

# Evidence Based Practices in Community Supervision: Does Offender Risk Matter?

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# Traditional Community Supervision

Previous research suggests that the effect of probation and parole services on recidivism is less than optimal (Bonta, Rugge, Scott, Bourgon, & Yessine, 2008; Solomon, Kachnowski, & Bhati, 2005; Taxman, 2002).

# Traditional Community Supervision

Bonta et al. (2008)

- In a meta-analysis of 15 studies and 26 effect sizes, results indicated that probation was no more effective than other community based sanctions.

Solomon, Kachnowski, and Bhati (2005)

- Prisoners released without parole performed about as well as those released with mandatory or discretionary parole requirements.

# “What Works”

While evidence suggests community supervision has not been very effective at reducing offender recidivism, there is now a well-developed literature in the field of corrections that identifies “what works” in reducing offender recidivism.

# Principles of Effective Intervention: The RNR Framework

## RISK

### WHO

Deliver more intense intervention to higher risk offenders

## NEED

### WHAT

Target criminogenic needs to reduce risk for recidivism

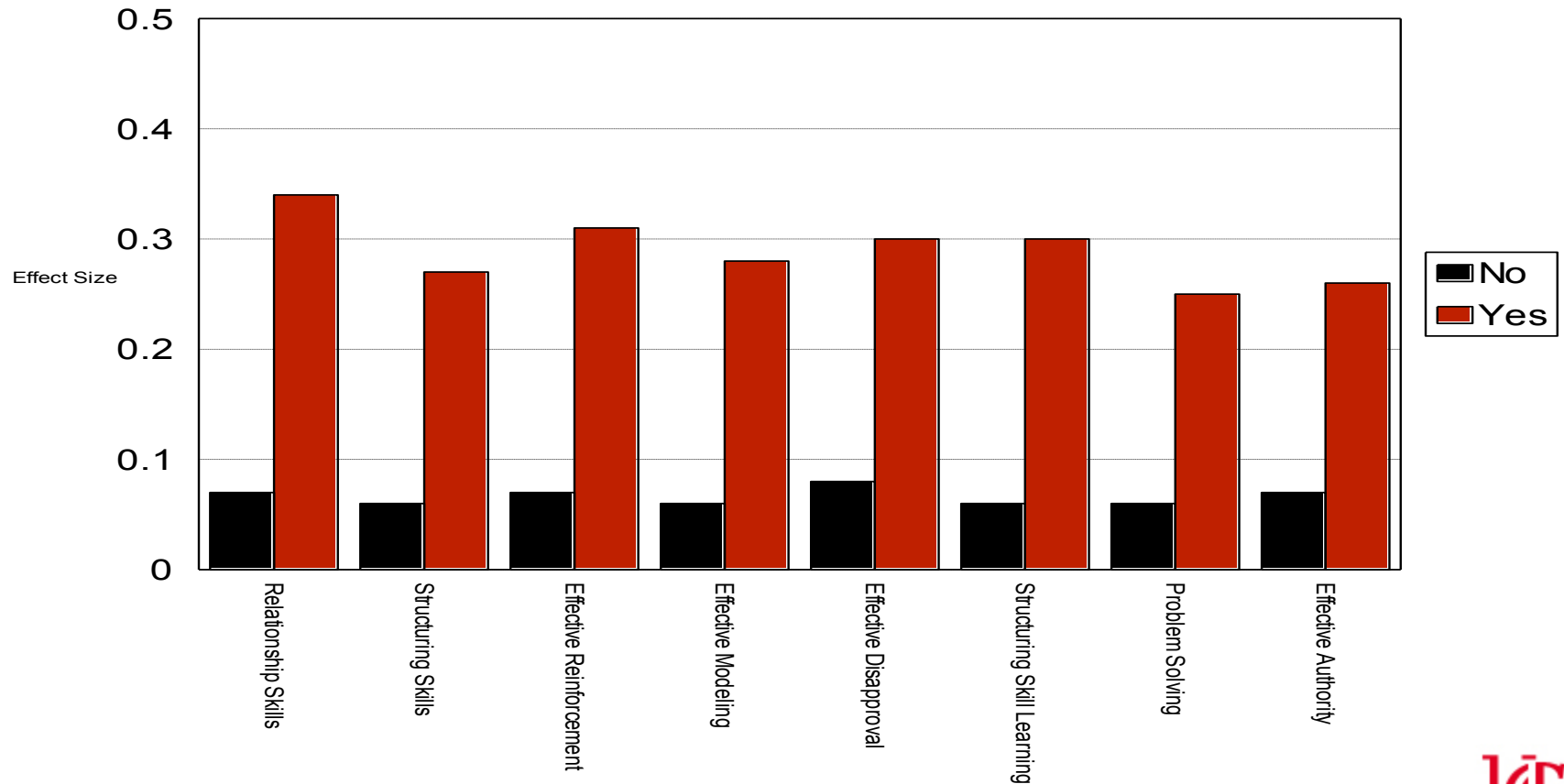
## RESPONSIVITY

### HOW

Use CBT approaches  
Match mode/style of service to offender

# Core Correctional Practices

## Elements of Effective Correctional Practice and Recidivism



Source: Gendreau, P. (2003). Invited Address, Division 18, APA Annual Convention, Toronto, CA.

