

# The 5-Step Approach to Evaluation

## Designing and Evaluating Interventions to Reduce Reoffending



CRIME AND JUSTICE

# THE 5-STEP APPROACH TO EVALUATION

## Designing and Evaluating Interventions to Reduce Reoffending

Guidance for service providers, planning partnerships, funders and commissioners

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# Foreword

*“I am delighted to introduce this easy-to-use 5-step evaluation guidance which is grounded in tried and tested methods. Not only should it help evaluate services of any size, but also to design more effective services from the outset.*

*This practical guide summarises the key evidence on ‘what works’ and is packed with examples making it a valuable resource for anyone who wants to assess the contribution they make to reducing reoffending including funders, planning partnerships, service providers and service staff”.*

Nicola Edge  
Head of Justice Analytical Services  
Scottish Government

# Introduction

**This evaluation pack is aimed at both service providers and funders who aim to reduce crime and reoffending.**

**For funders and planning partnerships**, it aims to:

- Offer a strategic, evidence-based and outcomes-focused planning tool.
- Offer guidance on how to assess evaluations from service providers and therefore direct funding to greatest effect.
- Demonstrate the role you can play in promoting and enabling high quality evaluations from those you fund.

**For service providers**, it aims to:

- Provide guidance on planning an evidence-based service with a “built in” evaluation process.
- Provide guidance and resources for you to effectively assess, understand and demonstrate how well your service is working in relation to your aims.
- Offer an alternative to randomised control trials, using a “logic model” approach to evaluation, which any service provider can use to evaluate any intervention, regardless of size.
- Encourage continual review and improvement of services.

## **Other audiences**

The pack is primarily aimed at funders, commissioners and service providers with a focus on reducing the risk of crime and reoffending. However, it is likely to be relevant to others with an interest in effective evaluation (such as inspectorates and auditors) and the approach can easily be adapted for projects that do not primarily seek behaviour change.

## **Is your project evaluating other outcomes e.g. health, environmental or cultural?**

For those of you who would like to see a more generic version of this pack, we have also published a version of this pack entitled *‘The 5-step Approach to Evaluation: Designing and Evaluating Behaviour Change Interventions’* which is relevant to evaluating any service.

# Background: The tricky business of measuring impact in a messy world

How the 5-step approach came to be.

## How was the pack developed?

### Who developed this pack?

This pack has been developed by Scottish Government researchers in Justice Analytical Services with the aim of promoting and supporting the effective evaluation of criminal justice interventions.

### What's in the pack?

We describe a 5-step approach to designing and evaluating interventions and services. It includes comprehensive summaries of the reducing (re)offending evidence-base and subject-specific logic models to support practitioners working in the field of crime and desistance.

### Is the 5-step approach being used in practice?

The approach described in this pack is already being used widely by services, interventions and funders including Third-Sector organisations, The Robertson Trust, the Scottish Prison Service and the Scottish Government .

## A Scottish approach to evaluation

### Co-production

Our approach to evaluation enables funders and service providers to work together in pursuit of their shared aims – to improve outcomes for service users and communities. The 5-step approach also engages with service users' views as a resource for evaluation rather than seeing users solely as an object to be measured. In fact, most complex social outcomes can ONLY be achieved if we make a distinctive, yet joined-up contribution over a sustained period of time.

### Asset-based

The 5-step approach focuses on ways in which evaluation *is* possible for services of any size, rather than expecting all services to use an experimental evaluation method which may not be appropriate or possible for smaller, community-based organisations. The 5-step approach allows even the smallest service to demonstrate the contribution they are making to change.

### An Improvement Culture

Evaluation enables improvement and even the most successful service can always be developed further. Furthermore, with the 5-step approach, evaluation is an on-going process, not something to be saved for last. This means that services can be continually improved in order to best meet the needs of their users.

## What are impact evaluations/RCTs

### What is an impact evaluation or RCT?

An impact evaluation is designed to answer the specific question 'did my project / service work?'

An impact evaluation or RCT is a much like a scientific experiment and is often considered the 'gold standard'. One group (the 'treatment' group) experience your intervention and one group (the control group) does not. You then compare the outcomes for both groups to see if your intervention made any difference. In other words, if you really want to know if you've made a difference, you need to know what would have happened if the same (or similar) users DIDN'T receive your service. This enables you to ATTRIBUTE changes in users to YOUR service rather than other factors like motivation, another programme or family influences.

The control group must either be selected completely at random or otherwise be very carefully selected to have very similar characteristics. Otherwise, you cannot be sure that any apparent differences in results at the end are not the result of differences that were already there at the start and therefore nothing to do with your intervention.

## Cost benefit analysis

Some funders ask for a cost benefit analysis which is an economic assessment that places a monetary value on the costs and benefits of an intervention. It is another way to determine the value of an intervention and convince others that it has public value.

### What is a cost-benefit analysis?

- CBA usually builds on a **rigorous RCT** and typically measures a wide range of outcomes.
- It usually measures the public benefits to society but may also consider benefits to individuals and families.
- It is both an art and a science especially when assigning monetary values to social benefits such as better parenting or securing accommodation .
- CBA allows for comparisons across interventions, policies, and other types of interventions.

### What data do you need?

- Cost estimates may be based upon well-documented impacts (i.e. evidence-based interventions)
- Cost estimates may be based upon well-documented impacts *and* future projections upon these documented impacts
- Cost estimates may be based on undocumented assumptions that the intervention works and hypothetical projections or 'what if' analysis – but no hard data is available

Excellent guidance on CBA can be found here and Justice Analysts are happy to provide advice: [http://whatworks.uwex.edu/attachment/whatworks\\_cost\\_benefit.pdf](http://whatworks.uwex.edu/attachment/whatworks_cost_benefit.pdf)

## The difficulty with RCTs

### You need a large sample

RCTs are only meaningful IF there is a large control group with very SIMILAR CHARACTERISTICS to the users (the counterfactual). Scotland is a relatively small nation and behaviour change projects often target small or localised populations, making them hard to carry out.

### They can be expensive

Funding may be a barrier since RCTs may be expensive to run and therefore not cost-effective as a means of evaluating small-scale projects.

### They can't tell you everything

RCTs can't tell you WHY something is effective (or ineffective) so learning anything about HOW a project worked is tricky using this method.

## Do impact evaluations / RCTs even ask the right question? Contribution not attribution

### Example – contribution to achieving outcomes

Like most social outcomes, reducing crime and reoffending are long term, complex goals and hard for any standalone service to achieve. For example, we know that many studies show that the most effective way to reduce reoffending is through a well-sequenced, holistic approach which can address multiple needs such as the provision of quality accommodation, positive relationships and recovery from drug abuse. The question then becomes...if these combined services achieve a reduction in reoffending, which service is responsible? The answer is, of course that all of them have a distinctive role in contributing towards achieving the outcome.....so it follows that any evaluation of a single service should assess the extent of their particular contribution (defined by their own objectives). Impact evaluations (RCTs) put all the pressure on single services to 'prove' they have reduced reoffending rather than evaluate the *contribution* they are making.

## An alternative to RCTs

### A “middle ground” approach

Rather than carrying out a small RCT which might be impractical and would only deliver meaningless results, or unreliable anecdotal research we recommend that small-scale project organisers carry out a **5-step approach to evaluation**. This is summarised in the following pages and detailed in the remainder of this pack.

This approach to evaluation is practical for projects of any size but does rely on providers having a clear sense of what they're hoping to achieve or change and how they're going to get there – a theory of change. For this reason, **using the 5-step approach to evaluation, we must begin at the planning stage.**

## What is evaluation really for?

Although doing evaluation requires the use of techniques and tools, bear in mind that its overall purpose is to help you (re) design services, ask questions, gather evidence, interpret the evidence, communicate important information about your service and take informed decisions. In this sense, the ability to ask relevant questions and clearly communicate the answers at the right time to the right people are key skills in making evaluation useful.

# The 5-Step Approach

## The 5-step approach to evaluation



Identify  
the  
problem



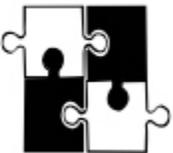
If your ultimate aim is to change people's attitudes, emotions or behaviour, you need to be clear and explicit what it is you are trying to change and why there is currently a need for this to happen.



Review  
the  
evidence



Interventions should be clearly structured and designed using robust evidence so it is important to be familiar with the results from relevant 'what works' and desistance evidence-base. If the aim of the intervention is more specific, for example to promote recovery from drug addiction or to improve parenting skills then also track down the relevant evidence-base and embed the findings into how the service works.



Draw a  
logic  
model



A logic model is a simplified diagram which shows, step-by-step, why the activities you plan should achieve your aims. The logic model forms the basis for evaluating the whole project – you are going to test whether these steps happened as you predicted.



Identify  
Indicators  
and  
monitor  
your  
model



Use the logic model to identify indicators (i.e. measurements or observations) that things actually happen as you predicted. You will need to collect data about your project FROM THE START on inputs, activities, users, short, medium and long-term outcomes.



Evaluate  
logic  
model



Analyse the data you've collected on your various indicators to evaluate how well your project worked for your various users. Report on whether your data suggests the logic model worked as planned. Be honest about any areas which were less effective. Use this to improve your service.

## The 5-step approach: A summary

### 1. Identify the problem

It is essential that you are clear from the start about the problem you are aiming to address. What exactly are you trying to change and why is this needed at this particular time and place? Perhaps there are local gaps in service provision or recent events which suggest intervention would be timely.

### 2. Review the evidence

The most effective projects and services build on **strong and consistent evidence** about what works to reduce crime or what helps offenders desist from crime and they also learn from previous experiences. Therefore, the 5-step approach puts a deliberate emphasis on using *existing* evidence and the evaluation should measure the extent to which each component of your service is based on good evidence. The first step is therefore to understand the results of 'what works', effective practice for staff and desistance studies. If your service is focused on achieving a particular intermediate outcome it is worth reviewing specific evidence on relevant areas such as recovery from addiction, effective parenting, emotion management, mentoring and throughcare in order to plan your service. You should also learn from previous experiences to continuously improve the service.

### 3. Draw a logic model of how your service should work

The logic model is a step-by-step diagram which shows the ultimate outcomes (change or results) you are aiming for and step-by-step how you intend to achieve them. It details inputs (e.g. money, staff, resources) needed to deliver your activities and how they *should* lead to short, medium and long-term outcomes and ultimately meet your aims. It is useful to think of longer term outcomes as wider social change that you are contributing to and that only collaboration will produce long lasting social change. In this sense, logic model outcomes vary in terms of how much influence *your* project has over them and in turn, how accountable your project is for achieving them.

It should describe how evidence, funds and staff will be used to design and deliver activities and how exactly, based on your review of the existing evidence, these activities are expected to lead to short, medium and long term outcomes. Your project won't operate in a vacuum so don't forget to identify external factors which could help or hinder the achievement of outcomes. These could be policy changes, the economic climate or the level of support for your project receives from your organisation.

**A template and excellent guide can be found here:** <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>

### 4. Identify indicators and collect monitoring data

Using your logic model as a guide, identify a) priority evaluation questions and b) indicators that will test whether the project *actually* worked as the logic model predicted. You should collect data on what activities were delivered to whom, as well as evidence that they led (or didn't lead) to the short-term and longer-term changes you anticipated. Collecting and analysing data can be resource intensive so agree what is most important to know from the

start and why you and/or your stakeholders need to know it and be realistic about what questions can and can't be answered.

**NB. It is important that you collect 'base-line' (pre-project) information about your users to compare with information you later collect during and after the intervention.**

### **5. Evaluate logic model**

You now need to analyse the data you've collected in order to test whether the project worked in accordance with your logic model. You should assess how well activities were delivered, levels of user engagement and whether users' needs were met or their attitudes changed. Case studies can be used to illustrate examples of who the service worked for and did not work for and why that might be.

## **WARNING!**

### **Do not leave planning your evaluation until the end of your project**

- Steps 1-3 should be carried out before the project begins
- Step 4 (monitoring) should continue from the very start to the end of your project (and, ideally, beyond).
- Step 5 (analysis) should not be left to the end either. Interim and on-going evaluations will enable you to make improvements to your project or service.

# Step 1: Identify the problem

Before it is possible to design an effective service, it is essential that you are absolutely clear what attitudes, emotions or behaviours you are trying to change and why this should be a priority in the context you're intending to work.

An example:

**WHAT is the problem?** Research studies show that improving the quality of family relationships for female prisoners can prevent reoffending AND reduce the risk of their children becoming involved in crime. However, there are no specialist family interventions in X prison for short term female prisoners.

**WHY is this a problem?** Poor family relationships decrease the likelihood of desistance from crime which is not only costly to society but can also increase the likelihood that the children of female prisoners develop mental health problems, drop out of school and get involved in crime.

**What is your ULTIMATE AIM?** Help to reduce the frequency of reconvictions of short term female prisoners by improving their family relationships and reduce the risk of their children becoming involved in crime.

# Step 2: Review the evidence

## What is ‘the evidence base?’

For the purpose of evaluation and planning, “the evidence base” refers to all available information which might guide what you do in pursuit of your particular aims.

Evidence can come in many different forms, including anecdotes or personal experience. However, when we talk about evidence in this context, we are usually talking about empirical evidence – that derived from purposively designed research studies. However, be aware that because the evidence base is derived from multiple studies, is not always obvious what will work. Studies can have contradictory findings or may ask different kinds of questions.

The following short guide, produced by the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, Inspiring Scotland and Evaluation Support Scotland, explains what it means to say a programme is “evidence-based:”

[http://www.cfr.ac.uk/assets/CRFR\\_ESS\\_IS\\_Evidence\\_base\\_briefing.pdf](http://www.cfr.ac.uk/assets/CRFR_ESS_IS_Evidence_base_briefing.pdf)

In this pack, we have summarised some of the empirical and theoretical evidence for you.

