

Monitoring and Evaluation: Using Good Data to Get Good Results

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Introductions



Overview

- Review of Monitoring and Evaluation standard
- How do monitoring and evaluation impact fidelity?
- How can you use evaluation?



Best Practice Standards for Adult Drug Courts

Standard X: Monitoring and Evaluation

The Drug Court routinely monitors its adherence to best practice standards and employs scientifically valid and reliable procedures to evaluate its effectiveness.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- A. Adherence to best practices
- B. In-program outcomes
- C. Criminal recidivism
- D. Independent evaluations
- E. Historically disadvantaged groups
- F. Electronic database
- G. Timely and reliable data entry
- H. Intent-to-treat analyses
- I. Comparison groups
- J. Time at risk

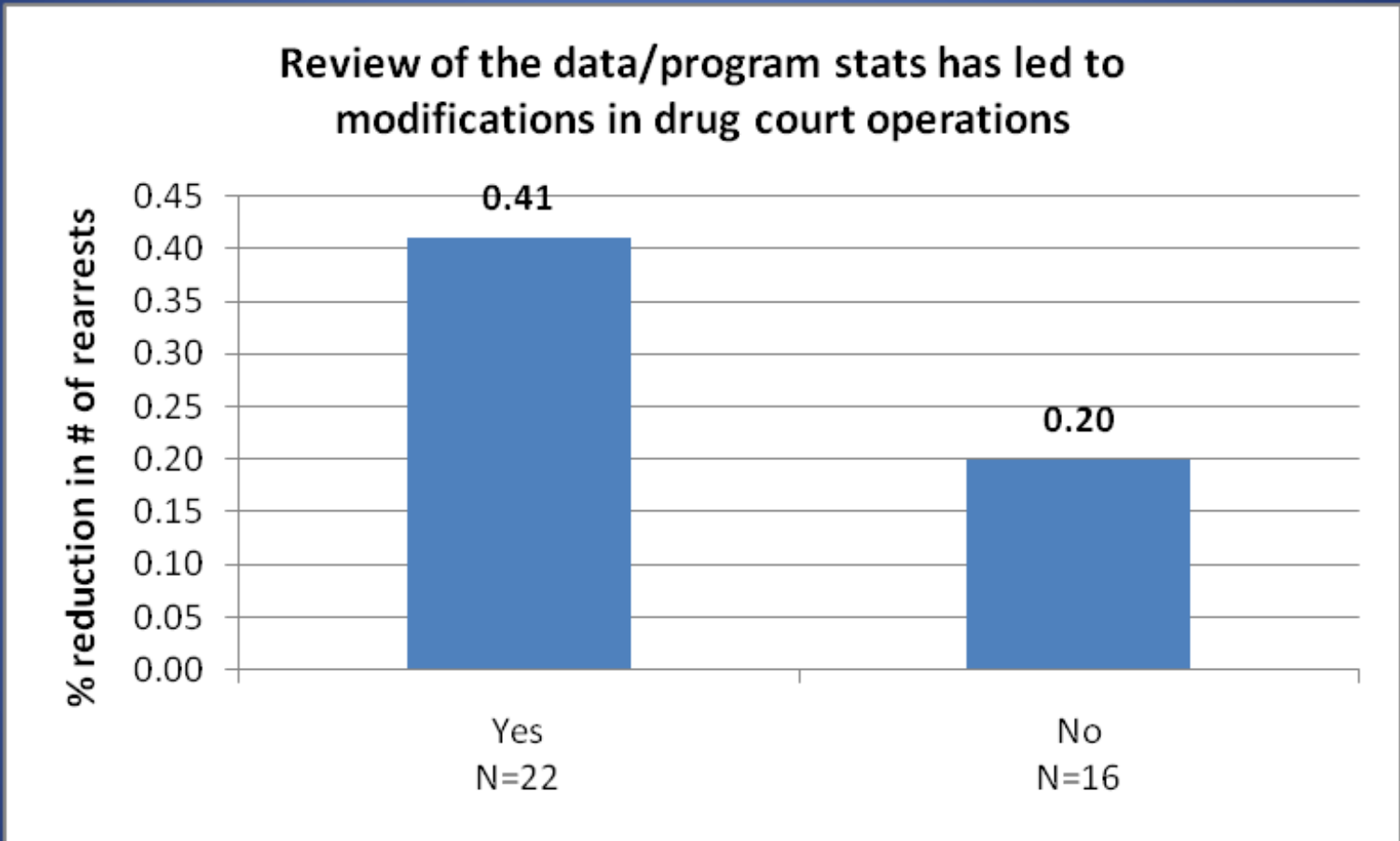
A. Adherence to Best Practices

- Drug court monitors adherence to best practices **at least annually**
- Develops remedial **action plan** and timetable to correct issues
- Examines **success** of remedial actions
- Outcome evaluations describe **effectiveness** of program in context of best practices