# Traditional Community Supervision and “What Works”

Bonta, Rugge, Scott, Bourgon, and Yessine (2008)

- Evaluated audiotaped probation contact sessions
  - Officers did not target criminogenic needs
  - Officers used cognitive behavioral interventions in less than 25% of sessions
  - Case plans were not based on the results of offender risk assessments

# Community Supervision and “What Works”

**RISK** - assess offenders with a validated risk and need assessment and focus time and treatment resources on offenders who are deemed a moderate or high risk to reoffend

**NEED** - focus on the dynamic risk factors that a validated needs assessment indicate are contributing to the likelihood that an offender will engage in future criminal behavior.

**RESPONSIVITY** - use cognitive-behavioral interventions during contact sessions to target criminogenic needs in a responsive way.

(Andrews & Bonta, 2010).

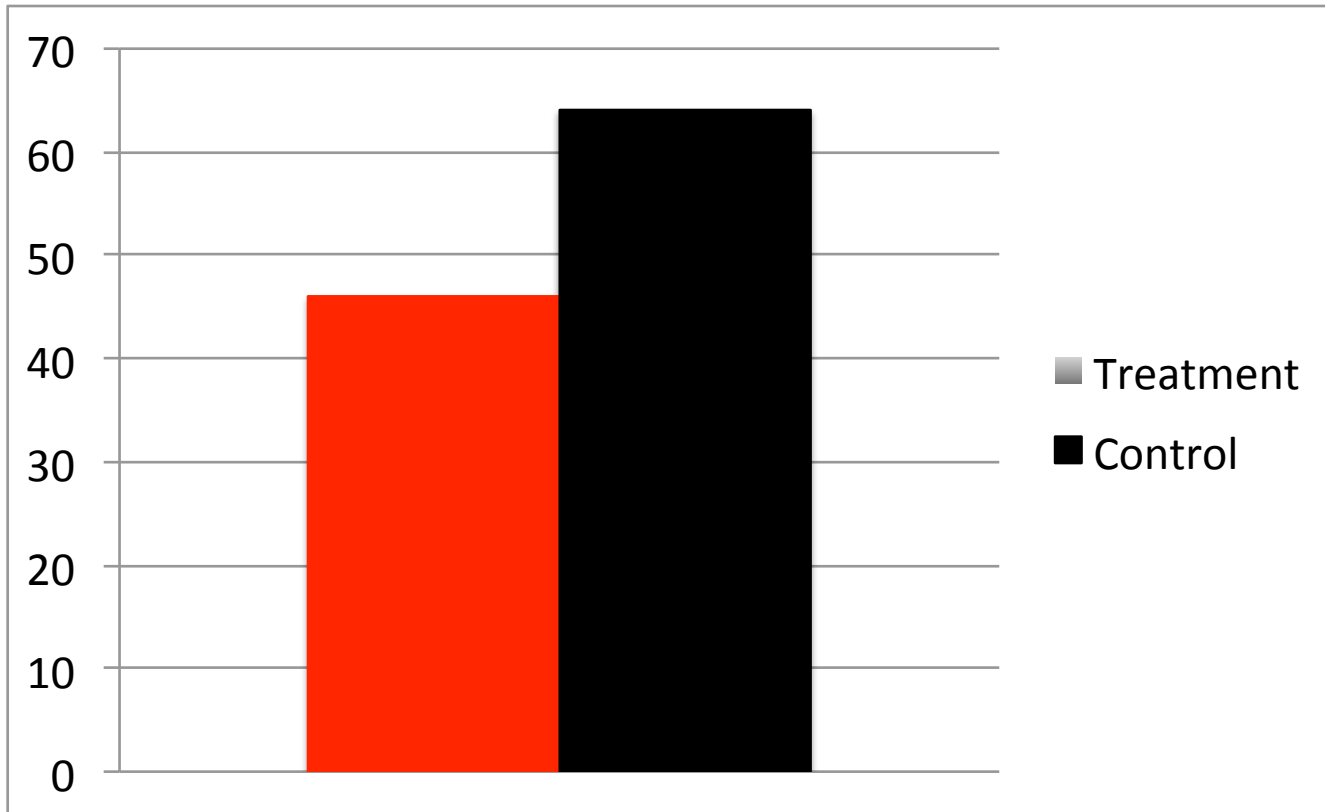


# Community Supervision and “What Works”

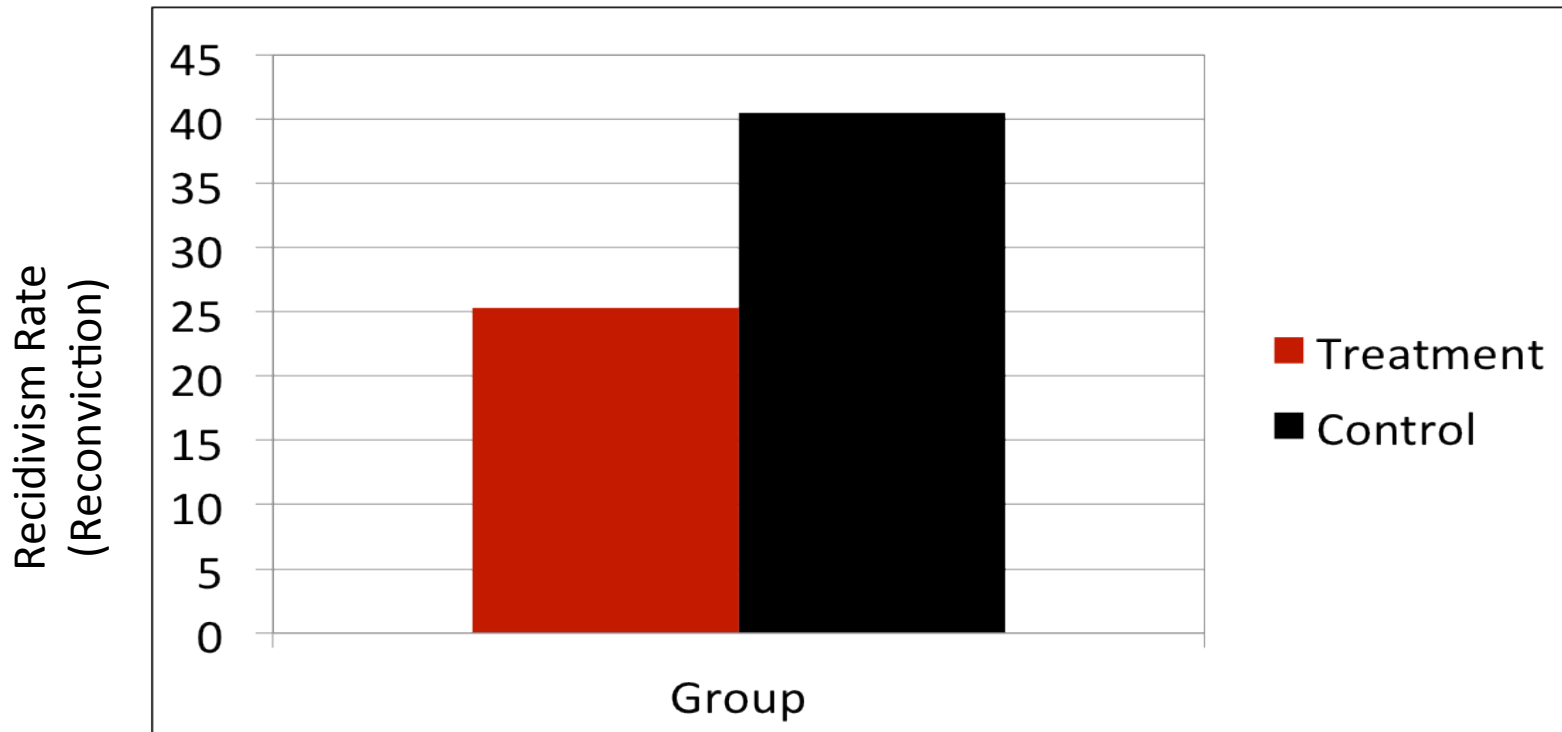
Several researchers have taken the initiative to train community supervision officers in the RNR model

- Chris Trotter (1996, 2006)
- Bonta et al. (2010, 2011 )
- Robinson, et al. (2011, 2012)