## Why review the evidence base?

### Crucial for Planning

A well-designed project will be based on the available evidence about ‘what works,’ and what doesn’t, in relation to your aims. Reviewing the evidence base as part of the planning process will give you the best chance of achieving change in your users.

### Crucial for Evaluation

However, following the 5-step process, reviewing the evidence is also a crucial phase in the evaluation process. Assuming that an experimental design (i.e. RCT) has not been possible, the 5-step process allows you to evaluate the project by assessing the quality of evidence behind a project’s theory of change - what reason do you have to believe that the project’s activities should lead to the outcomes envisaged? In addition, it is important that you have a clear idea of the causal processes which underlie the logic of your project so you can plan how you will gather evidence about whether or not they actually took place (see step 4).

## Sources of evidence

### Research Evidence

Including results of randomised control trials (RCTs), surveys and qualitative studies (e.g. interviews or focus groups). Systematic, literature or evidence reviews synthesise research evidence on a particular topic.

## Evidence from Prior Evaluation

If your service (or a similar one) has already been running for a period of time, your own previous evaluations may provide evidence as to whether the approach works or not, how and for whom.

## Anecdotal Evidence

Over years of working in a particular field, your own experiences and those you hear about from others can be a further source of evidence. However, whilst valuable, it is important to remember that such evidence may be particularly subject to bias since it will not have been collected systematically.

## Research and/or evaluation evidence should be used where available.

However, there is no a simple answer to what counts as “good evidence.” It depends on the question you are trying to answer. For more detail see these short videos from the Alliance for Useful Evidence: <http://www.alliance4usefulevidence.org/>

## For best results use a range of evidence

To draw the most robust conclusions about ‘what works,’ and why, you should take account of evidence produced through a range of methods.

- **Quantitative** studies (including the results of RCTs and impact evaluations) might help you to establish what usually works and for whom.
- **Qualitative** work (e.g. interviews with users who ‘succeed’ and ‘fail’ and/or with practitioners) might help you to understand the processes through which interventions work or don’t work and consider why barriers may exist to achieving your aims.

**TIP!** If you are short on time and resources, systematic and/or literature reviews are an excellent source of evidence. They often analyse both quantitative and qualitative studies on a particular topic and should do the work of summarising all this evidence for you.

## Finding evidence

When time and resources, are limited, evidence reviews (also called systematic reviews or literature reviews) are a realistic solution – enabling an overview of the evidence in a relatively short time.

Online databases and archives are the most convenient means through which to locate evidence reviews. The following provides a summary of the evidence on reducing crime and reoffending and links to full reviews. However, the following databases can be of general help in locating relevant evidence:

### Search academic databases:

<http://www.mendeley.com/dashboard/>

<http://scholar.google.co.uk/>

## Search government archives:

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/Recent>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>

**TIP!** Try searching for “evidence/literature/systematic review” + your behaviour change aim (i.e. “reoffending”, “parenting”, “collective efficacy”, “impulse control” or “motivation”).

## What does the evidence say?

Using evidence is an important INPUT to your service or intervention. Consistent results that show that certain activities or approaches help offenders to desist should work but only if you deliver the service to a high standard. For example, evidence shows that CBT programmes (which as a strong evidence-base for higher risk men) delivered in the community are less effective at achieving outcomes than prison-based interventions due to poorer delivery and less focus on quality assurance.

To make the results from robust studies more accessible, the following pages summarise some of the key evidence from the ‘what works’, desistance and best practice literature. Links to full reviews are also included.

## Reducing Crime

The full evidence review ‘What Works to Reduce Crime’ can be found here:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/10/2518>

### Tackle the root causes of crime

- Low self control in children is linked to offending
- Parenting programmes are effective in improving self-control
- Social skills training designed to improve emotional intelligence, may help reduce delinquent behaviour
- Offending is linked to abuse, neglect, exposure to domestic violence and parental substance misuse
- Quality of care of children and young people and protection from abuse and neglect are key
- Identification of abuse and neglect at the earliest stage

### Address key social factors

- Retain an attachment to school
  - Staying at school is a protective factor
  - Exclusion could be a significant risk factor
  - Behavioural boundary setting is key
  - Diversion activities e.g. sport play an important role
  - Enable children to realise their potential

- Holistic employment programmes that also provide social and educational support can be effective
- Minimise the impact of criminal justice sanctions on family bonds
- Restrict access to alcohol
- Tackle drug and alcohol abuse (improving social control through effective parenting may play a part)

### Deterrence and Changing the Situation

- Detection and punishment used alone are ineffective.
- People are more likely to comply with rules if they are perceived to be fair and legitimate not because they fear punishment.
- Tackling areas of ‘concentrated disadvantage’ is the most important step to take to reduce crime
- People offend less when communities look after their areas – ‘collective efficacy’ has been found to be an important factor in reducing crime.
- The *certainty* of punishment (increasing the likelihood of detection) is more effective as a deterrent than the severity of punishment

## What factors are related to reoffending?

Criminal history (previous convictions), age, gender, disposal type, index crime, age and sentence length are all strong static predictors of reoffending. Although they are unable to be changed by interventions, this information can be used to target intervention resources towards medium-high risk offenders who require the most support to desist.

If an intervention aims to reduce reoffending, it needs to target **dynamic criminogenic needs**. These are characteristics that have been found by a number of research studies to be associated with reoffending.

Criminal attitudes and values	Anti-social lifestyle
Criminal peers	Poor problem-solving/impulsive behaviour
Lack of employment, volunteering or leisure activities	Homelessness
Substance misuse	Low motivation, lack of hope and low self-efficacy

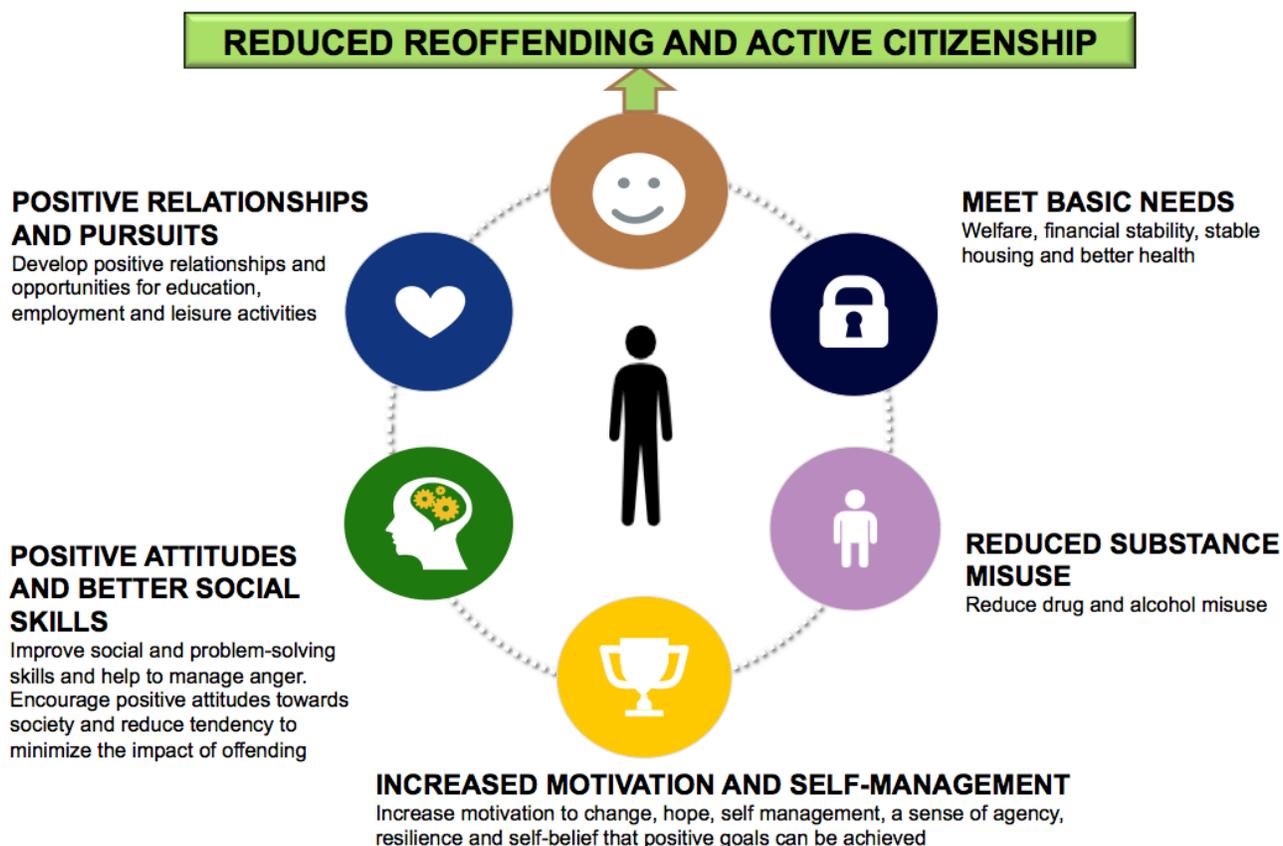
Offenders usually have multiple needs and thus interventions that tackle a range of problems will be more effective. The extent that needs have been addressed can be defined and measured as **intermediate outcomes (short and medium term)**

Women’s criminogenic needs overlap with men’s although women prisoners are more likely to also experience non-criminogenic needs such as depression, anxiety and learning difficulties. They also are more likely to face accommodation problems, financial crisis, trauma arising

from abuse and self-harming behaviour than male prisoners. The quality of relationships with family and friends is also more strongly linked to reoffending in women.

## Desired intermediate outcomes

Desired intermediate outcomes based on criminogenic needs



## What works evidence matrix

### Reducing Reoffending – ‘What works’ evidence

The following table describes the findings from the international ‘what works’ evidence on reducing reoffending.

The results are generated by quantitative randomised controlled trials of programmes and interventions.

Links to full evidence reviews can be found later in this section and at the end of this pack.

<b>Risks to reoffending (evidence-based)</b>	<b>Indicator that the risk is present in an individual</b>	<b>Desired intermediate outcomes</b>	<b>Approaches that work to address the risk</b>	<b>Promising approaches but more evidence needed</b>
Limited social skills, problem-solving skills and poor emotion management	Impulsive, pleasure-seeking, irritable, poor recognition of problems, poor problem-solving skills, poor social skills, lack of awareness of consequences of actions	Skills in problem-solving and perspective taking  Emotion management skills	Structured CBT programmes such as cognitive skills training  Restorative Justice Conferencing	No evidence identified but trained supervisors/mentors could help offenders engage in CBT programmes
Criminal attitudes	Rationalisations for crime, negative attitudes towards the law, negative attitudes to supervision and to society as a whole	Development of pro-social attitudes and a non-criminal identity	Structured CBT programmes such as cognitive skills training and cognitive restructuring techniques	Pro-social modelling, positive supervisor/mentor and staff interactions  Supervisors/mentors challenge anti-social attitudes
Criminal friends	Criminal friends, isolation from pro-social others, easily influenced by criminal associates	Criminal friends replaced by prosocial friends and associates	More evidence needed	Mentoring, circles of support and accountability (for sex offenders)
Lack of positive recreation or leisure activities /anti-social lifestyle	Lack of involvement and satisfaction in prosocial recreational activities. Regular activities encourage offending, recklessness and risk taking behaviours	Participation in pro-social recreational activities, sense of reward from pro-social recreation and sustained involvement in pro-social lifestyle	More evidence needed	No evidence identified but supervisors/mentors could aim to engage offenders in pro-social activities
Drug misuse	Uses drugs, injects drugs, unmotivated to tackle drug misuse, drug use and obtaining drugs a major occupation	Substance use reduced or stopped	CBT programmes, detox, opiate substitution therapy (for acquisitive opiate-addicted offenders) psycho-social support to maintain abstinence, 12 step programmes, structured, therapeutic communities for drug misuse.	No evidence identified but supervisors/mentors could help offenders engage with drug programmes
Alcohol misuse	Binge drinking, long term alcohol misuse, violent when intoxicated	Reduced alcohol use or stopped drinking, reduced through disturbances	More evidence needed	Supervisors/Mentors could help offenders engage with 'promising' programmes which

<b>Risks to reoffending (evidence-based)</b>	<b>Indicator that the risk is present in an individual</b>	<b>Desired intermediate outcomes</b>	<b>Approaches that work to address the risk</b>	<b>Promising approaches but more evidence needed</b>
		promoted by drinking		address the interaction between alcohol and violence
Dysfunctional family relationships	Poor family relationships, no current relationship, no previous experience of close relationships, manipulative lifestyle	Conflict reduced, positive relationships, enhanced warmth and caring, reintegration into (non-criminal) social and family groups  Strengthened family ties improving family and intimate relationships, improving parenting behaviours and increasing acceptance into communities and social networks	Therapeutic approaches for young adult offenders that involve the family	No evidence identified but supervisors/mentors could help young offenders engage with therapeutic approaches  Supervisors/mentors could also help offenders engage in 'promising' approaches, namely relationship coaching interventions and they could also facilitate family visits to prison
Unemployment	Poor performance, low satisfaction in work, lack of work-related skills, poor attitude to employment, lack of qualifications	Work skills, good interpersonal relationships at work, reward and satisfaction at work  Long term employment and increased employment skills	Employment-focussed programmes in which offenders can secure real jobs they enjoy.	Gaining work related qualifications, gaining employability skills  Work related support/mentoring
Homelessness	No fixed abode or transient	Finding and keeping suitable housing	More evidence needed	No evidence identified but supervisors/mentors could assist homeless offenders find homes and retain them
Low motivation and/or self-efficacy	Unmotivated to desist and/or the belief that they do not possess the skills to desist from crime	Offenders are highly motivated to engage with supervisors and interventions and offenders are confident they have the skills to desist from crime	Offenders build positive trusting relationships with skilled, empathetic and flexible mentors, collaborative goal-setting	No evidence identified

