

Recidivism and The Role of Probation and Parole

National Research Council (NRC)
“Roundtable on Crime Trends in America”

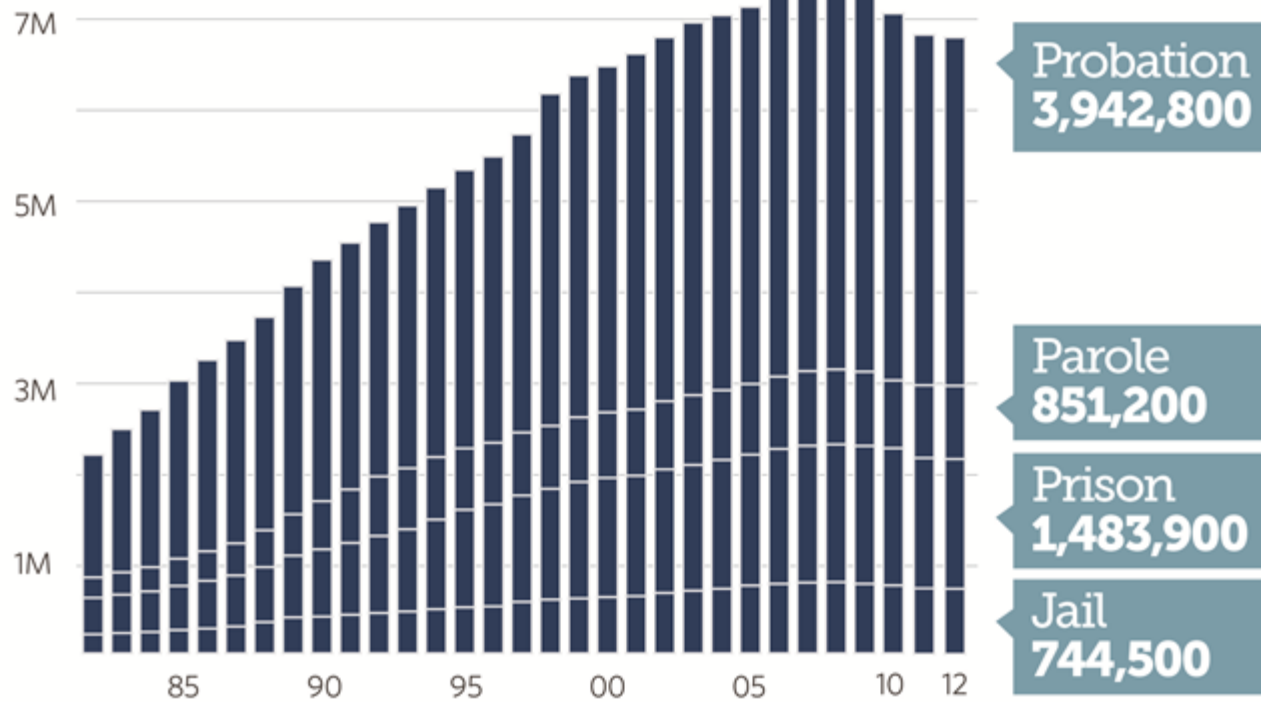
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Dramatic growth in size of supervised population



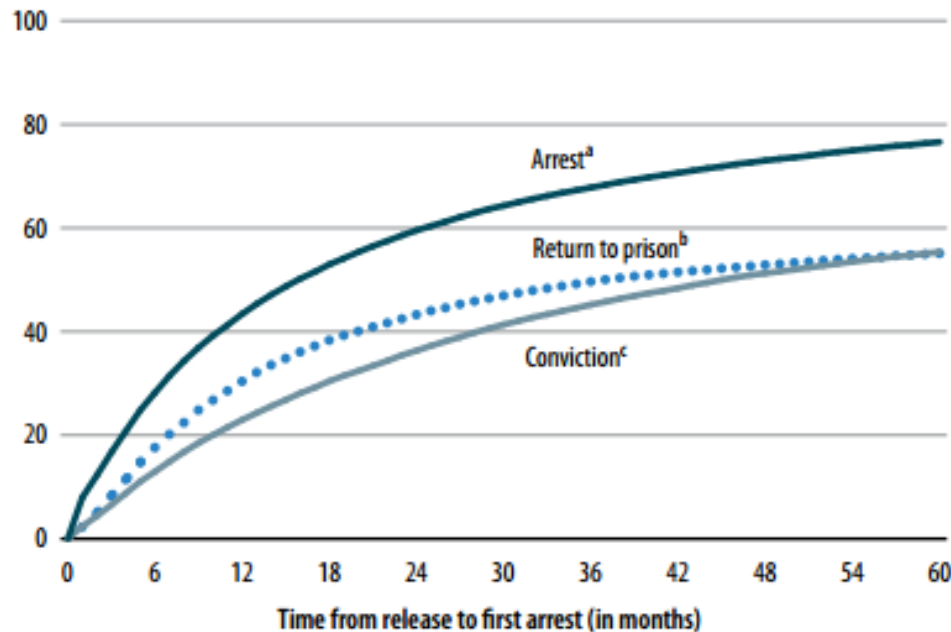
Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics and Pew Charitable Trusts