A. Adherence to Best Practices

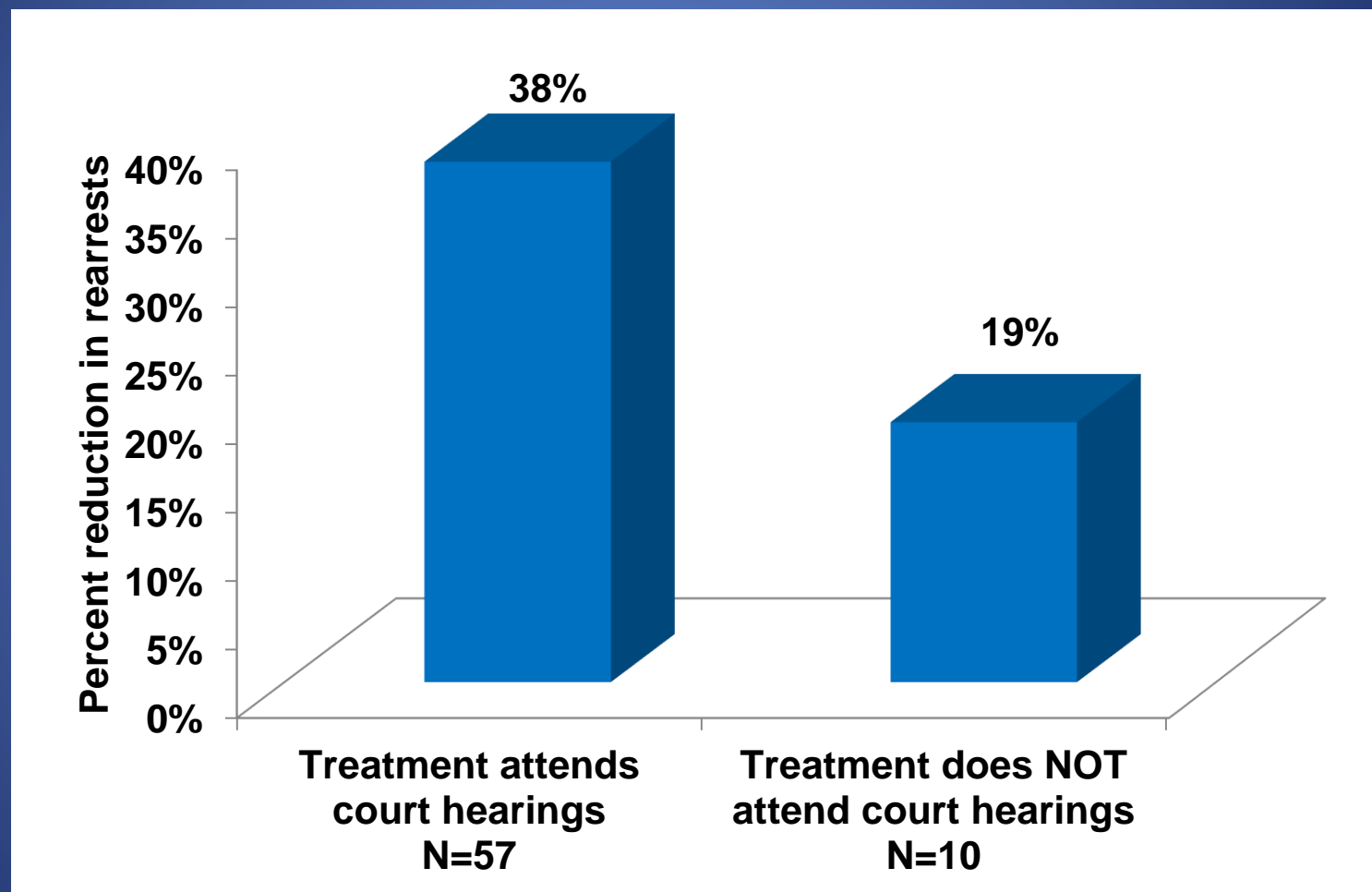
- Theme: **How we use feedback**
 - Did your actions resolve or reduce the problem?
 - What else might need to be done?