## Effective practice – interventions

- Short term sentences are not effective at reducing reoffending
- Respectful, skilled, participatory and flexible contact with a supervisor can trigger positive changes in offenders.
- The effectiveness of prison-based interventions is enhanced when aftercare support is provided following release.
- Holistic interventions that target offenders' multiple needs and involve work with offenders' families and the wider community (e.g. employers) are more likely to be effective at reducing reoffending.
- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) programmes can reduce reoffending by 8-10% especially for violent and higher risk offenders but quality assurance is key to success. The evidence for CBT for women is mixed.
- Interventions for women offenders are more likely to be successful if they target financial and family needs.
- Important to know where offenders are on their 'journey'. Cognitive approaches may be more effective with those more resistant to change.
- Random drug testing combined with treatment and swift and certain (but not severe) responses to breach
- Prison-based drug interventions such as therapeutic communities, psycho-social (CBT) and abstinence based approaches. Crucial to ensure quick access and support for as long as is needed.
- High intensity drug programmes are more effective than low intensity ones
- Specific restorative justice models, especially with property and violent offenders (where there is a clear identifiable victim) and a plan to support the offender to reintegrate
- Face-to-face conferencing model of restorative justice is can be effective at reducing reoffending and highly cost-effective. One UK scheme found reductions in reoffending of 14% when this model was used compared with a matched group.
- Stable and quality employment protects against reoffending especially is accompanied with other forms of support.
- One-size does not fit all - Risk Needs Responsivity (RNR) programmes have better outcomes
- Intervention goals should match the needs of clients
- Programme integrity and integration is crucial and emphasis on quality assurance
- Focusing on an single outcome (e.g. employment) increases likelihood of failure creating feelings of despondency
- Well integrated multi-level interventions (but has negatives for users due to being passed from pillar to post)
- Well-sequenced interventions
- See progress as a series of small steps
- Sharing case management information between partners - more effective and efficient support (HMP Peterborough)

## Effective practice – host organisations

**The following organisational factors have been found to be important for interventions to work effectively**

- The organisation that hosts the intervention has a history of adopting new initiatives
- Some decentralisation to allow a flexible approach to problematic areas
- No task or organisational conflict particularly at managerial level
- Low staff turnover to ensure stability and consistency
- Formal programme of training (e.g. SEED) and instruction
- Formal links with educational or academic institutions
- Funding should originate from the host organisation to increase accountability
- Funds should be sustainable
- Enhance professional credentials
- Focus on achieving clear intermediate goals and don't over-reach
- Evidence-base is widely understood and embedded into programmes

## Effective practice – practitioner skills

**The following practitioner skills and techniques have been found to be important for interventions to work effectively**

- Excellent interpersonal skills so workers can adapt to individual diversity and adapt styles
- Open, caring, warm enthusiastic and empathetic, understanding, listening, giving
- Provide problem-solving advice and practical help
- Practitioners who are persistent and demand change are seen as showing genuine interest and concern
- Practitioners still need to take the lead and use advocacy skills to resolve practical problems and remove obstacles
- Modelling/praising non-criminal behaviour and disapproving of criminal behaviour
- Users tend not to value general 'how are you doing?' conversations
- Time to spend with people to support effectively
- Involve offenders to develop release and treatment plans - helps to motivate and develop a sense of agency and self-determination
- Goals must join up and both parties must bring effort
- Know how to predict and respond to relapse
- Formal training and courses for practitioners is absolutely key and they should be supervised, supported and motivated
- Practitioners should be involved in designing the programme

## More evidence on effective practice and ‘what works’ to reduce reoffending

Here are the links to the full reviews of ‘what works’ to reduce crime and reoffending

*What Works to Reduce Crime*

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/10/2518>

*Strengthening Transnational Approaches to Reducing Reoffending – University of Cambridge*

[http://www.cepprobation.org/uploaded\\_files/Rep%20STARR%20ENG.pdf](http://www.cepprobation.org/uploaded_files/Rep%20STARR%20ENG.pdf)

*Reducing Reoffending Evidence Review – Justice Analytical Services*

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0038/00385880.pdf>

*Transforming rehabilitation – A summary of evidence on reducing reoffending – Ministry of Justice*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/243718/evidence-reduce-reoffending.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243718/evidence-reduce-reoffending.pdf)

*The quality of probation supervision – A literature review*

[https://www.shef.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.159010!/file/QualityofProbationSupervision.pdf](https://www.shef.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.159010!/file/QualityofProbationSupervision.pdf)

## Effective practice – throughcare

Although there is very limited evidence on ‘outcomes’, an international review found that features of effective throughcare were perceived to be based on the following features, according to users and practitioners and some research studies.

### Targeting the ‘right’ people

- Key workers should be consistent to enable trusting and flexible relationships to develop
- Pre-release plans are crucial and prisoners should be involved in devising these plans.
- Practitioners believed that services need to be available and accessible at the point when a service user is ready to make changes in their lives.
- The intensity of supervision needs to be relative to risk of reoffending – the greater the risk, the more intense the support should be.

### Effective partnership working

- Multi-agency working that takes a holistic approach is important. Agencies should have distinct functions, shared objectives, adequate resources and a strong working relationship
- A liaison officer can help agencies work together
- Opportunities should be created to share ideas and to understand functions and remits of the agencies involved e.g. Link Centres

- The statutory monitoring role and support role should be separated to avoid tensions arising.

### **Addressing release gaps**

- There should be continuity in service provision on release, especially for short term prisoners and those on remand.
- Early contact is crucial and should start at the point of sentencing.
- Day release to go to jobs and temporary accommodation are important for motivating users and avoiding disruption on release. Access to welfare provision and housing is crucial but can be extremely difficult due to bureaucratic barriers.
- Services should be NEEDS LED rather than service led.
- Short-term funding and heavy case-loads can create fragmentation, instability and decrease the quality of services.

### **Staff selection, remit and skills**

- A strong relationship between users and providers is key to changing behaviour but not enough in isolation. Needs have to be addressed too.
- Mentors may be an effective way to support service users but only as part of a wider network of services.
- Interpersonal skills and the ability to be flexible as well as practical was important according to practitioners.
- Service users response better to workers who identify individual strengths and positive features.
- Practical issues should be addressed before more complex needs as this maintains motivation.
- Addressing practical basic needs is important but is not sufficient to trigger change. More complex needs such as attitudes, social skills and emotion management are also important to address.
- Desistance is more likely if throughcare includes work with families and forges links with the wider community e.g. employers.

## **Effective practice – mentoring**

- Mentoring schemes should have robust working links with existing and developing interventions in their area of operation. Where feasible, these links should be underpinned by written protocols and/or care pathway agreements.
- The mentoring schemes should sit alongside cognitive restructuring treatment (changing destructive and anti-social attitudes) and cognitive skills (social and problem-skills) training and behaviour modification. These interventions have the strongest evidence in reducing reoffending because they internalise change in the offender so they acquire the skills to desist after the external support is withdrawn.

- The mentoring schemes should be designed around clear objectives and intended outcomes. These should be the outcomes which the evidence suggests mentoring can help offenders to achieve
- Mentors and mentees should be carefully matched.
- Mentors should undergo at least 20 hours of training prior to matching, and should be provided with ongoing training.
- To underpin the development of a strong, meaningful, supportive relationship between mentors and mentees they should meet at least once a week, and the mentoring relationship should last for at least six months.
- Mentoring projects should have a quality assurance system, a strong structure and overall coordination of the programme. A coordinator should help with selecting appropriate mentors, ensuring that mentors receive training, providing on-going monitoring of mentoring relationships and monitoring effective networks of organisations.

## Effective practice – women offenders

- Relationships with others have a stronger influence on women's offending than on men so they are key to desistance: Women desisters say they have strong social support from others and employ strategies for avoiding situations which could lead them back into offending.
- Interventions should be delivered by interpersonally skilled staff who build a consistent and trusting relationship with offenders.
- Interventions are most effective if they start in prison and continue when women are released, address criminogenic and non-criminogenic needs simultaneously and are well targeted and sequenced.
- To reduce reoffending, interventions should help women improve their financial situation, secure suitable and safe housing, establish loving bonds with children, tackle drug abuse in a residential setting and help women form positive relationships.
- Women offenders value help to solve practical problems such as accommodation, childcare and welfare benefits. These short-term needs may have to be addressed before women are ready to engage with interventions or address longer term needs such as education or employment.
- Substance misuse has a stronger relationship with reoffending in women, and women are more likely offend to support others' drug misuse as well as their own. However, some research has shown that recreational and occasional drug use are not strong predictors of reoffending in women, which suggests that intensive interventions should be targeted at drug use that is criminogenic
- Some social conditions that promote desistance in women are outside the control of some formal interventions – maturation, support from family and friends and establishing healthy personal relationships.
- Most of the studies on women's needs and effective interventions derive from the US or Canada so this may limit how transferable the studies are to offenders in the UK as offenders in these countries may have different demographic characteristics.

## Effective practice – desistance theory

Some research is beginning to shed light on the process of desistance from crime, and (to a lesser extent) on the potential role of criminal justice social work supervision in facilitating that process. Although there has been relatively little empirical research on the latter subject, a body of theorising has emerged which, follows the idea that probation practice should become 'desistance-focused' seeks to interpret desistance research for practice. Reviewing the available research, these efforts to interpret desistance research for practice tend to stress (albeit to varying degrees) eight central themes:

- Desistance is likely to involve lapses and relapses. There is value, therefore, in criminal justice supervision being realistic about these difficulties and to find ways to manage setbacks and difficulties constructively. It may take considerable time for supervision and support to exercise a positive effect.
- Since desistance is an inherently individualised and subjective process, approaches to criminal justice social work supervision must accommodate and exploit issues of identity and diversity. One-size-fits-all interventions will not work.
- The development and maintenance not just of motivation but also of hope become key tasks for criminal justice social workers.
- Desistance can only be understood within the context of human relationships; not just relationships between workers and offenders (though these matter a great deal) but also between offenders and those who matter to them.
- Although the focus is often on offenders' risks and needs, they also have strengths and resources that they can use to overcome obstacles to desistance – both personal strengths and resources, and strengths and resources in their social networks. Supporting and developing these capacities can be a useful dimension of criminal justice social work.
- Since desistance is in part about discovering self-efficacy or agency, interventions are most likely to be effective where they encourage and respect self-determination; this means working with offenders not on them.
- Interventions based only on developing the capacities and skills of people who have offended (human capital) will not be enough. Probation also needs to work on developing social capital, opportunities to apply these skills, or to practice newly forming identities (such as 'worker' or 'father').

## Writing an evidence-based proposal

A service that is underpinned by a clear justification for why it is needed and by a strong evidence-base is **more likely to be effective**.

The next page shows a short example of how to show that your service or intervention is grounded in the findings from a **number** of robust studies.

**Appendix 1** gives an example of a fuller evidence-based proposal for an intervention.

**TIP!** A similar document could be provided to a funder. The extent to which an intervention is based on evidence could help assess the strength of a proposal for funding.

### **Intervention (what are we doing?) Evidence (why are we doing this?)**

- This project aims to increase support and interventions for short term prisoners released from prison.
- The project is targeted at male short term prisoners.
- Contact by a fully trained throughcare officer will be made 1 month after sentencing. They will spend the first month building a relationship with prisoners before the first of 3 needs assessments are conducted and 'whole person' pre-release plan is developed.
- Practitioners will accompany prisoners through the gate to link them with services and for 3 months after release.
- Several international reviews, drawing on randomised controlled trials and qualitative research have demonstrated the positive impact of one-to-support from highly skilled practitioners and needs-led interventions on desistance from crime (see Scottish Government Literature Review, 2011 and 2015). There is also some evidence from impact evaluations that a lack of pre-release planning and poor access to employment, support and accommodation after leaving prison leads to reoffending (Scottish Govt review 2015).
- Although male prisoners are at a higher risk of being reconvicted than women and longer-term prisoners, they are less likely to take up voluntary throughcare (see Throughcare review 2012).
- A systematic review of the international literature on throughcare and resettlement highlighted that needs assessments are higher quality if practitioners give prisoners time to settle into prison, build a trusting relationship and if the needs assessment considers the whole person including family and influences. Research with offenders also shows that trained practitioners who use a flexible approach and strong interpersonal skills are able to keep offenders motivated and engaged.
- A Canadian review and the international review mentioned above highlighted the need for practitioners to connect prisoners with services once they return to the community. The highest risk of reoffending is 3 months after release from custody (Howard, MoJ 2011).