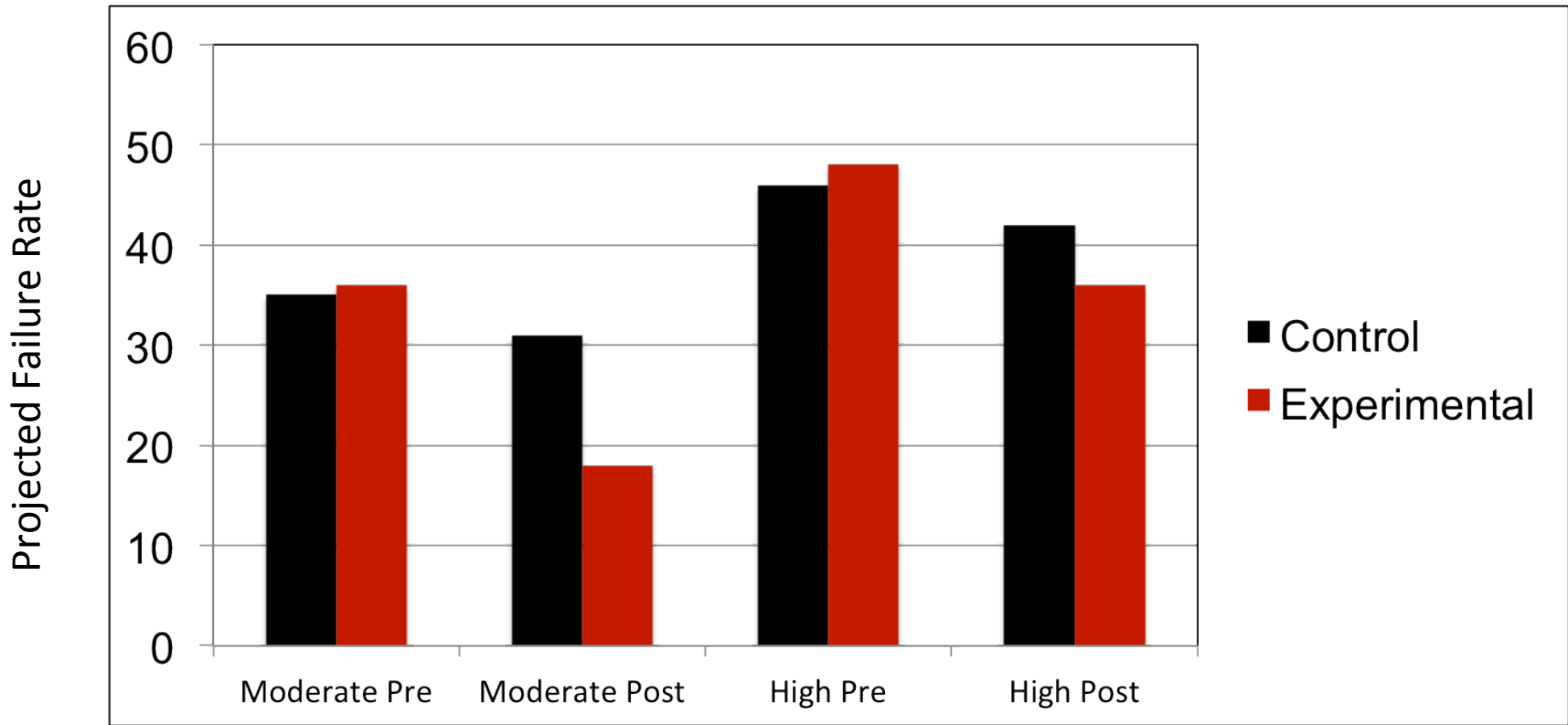
# Chris Trotter (1996, 2006)



# STICS Research (2010, 2011)



# STARR Research (2011, 2012)



# Effective Practices in Community Supervision Model (EPICS)

This model strives to more fully utilize staff as agents of change and ensure offenders receive a consistent message throughout the continuum of correctional services

The EPICS model is not intended to replace more intense cognitive-behavioral treatments that address specific criminogenic needs

# EPICS

Applies the RNR framework to community supervision

Trains officers on core correctional practices

Trains officers to intervene where the offender is deficient in making decisions

Includes measures of fidelity and coaching sessions

# EPICS and the RNR Model

How does the EPICS model encourage adherence to principles of risk, need, and responsivity?

- Focuses effort on moderate to high risk offenders
- Provides a format to target criminogenic needs in a one-on-one context
- Encourages identification of specific responsivity factors
- Uses cognitive and behavioral strategies to change offender behavior

# EPICS Session Structure

Each session should be structured in the following way:

1. Check-In
2. Review
3. Intervention
4. Homework



# EPICS Training and Coaching Requirements

EPICS is a three-day training for probation/parole officers and supervisors.

In order to ensure adherence to the model and to train the supervisors as coaches, monthly coaching sessions are included as part of the training.

# EPICS Evaluation

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Effective Practices for Community Supervision (EPICS) Model in the state of Ohio in reducing recidivism among criminal offenders within the context of a community supervision setting

# Research Questions

1. *Can the EPICS model increase the effectiveness of community supervision outcomes?*
  - *Is there a differential impact of risk on recidivism*
2. Can researchers and practitioners collaborate to study and improve probation officer-offender interactions?
3. Can researchers and practitioners work together to maintain research and program fidelity and translate these techniques into practice?

# Methodology

Trained officers on EPICS and core correctional practices

On-going coaching sessions for trained officers

Support for supervisors as internal coaches

Support for agency implementation considerations

# Methodology

Officers were evaluated on their use of the model in their contact sessions with offenders in order to determine if those skills result in better outcomes for the offenders

## Specific Measures:

- Offender and officer attributes and demographics
- Session interactions and adherence to model
  - Audios and Coding Sheets
- Outcome measures
  - Criminal recidivism defined as reincarceration, arrest for new offense, and technical violations of community supervision