Drug courts where review of the data and/or program statistics led to modifications in program operations had 105% greater reductions in recidivism



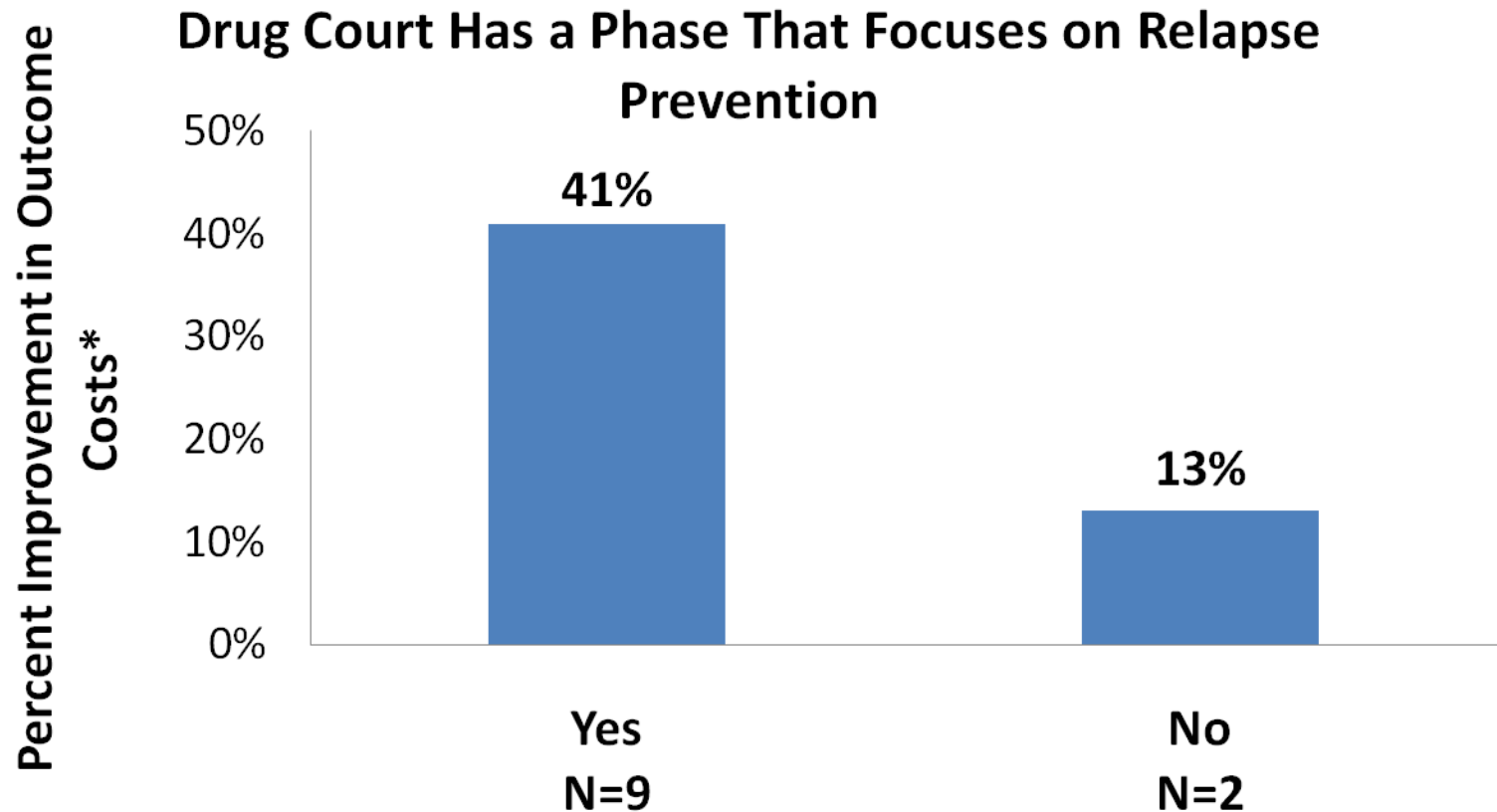
Note: Difference is significant at $p < .05$