# Step 3: Draw a logic model

Show how the project should work  
Draw links between resources, activities and outcomes

## What are logic models and who can use them?

### What are logic models?

Logic models are step-by-step diagrams which simply show:

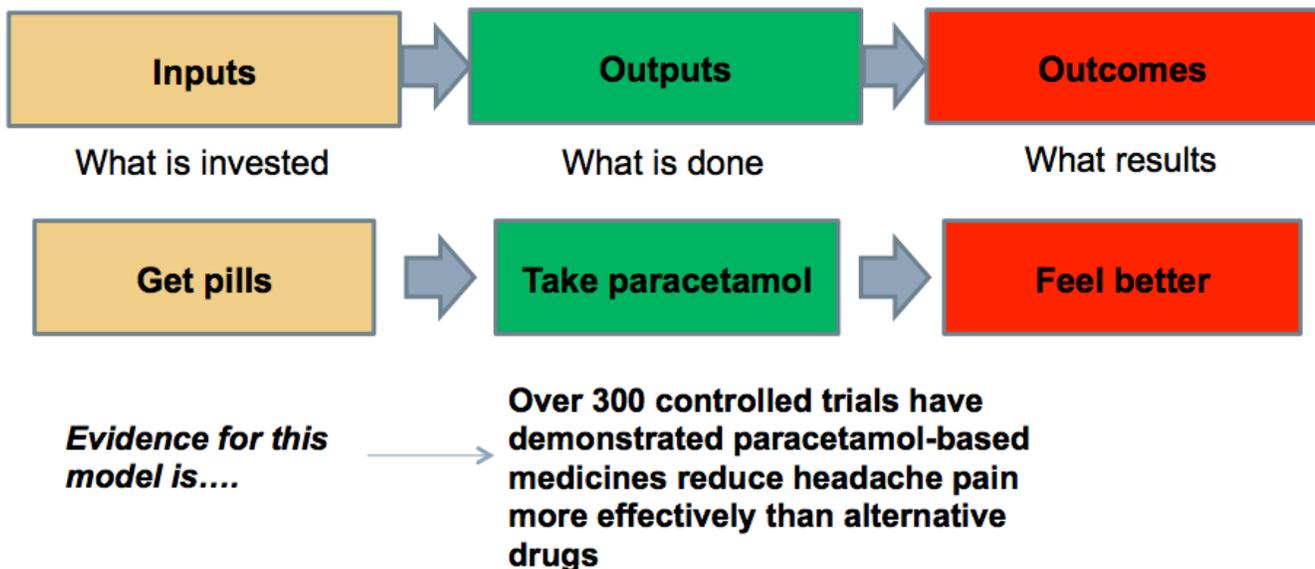
- What you're hoping to achieve in the long run (long-term outcomes)
- The process (short and medium term outcomes) through which your planned activities can be expected to lead to long-term aims.
- What resources will you need to do this (inputs)

### Who can use them?

Anyone who is planning activities with particular aims in mind can benefit from using a logic model. This includes **funders and commissioners**, who might use them to plan how to assess applications and allocate funds in pursuit of their overall aims, as well as **organisations** and **individuals** planning behaviour change projects or services. A logic model is also used as the framework for collecting data and evaluating your service.

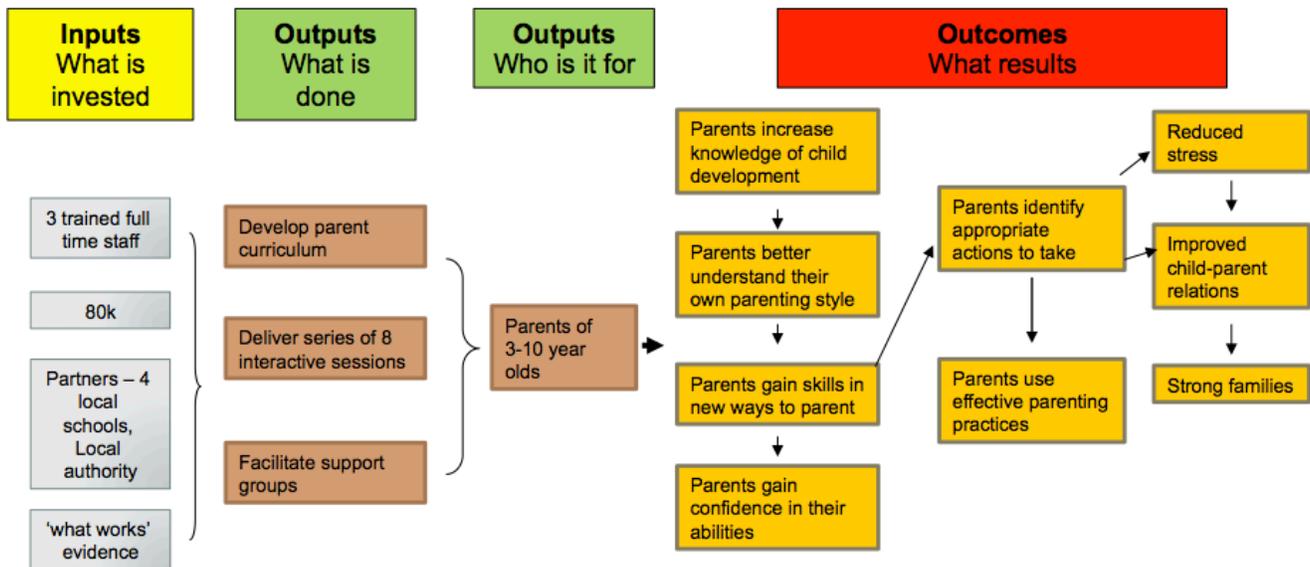
## A very simple evidence-based model

**Situation:** I have a pounding headache



## A more complex logic model

**Situation:** A recent parent survey in primary schools showed that 76% of parents of 3-10 year olds had struggled with dealing with tantrums in the last year. 59% of those parents said they felt 'stressed'.

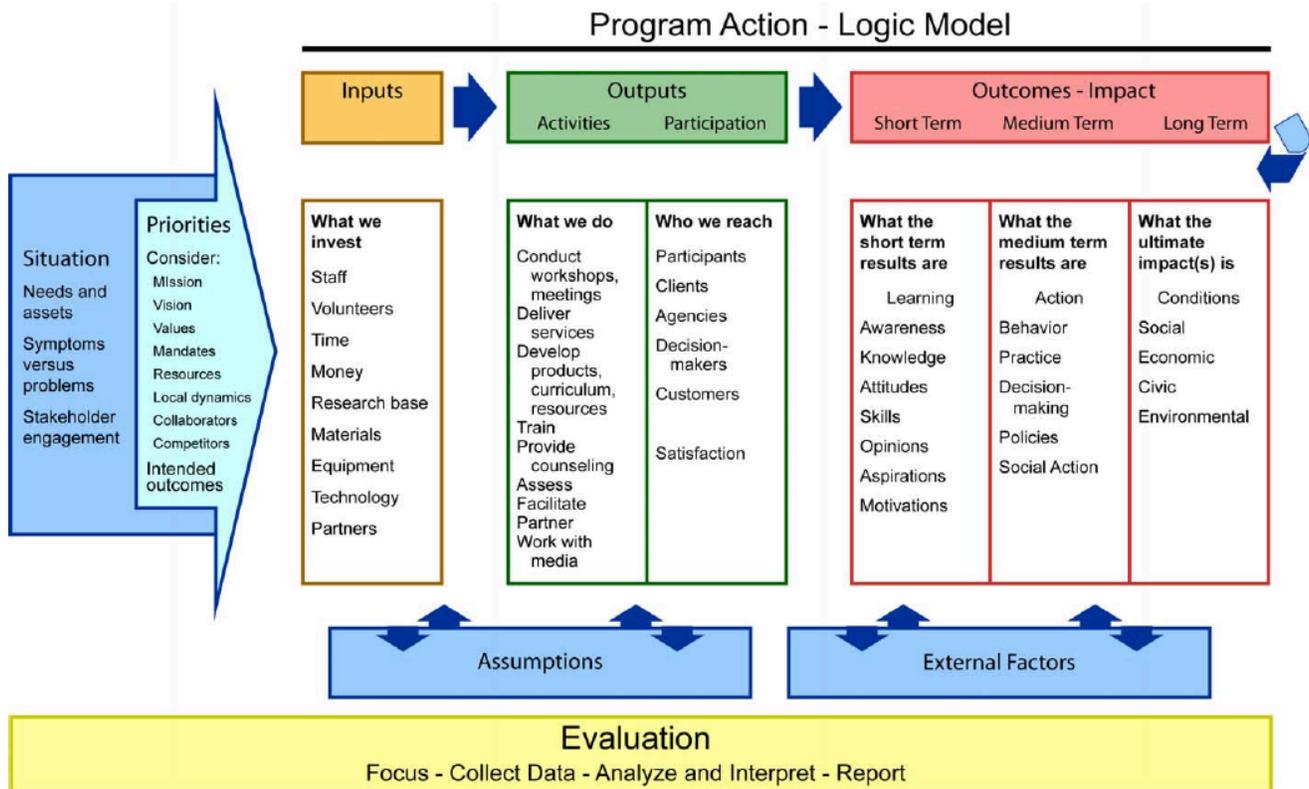


Source: University of Wisconsin

## What logic models can do

- **Planning:** Linking policies or projects to outcomes, or outcomes to policies
- **Co-production and partnership working:** Developing a logic model with partners clarifies roles and responsibilities and a shared understanding around outcomes
- **Transparency and cohesion:** Clear line of sight between activities and intended outcomes for external and internal audiences
- **Monitoring and Performance management:** Checking progress and links
- **Evaluation:** It's a tool for identifying process and outcome measures and then collect data to see if outcomes were achieved as defined in the model.
- **Accountability:** Identify outcomes that your project has direct control and influence over and complex

# The logic model template



This blank template can be found here:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>

## Logic model column content – a quick guide

- Situation/Priorities:** What is the existing need/problem you are aiming to address?
- Input:** What you need to invest (money, what evidence was embedded, materials, equipment, venue, technology, partners)
- Activities:** What you do (e.g. conduct workshops, meetings, sessions, develop resources, assess, facilitate, provide one to-one support)
- Participation:** Who you reach (e.g. users, clients, agencies, decision-makers, customers)
- Short term outcomes:** What change happened in the short term? (e.g. awareness, learning, knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, aspirations, opinions)

<b>Medium term outcomes:</b>	What change happened in the medium term – ACTION (e.g. Practice and demonstrate new skills, behaviour, decision-making, policy change, social action)
<b>Long term outcomes:</b>	What is the ultimate outcome? (e.g. social change, economic change)
<b>Assumptions:</b>	(Linked to your review of the evidence) what assumptions need to be true in order for your model to work?
<b>External factors:</b>	What other factors will influence whether or not your outcomes are achieved? (e.g. economic conditions, local facilities, family context)

## Design a well structured intervention

**Evaluating any intervention will be extremely difficult unless the intervention itself is run in a structured way, is focussed on outcomes and delivers clearly defined activities that should achieve those outcomes.**

**A well designed intervention has the following key features,**

- Evidence-based activities, ways of working with users and outcomes.
- A clear understanding of the people they are targeting and why.
- Knowledge of how many people are eligible for the intervention , a record of user profiles , how many participate and how many complete and drop out.
- Staff with a shared understanding of the objectives and outcomes they want to achieve (e.g. what needs are being addressed).
- A record of costs and how the money is spent.
- A clear understanding of the skills the practitioners need and staff that have the right skills.
- Enough staff to make progress towards achieving outcomes .
- Structured activities that clearly are designed to improve outcomes based on what the evidence says should work.
- A resource-savvy evaluation plan that focuses on 3-4 **priority evaluation questions** based on what is **most important to know**, what is **feasible** to measure and on finding areas for **improvement**.
- Data collected on inputs (e.g. costs, staff numbers) , outputs (e.g. activities, participation) and priority outcomes (e.g. before and after scores).

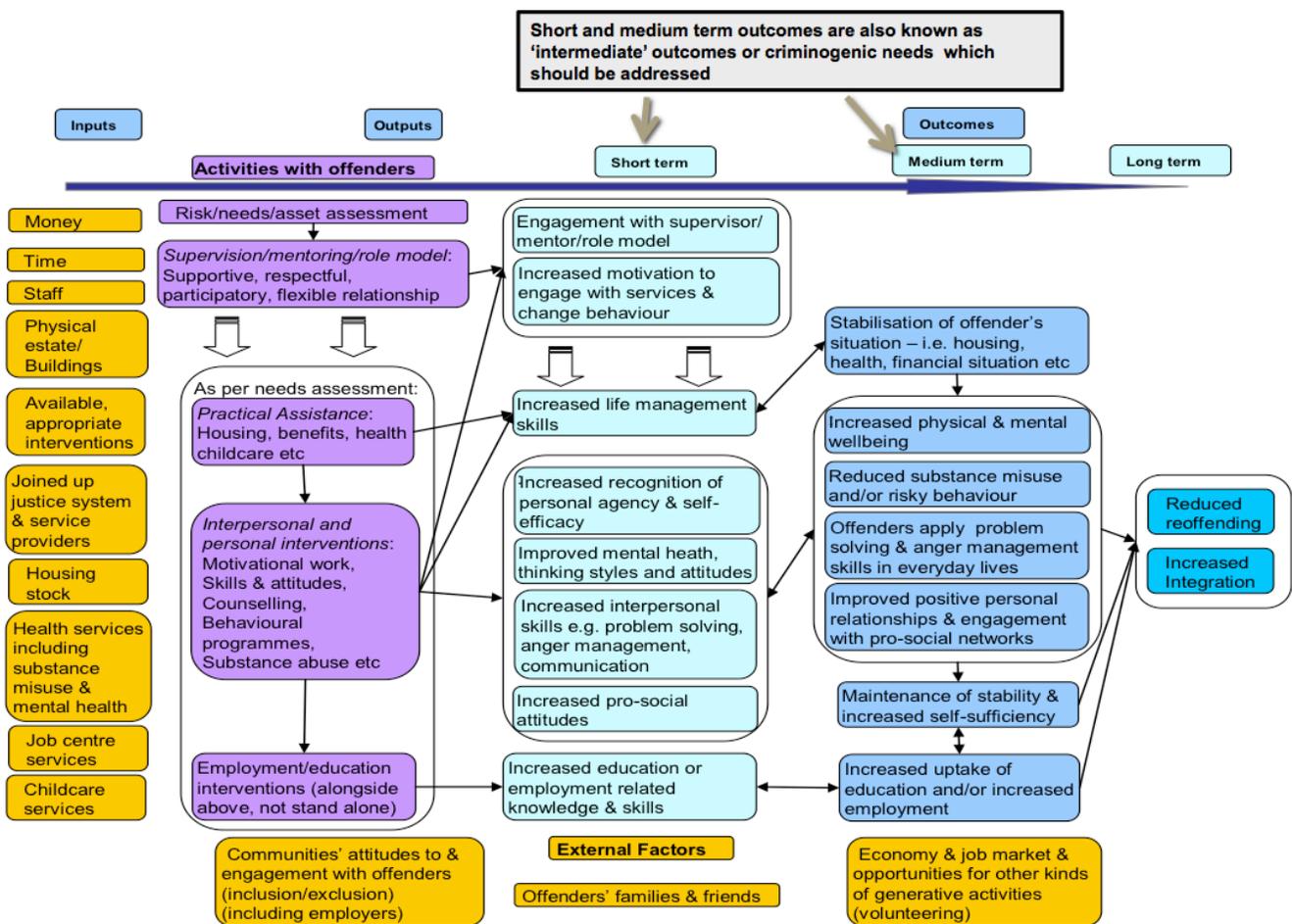
**TIP!** All applicants for funding should be asked to demonstrate each of these features

# A evidence-based logic model - Reducing Reoffending

The following logic model was generated from International evidence on ‘what works’ to reduce reoffending. It shows clear links between ‘what you do’ and the expected outcomes, based on what research studies tells us. It draws on the collective results from robust published evaluations and research, not on anecdotes or standalone studies.

