

Benefits and Challenges of Implementing Gender Responsive Assessment and Classification

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Achieving More Effective
Outcomes with Women in
Jails Summit

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National Resource Center 
on Justice Involved Women

A project of the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the National Institute of Corrections

State of Research and Its Challenges

- Studies do not provide an overview of pretrial as a system;
- Pretrial populations pose unique sampling problems:
 - Population mobility and complexity;
 - Short terms;
 - Timing.
- Most are actually studies of jail populations;
- Low base rates on outcome variables;
- Some controversy.

Hamilton County Women's Assessment Project

Three-year evaluation relating to the arrest, incarceration, assessment, and treatment of women (*Grace, O'Donnell, Walters, and Smitson -1999*):

- Identified gender responsive risk/need factors;
- If factors are undetected, put women at higher risk of pretrial misconduct;
- Few if any validated gender responsive risk/needs assessment tools existed for use at the pretrial stage.

National Institute of Corrections/University of Cincinnati Collaboration

- Endeavored to create an evidence-based, gender responsive screening and treatment intervention process that would reduce the high incidence of pretrial detention and incarceration of women;
- Unable to conduct construction validation; pretrial component was not funded;
- In April 2007, Hamilton County, OH began to use the tool for program referrals;
- Administered tool to both women and men;
- 2009 validation funding provided to the University of Cincinnati by The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati.

Gehring Research

- Variation of the Women's Risk and Needs Assessment (WRNA) in Hamilton County, Ohio
 - *Inventory of Need Pretrial Screening Tool;*
- Dr. Gehring looked at both male and female pretrial defendants (N=266). We are focusing on the findings for women;
- Pretrial, not jail population:
- Were these needs related to pretrial failure?
 - FTAs
 - New Arrests
 - Any Failures
- Did these needs differ for men and women?

Needs in the Study

Gender-Neutral

- Criminal History (risk)
- Employment
- Educational Need
- Substance Abuse

Gender Responsive

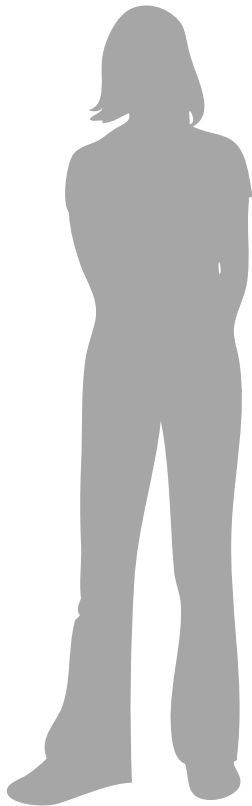
- Abuse
- Trauma
- Mental Health
- Homelessness
- Family Support

Men Scored Significantly Higher than Women On:

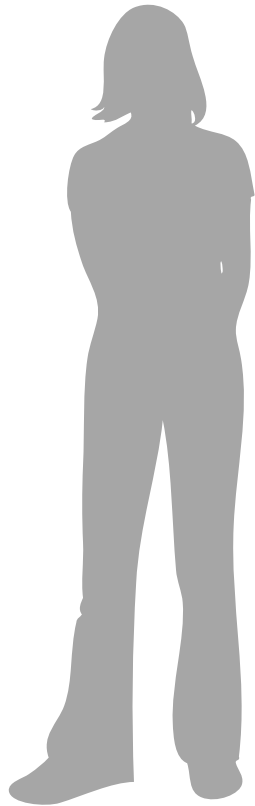


- Criminal history;
- Substance abuse;
- Medium/high risk;
- Having positive visits from family.

Women Scored Significantly Higher than Men On:



- Employment/financial (concerns);
- Child abuse;
- Adult victimization;
- Trauma scale;
- Recent abuse;
- Mental health (depression & PTSD);
- Unsafe housing;
- Parental Involvement;
- Having custody of children;
- Providing sole support for children.



Pretrial women were significantly more likely to score as low risk (51%) than men (33%).

Needs Related to Pretrial Failure

FTAs

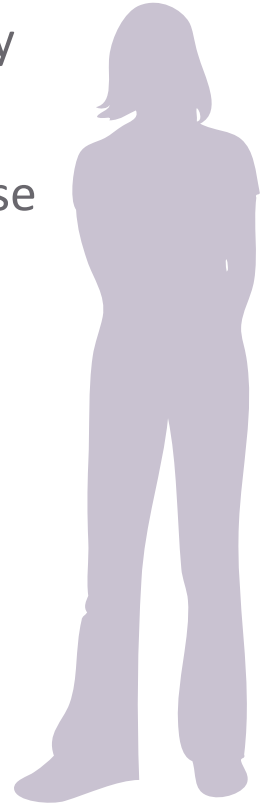
- Criminal History
- Employment
- Substance Abuse
- Abuse
- Trauma
- Mental Health
- Homelessness
- Family Support