Recidivism rates remain stubbornly high

Recidivism of prisoners released in 30 states in 2005, by time from release to first arrest that led to recidivating event

Percent who recidivated



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

Within three years of release in 2005:

- Two-thirds (68%) of inmates were rearrested for a new crime
- More than half (55%) were reconvicted of a new crime
- More than half (55%) were returned to prison for either a new crime or a technical violation of supervision

Impact of probation & parole populations on crime rates is complicated

- People under supervision account for small share of arrests
 - Council of State Governments analysis of arrests in four cities in California (Los Angeles, Redlands, Sacramento, and San Francisco) between 2008-2011 found people under supervision accounted for only 22 percent of total arrests
 - Consistent with earlier (2005) study by Rosenfeld and colleagues which showed recently released prisoners (not including jail releases) accounted for one-fifth of new adult arrests
 - Begg the question: what happens when they are off supervision?
- Deterrence versus behavior change
 - Pew study of parole outcomes in New Jersey found that many arrests occur after a parolee has been discharged from supervision. Among those rearrested within three years of parole release in 2008, nearly half (48%) were no longer under supervision
- Repeat clients
 - Bureau of Justice Statistics found that a sixth (16%) of all inmates released in 2005 accounted for nearly half (48%) of all rearrests within five years



“Does Parole Work?”

TABLE 2. Rearrest Outcomes after Two Years, by Supervision Status at 1994 Release

	Unconditional releasees	Mandatory parolees	Discretionary parolees
Percent rearrested	62%	61%	54%
Average number of rearrests	2.5	2.1	2.1

Source: Urban Institute analysis of Bureau of Justice Statistics data.

TABLE 3. Predicted Probability of Rearrest Two Years after Release, by Supervision Status at 1994 Release

	Unconditional releasees (%)	Mandatory parolees (%)	Discretionary parolees (%)
OVERALL	61	61	57

- Urban Institute report using data from the 1994 BJS recidivism study comparing people released to mandatory and discretionary parole and those released without supervision at the end of their sentence
- Those released to mandatory parole had similar recidivism outcomes to inmates who “maxed out” but inmates released to discretionary parole had better outcomes, even when controlling for risk



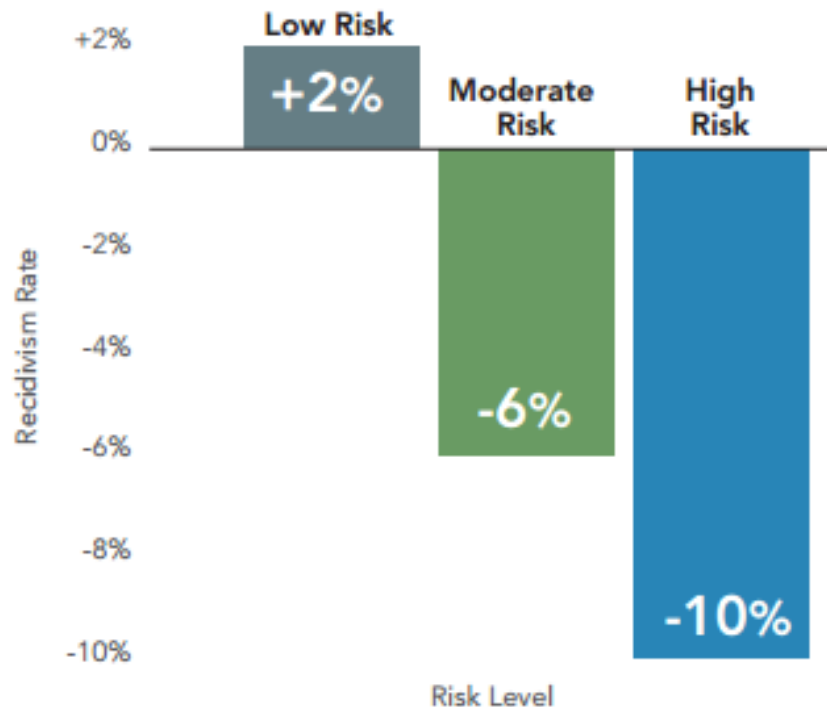
“Putting Public Safety First: 13 Strategies”