This model is quite general, so interventions should be a bit more detailed about the evidence they have used to design and deliver the intervention and also describe the content of activities in more detail.

## The Reducing Reoffending Evidence Model



## A project logic model - A simple supervised bail logic model

The following simple logic model shows how a project aimed at improving family relationships for people on bail, improve employability and reduce reoffending is expected to work. It is based on international evidence about ‘what works’ to reduce reoffending and on research which highlights the importance of promoting positive relationships between workers and service users. It shows clear links between activities and the expected outcomes, based on what research studies tells us.

This model is quite general so service providers should be a bit more detailed about the evidence they have used to design and deliver the intervention and also describe the content of activities in more detail.

More examples of logic models can be found in ‘The 5-step Approach to Evaluation: Designing and Evaluating Behaviour Change Interventions’.

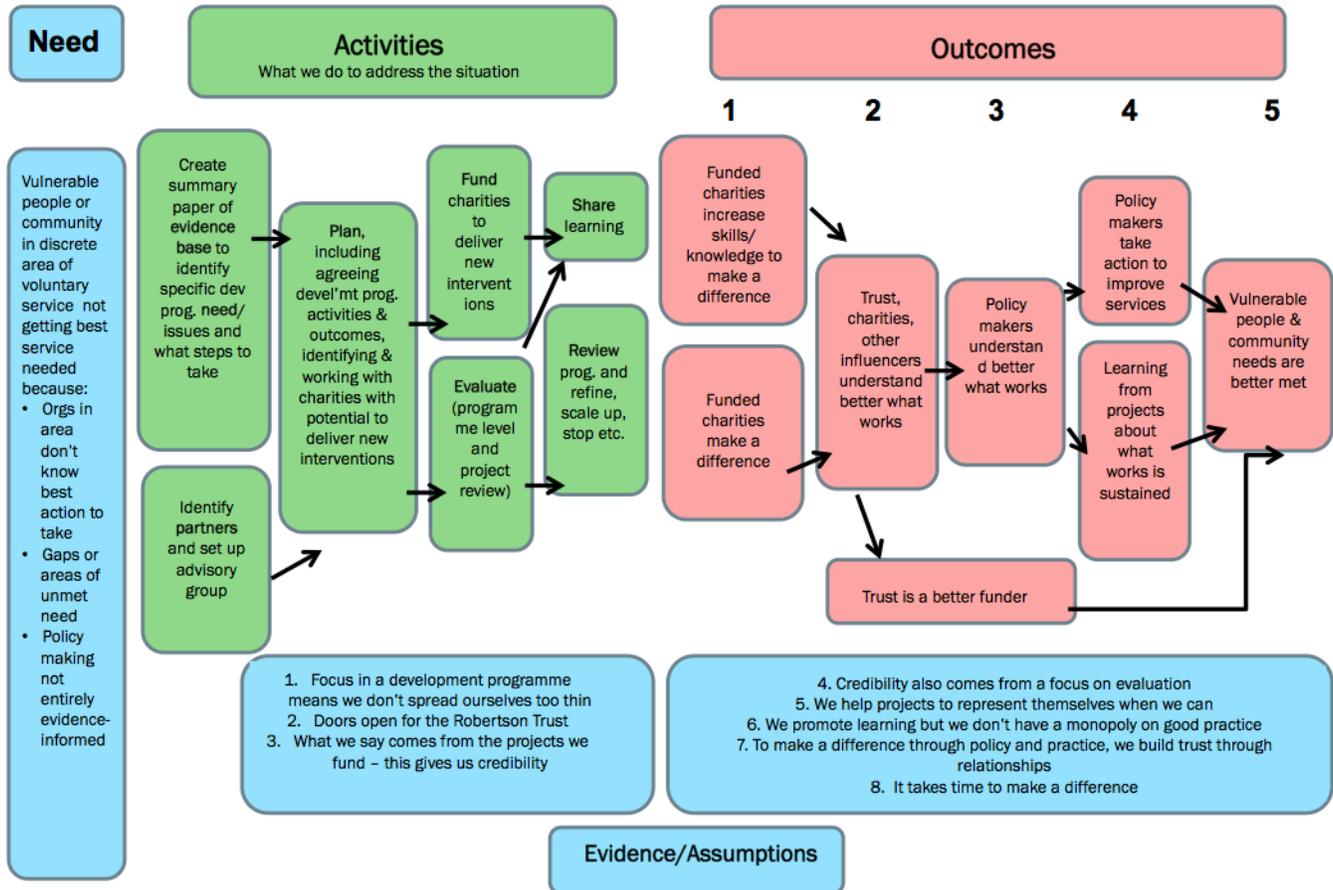
### A simple supervised bail logic model

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes		
	Activities	Participation	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
Bail workers (criminal justice social work/ third sector) Bail offices Time Money Partners: Judiciary Defence agents Police Procurators Fiscal Evidence (support)	Suitable candidates for SB identified and given SB Bail workers meet with bailees 2-4 times per week for an hour Bail workers assess bailee needs and signpost where appropriate	Bailees and potential bailees	Bailees feel they get on well with bail workers Bailees feel motivated to attend meetings and comply with conditions Bailees feel motivated to take up signposted services Bailees attitudes to their behaviour and aspirations change	Bailees attend meetings Bailees comply with conditions Bailees engage with signposted services Bailees change behaviour and aspirations Compliance leads to community sentence Bailees stay in the community and out of prison	Enhanced bailee relationships with family Reduced reoffending by bailees Enhanced employability

# A high level funding model

Logic models can be a valuable tool at every stage of planning and delivery of projects and services.

The next logic model shows an example of how they can be used by funders to plan their activities. This example is a generic framework developed by the Robertson Trust.



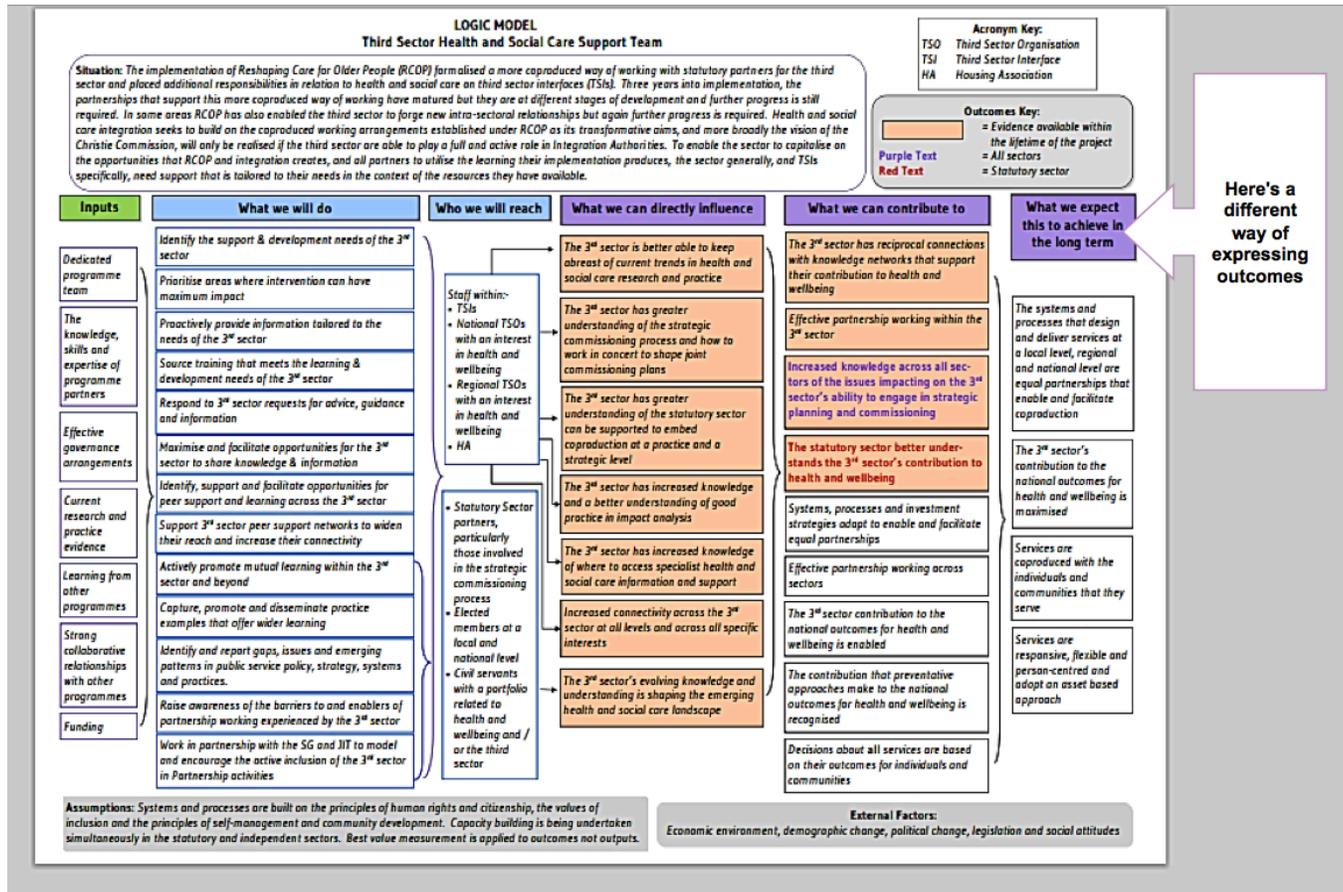
## Using your logic model to show contribution and accountability for outcomes

The next page shows a real logic model from the Third Sector Health and Social Care team which clearly describes the outcomes they can directly influence, what they contribute to and what they can expect to achieve in the longer term.

The orange colour coding also shows which outcomes they could expect to achieve in the lifetime of the project.

**TIP!** Labelling outcomes in this way is a good way of communicating to funders what your project can and can't influence over the lifetime of your project. This will help to manage expectations and guide data collection from the outset.

# Health and Social Care logic model – contribution



# Step 4: Monitor your logic model

## Use the logic model to agree evaluation questions and indicators

Once the logic model is completed, you need to figure out how you will be able to tell if your model works as predicted, or not. To do this, you should:

1. **Agree priority “evaluation questions”**. Often people jump to data collection before they have decided what they need to find out – this can lead to collecting data that isn’t useful which is a waste of resources. Before you think about the data, draft specific questions that you need to answer to test whether the model is working as predicted – see Testing the logic model section for examples. Make sure you don’t pose too many questions or try to measure too many outcomes because it is important that the size and cost of the evaluation is proportionate based on the size and cost of the service. Agree on approximately 3-4 questions to focus the evaluation on what is **MOST IMPORTANT** to know.

## Beyond evaluation questions: Developing and testing theories of change

Stating your theories of change goes **a step further** than evaluation questions.

Every logic model of a service has a theory/theories of change that underpin it even if they’re not stated explicitly. A clearly stated theory of change is basically making it absolutely clear why you think your project will lead to outcomes. You then collect data to ‘test’ whether your theories stand up.

E.g. A project that tries to secure employment for offenders could be based on the following 3 key theories of change -

1. Employment should give offenders a sense of accomplishment and purpose which they would be reluctant to lose as a result of further offending
2. Employment will provide an income which should mean crimes of dishonesty should decrease
3. Employment should help offenders form new relationships with non-offending peers making them less likely to be influenced by others to reoffend

You then collect relevant data to test whether any of these theories held up. As well as numerical data you could survey or interview users who did not reoffend to understand **why** they desisted from crime. Perhaps none of your theories hold up and they give a completely different reason why they didn’t reoffend! Once you know which theory was supported by the evidence, it can inform how your employment project develops.

