Benefits and Challenges of Implementing Gender Responsive Assessment and Classification

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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.
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FTAs</th>
<th>New Arrests</th>
<th>Any Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criminal History</td>
<td>Criminal History (6 Mo)</td>
<td>Criminal History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abuse</td>
<td>Abuse</td>
<td>Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma</td>
<td>Mental Health</td>
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<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>Homelessness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>Family Support</td>
<td>Family Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Resource Center on Justice Involved Women
## 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

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*National Resource Center on Justice Involved Women*
### ION Validation Results for Women (4 and 6 Month Follow-up)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FTAs</th>
<th>New Arrests</th>
<th>Any Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 mo.</td>
<td>6 mo.</td>
<td>4 mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inventory of Need</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
<td>AUC</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 mo.</td>
<td>6 mo.</td>
<td>4 mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamilton County, OH</td>
<td>.48*** .89</td>
<td>.48*** .89</td>
<td>.23*** .67</td>
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<tr>
<td>(N=103)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton County, OH</td>
<td>.28*** .72</td>
<td>.27*** .70</td>
<td>.22*** .71</td>
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<tr>
<td>(N=163)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
WRNA Prison Studies
Many Current Systems Over-classify?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of misconducts among men and women across maximum, medium, and minimum levels.]
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](http://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)

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

* 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