Thinking for a Change and Cognitive-Behavioral Programs
Thinking for a Change and Cognitive-Behavioral Programs Annotated Bibliography

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Introduction

This brief bibliography contains research supporting *Thinking for a Change* as well as CBT programs for offenders generally. Some of these resources are available through the NIC Information Center: (800) 877-1461, the online Help Desk at [http://nicic.gov/helpdesk](http://nicic.gov/helpdesk).

The *Thinking for a Change: An Integrated Approach to Changing Offender Behavior* (T4C) curriculum, developed by Barry Glick, Jack Bush, and Juliana Taymans in cooperation with NIC, “uses a combination of approaches to increase offenders’ awareness of themselves and others. It integrates cognitive restructuring, social skills, and problem solving. The program begins by teaching offenders an introspective process for examining their ways of thinking and their feelings, beliefs, and attitudes. The process is reinforced throughout the program. Social-skills training is provided as an alternative to antisocial behaviors. The program culminates by integrating the skills offenders have learned into steps for problem solving. Problem solving becomes the central approach offenders learn that enables them to work through difficult situations without engaging in criminal behavior” (Milkman & Wanberg, 2007).
Thinking for a Change


The research literature on effective offender programming shows that cognitive–behavioral programming creates larger reductions in recidivism than other types of offender programming. In light of this evidence, the ODRC adopted the Thinking for a Change (TFAC) program. In 2009, the department encouraged every prison to implement the TFAC program. The program teaches problem-solving skills, particularly when interacting with others, in order to increase rational thinking and lead to pro-social interactions and behaviors. In addition, through cognitive restructuring (aka, cognitive self-change), thought processes are modified to reduce thinking patterns that are conducive to criminal behavior, i.e., antisocial attitudes. This evaluation uses a quasi-experimental, non-random, two group pretest post-test design, and it explores intermediate outcomes that examine whether the program has influenced participant’s self-assessment of their social problem-solving skills and approaches and their acceptance of criminal attitudes. [author executive summary]


Center for Evidence-Based Practice. Effectiveness of Community Corrections in the State of Indiana. CEBP/University of Indiana: Bloomington, 2011.

“The purpose of this study was to determine who is served by Indiana Community Corrections, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the community corrections program, and its components and services” (p. 37). Results are organized according to who is served in Indiana community corrections, what the effectiveness of community corrections is, what the effectiveness of the required components of community corrections is, what the effectiveness of services is, what combinations of components do offenders participate in, and what the outcomes of those combinations are. The National Institute of Corrections offender training program “Thinking for a Change” is the most common service provided while also having the highest completion rate of 60%.

http://www.nicic.gov/Library/025400


This study evaluated the effectiveness of a National Institute of Corrections’ cognitive-behavioral program for adult offenders, entitled “Thinking for a Change.” One hundred male and 42 female probationers were studied. Probationers assigned to the “Thinking for a Change” program were matched with a comparison group not assigned to the program and contrasted on interpersonal problem-solving skills pre- and post-program completion, and on recidivism at three months to one year post-program. Results indicate a trend towards
lower recidivism, with 33% fewer subjects who completed the program committing new offenses, compared to those who did not attend the program, over a period of up to 12 months. Technical violations of probation were significantly higher for program dropouts than for completers or comparisons. Program completers improved significantly on interpersonal problem-solving skills after "Thinking for a Change," while the dropout and comparison groups had no such gains.