1. Define Success as Recidivism Reduction and Measure Performance
2. Tailor Conditions of Supervision
3. Focus Resources on Moderate and High-Risk Parolees
4. Front-Load Supervision Resources
5. Implement Earned Discharge
6. Implement Place-Based Supervision
7. Engage Partners to Expand Intervention Capacities
8. Assess Criminogenic Risk and Need Factors
9. Develop and Implement Supervision Case Plans that Balance Surveillance and Treatment
10. Involve Parolees to Enhance their Engagement in Assessment, Case Planning, and Supervision
11. Engage Informal Social Controls to Facilitate Community Reintegration
12. Incorporate Incentives and Rewards into the Supervision Process
13. Employ Graduated Problem-Solving Responses to Violations of Parole Conditions in a Swift, Certain, and Proportional Manner



Target moderate and high-risk populations

Study of 44 Ohio halfway house programs



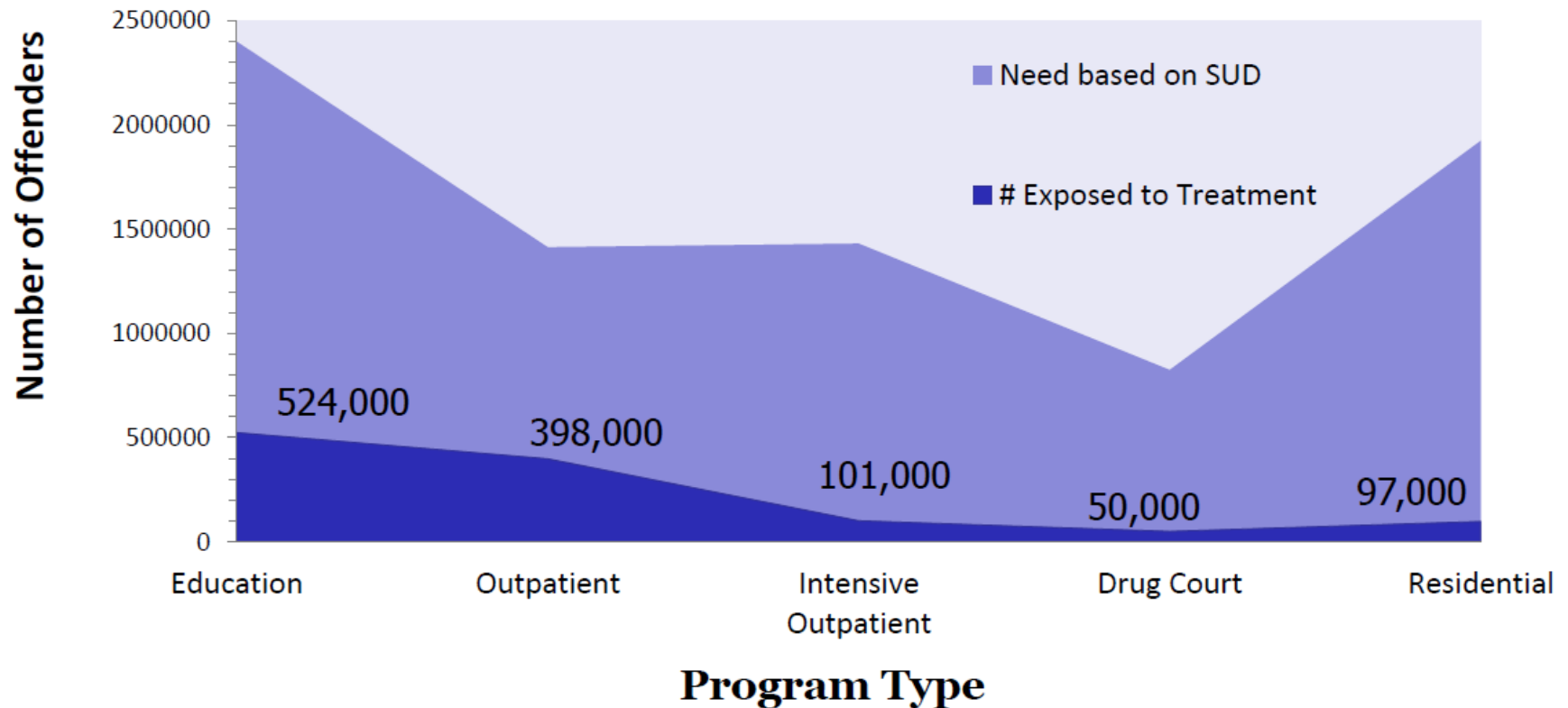
- Focus scarce resources on those who pose the greatest risk
- Avoid criminogenic effects for low-risk population
- Maximize recidivism reduction and crime avoidance
- At least 16 states expanding the use of risk and needs assessment as part of JRI