# Analyses

Descriptive statistics

Bivariate analyses

Pearson Chi-Square

*t*- tests

Logistic Regression

# Demographics of Officers

Characteristic	Trained		Untrained	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Total Sample (<i>n</i> = 42)</b>	<b>22</b>		<b>20</b>	
Male	10	47.6	10	50.0
White	20	95.2	17	85.0
<b>JP (<i>n</i> = 8)</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>4</b>	
Male	2	50.0	2	50.0
White	3	75.0	3	75.0
<b>AP (<i>n</i> = 20)</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>10</b>	
Male	3	30.0	3	30.0
White	10	100.0	9	90.0
<b>DRC (<i>n</i> = 14)</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>6</b>	
Male	5	71.4	5	83.3
White	7	100.0	5	83.3

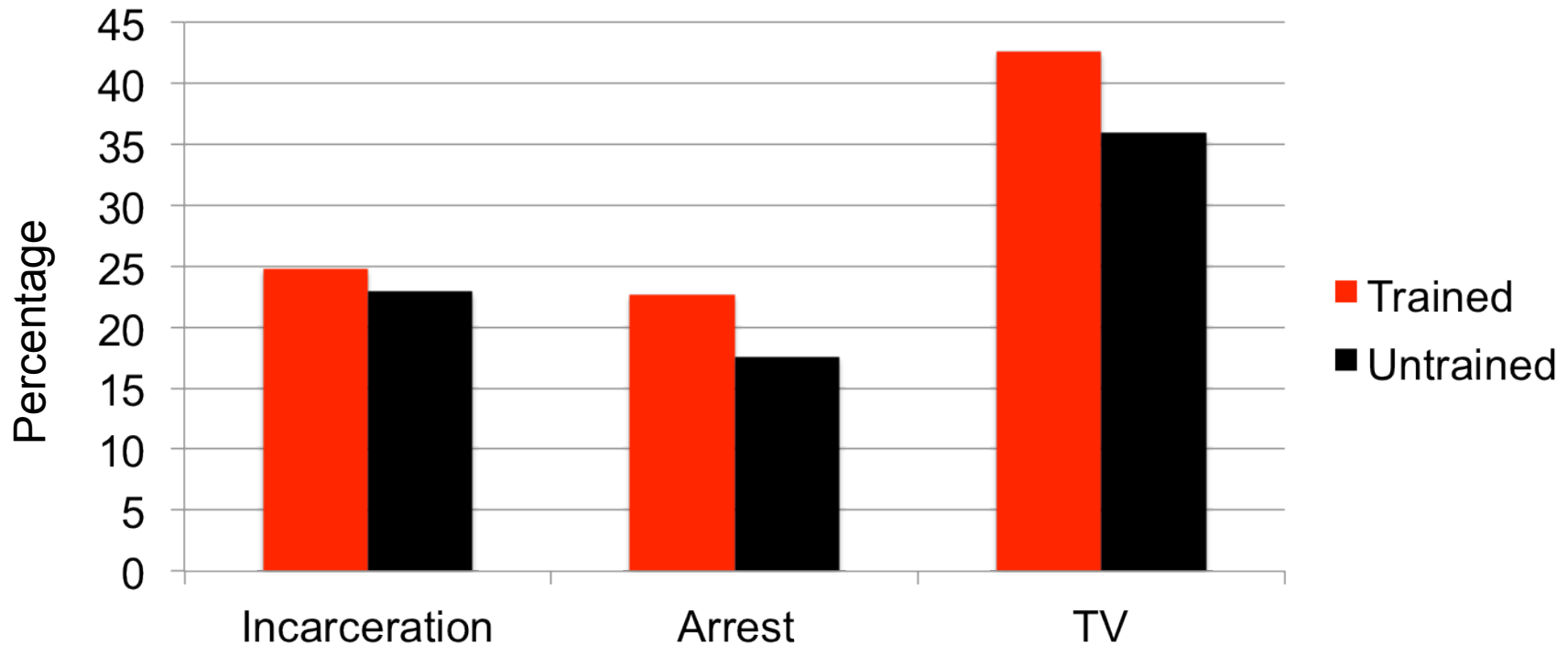
# Demographics of Offenders

Characteristic	Trained		Untrained	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Total Sample (<i>n</i> = 272)</b>	<b>141</b>		<b>131</b>	
Male*	124	87.9	103	78.6
White	67	47.5	68	51.9
Mean age (SD)	31.1	9.4	31.5	10.2
<b>Agency</b>				
JP ( <i>n</i> = 15)	8	5.7	7	5.3
AP ( <i>n</i> = 200)	102	72.3	98	74.8
DRC ( <i>n</i> = 57)	31	22.0	26	19.8
<b>Risk Level</b>				
Moderate ( <i>n</i> = 159)	79	56.0	80	61.1
High ( <i>n</i> = 113)	62	44.0	51	38.9