Drug courts where a treatment representative attends court hearings had 100% greater reductions in recidivism



Note: Difference is significant at $p < .10$

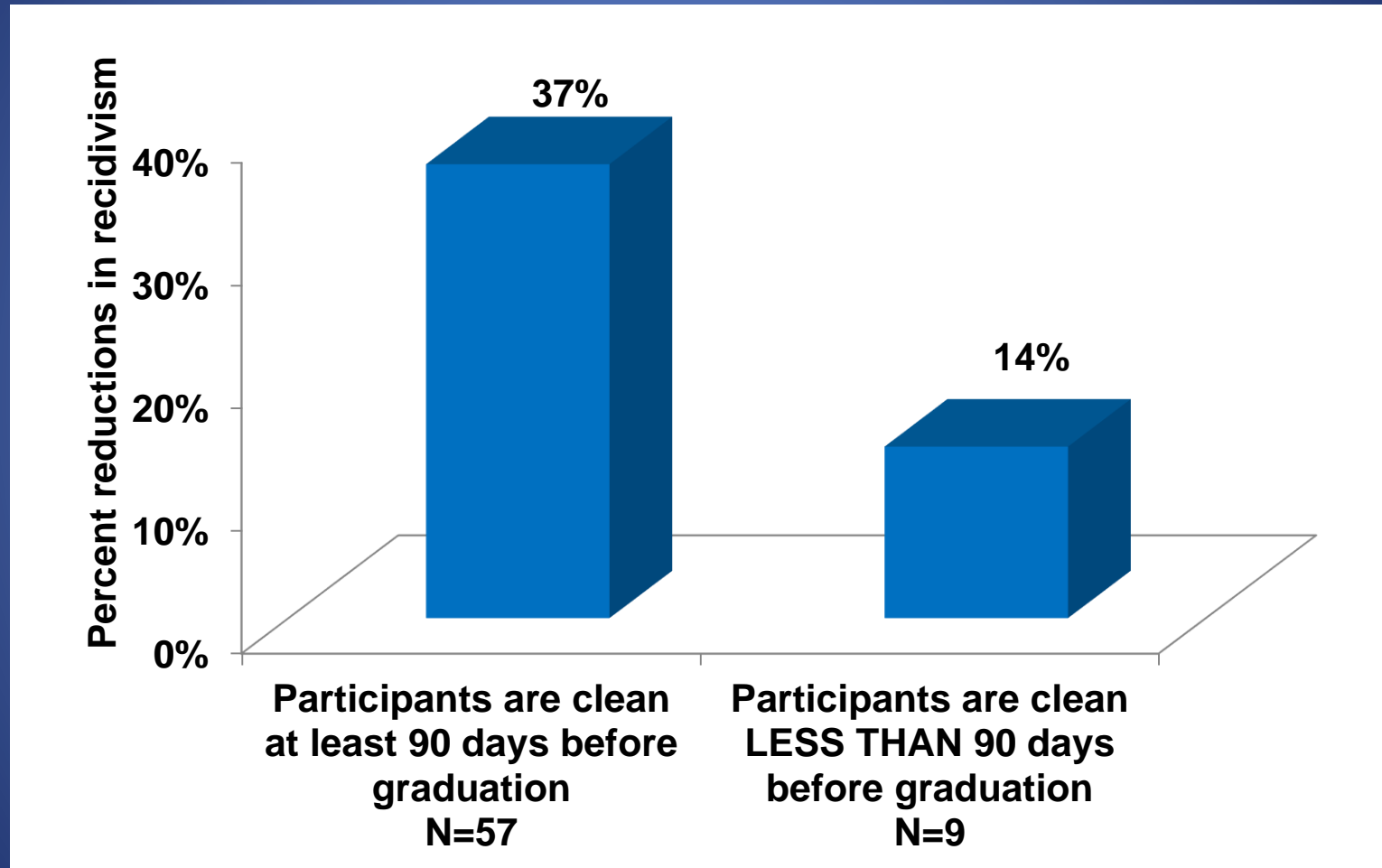
Drug courts that include a focus on relapse prevention had over 3 times greater savings



* "Percent improvement in outcome costs" refers to the percent savings for drug court compared to business-as-usual

Note: Difference is significant at $p < .10$

Drug courts where participants are expected to have greater than 90 consecutive days clean before graduation had 164% greater reductions in recidivism



Note: Difference is significant at $p < .15$ (Trend)

B. In-Program Outcomes

- Drug court continually monitors participant **outcomes during the program**
 - Attendance at scheduled appointments
 - Drug and alcohol test results
 - Graduation rates
 - Lengths of stay
 - Technical violations (e.g., drinking alcohol)
 - New arrests

Discussion

- What are some ways you can share your data?
- How do you use your data to support your program internally?