The effectiveness of "Thinking for a Change" -- a cognitive behavioral program for adult probationers -- is investigated. Following an abstract, this dissertation contains these chapters: introduction; literature review; study purpose and major aims; method; results; and discussion. While "results for changes and improvements in criminal sentiments found in the present study [are] disappointing and counter to expectation," there are significant positive changes in social skills and social problem-solving (p. 90). More importantly, new criminal offense rates for group completers dropped 33%.

http://www.nicic.gov/library/018190


"This workshop covers the underlying foundations of cognitive behavioral training, including cognitive restructuring and cognitive skills. The panel discusses how cognitive behavioral principles can help people more effectively negotiate risky situations, solve problems, and make decisions that can lead them out of trouble. Particular attention is paid to implementing cognitive behavioral programs with integrity in order to get the best results. NIC’s "Thinking for a Change" curriculum is highlighted as an example of cognitive behavioral training programs."

http://nicic.gov/library/027363


Due to the popularity of cognitive behavioral interventions, programs that follow this model are often assumed to be effective. Yet evaluations of specific programs have been slow in coming. The current investigation seeks to bridge this gap by evaluating the effectiveness of Thinking for a Change, a widely used cognitive behavioral curriculum for offenders. Furthermore, this evaluation provides a “real-world” test of T4C, because it was implemented by line staff in a community corrections agency as opposed to being a pilot project implemented by program developers.

The results of the analyses indicate that offenders participating in the TFAC program had a significantly lower recidivism rate than similar offenders that were not exposed to the program. In this study, the authors compared the recidivism rates of 121 offenders on probation that received T4C to 97 offenders on probation supervision that did not receive T4C. Offenders participating in T4C and those not participating in T4C were
drawn from a similar time period and from the same jurisdiction. The follow-up time period ranged from 6 to 64 months with the average follow up being 26 months. Other measures included a risk score (summed score of prior arrests, prior prison, prior community supervision violations, history of drug use, history of alcohol problems, highest grade completed, employment status at arrest), age, sex, and race. The outcome measure was new arrest for any new criminal behavior during the follow up period.

Two statistical models were used. The first compared all the T4C participants to the non-participants. The second model compared only those offenders that successfully completed T4C to those offenders that did not participate in T4C. The findings of these models revealed significant and substantive differences in the likelihood of arrest between the groups of offenders. The 121 offenders that received some exposure to the T4C program but didn’t necessarily successfully complete T4C had an adjusted recidivism rate of 23%. Those offenders that successfully completed T4C (n = 90) had an adjusted recidivism rate of 18%. Finally, those offenders that did not participate in T4C programming (n = 97) had an adjusted recidivism rate of 35%. These differences are net the effects of other control variables such as race, age, sex, and risk level. [JOURNAL ABSTRACT]

This website uses rigorous research to inform practitioners and policy makers about what works in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services. A profile of the Thinking for a Change program includes an overall evidence rating, and the program goals, target population, theory and components.
http://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=242
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Cognitive Behavioral Programs (some studies include T4C)


“One of the earliest cognitive-behavioral programs is the Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R) … R&R teaches offenders cognitive, emotional and social skills and values that are required for pro-social competence and are antagonistic to antisocial behavior. It trains offenders in skills and values that enable them to withstand environmental and personal factors that engender antisocial behavior … R&R programs are also among the most frequently evaluated programs in the criminal justice field. Their efficacy in reducing recidivism has been demonstrated in a remarkable number of evaluations. The present report presents the major findings of each of the independent controlled evaluations of R&R and R&R2 that have been conducted in many countries over more than 26 years since the program was first developed and evaluated in Canada. The report documents the success of many applications of the R&R/R&R2 model but also indicates several factors that have limited or prevented its success.”


A systematic review of evidence-based programs for adult offenders, looking at 291 evaluations previously conducted in the U.S. and other English-speaking countries.
Regarding Cognitive-behavioral Treatment, the researchers found “25 rigorous evaluations of program for the general offender population that employ CBT…. On average, we found these programs significantly reduce recidivism by 8.2 percent. We identified three well-defined programs that provide manuals and staff training regimens: Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), and Thinking for a Change (T4C).”
The results of this study also indicate reductions in recidivism of low-risk sex offenders on probation, as well sex offenders in prison.


