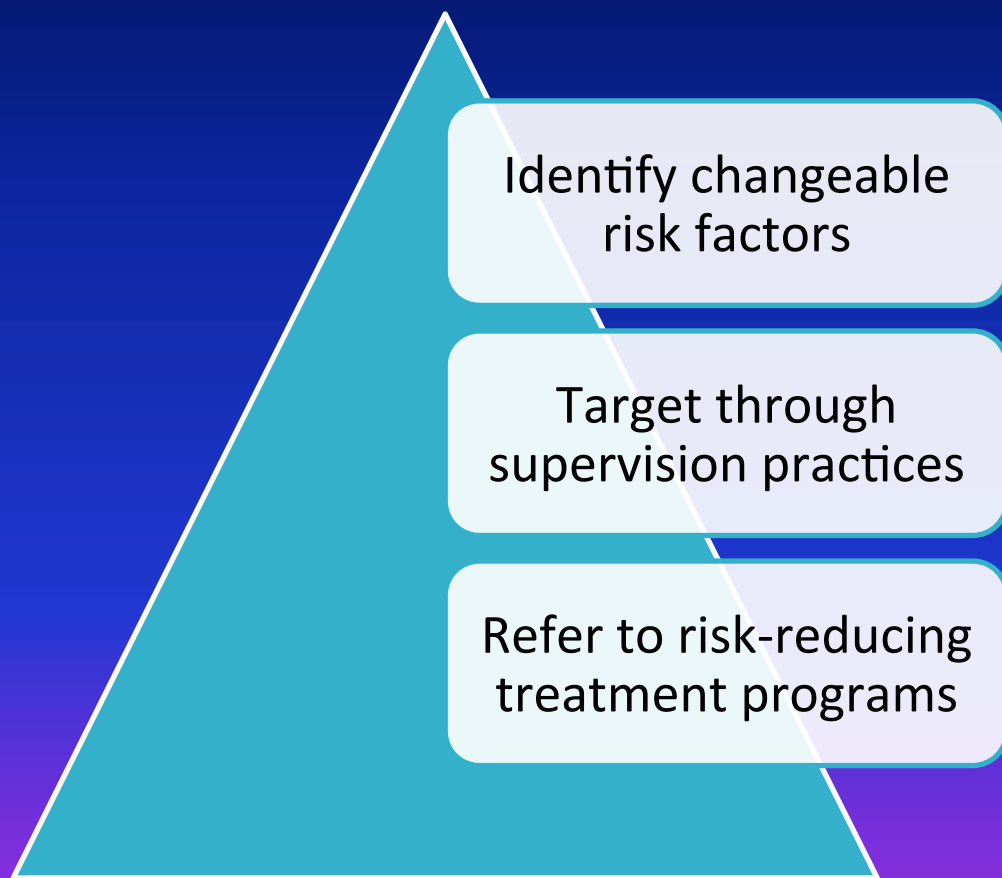
Assess youth's risk for recidivism using research-supported tool(s)

Match supervision intensity and strategies to risk level

- Prioritize intensive resources for higher risk youth
- Avoid over-intervention with low risk youth

(Borum, 2003; Borum & Verhaagen, 2006)

# Maximizing Supervision Outcomes via Evidence-Based Principles: Need Principle



(Borum, 2003; Borum & Verhaagen, 2006)

Surveillance, Monitoring, Enforcement, and Punishment	Balanced Approach with Focus on Accountability <u>and</u> Success
Officers are viewed as enforcers of supervision/release conditions	Officers are viewed as agents of change in the lives of youth and their families
Monitoring occurs primarily to identify compliance and need for sanctions	Monitoring occurs to assess progress, goal attainment, and compliance
Contacts are driven by adherence to standards set forth in policies: Focus on <b>number</b> of contacts	Contacts are driven by problem-solving and change-promoting interests: Focus on <b>nature</b> of contacts
Emphasis is on punishment for non-compliance and problem behaviors	Emphasis is on reinforcers to promote positive behavioral change, sanctioning when warranted
Referrals to programs and services are ancillary/secondary	Advocacy and brokerage for evidence-based programs and services are central
Officers react after problems arise	Needs are anticipated in advance and officers intervene proactively

# 2006 Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act

Repealed the Wetterling Act

First federal registration and notification law to require application to juveniles

21 of 30 jurisdictions who have not implemented AWA reported challenges with juvenile registration

- *GAO, 2013*

Some states will not implement AWA as a result

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# **Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission Experience**

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## **Research Overview**

### **Ask the Expert**

# Thank You

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For more information, contact Cynthia Thaler (cthaler@csg.org)



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