C. Criminal Recidivism

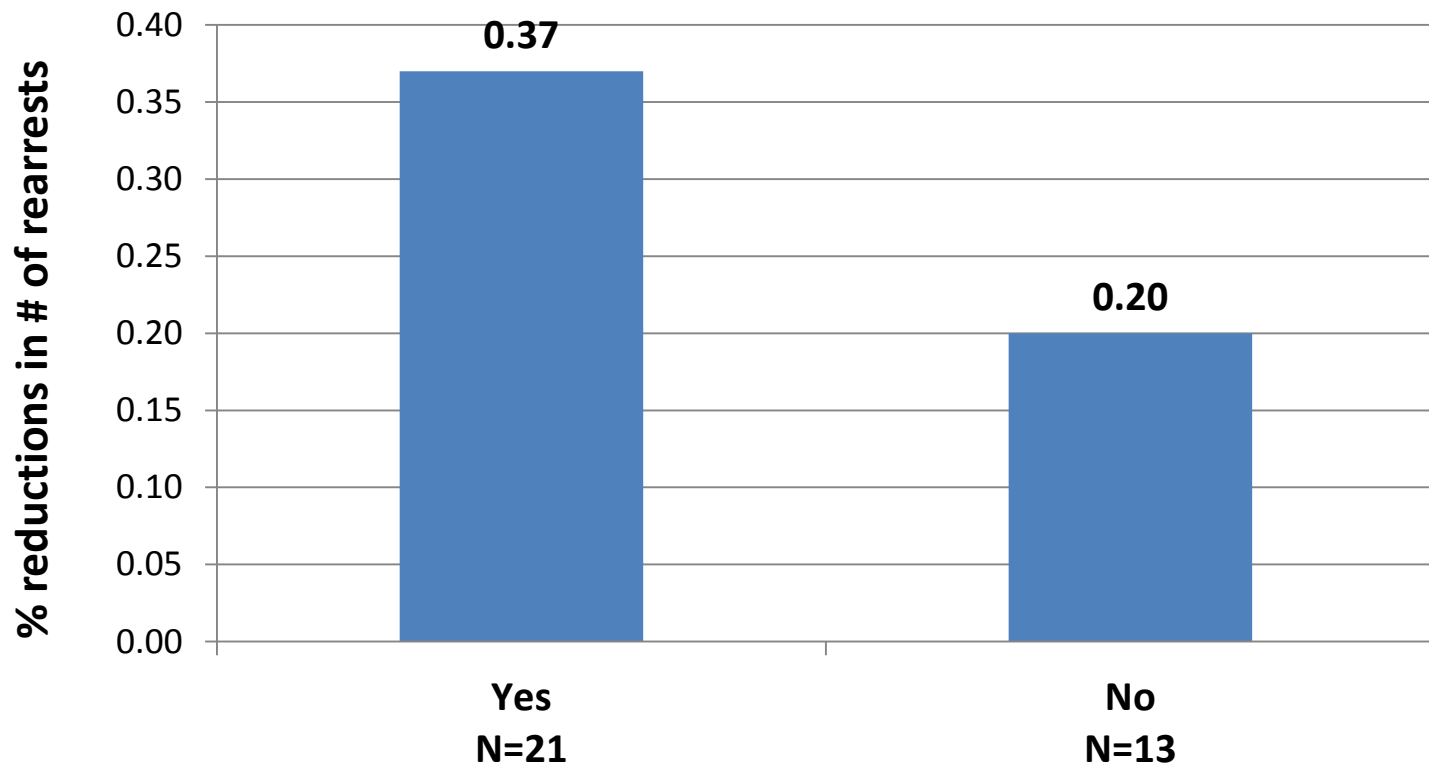
- New arrests, convictions, incarcerations
- From program entry or arrest (or release)
- At least 3 years (shorter follow-ups are preliminary), ideally 5 years
- Categorize
 - Level (felony, misdemeanor, summary offense)
 - Nature (drug, property/theft, violent, technical violation, prostitution, traffic)