This pilot study examined differences in criminal attitudes and hostile attribution biases among three groups of offenders diagnosed with serious mental disorders. It also compared the criminal outcomes for a sample of mentally ill offenders (MIO’s) who completed a modified version of the Options cognitive skills program with a treatment-as-usual sample of MIO’s. Results showed that pre- and posttest change scores for the Overgeneralization subscale of the Hostile Interpretations Questionnaire (HIQ), the Identification with Criminal Others subscale of the Criminal Sentiments Scale-Modified (CSS-M), and the HIQ Authority subscale differed between the groups of offenders with serious mental disorders.
Participants identified for treatment by the pilot program (intended treatment group) and
participants who completed the entire intervention had fewer arrests, including fewer arrests for violent offenses, but had higher technical probation violations than a treatment-as-usual comparison group.


This is an excellent introduction to “What Works” in correctional programming. “The purpose of this paper is to identify the major characteristics of effective offender programming as found in the research literature and provide a description of programs that work. The hope is that this document can assist administrative and treatment staff in the design and implementation of effective offender programming” (p. 3). Topics covered include: the death and rebirth of correctional programming; what the seven general principles and characteristics of effective treatment programs are; and evidence-based programming for criminogenic needs—recovery services programming, educational programming, employment programming, attitudes/associates/social interaction (cognitive-behavioral programs), marital/family relations programming, and programs addressing mental health problems. This report ends with a great chart showing the various program types, program description, recidivism reduction outcomes, and any other significant research findings

http://www.drc.ohio.gov/web/Reports/Effective%20programs.pdf


Results from an 18-month evaluation of the Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT) provided by the Evening Reporting Centers (ERC) of the Illinois Fourth Probation District of the Second Judicial Circuit are presented. Seven sections follow an executive summary: evaluation design overview; a review of the literature; Franklin and Jefferson counties overview; history and description of Franklin/Jefferson county ERC and MRT; process evaluation; outcome evaluation; and summary of findings and recommendations. While only 13.5% of ERC participants in Franklin County committed new offenses upon release, reductions in delinquency of 41% were experienced by Jefferson County participants only while they were enrolled in ERC.


This short article is a revision of “Preventing Future Crime with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy,” originally published in the National Institute of Justice Journal (Issue No. 265) and explains the CBT has been found to be effective with juvenile and adult offenders (low- and high-risk), sex offenders, and in a variety of correctional settings in the community and in institutions.

The effectiveness of the Moving On program is evaluated. Moving On is a gender-responsive, cognitive behavioral program for women probationers. Sections of this report include: program description; data and study design; sample; outcome measures; results for rearrests, convictions, incarcerations, and technical violations; effects of program completion on rearrests, convictions, incarcerations, and technical violations; and implications of the findings. "The findings from this study indicate the Moving On program would be a good fit for agencies looking for an evidence based gender-responsive program” (p. 12).

http://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/womenoffenders/docs/MOVING%20ON.pdf


Community corrections are being used with increasing regularity for the supervision and management of serious and violent offenders. Attempts to increase the frequency and severity of conditions of supervision have not resulted in meaningful decreases in crime rates among this population. Some encouraging results, however, have been observed when a treatment component is integrated into supervision protocols. This dissertation first examines the theories and current research that inform this shift in strategies. Secondly, we evaluate for the first time, a cognitive-behavioral therapy intervention developed to reduce recidivism within a high-risk, male probation population.

http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1802&context=edissertations