New Arrests

- Criminal History (6 Mo)
- Employment
- Substance Abuse
- Abuse
- Mental Health
- Homelessness

Any Failure

- Criminal History
- Employment
- Substance Abuse
- Abuse
- Mental Health
- Homelessness
- Family Support



Needs Related to Pretrial Failure

FTAs

- Criminal History
- Substance Abuse
- Trauma
- Mental Health
- Homelessness
- Family Support

New Arrests

- Criminal History
- Employment
- Educational Need
- Substance Abuse

Any Failure

- Criminal History
- Employment
- Educational Need
- Substance Abuse
- Trauma
- Mental Health (6 Mo)
- Homelessness
- Family Support

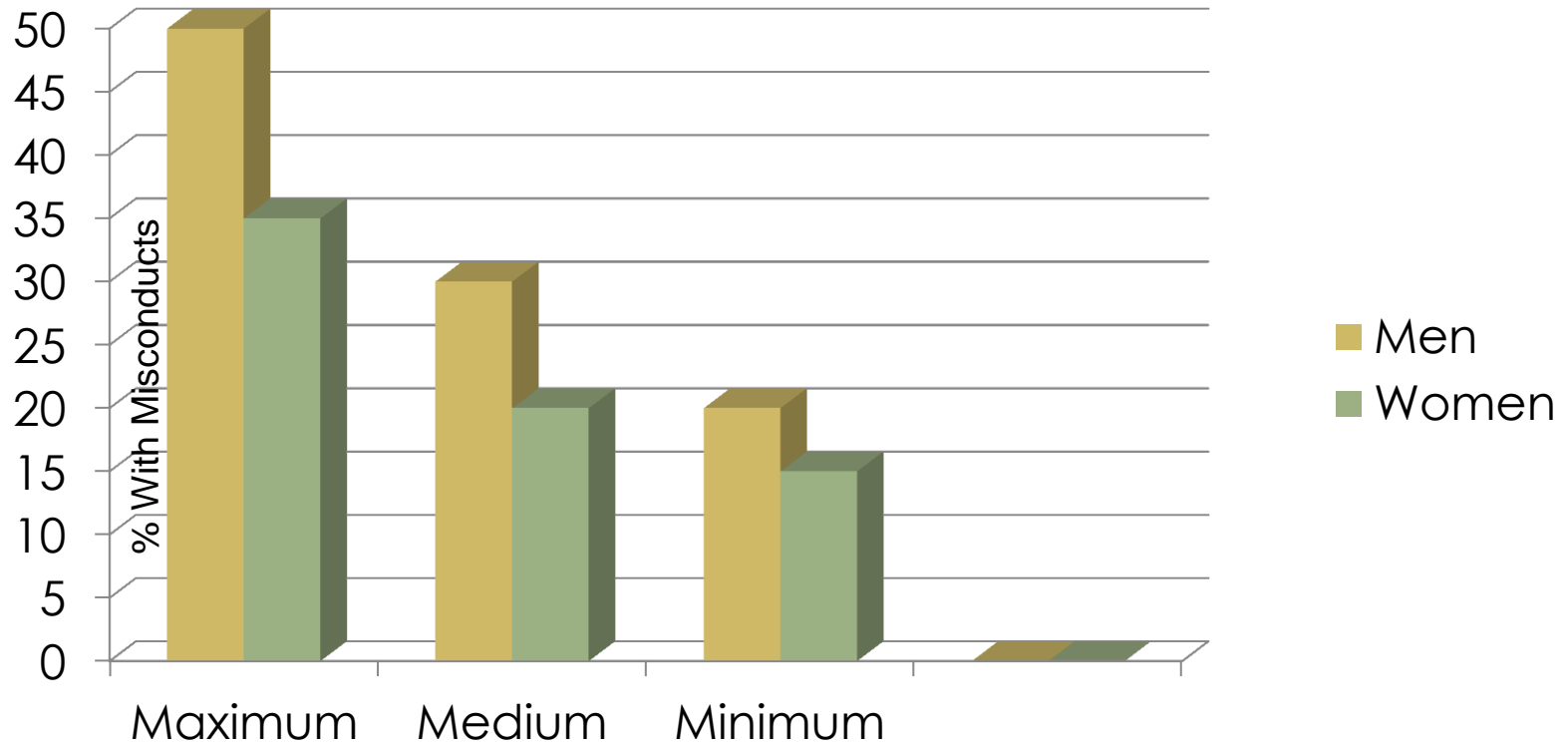


ION Validation Results for Women (4 and 6 Month Follow-up)

Inventory of Need	FTAs		New Arrests		Any Failure							
	4 mo.	6 mo.	4 mo.	6 mo.	4 mo.	6 mo.						
	r	AUC	r	AUC	r	AUC						
Women												
Hamilton County, OH (N=103)	.48***	.89	.48***	.89	.23***	.67	.18**	.60	.40***	.78	.35***	.73
Men												
Hamilton County, OH (N=163)	.28***	.72	.27***	.70	.22***	.71	.24***	.70	.32***	.73	.33***	.71

WRNA Prison Studies

Many Current Systems Over-classify?