Source: Ed Latessa and the Pew Charitable Trusts.



Balance surveillance with treatment

The Treatment Gap

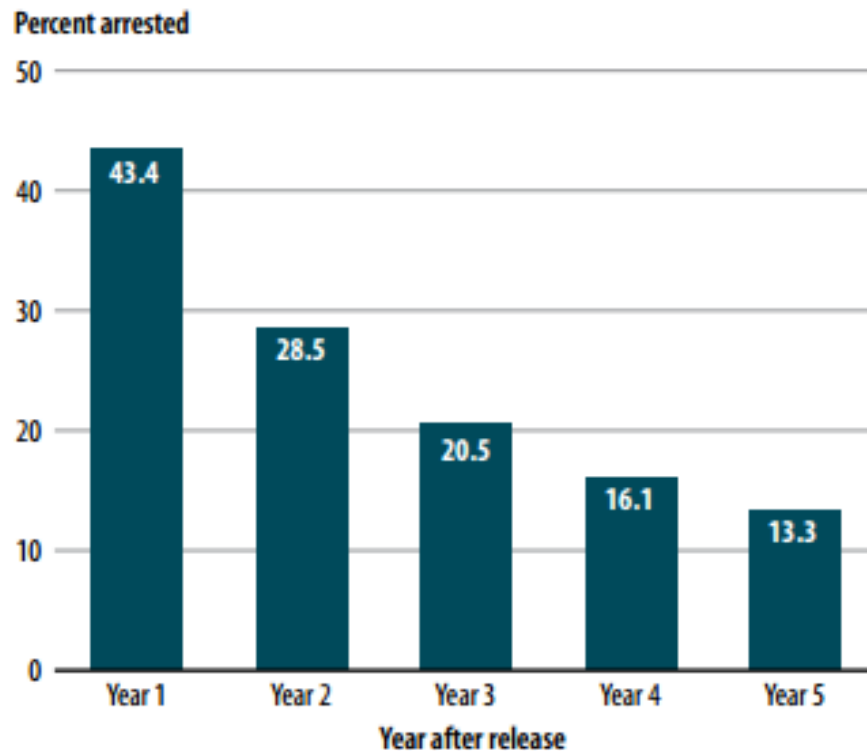


Source: Faye Taxman, George Mason University Center for Advancing Correctional Excellence



Frontload supervision resources

Percent of prisoners arrested during the year who had not been arrested since release in 30 states in 2005



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

Research has consistently shown that the period immediately following release from prison is the most critical for recidivism reduction

- Newest BJS recidivism data shows 4 out of 5 released inmates who had not yet been arrested would remain arrest free in their third year in the community
- Consistent with earlier study from National Research Council (2008) which found that the probability of arrest was 40 percent higher in the first month of supervision than in the 15th month



Swift, certain, and proportional sanctions

Many probationers and parolees will violate the rules of supervision and commit new crimes