## Use the logic model to identify indicators

2. **Identify specific indicators** (measures or signals of some kind) that can answer these questions and therefore provide evidence that your model is or isn't working as expected. For example, an offender employment programme could measure some or all of the following;

- User feedback on what an employment programme provided, compared with what was intended
- User feedback on what aspects were most and least useful in helping them find employment
- The number/percentage of users who completed and dropped out the employment programme
- The characteristics (age, gender etc) of users who completed and dropped out of the programme
- The number/percentage of users who gained employment and stayed in work for 6 months or more
- The number and percentage of users who found employment who said they would not go back to offending because it gave them a feeling of accomplishment
- The number of crimes of dishonesty committed by users before and after finding employment
- Perceptions of whether employment helped forge new positive relationships

### Warning!

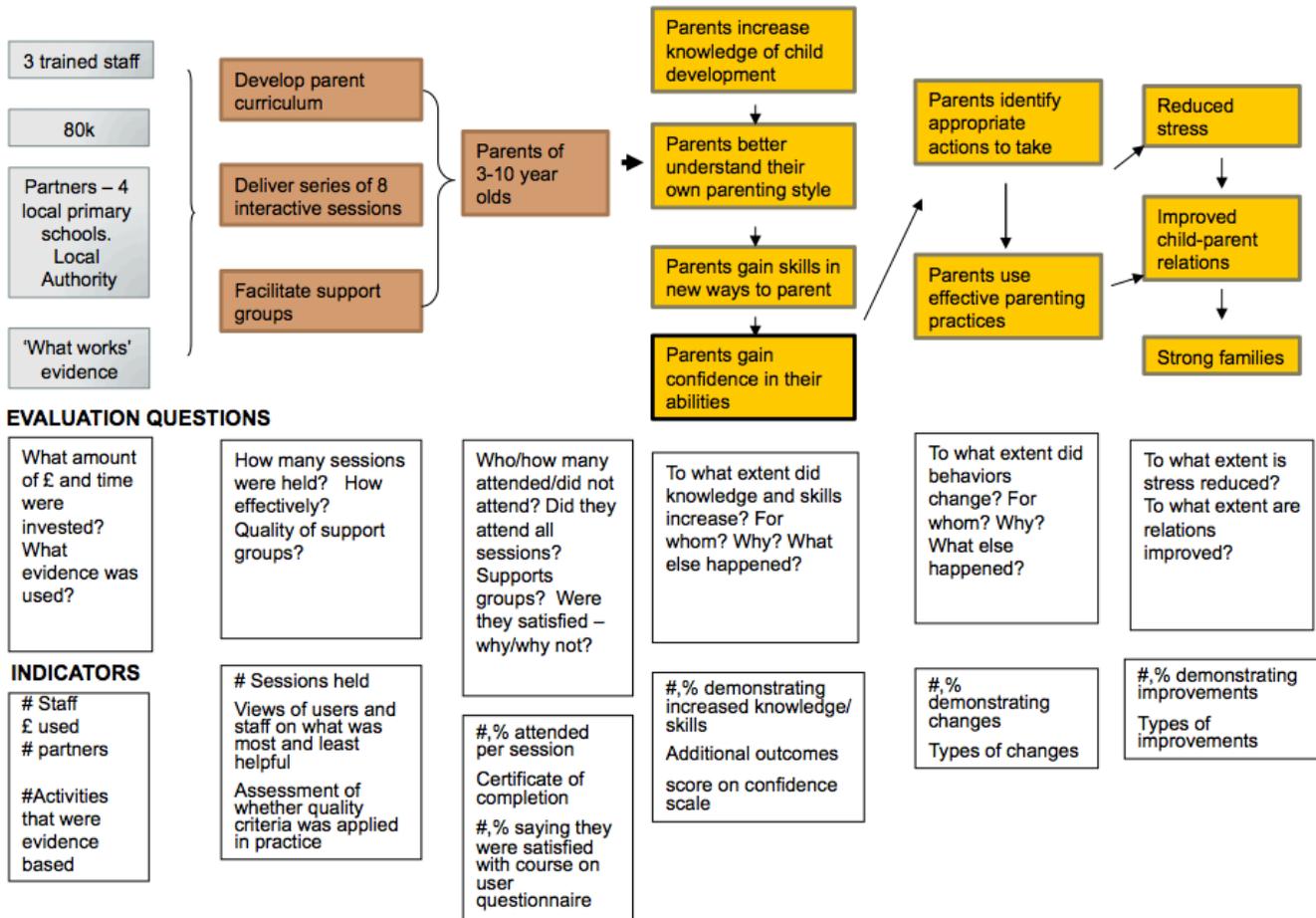
If centrally collected national data is not available, collecting new outcome indicators for large national strategic programmes/reform is not easy. The reality of collecting outcomes data from 1000's of individuals who flow in and out of services and systems across the country can be prohibitively difficult, time-consuming and resource intensive. The following questions need to be addressed:

- What outcomes data is relevant as an indicator of performance?
- Who would the data have to be collected from e.g. prisoners, people on an order, people in services, people back in the community? Is this feasible?
- How is the data going to be collected and how frequently?
- Who is responsible for collecting the data and analysing it?
- Can data be collected and analysed consistently across a range of areas?
- Are outcomes completely within the sphere of influence of the organisation(s) who is being performance managed or do external factors (out of control of the organisation) influence outcomes?

If it is not possible to collect outcomes data, then collecting information on the delivery of activities and outputs (things that organisations should be **doing** to contribute to achieving outcomes as per the logic model) is advised.

# Identify indicators – parenting skills example

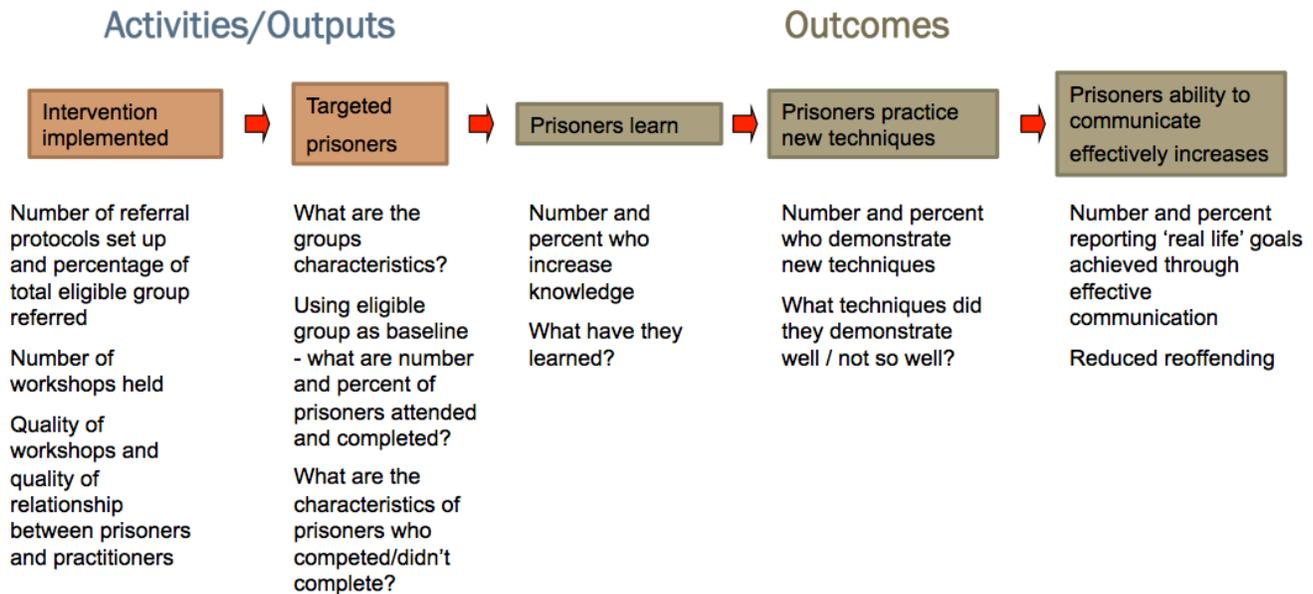
Use the logic model to set evaluation questions to identify indicators. This will guide the collection of data: **Parenting skills example**



Source: University of Wisconsin

## Identify indicators – prisoner skills example

Example indicators for **Activities** and **Outcomes**:  
**Prisoner skills example**



## Data collection principles

Now you've identified your indicators, you need to decide on a way of measuring or observing these things. There are lots of different methods you can use to collect this data but some basic principles to observe are:

- **Collect data for every stage** of your logic model, including resources and activities as well as outcomes.
- **Collect data at a unit level** (i.e. about every user of the service) **and at an aggregate level** (i.e. about the service as a whole). Unit level data can be very useful as it can tell you who the service is working for and who it isn't and you can follow the progress of individuals over time. It can also be combined to give you overall data about your service. But remember, if you only collect aggregate data you will not be able to disaggregate it and therefore collect evidence about particular individuals.
- **Follow users through the project** You should collect data about users at the very start, throughout and ideally beyond completion of the project. This will enable you to evidence whether users have changed, in terms of their attitudes, behaviour or knowledge.

**TIP!** Focus on finding indicators that measure the quality of what people do (activities) -unless people deliver a service to a high standard, it is unlikely that outcomes will materialise. Also, if outcomes are hard to measure, focus on quality assurance indicators.

- **Make use of numbers *and* stories.** Collect qualitative as well as quantitative evidence. Averages and percentages can help you to assess overall trends and patterns in outcomes for service users. Talking to people, hearing about the views and experience of users and stakeholders will help you to explain these patterns.
- **Don't reinvent the wheel.** Standardised and validated (pre-tested) tools are available to measure such things as needs, attitudes, motivation, wellbeing and employability. Using these will enhance the reliability of your evidence and save you valuable time. Freely available tools are detailed here:

<http://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/UsingOffShelfToolsToMeasureChange.pdf>

<http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/tools/>

<http://inspiringimpact.org/resources/> (follow link to “List of Measurement Tools and Systems”)

- **Be realistic and proportionate.** Expensive and/or experimental projects should collect greater amounts of data than well-evidenced and established, cheaper projects. You might want to give questionnaires to all users but it would usually be sensible to carry out in-depth interviews with just a smaller sample of your users as long as they include users who achieved outcomes and those who did not to avoid bias.

## Data collection methods

Various methods can be used to collect data in relation to your evaluation questions. Data can be collected from service users, staff or outside agencies. Not all methods will be suitable for all projects. Evaluation Support Scotland have produced excellent guidance on using different approaches.

- Using Interviews and Questionnaires <http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/129/>
- Visual Approaches <http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/130/>
- Using Qualitative Information <http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/136/>
- Using Technology to Evaluate <http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/131/>

More general advice on generating useful evidence can be found in the “Evidence for Success” guide <http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/270/>

**TIP!** The most rigorous evaluations will be based on data collected using a range of methods

## Data capture

You need a way of capturing and storing the data you collect which will make it easy for you to analyse.

1. Input data into an Excel spread sheet (or any other database that allows the data to be analysed rather than just recorded).
2. Some data could be simply recorded as raw numbers such as costs, number of staff or age.
3. Some data might be recorded using drop-down menus. E.g. user characteristics (ethnicity, male/female,) response options in questionnaires or attendance at a particular session.
4. Qualitative data (e.g. from interviews and focus groups) may need to be transcribed or recorded via note-taking.

## Data analysis

Numerical data or “tick box” answers might be analysed and reported using percentages and/or averages. E.g. “the median (average) age of users was 16” or “80% of users rated the sessions as ‘enjoyable’ or ‘very enjoyable’.”

BUT remember to also report *actual* numbers as well as percentages, especially if you have only a small number of users. It can be misleading to say 66% of users attended a session, if there are only 6 users in total.

Where you have collected qualitative data (e.g. answers to open questions or interviews), go through all of the responses and highlight where common responses have been made by different people. These common responses can be reported as ‘themes’, to summarise the kinds of things people have said in their answers.

## An example data collection framework for a criminal justice intervention

A data collection framework is really useful for evaluators. It is a document, often in the form of a table, clearly setting out:

- What data you will collect in relation to each stage of the logic model
- From whom or what, will you collect your data
- Where and how you will record your data (e.g. on a database)

**Appendix 2** shows an example of a fictitious data collection framework for a criminal justice intervention.

# Step 5: Evaluate the logic model

## Analysing your data to evaluate the project

Once you've collected some or all of your data you can use it to analyse whether or not your model is working as predicted. Analysis is not just a case of describing your data. You need to address the following questions:

1. **What does the data tell you?**
2. **Why are you seeing these results (it could be because of your activities or external factors)?**
3. **What are you going to do about this? How can you improve the outcomes?**

Nb. Although you should definitely carry out this process at the end of your project, **earlier interim analysis and evaluation is also highly valuable** in order to identify problems and improve your service on an on-going basis.

## Who should carry out an evaluation?

**Don't automatically assume that outside evaluations will be more helpful or reliable, nor that funders will necessarily view them this way.**

As the next page shows, **there are advantages and disadvantages to both outside and internal evaluations**. You should consider these carefully before deciding which approach is right for your organisation.

You may also want to consider commissioning outside expertise to support with particular stages of the evaluation (e.g. designing a data collection framework or reviewing existing evidence).

Whatever your decision, **remember to budget** for either internal evaluation or external expertise in your funding proposals. ESS provide further guidance on budgeting for self-evaluation: <http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/237/>

## Outside vs. internal evaluation

### Self evaluation by staff member(s)

#### Advantages

- Cheaper
- 'In house' evaluators should have a clearer idea of your aims and project
- Personal investment in improving the service
- Easier to evaluate on an on-going basis and implement improvements continuously

#### Disadvantages

- Staff may lack the skills or time to carry out evaluations
- Staff may feel pressured to report positive findings
- May be perceived as less reliable by some funders

### Commissioning outside evaluation

#### Advantages

- Findings may be perceived as more reliable or less biased by some funders and other stake-holders
- Evaluators trained in data collection and analysis
- Offer an 'outsider' perspective

#### Disadvantages

- Outside evaluators are usually brought in at the end of a project, limiting ability to implement on-going improvements.
- May lack 'insider' knowledge about the project
- May also feel pressured to report positive findings to those commissioning them

## Testing the logic model

**Did the intervention work as it should?** Look back at the research questions and see what the data tells you about each question. The data (quantitative and qualitative) will tell you whether the service worked as the model predicted. The following are *example* questions you could answer using the basic monitoring data you collected.

## Inputs



- Which aspects of the service were/were not evidence based?
- How much money was spent on activities? Was it sufficient?
- How many staff were employed and at what cost?
- What was staff/user ratio?
- What did the staff do?
- How many staff were trained?
- What was the training?
- Were there enough staff to deliver the activities as planned?
- What other resources were required?