Uses a Longer Assessment:

Women's Risk Needs Assessment (WRNA):

- Developed through a Cooperative Agreement Between the National Institute of Corrections and the University of Cincinnati;
- Separate focus groups with women offenders, staff, and administrators;
- Design of questions: Missouri Women's Issues Committee;
- Validated and refined in: Colorado, Missouri, Minnesota, Rhode Island; Ohio and California.

Validation findings available at: www.uc.edu/womenoffenders

Women's Risk/Needs Instrument (WRNA)

Gender Neutral Risk Factors

- **Criminal history**
- **Criminal thinking**
- **Antisocial associates**
- **Vocational/educational**
- **Financial problems**
- **Family support**
- **Substance abuse**
- **Accommodations**



Women's Risk/Needs Instrument (WRNA)

Gender Responsive Risk Factors

- Mental health history
- Anger
- Depression/anxiety
- Psychosis
- Child abuse
- Adult victimizations
- PTSD
- Relationship dysfunction
- Parental stress
- Housing safety



Women's Risk/Needs Instrument (WRNA) Gender Responsive Strengths

- Self-efficacy
- Family support
- Parental involvement
- Educational assets
- Relationship support

Validation Results Prison Sites

Prison Validation Results (12 Month Follow-up)

Probation WRNA	Serious Misconducts r AUC	Aggressive Misconducts r AUC
Stand Alone WRNA		
Missouri (2008)(N=272)	.36*** .66	
Missouri (2013)(N=98) ^a	.18*** .59	-- --
Ohio (2013) (N=347)	.33*** .73	.30*** .74
Trailer		
Minnesota (2008)(N=198)	.33*** .70	
Rhode Island (2013)(N=69)	.17* .59	.38*** .80
California (2010)(N=604)	.31*** .74	.26*** .68
California (2010)(N=305)	.38*** .79	.39*** .87

^a Follow-up is 6 months, otherwise 12 months.

What's Important for Incarcerated Women?

Gender Neutral Risk Factors

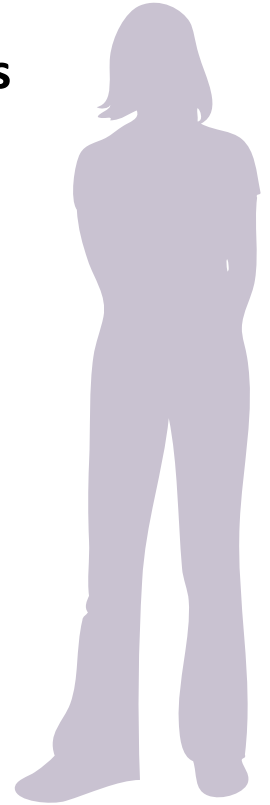
- Criminal history
- Antisocial friends
- Substance abuse

Gender Responsive Risk Factors

- **Anger**
- **Depression (symptoms)**
- **Psychosis**
- **Abuse**
- **Relationship Dysfunction**

Strengths

- **Family support**



Compared to Community (Probation) Risk Factors

Gender-Neutral Risk Factors

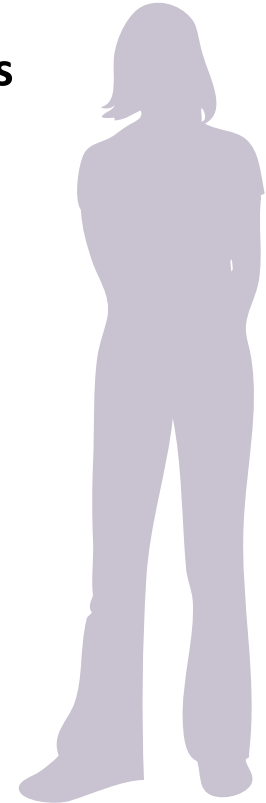
- Criminal history
- Financial/employment
- Antisocial friends
- Substance abuse

Gender Responsive Risk Factors

- **Housing safety**
- **Anger**
- **Depression (symptoms)**
- **Abuse**
- **Parental stress**

Strengths

- **Educational assets**
- **Self-efficacy**
- **Family support**



For More Information:

www.uc.edu/womenoffenders