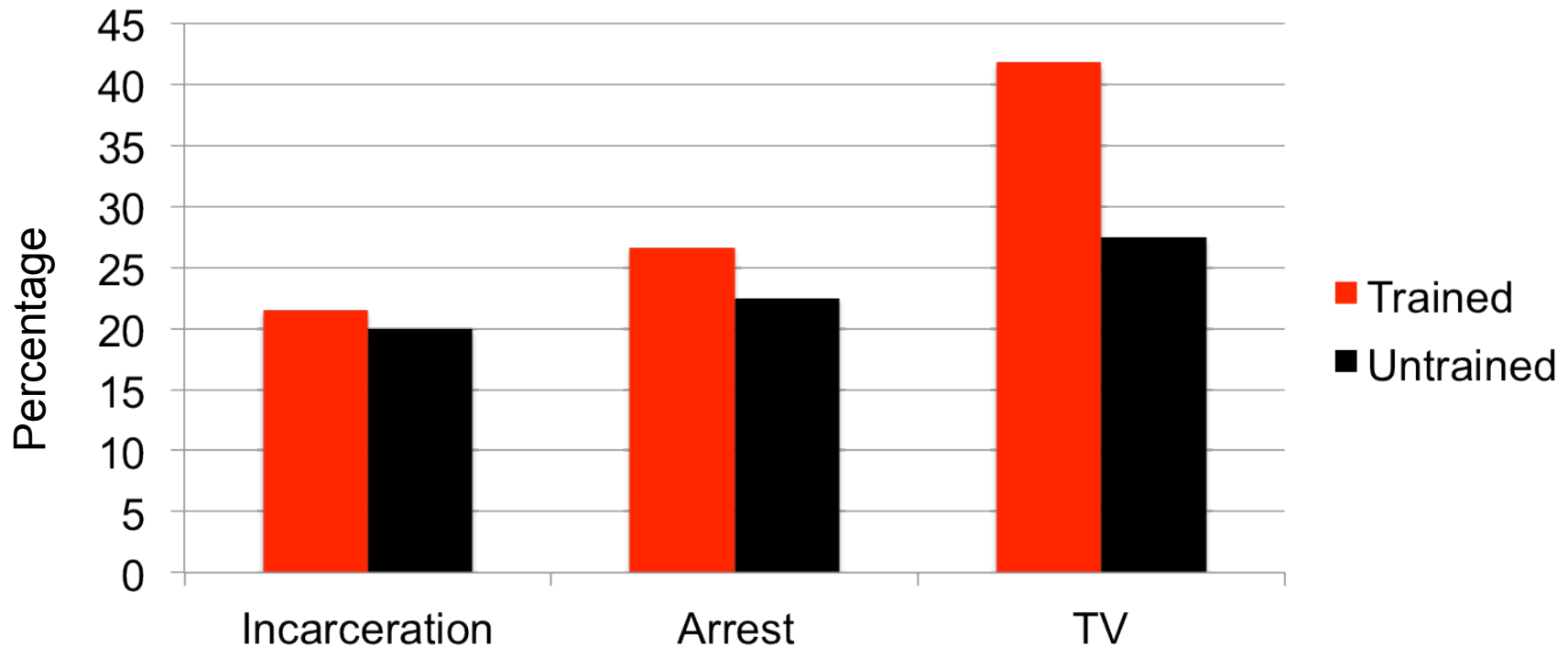
\**p* ≤ .05.



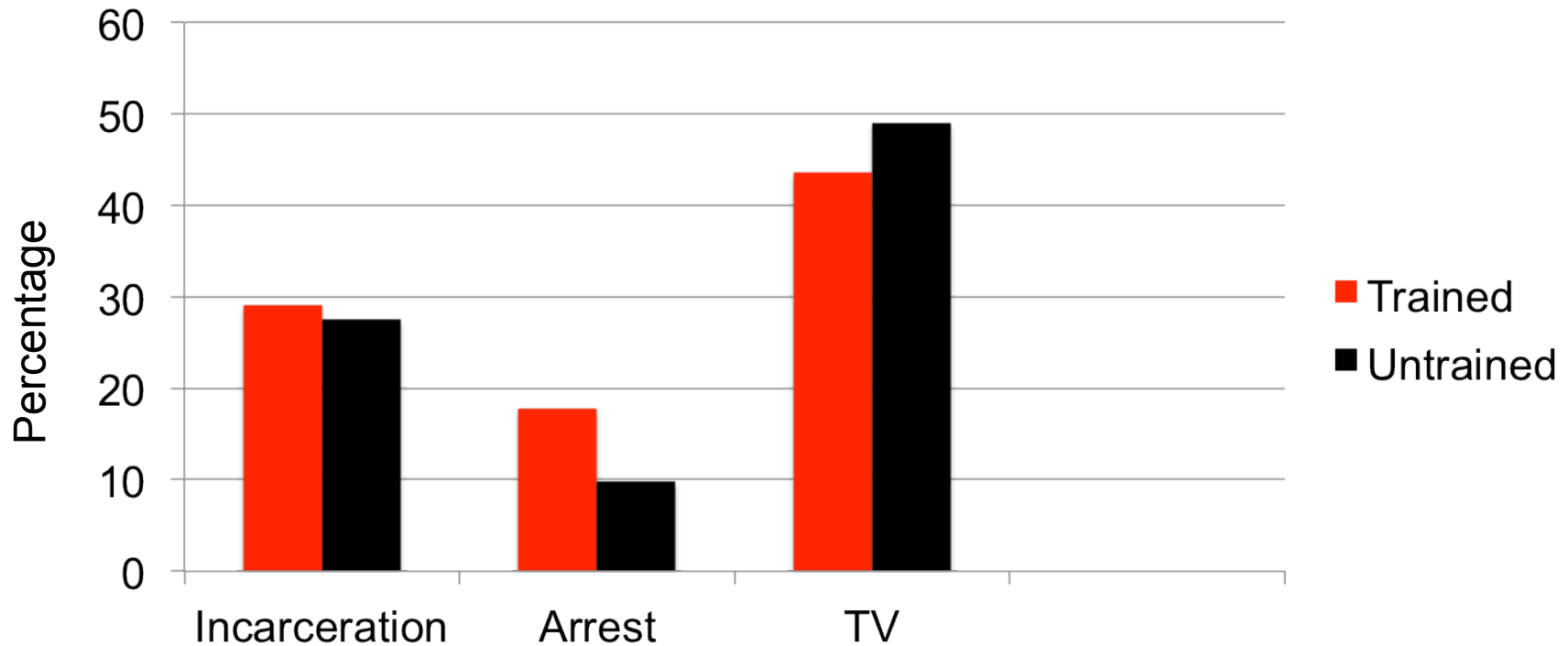
# Recidivism by Group Assignment for the Total Sample