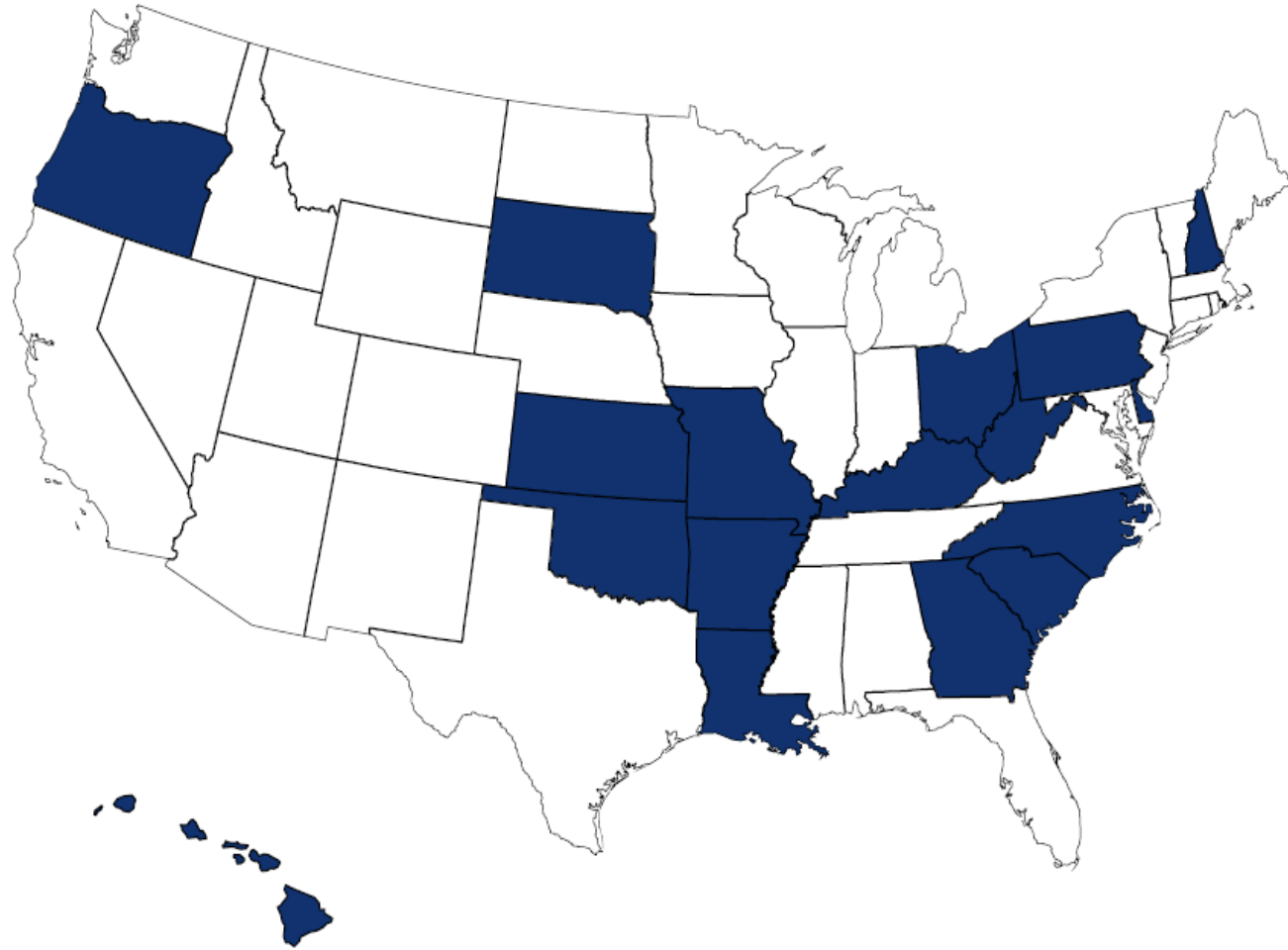
Therefore, to avoid over-relying on incarceration:

- Conditions must be realistic and tailored to the individual
- Supervisory agencies must engage government and NGO partners to expand intervention capacities
- Responses to failures should be swift, certain, and proportional