## Outputs



- Who were the target group was the intended target group reached?
- What was the size of the target group/their characteristics?
- What were their needs?
- What were the activities/content?
- How many referral protocols were set up and who with? How did it work? Did it work?
- How many of the target group participated, how many completed and how many dropped out?
- How many sessions were held?
- How long was an average session?
- Did staff have the right skillset to deliver the content?

## Outcomes



- How many improved or made progress/did not improve or make progress?
- What were the characteristics of the users who made progress?
- What were the characteristics of the users who did not make progress?
- What type of progress was made e.g. skills, learning?

## Explaining outcomes: Assessing contribution

Given the complexity of the social world, it is very unlikely that any single project can make a difference to people's behaviour *on its own*. Where change is evidenced in users (both positive and negative), it is likely that there are multiple causes for this and your project will only be a part of this.

Without using a randomised control trial (which as we have said is often impractical), it is very difficult to really *measure* the impact of a single project on outcomes, especially long term outcomes such as reoffending. However, we *can* get a broad sense of the relative importance of the project and how it might have contributed to change, in conjunction with other influences

There are two key ways of doing this:

1. **Subjective views on contribution**
2. **Identifying potential outside influences**

## Subjective views on contribution

**Users, staff and other stakeholders are valuable sources of evidence in order to assess the relative contribution of your project to observed changes in users, in relation to other influences.** You can:

- 1) Ask users whether they received other forms of support or influences on their behaviour?
- 2) Ask users to rate the extent to which each form of help contributed to their success, for example, did they say it was the project, their family, friends, another intervention or their own desire to succeed?
- 3) Ask others who know the users (e.g. family, teachers, social workers) to rate the relative influence of the project on observed changes.

### Limitation!

Asking users and staff to judge the influence of a project runs the risk of '**self-serving bias**'. This is the well-established tendency for people to take the credit for success and underplay external factors. One way to limit this tendency is to tell staff, users and other participants that you will be asking others to also assess the contribution of the project. Be honest about this limitation in your evaluation reports.

## Identifying potential outside influences

By thinking about other potential influences, outside of your project, which might also have influenced behaviour change, you can put your own evidence into context.

Having identified *potential* influences, you may then be able to exclude or acknowledge whether they actually influenced your own users.

For example, in relation to a project to improve the family relationships of female ex-prisoners in the community, potential influences you might consider are:

- **Outstanding warrants** – If some of the women were re-arrested on outstanding charges this will have hindered participation
- **Child protection issues** – Concerns around the safety and well-being of children may have prevented practitioners from working with some families.
- **Economic conditions** – Changes in income levels for the women could impact on user participation in the project in terms of travel costs

## Explaining negative or mixed outcomes

It is extremely unlikely that your data will show that your model worked as predicted for *all* users. Be honest about this. It is helpful to analyse users with poor outcomes (no change or negative change), as well as those showing positive outcomes. Use the data (and any other relevant information) to consider:

1. **Are there any patterns in terms of who shows positive/poor outcomes?**  
*e.g. Are there better outcomes according to gender, age, socio-economic group, offence type?*
2. **Can you explain these patterns through reference to the way the project was carried out?**  
*e.g. Were activities better targeted at particular groups or likely to exclude others?*
3. **Are there any external factors which explain these patterns**  
*e.g. Do cultural norms or practical factors mean particular groups were always less likely to engage? For example women not engaging with drug services for fear of losing their children?*

**Remember!** Your project cannot explain everything. You are only ever *contributing* to change. This is true of both positive and negative outcomes. If your project demonstrate poor outcomes, you should analyse external factors as well as internal processes in order to explain them.

## What can you do to improve?

The crucial next step in the evaluation process is to use your explanations of outcomes in order to improve your model.

- Can you address any issues at the input stage (e.g. issues with staff training or resources)?
- Should you extend activities which appear to have been successful?
- Is it best to stop or redesign activities which the data suggests are ineffective?
- Can you improve the model to better target groups with negative outcomes?
- Can you do anything to address external factors which have negatively impacted? E.g. provide transport

## Who needs to know about this?

Don't keep your evaluations to yourself! They are important sources of evidence to various groups.

- **Funders** will usually require an evaluation report in order to assess the contribution of a particular project (and their funding of it) to positive change. Remember, funders will also want to see evidence of a commitment to continual improvement. So be honest about difficulties and clear about future plans. Advice on producing evaluation reports can be found in appendix 2.
- **Staff** should ideally be involved in the production of evaluations (particularly at the stage of explaining outcomes and planning for improvement) and should certainly be informed of their findings. This will ensure everyone has a shared vision of how the project is working and how to improve their practice.
- **Other organisations** particularly those with similar aims, may be able to benefit from your evaluation findings in planning their own projects. Your evaluation contributes to the evidence base which others should review.

# Evaluation Report Structure

## Structure and content of evaluation reports

### SECTION 1: Executive Summary

- Provide a brief overview of the intervention itself and its purpose
- Summarise the main findings and recommendations from the evaluation

### SECTION 2: Intervention description

- Explain why the intervention was required/funded. For example was there a gap in provision?
- Describe the intervention being evaluated including intervention costs, target group and intervention objectives.
- Describe in more detail how the intervention works using the logic model of the intervention
- Write a clear accompanying narrative that describes the model to the reader. The narrative should explain how funds were spent on the content of the intervention (in detail) and how the international literature of 'what works' elsewhere and good practice has been embedded into the intervention in terms of target group, activities they undertook, the skills of the practitioners and how the intervention was delivered to maximise engagement and learning. Also set out the short, medium and long term outcomes that should materialise.

### SECTION 3: Evaluation questions and methods

First, set out your research questions using the logic model as a guide. Set out questions that relate to

- **Inputs** - for example how much did the intervention cost and how funds were spent? To what extent were different components of the programme based on the results from robust and consistent studies?
- **Outputs** - for example were activities carried out as planned, was the target group obtained, how many of the eligible group completed and what did activities consist of?
- **Short and Medium term (intermediate) outcomes** - for example how many/ percentage of users increased motivation and had their criminogenic needs met?

Describe what data was collected (quantitative and/or qualitative) in order to answer each evaluation question and describe HOW the data was collected, for example by questionnaire and describe how the data was analysed

### SECTION 4: Results

Results should be set out to answer each of your research questions and must AT LEAST include the following results as a MINIMUM

- The cost/resources used and how the money was spent and was it sufficient to run the activities?
- Which aspects of the service were evidence-based and which were not?
- How users were selected and was this effective at reaching the target group?
- Characteristics of the eligible group and eventual users (not just completers)
- Throughput – how many of the eligible group started, dropped out and completed and what were their characteristics?
- Whether activities were carried out as planned, their specific content and how many participated in them
- Before and after analysis of outcomes. How many made progress, who did not and what were their characteristics?
- If an impact evaluation was conducted, the results of the statistical test would be included in this section

### **SECTION 5: Interpretation and recommendations**

- Draw on your results to comment on the successes, challenges and lessons learned
- Reflect on which aspects of the logic model were supported by your results and which aspects were not and why.
- List suggestions for modifying or supplementing the intervention the future to improve its ability to meet its own objectives
- Conclusions MUST to be backed up by your results

**TIP!** Short chapter summaries are extremely helpful for readers who don't have time to read the full report or who want to get a sense of the evaluation before reading it in detail.

This summary was drawn from excellent guidance on what to include in an evaluation report which can be found here [http://www.uic.edu/depts/cwrg/cwitguide/05\\_EvalGuide\\_STAGE3.pdf](http://www.uic.edu/depts/cwrg/cwitguide/05_EvalGuide_STAGE3.pdf)

# Judging the worth of an intervention

How can the 5-Step Approach help funders to make their decisions?

## Assessing an evaluation report

The extent to which an organisation has undertaken these 5-steps could be judged using an objective scoring scale which would standardise the way interventions are judged

A standardised, objective and transparent scoring system could be developed to assess the extent to which these 4 elements have been addressed in the report, namely,

- To what extent is the intervention based on strong and consistent evidence drawn from the results of sound research studies?
- Is there is logic model that shows clear, evidence-based and logical links between each activity and the outcomes?
- Has an independent and robust evaluation been carried out?
- To what extent did the evaluation show a) that the resources (inputs) and been spent on evidence-based activities, that b) the target group were obtained c) that most completed the intervention and d) that the anticipated outcomes for users were achieved?

Example judging criteria matrix for reducing reoffending interventions	Yes, No or to some extent (Comments)	Weighting	Score (1-3)
Is there a clear rationale for this intervention? Why was it needed?			
Did the target group pose a medium to high risk of reoffending?			
Is intervention content (what they are going to do) described in detail?			
Is there a comprehensive assessment of published robust studies?			
Is this evidence clearly embedded into the design of the programme? For example, does the intervention develop individual motivation, skills and competencies?			
Are there also evidence-based or at least logical links between inputs (costs), content/activities and short-, medium- and long-term outcomes?			
Has an independent evaluation been carried out?			
Does the evaluation collect appropriate data to test the logic model as described?			

Example judging criteria matrix for reducing reoffending interventions	Yes, No or to some extent (Comments)	Weighting	Score (1-3)
Impact — was there a control or a comparison group e.g. matched pairs? If so, what was the sample size?			
Did the evaluation show that resources were spent appropriately on activities with users?			
Is there evidence that activities were carried out and to a high standard?			
How many were eligible? What was the throughput?			
Were outcomes achieved? Was impact measured and has the intervention made a real difference?			

### Features and Advantages of a scoring system

- A scoring system could be developed in collaboration with Justice Analytical Services, funders and interventions.
- Judging criteria could be weighted according to the *importance* of each criteria
- A total score could be worked out for each intervention and assessed – it even provides a basis for making objective and transparent comparisons between interventions.
- There is a precedent for this type of scoring system – ‘formal’ criminal justice programmes seeking accreditation are assessed using a similar scoring system and Analytical Services use a similar system of criteria to assess bids for research projects
- Advantages and disadvantages of the 5-step approach

## Advantages and disadvantages of the 5-step approach

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inclusive – all interventions of any size should be able to conduct this type of evaluation.</li><li>• Giving credit for evidence-based approach and a sound model of change can offset problems with conducting ‘gold standard’ impact evaluations.</li><li>• Funders could rate the quality of evaluations on a scale which allows weighting to help compare programmes.</li><li>• A transparent and consistent scoring system would support and enable a process of ‘certification’ (similar to accreditation of formal programmes) which could raise the quality of interventions which in turn should reduce reoffending in the longer-term.</li><li>• The approach is already endorsed and used to commission change fund projects.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not everyone is familiar with logic models, how to embed the evidence or evaluations so evaluators and funders might need support.</li><li>• It falls short of a quantitative and objectively verifiable measure of impact on long term outcomes.</li><li>• In order for interventions to conduct a robust logic model evaluation, they must have sufficient time for medium term outcomes to materialise. Short funding cycles may act against this although this approach does allow other aspects of the process to be evidenced sooner, for example evidence-based practice, a clear logic model, sound implementation of activities and short-term outcomes.</li></ul>

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Example proposal for an evidence-based intervention

### Why is this service needed?

There are 2 clear reasons for providing this service

1. There is a gap in current provision. The Scottish Prison Service have identified a gap in services aimed at improving prisoners' social, communication and emotion-management skills. There is currently no prison-based service available to address these needs in prisoners.
2. There is strong and consistent evidence that this intervention should help contribute to reducing reoffending.

We have drawn on robust research evidence to demonstrate how our planned activities should lead to prisoners developing better communication and emotional skills which should help them deal more effectively with people, achieve positive goals (such as finding employment) and desist from crime after liberation. We have drawn from reviews of the evidence rather than single studies which can be biased or unreliable. We have drawn on the following sources:-

- Systematic and literature reviews on 'what works' to reduce reoffending to provide justification for throughcare and the needs the service will address .
- A range of qualitative research studies which suggest how the service should be implemented to achieve outcomes and data provided by the Scottish Government on prisoners' reconviction rates.

### What outcomes do we want to achieve?

#### **Evidence - what factors contribute to reducing reoffending?**

The findings from international systematic reviews of 'what works' to reduce reoffending provides strong and consistent evidence services need to target criminogenic needs to reduce reoffending.

A systematic review published by the Ministry of found a clear association between poor social and emotion management skills with reoffending, therefore they are both justifiable targets for interventions aimed at reducing reoffending. Other dynamic criminogenic needs have been found to be criminal peers, drug use and criminal attitudes.

There is fairly strong evidence that that better outcomes are achieved if services are holistic, well-structured and continue after release (reference).

#### **What outcomes will we be trying to achieve?**

This intervention will focus mainly on improving offenders social and emotion management

skills. To ensure that this intervention forms part of a wider holistic service which will address multiple needs, this intervention will link into existing throughcare processes as one of the range of services that prisoners can be referred to in prison and in the community.

The community-based part of the intervention will also encourage liberated prisoners to join sports and leisure groups which should help ex-prisoners build pro-social networks.

Therefore this intervention will focus on addressing 3 needs that have been found to be associated with reoffending – improve social skills, improve emotion management and develop social networks

### **Which activities will achieve outcomes?**

#### **Evidence for linking this intervention with existing throughcare processes**

Although there is a lack of controlled experimental studies which show that throughcare reduces reoffending, there is a growing body of evidence that throughcare plays an important role in helping short term prisoners reintegrate back into the community and that throughcare can enhance the effectiveness of prison-based interventions (add reference). With particular relevance to social skills and emotion management, some research studies have shown that throughcare can enable prisoners to practice skills they have learned once they return back to their communities which will help them deal with real life situations, seek work, control aggression and engage positively with non-offending peers (add reference).

As there are existing throughcare processes, we have designed this intervention to align with the processes and with the main tenets of effective throughcare which are listed below. According to an international review of throughcare published in 2013 by SCCJR,

- Throughcare should start as early as possible following sentencing
- Pre-release planning is important and prisoners should be involved in devising these plans
- There should be continuity of provision through the gate
- Supporting prisoners to practice their skills in the community embeds more positive behaviour.