D. Independent Evaluation

- Statistical expertise
- Outsider can obtain participant feedback
- Whenever program or environment has changed, or at least every 5 years
 - Staff turnover
 - Drift from model
- Address recommendations
 - Create action plan and timeline

Drug courts that used program evaluations to make modifications in drug court operations had 85% greater reductions in recidivism

The results of program evaluations have led to modifications in drug court operations



Note: Difference is significant at $p < .10$

Group Discussion

- Tell us about an evaluation experience that was great and what made it great?
- Have you experienced or do you have examples of an evaluation that wasn't useful?



E. Historically Disadvantaged Groups

- Drug court continually monitors
 - Admission rates
 - Services delivered
 - Outcomes achieved
- Look at members of historically disadvantaged groups within program
- Develop action plan and timeline to correct disparities
- Examine success of plan

F. Electronic Database

- The program uses an electronic data collection (MIS) that provides relevant statistics on program performance....
-that the team can use to
 - garner insights into its performance
 - guide improvements
 - reveal areas where training is needed

F. Electronic Database



F. Electronic Database

Examples of how to use data from a database to check on program performance:

- Run a summary of the ratio of incentives to sanctions
- Run a summary of the substances that are coming up positive on drug tests
- Run a summary of average time between arrest and program entry and between program entry and first treatment session
- Run a summary of length of stay (time between program entry and exit)

G. Timely & Reliable Data Entry

- Staff members are **required to record** information about
 - Provision of **services**
 - In-program **outcomes**
- Enter when event occurs or **within 48 hours**
- Data entry is part of evaluation of staff job performance



H. Intent-to-Treat Analyses

Include **all eligible participants** who entered the drug court as the program group

Common for programs to want to look only at their graduates (Graduates are often considered the true product of the program)

- ❖ Terminated participants get program services and use program resources too.
- ❖ Terminated participants are also a product of the program.

H. Intent-to-Treat Analyses

Do not compare graduates to the (full) comparison group

- ✓ Graduates may have less severe issues at entry than participants who are terminated.
- ✓ Comparison group has both of these types of people: those who would have graduated had they participated in the program as well as people who would terminate. (But we don't know which ones.)



I. Comparison Groups

Purpose:

To answer the question, “Is the program effective?”

“Compared to what?”

A comparison group tells us **what would have happened if there had been no program.**

Individuals are **exactly like** individuals who participated in the program.

Invalid Comparison Groups

- Do **not** include individuals who
 - Refused program
 - Withdrew (except for neutral reason)
 - Were terminated
 - Were denied entry because of
 - Legal charges
 - Criminal history
 - Clinical assessment results



Good Comparison Groups

Random Assignment

“Gold Standard” in research and evaluation

- Individuals who have been determined to be eligible for drug court are randomly assigned (flip a coin) to participate in drug court or “business-as-usual”
- Called a *Control Group*

Good Comparison Groups

Quasi-experimental design

- Wait-list comparison (too few program slots for everyone)
 - Historical comparison (people in court before program existed)
 - Geographic comparison (people in another county or jurisdiction)
 - Slipped through the cracks (eligible but not referred)
- ✓ *Check for pre-existing differences between groups*

Good Comparison Groups

Matched comparison group

- Evaluator constructs comparison group out of large, heterogeneous pool of offenders
- Select people based on characteristics
 - Demographics
 - Criminal history
 - Substance use diagnosis

Good Comparison Groups

Propensity score analysis

- Advanced statistical procedure
- Mathematically adjusts for differences between groups
- Calculates relative similarity between individuals
- Relies on having good data for the match (e.g., criminal history, substance use)

How Do You Decide Which Comparison to Use?

- ✓ What resources do you have available for evaluation?
- ✓ What data are available?
- ✓ Is the program too new for an outcome or impact evaluation?
- ✓ How much time do you have?
- ✓ What are you willing to do?

It is not always necessary or feasible to evaluate all outcomes for every program.