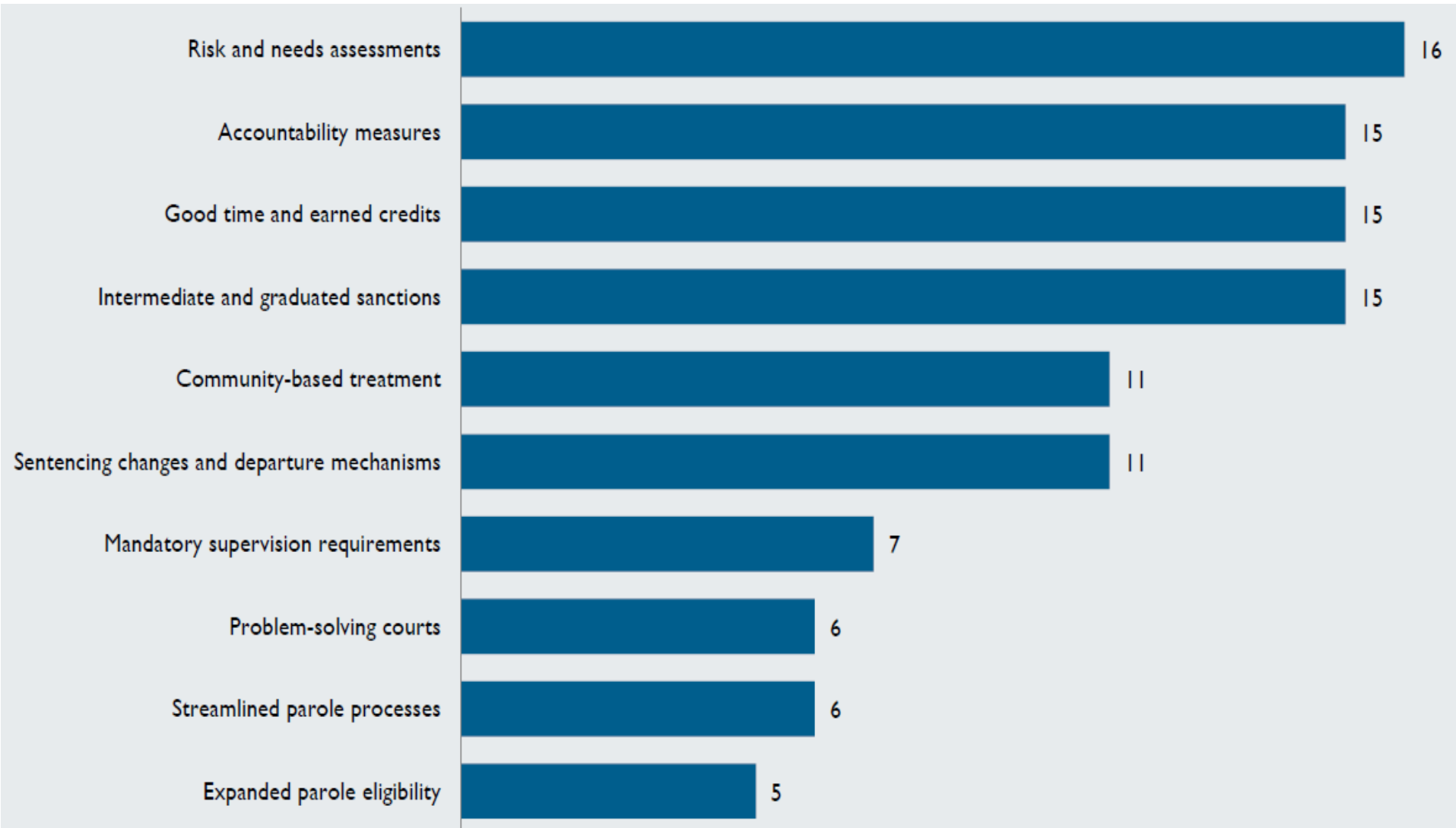
Justice Reinvestment Initiative

- Launched in 2010
- Includes 17 states:
 - Arkansas
 - Delaware
 - Georgia
 - Hawaii
 - Kansas
 - Kentucky
 - Louisiana
 - Missouri
 - New Hampshire
 - North Carolina
 - Ohio
 - Oklahoma
 - Oregon
 - Pennsylvania
 - South Carolina
 - South Dakota
 - West Virginia





JRI reforms



Conclusion

- Directions for future research
 - Unpacking recidivism
 - Reforms may in fact increase recidivism
 - More crime, but less severity?
 - Evaluating actual policy changes
 - Analyzing gaps in policy and practice
 - Simulating potential changes