#### **How will our service link with throughcare?**

In accordance with this evidence, this service will engage prisoners who are referred to us as early as possible and we will also offer one-to-one support available to prisoners on an appointment basis. Once liberated, prisoners will be able continue to improve and practice their social and emotional management skills in the community through the provision of a community-based structured programme.

As there is strong evidence that criminal peers place offenders at a high risk of reoffending, once released the users will be encouraged to find work, join local sports or social clubs of interest to the users so they can forge relationships with non-offending peers. Where possible, links to clubs and employers will be made prior to release to smooth the transition. The community-based service will support prisoners for at least 6 months after release or until a time they are confident in using positive social skills without further support.

### **Evidence on effective techniques to improve social skills and emotional management**

There is strong and consistent evidence from systematic reviews that show CBT is the most effective technique at improving social skills, managing aggression and reducing reoffending (add reference).

### **What approach will we use in our sessions?**

Specialist workers who are trained and experienced in motivating offenders using CBT techniques will run structured interventions within the prison and in the community. These will improve communication and emotion management skills through using CBT approaches, participatory role play within peer groups.

Within the prison, peer groups will be used to practice holding conversations, allowing prisoners to learn from each other how to express ideas and develop effective techniques which help them deal with anger and frustration. As stated above, it is important that once released, prisoners also start to build relationships with pro-social peers.

### **Evidence on required intensity of support**

Risk, Needs and Responsivity principals show that the intensity or 'dosage' of supervisions needs to be relative to the risk of reoffending (add reference).

### **Our approach to intensity of support**

As this group are at a high risk of reoffending (see participants section), this project will provide intensive support. This will take the form of one-to-one support on an on-going appointment basis and two, one hour sessions per week designed to improve social and emotion management skills. This frequency will continue in the community as appropriate to individual users.

### **Evidence on what increases motivation**

Research also shows that targeting this group may present problems with lack of motivation and engagement as the target group may be extremely resistant to receiving support. However research has found there may be rational reasons for a lack of motivation (e.g. poor experiences of interventions in the past, chaotic life-styles which act as a barrier to participation, being forced to own up to their offending, guilt, fear of ridicule from others and a lack of self-efficacy etc).

### **Our approach to motivating prisoners**

Therefore our staff are trained in evidence-based methods to motivate reluctant offenders by developing trusting relationships, showing willingness to focus on and discuss life goals and discuss how they could be achieved, agreeing shorter term treatment goals, explaining processes and activities that will be fully explained and by using enjoyable tasks. This should help prisoners to feel motivated and sustain engagement with the programme.

### **Who will we reach?**

### **Evidence on selecting appropriate target groups**

RNR principals suggest that offenders with a medium-high risk of reoffending are most likely to benefit from structured interventions compared with those who are low-risk or very high risk.

Offenders who at a high risk of reoffending tend to have the following characteristics,

- They have a number of prior convictions
- They are serving short term sentences
- They have multiple criminogenic needs

Data on the Scottish prison population provided by the Scottish Government confirms that prisoners serving short term sentences (6 months or less) who have multiple prior convictions have the highest reconviction rate out of all prisoner groups. Approximately 70% of prisoners under 30 serving under 6 months with more than 10 prior convictions were reconvicted within a year compared with 50% of all prisoners serving short term sentences.

### Which target group will we reach?

This project will therefore target the most prolific male prisoners who are

- Serving sentences of under 6 months
- Have over 10 prior convictions

The total number of prisoners across the whole estate who should be eligible for the service per annum is based on figures for 2010-11 cohort which suggests 1264 prisoners would fall into this category. As this is an intensive service, which requires considerable time spent with prisoners we aim to target 30 offenders per annum.

## Appendix 2: An example data collection framework

### Example data collection framework for a criminal justice intervention

Part of logic model analysed	Indicators	Data collected from (data source)	Data recorded in...	Data entered into database as...
<b>INPUTS</b>				
<p><b>Were there sufficient resources to run the intervention and how were they deployed?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unless there were sufficient resources, then the quality of the intervention could have been compromised.</li> <li>• The evaluation should show what resources were required to run the intervention and whether they were sufficient to deliver the intervention as intended.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The total cost of the intervention.</li> <li>• Average £ spent on each user.</li> <li>• What were funds spent on? How many staff, were required, staff case loads, costs of running sessions, cost of materials, venues etc.</li> <li>• Gather views on whether resources were sufficient.</li> <li>• To what extent was the evidence base embedded into the intervention?</li> </ul>	<p>Manager and staff</p> <p>Annual accounts</p>	<p>Intervention level database</p>	<p>Costs, values and views</p> <p>Costs can be reviewed periodically (e.g. annually)</p>

Part of logic model analysed	Indicators	Data collected from (data source)	Data recorded in...	Data entered into database as...
<p><b>PARTICIPANTS</b></p> <p><b>Collect information on your users to check that you reach your intended target group.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up the database so you can collect data on each user.</li> <li>• Data can then be aggregated to provide important quantitative data on users e.g. percentages, averages etc.</li> <li>• You can also see whether the intervention worked for some users but not others by breaking down outcome data into different types of users (e.g. different ages, offence types) Numbers have to be large and data has to be quantified to do this though.</li> </ul>	User ID number	N/A	User level database	Entered as 01, 02, 03 etc
	Name	User	User level database	Name
	Date of birth	User	User level database	Date of birth
	Age at start of programme	User	User level database	Age
	S number (if possible)	Police/ CJSW	User level database	S number
	Gender	User	User level database	Column - Gender Male= 1 Female= 2
	Local Authority	User	User level database	Assign code for each LA area
	Current index offence	SOI	User level database	Code crime types e.g. Sex offence = 1 Crime of dishonesty = 2

Part of logic model analysed	Indicators	Data collected from (data source)	Data recorded in...	Data entered into database as...
	<p>Needs e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substance use</li> <li>• Criminal peers</li> <li>• Criminal attitudes</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Education</li> </ul> <p>Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentence length</li> <li>• Number of previous convictions and LSC/MI score</li> <li>• Gender</li> </ul>	LSC/MI	User level database	LSC/MI scores and record of needs for each user

Part of logic model analysed	Indicators	Data collected from (data source)	Data recorded in...	Data entered into database as...
<b>ACTIVITES</b>				
<p><b>What did users experience?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on activities is important because if activities didn't happen or were poorly delivered, then it is unlikely that outcomes will occur, or if they did, something external to the intervention might be responsible.</li> <li>• Work out the number and % of users who complete and not complete the intervention as a</li> </ul>	Date of intervention start/ completion	Case record	User level database	Enter dates in xx/xx/xxxx format
	How many users had their needs assessed?	Case record	User level database	For each user Needs assessment 1 = Yes 2 = No
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe intervention sessions that each user <b>should have</b> completed.</li> <li>• For each user, record the type of modules, activities or sessions that <b>should have</b> been delivered, the number of sessions they should have</li> </ul>	Intervention supervisors	User level database	For each user, create columns for each module or activity that was supposed to be undertaken by the individual. For each activity record <b>intended</b> number of

Part of logic model analysed	Indicators	Data collected from (data source)	Data recorded in...	Data entered into database as...
<p>whole and whether each user completed the activities that were designed to meet their needs.</p>	<p>completed, and the duration of these sessions. Report the content of sessions and mode of delivery (e.g. group sessions, role play, CBT etc)</p>			<p>sessions, session duration, content etc.</p> <p>Create a column for if they completed the intervention as a whole e.g. Completed Yes = 1 No = 2</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For each user, record what modules, sessions or activities they <b>did complete</b>.</li> </ul>	Case record	User level database	<p>For each user, assign a code for whether each activity was completed or not. For example: Pro-social skills Completed = 1 Not completed = 2</p>
<p><b>How did users experience the intervention?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather user accounts of what they actually did.</li> <li>The extent to which users valued the content and their views on the way the intervention was delivered is important</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>User perspectives on what happened in the sessions, the length of sessions, the format, quality of relationships with supervisors, what they learned and skills they developed.</li> <li>What were the most useful aspects what were the least useful?</li> <li>If they did not complete, why not?</li> <li>How satisfied were they with the intervention?</li> </ul>	User	User level database	<p>Assign codes to closed responses</p> <p>For example, user views on session length – Less than 10mins =1 10-20mins = 2 20-40mins =3</p> <p>or relationship quality – Poor = 1 Good = 2 and enter into database.</p> <p>or usefulness</p> <p>Very useful = 1 Quite useful = 2 Not very useful = 3</p> <p>Analyse qualitative open questions (not entered into data base)</p>

Part of logic model analysed	Indicators	Data collected from	Data recorded in...	Data entered into database as...
<b>SHORT- and MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES</b>				
<p><b>Did change happen?</b></p> <p><b>Quantitative measures of change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain a pre-intervention base line and post-intervention assessment end line.</li> <li>Short term outcomes tend to be changes to attitudes, knowledge, learning, motivation or skills.</li> <li>Medium term outcomes show evidence of individual behaviour change.</li> <li>Measure the same outcomes at the start and exit point to see if change occurred.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The difference between the baseline situation and the end situation is the measure of whether <b>change</b> happened.</li> <li>Record the following at the <b>start and end</b> of the intervention</li> </ul> <p>For example, record the score on psychometrics tests (if appropriate). Record where users started from on key outcome variables such as attitudes, needs, skills, knowledge, awareness, status, views, feelings, behaviours or competencies.</p>	<p>User and intervention supervisor</p>	<p>User level database</p>	<p>Create two columns—one for the outcome variable <b>before</b> and one column for <b>after</b> the intervention . For example</p> <p>Communication skills 'able to express ideas' (before): Yes =1 No =2</p> <p>and 'able to express ideas' (after): Yes= 1 No = 2</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Housing Has stable accommodation (before): Yes = 1 No= 2</p> <p>Has stable accommodation (after): Yes = 1 No = 2</p>
<p><b>Qualitative measures of change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As well as scales, ask the users, supervisors and family as to whether they</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did offenders friends and family think progress has been made ?</li> <li>Clinical judgement of progress.</li> <li>User and family views on the contribution of external factors</li> </ul>	<p>Users friends and family  Intervention Supervisor</p>	<p>User level database</p>	<p>Could code answers  e.g. Supervisor views of change</p>

Part of logic model analysed	Indicators	Data collected from	Data recorded in...	Data entered into database as...
<p>think users have changed and in what way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is no control group but you want to explore attribution you could elicit views on the relative impact of the intervention by asking users and family about perceived impact the other interventions or support has had.</li> <li>Could also observe sessions at the exit to see if progress has been achieved.</li> </ul>	<p>to offender outcomes relative to intervention.</p>	<p>User and family</p>		<p>'Made progress' Yes = 1 No = 2</p> <p>And/or transcribe interviews for more depth information</p>
<b>LONG-TERM OUTCOMES</b>				
<p>Did the intervention reduce reoffending?</p>	<p>Statistical differences in outcomes between a control group and the treatment (user) group</p>	<p>Reconviction data</p>	<p>Separate analysis conducted</p>	

# Helpful resources

## **General advice on proportionate evaluation for small-scale projects**

<http://project-oracle.com/standards-of-evidence/>

<http://www.clinks.org/community/blog-posts/how-can-we-make-evidence-easier#comment-form> (see embedded presentation)

## **Evaluation Plan Worksheets**

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/planning/pdf/EvaluationPlanWorksheet.doc>

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/G3658-1W.PDF>

[http://project-oracle.com/uploads/files/2.3\\_Project\\_Oracle\\_-\\_Evaluation\\_plan\\_example\\_and\\_template\\_-\\_June\\_2014.pdf](http://project-oracle.com/uploads/files/2.3_Project_Oracle_-_Evaluation_plan_example_and_template_-_June_2014.pdf)

<http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/Resources/CharitiesEvaluationServices/Documents/Monitoring%20and%20evaluation%20framework.pdf>

## **What works to Reduce Crime – Scottish Government**

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/10/2518>

## **‘What works’ and desistance theory –full reports**

*Reducing Reoffending Review- Scottish Government*

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0038/00385880.pdf>

*Strengthening Transnational Approaches to Reducing Reoffending – University of Cambridge*

[http://www.cepprobation.org/uploaded\\_files/Rep%20STARR%20ENG.pdf](http://www.cepprobation.org/uploaded_files/Rep%20STARR%20ENG.pdf)

*Transforming rehabilitation – A summary of evidence on reducing reoffending – Ministry of Justice*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/243718/evidence-reduce-reoffending.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243718/evidence-reduce-reoffending.pdf)

*Campbell Collaboration Systematic Reviews* (e.g. on mentoring and prison-based drug interventions)

<http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/?go=monograph>

*Discovering Desistance – McNeill et al*

<http://eprints.gla.ac.uk/79860/1/79860.pdf>

## **Key practice skills research**

*Practitioner skills and attributes*

[http://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/38070/1/21st\\_c.pdf](http://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/38070/1/21st_c.pdf)

*Motivating Offenders to Change*

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Motivating-Offenders-Change-Engagement-Psychology/dp/047149755X>

*The quality of probation supervision – A literature review*

[https://www.shef.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.159010!/file/QualityofProbationSupervision.pdf](https://www.shef.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.159010!/file/QualityofProbationSupervision.pdf)

Recent key texts

<http://psycnet.apa.org/psycinfo/1995-98528-000>

Writing an evaluation report.

[http://www.uic.edu/depts/crwg/cwitguide/05\\_EvalGuide\\_STAGE3.pdf](http://www.uic.edu/depts/crwg/cwitguide/05_EvalGuide_STAGE3.pdf)

An example of commissioning using key elements of the 5-step approach: Reducing Reoffending Change fund guidance

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Justice/public-safety/offender-management/changefund/changefundguidance>



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