The value of research in modern policing

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International Crime and Intelligence Analysis conference
26th February 2016
What is evidence based policing?

EBP means using the best available evidence to inform decisions about practices and policies.

EBP is an ongoing, process aiming to increase our understanding by building a body of evidence for the profession.

Statements about “what works” & “what doesn’t”

Problem solving and hot spot policing reduce crime according to Campbell systematic reviews

Statements about “what’s promising”

Evidence suggests leadership training has impact for specific groups

Statements about possible impact

Taken together with information about implementation, this result suggests the increase could be attributed to the programme, although the influence of other factors cannot be ruled out.

Study designs increasingly rule out potential alternative causes

Study designs cannot rule out potential alternative causes

Context & mechanisms for change

Systematic Reviews
(Based on level 3-5 studies)

5 Randomised controlled trials

4 Before/after measures
   Multiple site comparisons

3 Before/after measures
   Two site comparisons

2 Before/after measures
   No comparison site

1 One-off measure
   No comparison site
Why it really matters

- I’ve had this great idea...

**Effects of Scared Straight and similar programs: First crime effects by year of publication**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study name</th>
<th>Odds ratio</th>
<th>Lower limit</th>
<th>Upper limit</th>
<th>Z-Value</th>
<th>p-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michigan DOC (1967)</td>
<td>3.750</td>
<td>1.110</td>
<td>12.669</td>
<td>2.128</td>
<td>0.033</td>
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<tr>
<td>GERPDC (1979)</td>
<td>1.513</td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td>3.772</td>
<td>0.888</td>
<td>0.374</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yarborough (1979)</td>
<td>1.054</td>
<td>0.537</td>
<td>2.070</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>0.879</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orchowsky (1981)</td>
<td>1.087</td>
<td>0.444</td>
<td>2.660</td>
<td>0.183</td>
<td>0.855</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vreeland (1981)</td>
<td>1.476</td>
<td>0.569</td>
<td>3.832</td>
<td>0.801</td>
<td>0.423</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finckenauer (1982)</td>
<td>5.454</td>
<td>1.650</td>
<td>18.022</td>
<td>2.781</td>
<td>0.005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lewis (1983)</td>
<td>2.092</td>
<td>0.860</td>
<td>5.090</td>
<td>1.627</td>
<td>0.104</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.724</td>
<td>1.134</td>
<td>2.619</td>
<td>2.550</td>
<td>0.011</td>
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![Graph showing odds ratio and 95% CI for crime reduction and increase](image.png)
Crime Reduction Toolkit

- **Intervention**
- **Impact on crime**
- **How it works**
- **Where it works**
- **How to do it**
- **What it costs**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol ignition interlock</td>
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<td>CCEP (crimology)</td>
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<td>DMT (drink driving)</td>
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<td>Electronic monitoring</td>
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<td>Increased police patrols</td>
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<td>Mass media campaign</td>
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<td>Multisystemic therapy</td>
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<td>Music making interventions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood watch</td>
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**Key**

- Quality of evidence: 2
- Not informed: 
- Limited quality: 
- Moderate quality: 
- Strong quality: 
- Very strong quality: 

**Method Statement**

- *This is based on the strongest set of a number of reviews.*

**What is the focus of the intervention?**

Scared Straight involves organised events at prison facilities for juvenile delinquents or children at risk of becoming delinquent. Programmes include confrontational 'rep' sessions in which adult inmates share graphic stories about prison life with the juveniles. Other less confrontational methods and more educational sessions include visits from former inmates. The aim of these sessions is to deter those at risk by showing them the reality of incarceration. This review focuses on both types of delivery methods.

The narrative summary is mainly based on two systematic reviews, review 1 (11 studies) and review 2 (12 studies), with additional information on economic costs from a separate paper (10 studies).

**EFFECT**

- **How effective is it?**
  - Overall, the evidence suggests that the intervention has increased crime.

After accounting for bias, review 1 estimated that recidivism was 13% higher amongst those juveniles who participated in the programme, as compared to those who did not participate. Participant self-reporting was 13% higher compared to offenders who did not receive the intervention in 7 of the 9 studies.

- **How strong is the evidence?**
  - The overall evidence is taken from review 1 (covering 8 studies). The review was sufficiently systematic to identify and extract the results from the remaining study. The evidence did not quantify an overall effect for unanticipated outcomes caused by the intervention.

**MECHANISM**

- **How does it work?**
  - The reviews provide a general statement of the assumed theory of the possible mechanisms through which Scared Straight might reduce crime.

Both review state that Scared Straight might reduce crime by giving programmes participants realistic depictions of life in prison and a offenders or children at risk of becoming delinquent. Further research and this hypothesis is that if punishment is swift, severe, and certain, it...
“It’s not NHS, CPS, Police or Council money… it’s all public money.

The way our public services work together

1. Interventions chosen on the strength of evidence
2. Integrated, coordinated, sequenced and bespoke packages of support
3. Family-based approach to changing behaviour, not just focused on individuals

Early intervention
“tackling root causes before they become a problem”

Education Endowment Foundation

Toolkit
Global Policing Database

• **Building an exhaustive repository of quality evaluation research regarding police and policing**

  Dr Angela Higginson  
  Lead Chief Investigator

  **Professor Lorraine Mazerolle**  
  Chief Investigator

  **Ms Elizabeth Eggins**  
  Chief Investigator/Project Manager

  **Professor Betsy Stanko**  
  Chief Investigator

With assistance from UQ PhD students, as well as UQ and Griffith University student interns and volunteers


**Overall, the findings support the hypothesis that the integration of CCTV with proactive police activity generates a crime control benefit greater than what research suggests is achievable via “stand-alone” camera deployment, particularly in the case of street-level crime.**
Getting it used in practice

Surveys show officers rely on and prefer professional experience rather than research

BUT

The more they know about research the less they believe the police alone have enough information about crime and what to do about it

AND

The more they are exposed to research the more likely they are to be willing to do experiments

SO

When research is part of their professional experience - they will be much more likely to use it!

Palmer (2011) Survey of inspectors and chief inspectors in Greater Manchester Police
Lum et al (2012) Receptivity to research in Policing
Police Knowledge Fund

To support the development of sustainable education & research collaborations between police forces & academic institutions.

1. Build sustained capability amongst officers & staff to understand, critique & use research

2. Embed or accelerate understanding of crime & policing issues, & evidence based problem-solving approaches

3. Demonstrate innovation in building the evidence base & applying it across policing through knowledge exchange and translation

Global Policing Database
www.gpd.uq.edu.au
15 bids representing 39 forces & BTP
Get involved

whatworks.college.police.uk

whatworkscentre@college.pnn.police.uk

nerys.thomas@college.pnn.police.uk