# Recidivism by Group Assignment for Moderate Risk Offenders



# Recidivism by Group Assignment for High Risk Offenders



# Results

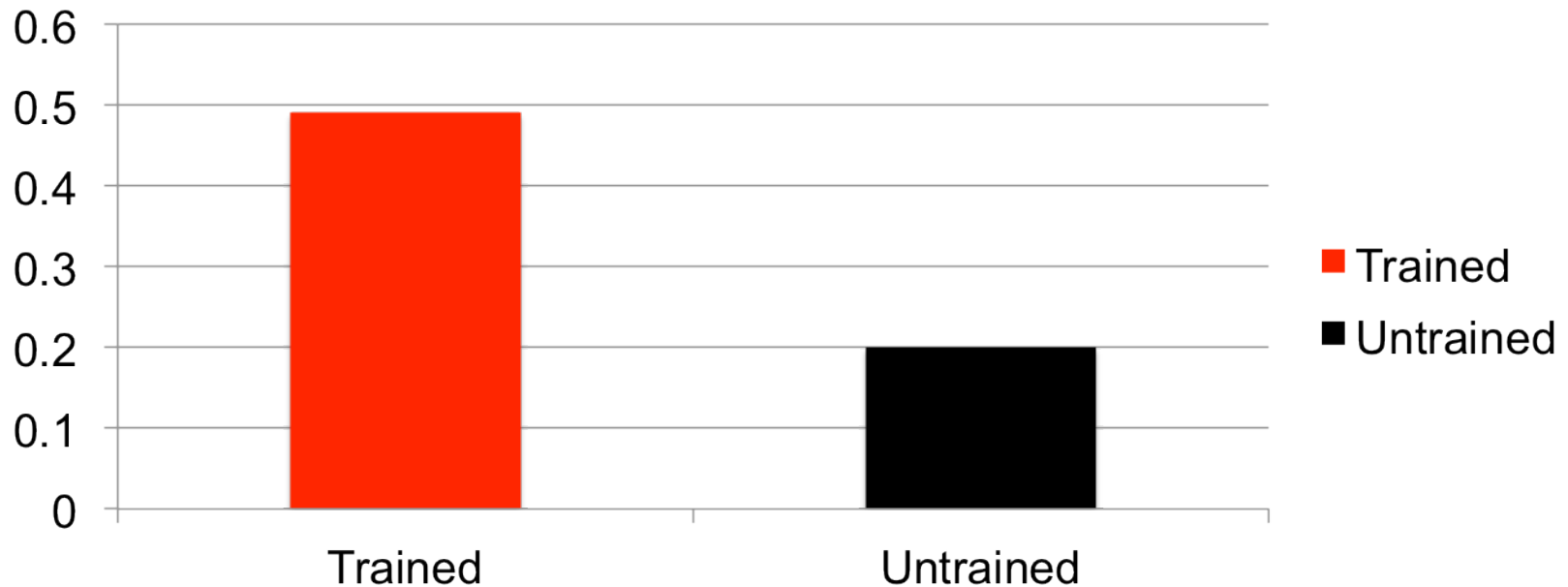
The Effect of EPICS Training on Officer Use of Core Correctional Practices (CCP) ( $n = 37$ )

<b>EPICS Score</b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>	<b><i>t</i></b>	<b><i>df</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>	<b><i>Cohen's d</i></b>
<b>Total Sample</b>			-9.63 <sup>a</sup>	29.9 <sup>a</sup>	< .001	3.2
Trained ( $n = 21$ )	.49	.12				
Untrained ( $n = 16$ )	.20	.06				