A meta-analysis of 58 experimental and quasi-experimental studies of the effects of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) on the recidivism of adult and juvenile offenders confirmed prior positive findings and explored a range of potential moderators to identify factors associated with variation in treatment effects. With method variables controlled, the factors independently associated with larger recidivism reductions were treatment of higher risk offenders, high quality treatment implementation, and a CBT program that included anger control and interpersonal problem solving but not victim impact or behavior modification components. With these factors accounted for, there was no difference in the effectiveness of different brand name CBT programs or generic forms of CBT. [AUTHOR ABSTRACT]

http://restorativejustice.pbworks.com/fj/Landenberger_Lipsey.pdf
The University of Cincinnati’s Center for Criminal Justice Research conducted evaluation of five treatment programs in 24 institutions within the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The programs—Thinking for a Change (T4C), Batterer’s Intervention, Violence Prevention, and two Sex Offender programs—were evaluated using the Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) and CPC-Group Assessment (CPC-GA) and examined the extent to which the programs adhered to the principles of effective intervention. Numerous components must be in place in order for evidence-based group interventions to maintain program integrity. Indicators of Program Integrity on the CPC-GA include: an individual dedicated to oversee and manage the group, and select and supervise group facilitators; facilitators must meet specific qualifications; formal training should be conducted regularly, along with formal meetings about the program; ethical guidelines need to be honored; and support must exist from key stakeholders. CPC Indicators include having an engaged program coordinator with the necessary skills and experience to work with staff and offenders, and ground work must be done in advance, such as literature reviews and piloting of the program. Stable and adequate funding for the program helps to ensure effectiveness, along with involvement and input from the staff and ongoing clinical supervision and service delivery skills training/coaching.

“The Thinking for a Change results in the area of treatment program integrity indicators were consistent with the overall results of the agency with two exceptions. The first is that Thinking for a Change is considered an evidence-based curriculum as it integrates key cognitive-behavioral techniques and the principles of social learning theories
consistently throughout the manual. The second and related difference is that the... curriculum regularly integrates modeling and role-playing with corrective feedback into group sessions” (p. 38).
http://nicic.gov/Library/024463


Recidivism can be defined as “the return of a criminal to crime within a specified time interval after release from prison or completion of a punishment for a prior conviction” (Tebbitt, 2011, p.1). Although there has been a decline in the recidivism rate over the years, it remains to be an issue in the United States, and in Florida. Because of this issue, many people are trying to figure out a way to keep offenders from committing new crimes and returning to prison. One idea is the use of Cognitive Based Treatment Programs. Therefore, this paper asks the question “Does offender participation in a CBT reentry program affect the offender’s probability of reoffending?” To answer this question, the paper will look into previously conducted studies to see what information researchers have already found on this topic and will explain a new approach to answer this question. This paper contains a literature review of the previously conducted studies which have examined similar questions. Next this paper will discuss the methodology that was used to help answer this question including the explanation of the dependent and independent variables used in the study. Finally, this paper will examine the expected findings and the implications that occurred when researching this question. [Author Abstract]
http://www.sarasota.usf.edu/academics/cas/capstone/2012-2013/criminology/lindhout_offender%20participation%20in%20cognitive%20based%20treatment%20program%20and%20effects%20on%20recidivism.pdf


A systematic review using meta-analysis techniques was conducted with 14 studies selected to provide the best evidence on the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral programs for reducing re-offense recidivism of criminal offenders. The results indicated that, overall, cognitive-behavioral programs are effective, and the best of them are capable of producing sizable reductions in recidivism. Many of the available studies, however, investigate research-oriented demonstration programs; the effectives found for routine practical program were notably smaller. Moreover, the research coverage of both juvenile and adult programs in institutional and non-institutional settings is uneven and leaves troublesome gaps in evidence. [JOURNAL ABSTRACT]


Much research on the subject shows that cognitive-behavioural therapy effectively reduces the recidivism of offenders after serving their sentences. There is, however, a significant
difference in how effective the different treatment programmes that use this form of therapy are, but further research is required to identify what sets them apart from each other.  

http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/project/29/


This article describes the implementation and evaluation of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) in Federal probation case management conducted in the predominantly rural Federal District of North Dakota under a grant from the Federal Research to Results (R2R) program.  


Detailed information regarding the use and benefits of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) in prisons and jails is provided. Chapters comprising this address: the increasing need for effective treatment services; what cognitive-behavioral therapy is; prominent CBT programs for offenders; measuring the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs; evaluating specific CBT curricula; and “real-world” program applications.  