J. Time at Risk

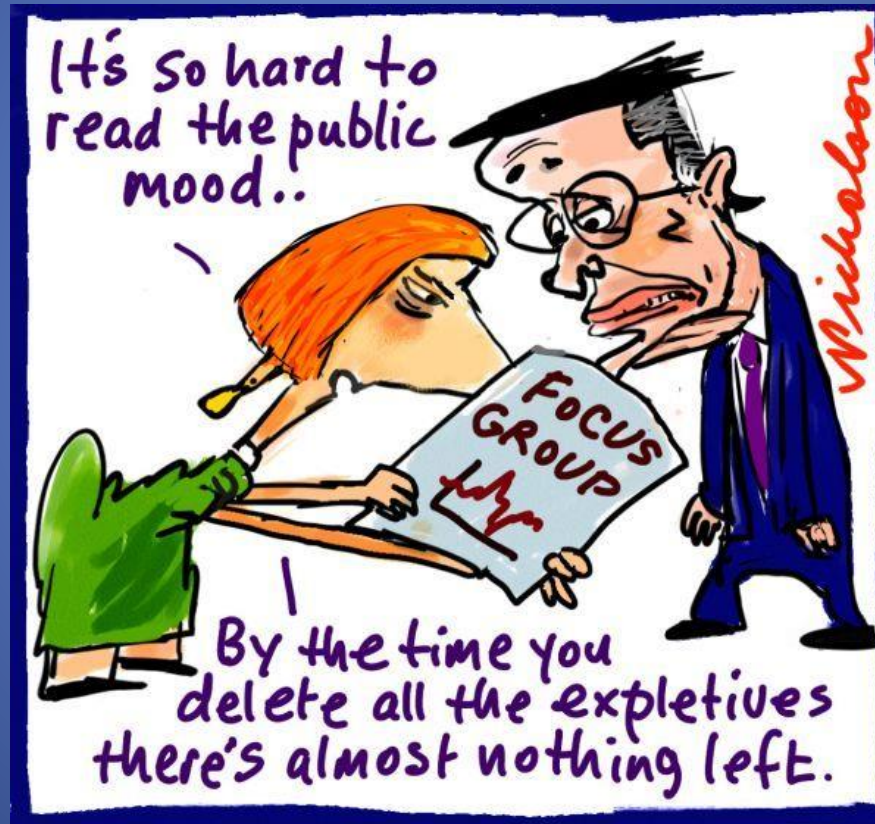
- Same follow-up time for both program and comparison groups
- Comparable start date for follow-up period
- Statistical adjustments if needed
- Time at liberty (incarcerated or in residential treatment) accounted for

How do you use evaluation?

**How can you make it useful for
you?**

Compare yourself to best practices
Know what you are doing well so
you can keep doing it

Learn areas for improvement



You Have an Evaluation ... Now What?

- ✓ Make sure people have the results!
 - Accessible
 - Website, email, press release
 - Easy and digestible
 - Executive Summary
 - Individual court reports



You Have an Evaluation ... Now What?

- ✓ Communication plan
 - Share results with stakeholders, partners, funders and practitioners
 - Report both the negative and the positive - **show transparency and program integrity**



You Have an Evaluation ... Now What?

- ✓ Follow up plan
 - Statewide Advisory Committee
 - Long Term Strategic plan
 - Annual action planning
 - Integrated into TA and trainings

**"STRATEGIC PLANNING IS WORTHLESS -
UNLESS THERE IS FIRST A STRATEGIC VISION."**

JOHN NAISBITT

© Lifohack Quotes

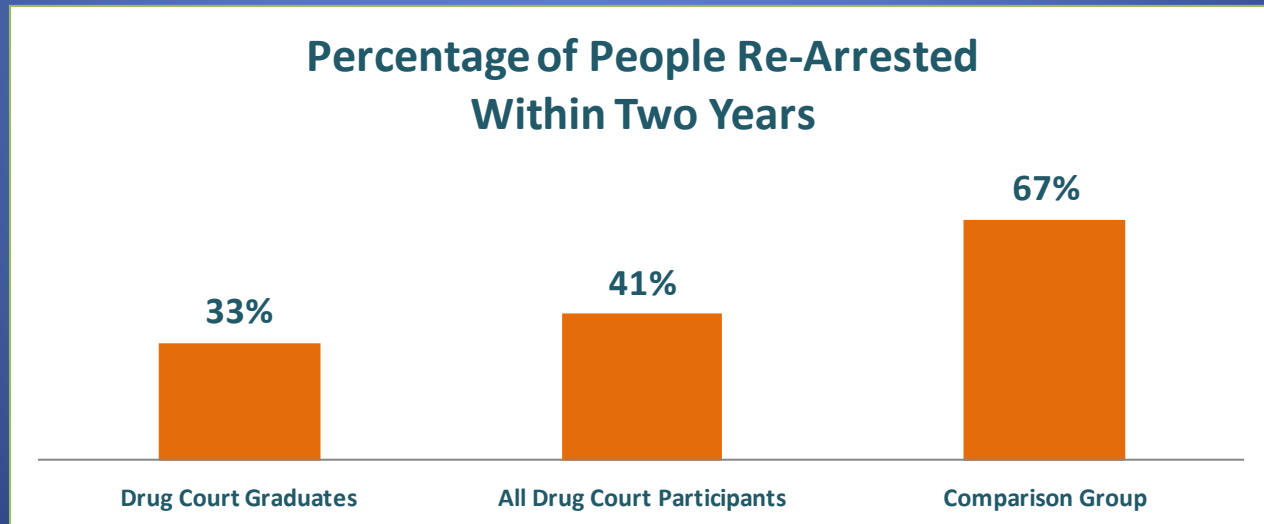
You Have an Evaluation ... Now What?