<sup>a</sup>The  $t$  and  $df$  were adjusted because variances were not equal

# The Effect of EPICS Training on Officer Use of Core Correctional Practices (n = 37)

Average EPICS Score

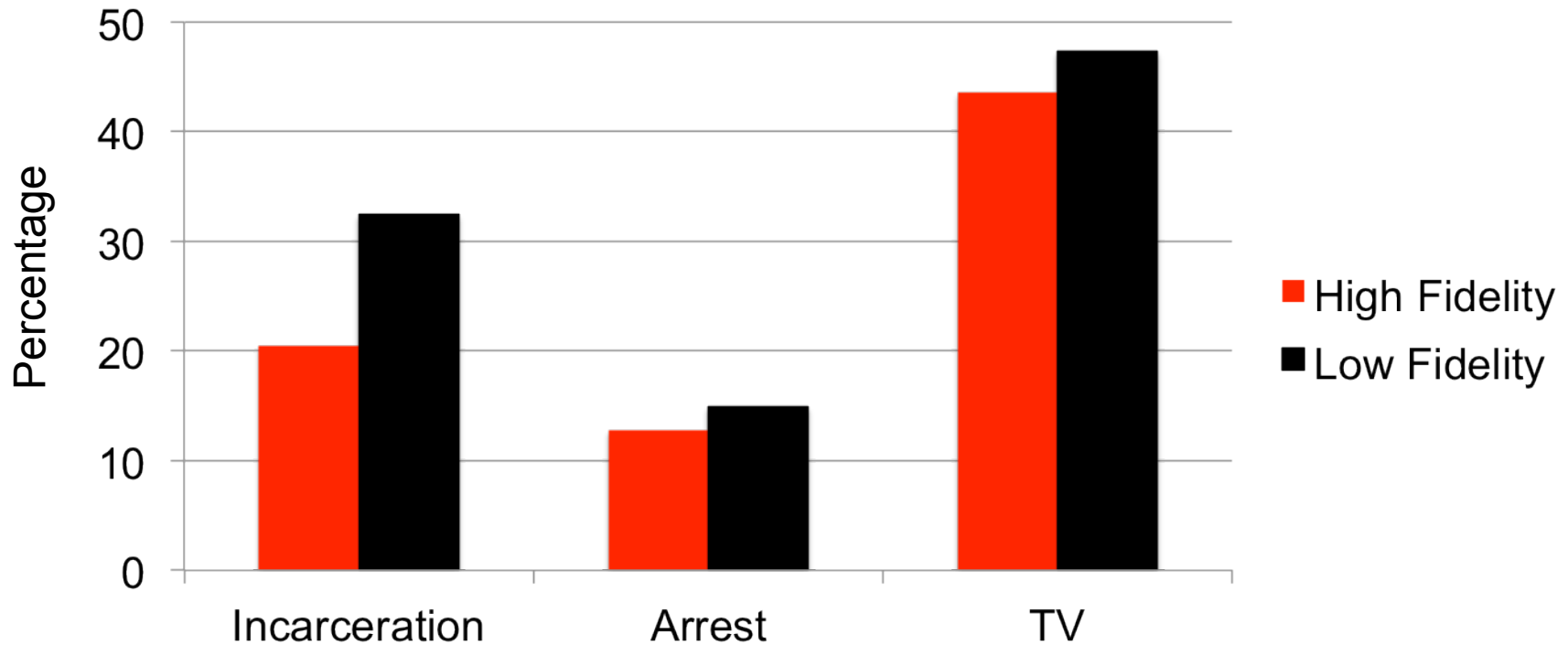


# Results

## Recidivism by Officer use of CCP & Offender Risk Level

	Incarceration			Arrest			Technical Violation		
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Φ</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Φ</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Φ</u>
<b>Moderate Risk</b>			.03			-.05			.16
High-Fidelity	9	20.5		8	18.2		20	45.5	
Low-Fidelity	19	17.8		24	22.4		31	29.0	
<b>High Risk</b>			-.13			-.03			-.04
High-Fidelity	8	20.5		5	12.8		17	43.6	
Low-Fidelity	24	32.4		11	14.9		35	47.3	

# Officer Use of CCP and Recidivism for High Risk Offenders



# Summary Of Findings

There is a differential impact of risk on recidivism for offenders supervised by EPICS trained officers

- There is an added benefit to targeting high-risk versus moderate-risk offenders



# Policy Implications

Community supervision agencies and officers should adhere to an RNR approach

- Target higher risk offenders

Officers should use core correctional practices during interactions with offenders'

The EPICS model is one structured approach that supports adherence to the RNR model and use of core correctional practices

- Agencies may benefit from training officers in the EPICS model

# Study Limitations

Sample size

Officer Attrition

Implementation challenges

Limited to the state of Ohio

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# Thank You

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