This article reports an evaluation of two cognitive skills programs (Enhanced Thinking Skills and Think First) with 801 women offenders serving community sentences in the English and Welsh Probation Service. A quasi-experimental design was used to compare the reconviction rates at 1-year follow-up of offenders who completed the program, offenders who started but did not complete the program, and a comparison group that were not allocated to the program. Multivariate analysis showed that the completers did not have a significantly lower rate of reconviction than the comparison group. However, the non-completers had a significantly higher rate of reconviction than the comparison group. No differences were found in reconviction between the completers group and non-completers group. The implications of the findings for interventions with women offenders are discussed.  

http://cjb.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/10/09/0093854814552099


If you work with mentally ill offenders you will find this publication very useful. “In this document, we [the authors] review the leading offender recidivism–targeted intervention paradigm: Risk/Needs/Responsivity (RNR) ... In particular, we focus on criminal thinking,
one of the identified "needs," and structured cognitive-behavioral interventions from the worlds of criminal justice and mental health that were created or adapted to specifically target the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors associated with criminal recidivism" (p. 1).

Sections address: risk—evidence-based criminogenic risk assessment; needs—Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy and adaptations for justice-involved populations--Thinking for a Change (T4c), Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT), Interactive Journaling, Reasoning & Rehabilitation (R&R), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), and Schema Focused Therapy (SFT); and responsivity—Motivational Interviewing (MI).


"IPP [Insight Prison Project] programs are designed for incarcerated populations to develop insight and awareness about their emotions, behaviors, and motivations; practice new skills; and integrate these new skills into all aspects of their lives in order to correct entrenched negative behavioral patterns. IPP's programs focus on a socialization process, a process of transformational re-education, that is designed to bring about a shift in ingrained patterns of harmful and destructive behavior; enable men to make life-enhancing choices; and then integrate them into lasting, positive behavior” (p. 3). The core classes (5 of 19) comprising IPP programming and that are evaluated are the Victim Offender Education Group, Yoga, Violence Prevention, Emotional Literacy (with a focus on cognitive behavioral rehabilitation), and the peer mentoring and crisis intervention training program Bothers' Keepers. Results show that these programs deliver promising influences on the participants' lives and reduce violence.


This study seeks to describe the number of United States Probation Offices using cognitive-behavioral treatment programs, which programs are being used, how referrals are made to the programs, if risk factors are considered in the referral process, how successful participants are in completing the programs, and how successful program completers are in successfully completing supervision. A survey was sent to U.S. Probation Offices across the country requesting information about those questions. In this study, the response rate was very low, approximately six percent, and the survey was submitted with varying degrees of information provided by respondents. This limited any conclusions that could be drawn from the data collected. http://gradworks.umi.com/14/64/1464623.html

**Purpose.** Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS) has been the most widely delivered cognitive skills programme in the prisons of England and Wales. Four quasi-experimental outcome studies have produced mixed results, a qualitative survey of offenders’ and facilitators’ experience on the programme proved useful in programme refinement, and a study using random allocation provided evidence that ETS impacts significantly and positively on short-term attitudinal change. This study aims to make a further contribution, using another methodology, to the accumulation of evidence.

**Methods.** This was a real-world evaluation, comparing the reconviction outcomes of the population of 17,047 ETS participants in custody from 2000 to 2005 with a national cohort of 19,792 prisoners released over the same period.

**Results.** Overall, prisoners who had attended ETS were found to reoffend at a rate 6.4 percentage points less than the cohort (rising to 7.5 percentage points for programme completers) and 9.5 percentage points less than the predicted rate. In all but the very highest risk group and in every sentence length band, the reoffending outcomes for ETS participants were significantly better than for prisoners in the cohort.