Example of impact of evaluation in Colorado

- 2011- First ever permanent funding
- 2012-  9 FTE
- 2013-  2.2 Million for treatment
- 2014-  3 FTE
- 2015-  Treatment funding

How do you use evaluation results to get funding?

- Fact sheets (1 or 2 page quick summary of positive outcomes – e.g., cost savings)
- Executive summaries
- Anecdotes from graduates
- Graduates in person



Show the Human Side

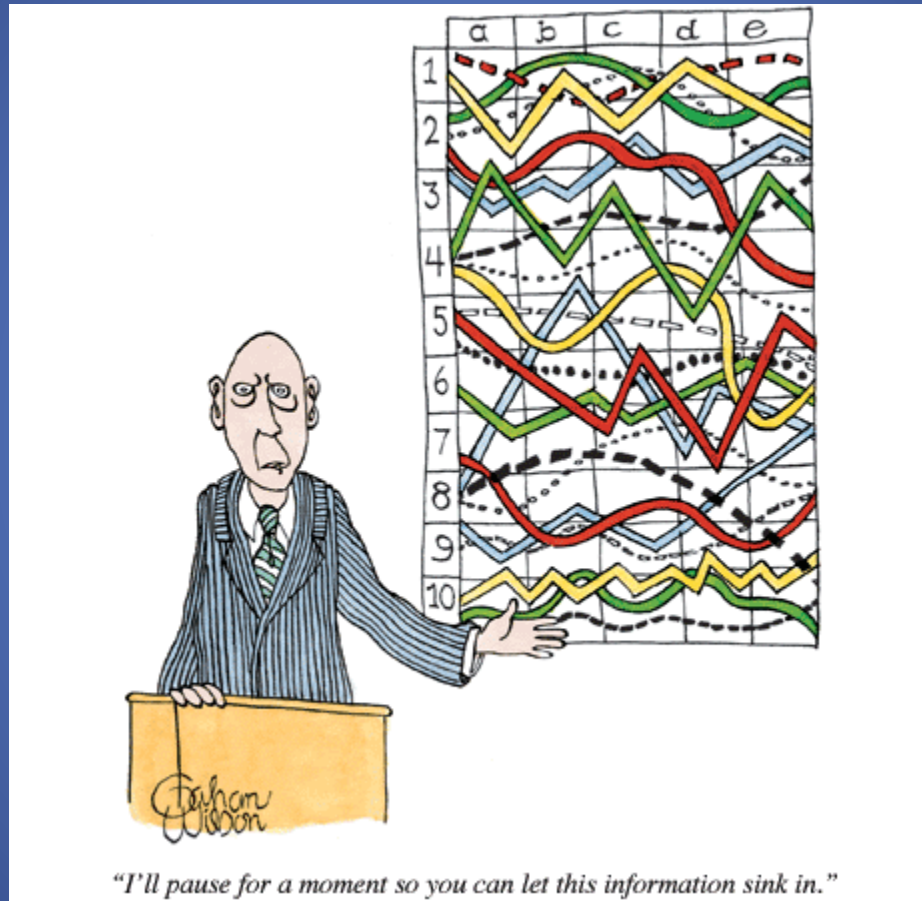


Before DC



After DC

Questions or Comments?



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