**Conclusions.** It is argued that this non-experimental methodology makes a contribution to the ‘What Works’ evidence.


This article is about the relationship between recidivism rates and supervision skills used by probation officers (or others who supervise offenders on community-based orders or parole).


The article focuses on the value of integration of both cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and therapeutic community (TC) for substance abuse prison-based CBT. It says that an integrated TC/CBT model for substance abuse offender treatment has been used in the field for more than 20 years. It mentions that the Correctional Recovery Academy™ mixes the best quality elements of social learning approach of TC with advanced CBT curriculum.


Prior reviews and meta-analyses have supported the hypothesis that offender rehabilitation programs based on cognitive-behavioral principles reduce recidivism. This article quantitatively synthesizes the extant empirical evidence on the effectiveness of structured cognitive-behavioral programs delivered to groups of offenders. The evidence summarized
supports the claim that these treatments are effective at reducing criminal behavior among convicted offenders. All higher quality studies reported positive effects favoring the cognitive-behavioral treatment program. Specifically, positive reductions in recidivism were observed for moral reconation therapy, reasoning and rehabilitation, and various cognitive-restructuring programs. The evidence suggests the effectiveness of cognitive skills and cognitive restructuring approaches as well as programs that emphasize moral teachings and reasoning. [JOURNAL ABSTRACT] 

Effectiveness with Youth


Results of twelve studies, five RCTs and seven non-RCTs including a control group, conducted in the USA, Canada and Great Britain suggest that Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (CBT) in residential settings is more effective than standard treatment in reducing criminal behavior in adolescents twelve months after release from the institution. The results are consistent across studies although the studies vary in quality. There is no evidence that the results of CBT are better than those of alternative treatments, i.e. treatments other than CBT.

http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/project/31/


Researchers within the criminal justice field have examined recidivism to discover effective methods to deter criminals from re-offending. Typically, incarceration provided specific deterrence for offenders but recidivism after release proved problematic. Using secondary data analysis, the present study evaluates a cognitive behavioral therapy [CBT] program, Reasoning and Rehabilitation, which the state of Colorado implemented in 1995 among juveniles on intensive probation. The original research team collected the data through pre- and post-questionnaires and interviews with probation officers. The pre- and post-test data are utilized to specifically analyze certain variables including self-control, empathy and problem-solving abilities. The focus of the present study is to determine the level of change in these particular variables as an outcome of completing the CBT program. This analysis also explores the value of CBT programs and examines how the programs alter an offender’s level of self-control, empathy and problem-solving abilities thus reducing recidivism after completion.

http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc6129/m2/1/high_res_d/thesis.pdf


http://www.civicresearchinstitute.com/cby.html

Miles, Helen Louise, Kate Ellis, and Anne Elizabeth Sheeran. “'Coping Inside?': The Prevalence of Anxiety and OCD amongst Incarcerated Young Offenders and an Evaluation of a One-day CBT Workshop.” Journal of Forensic Psychiatry & Psychology 23, no. 5/6 (October 2012): 689-705.

Incarcerated UK young offenders were screened and offered a one-day low intensity (four-hour) Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) group workshop if they met criteria for an Anxiety and/or Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Sixty-six per cent of 684 (n = 451) young offenders were screened, revealing high rates of anxiety (21–43%) and OCD (73%). Despite attrition following prison issues, 106 (58% of referrals) attended a ‘Coping Inside’ workshop resulting in a significant decrease in participants’ cognitive self-consciousness, and trends towards decreases in maladaptive beliefs about superstition and responsibility, slowness and avoidant or detached coping styles. However, the ‘dose’ of intervention didn’t appear sufficient. Nevertheless, participants reported high satisfaction with the format, style, content and setting of the workshops, suggesting the approach was acceptable in this population. Consequently, despite the limited impact on symptoms, the format maybe a useful introduction to or promotion of more intensive group based offending behaviour or psychological treatment programmes for young offenders. [ABSTRACT FROM PUBLISHER]