

Causes of Crime

Sarah Greenman, PhD
Associate Professor
Hamline University

Goals for Today

- Causes of crime
- What works to prevent crime

What causes crime?

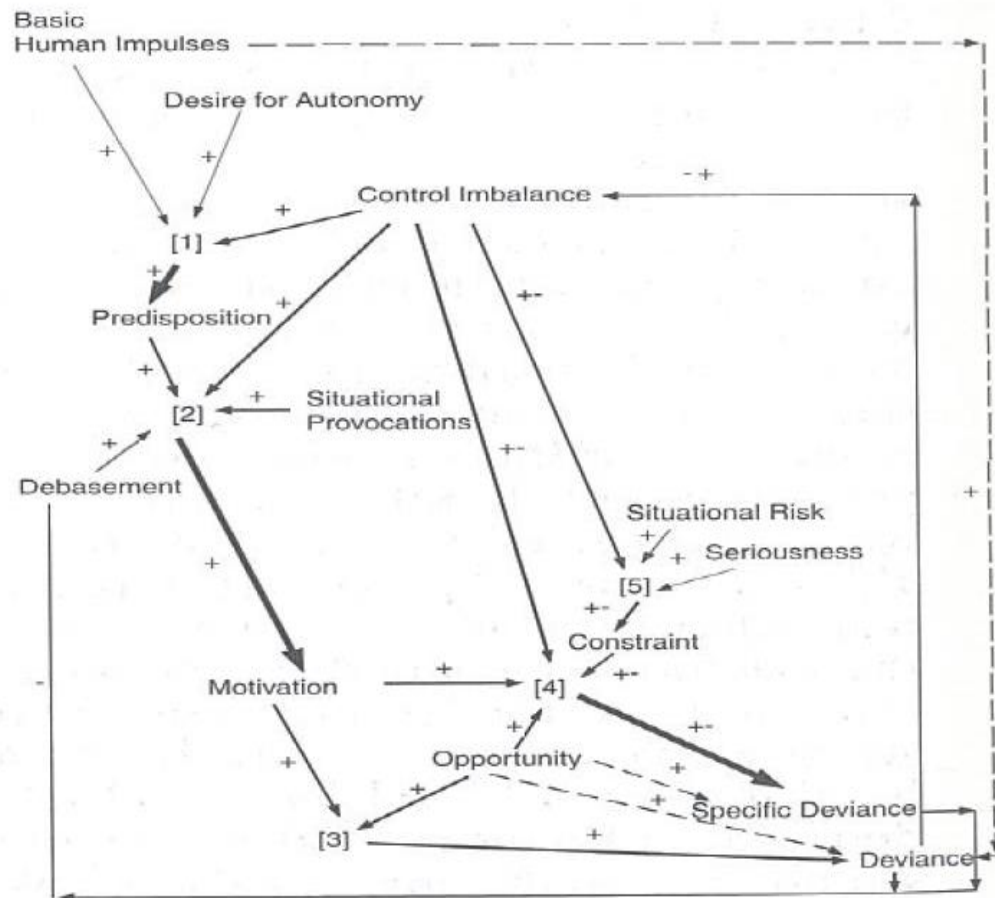
—

Complex and cumulative

Theories of Criminal Behavior

- Neighborhood based (cohesion and trust)
 - Strain (financial or trauma)
 - Learning (associations)
 - Control (attachments, internal controls)
-
- Sanctioning (Deterrence, Rational Choice)
 - Labeling (system based)

Causal Linkages of Control Balance Theory



Source: Adapted from Tittle 1995, 189.

Theories of Criminal Behavior

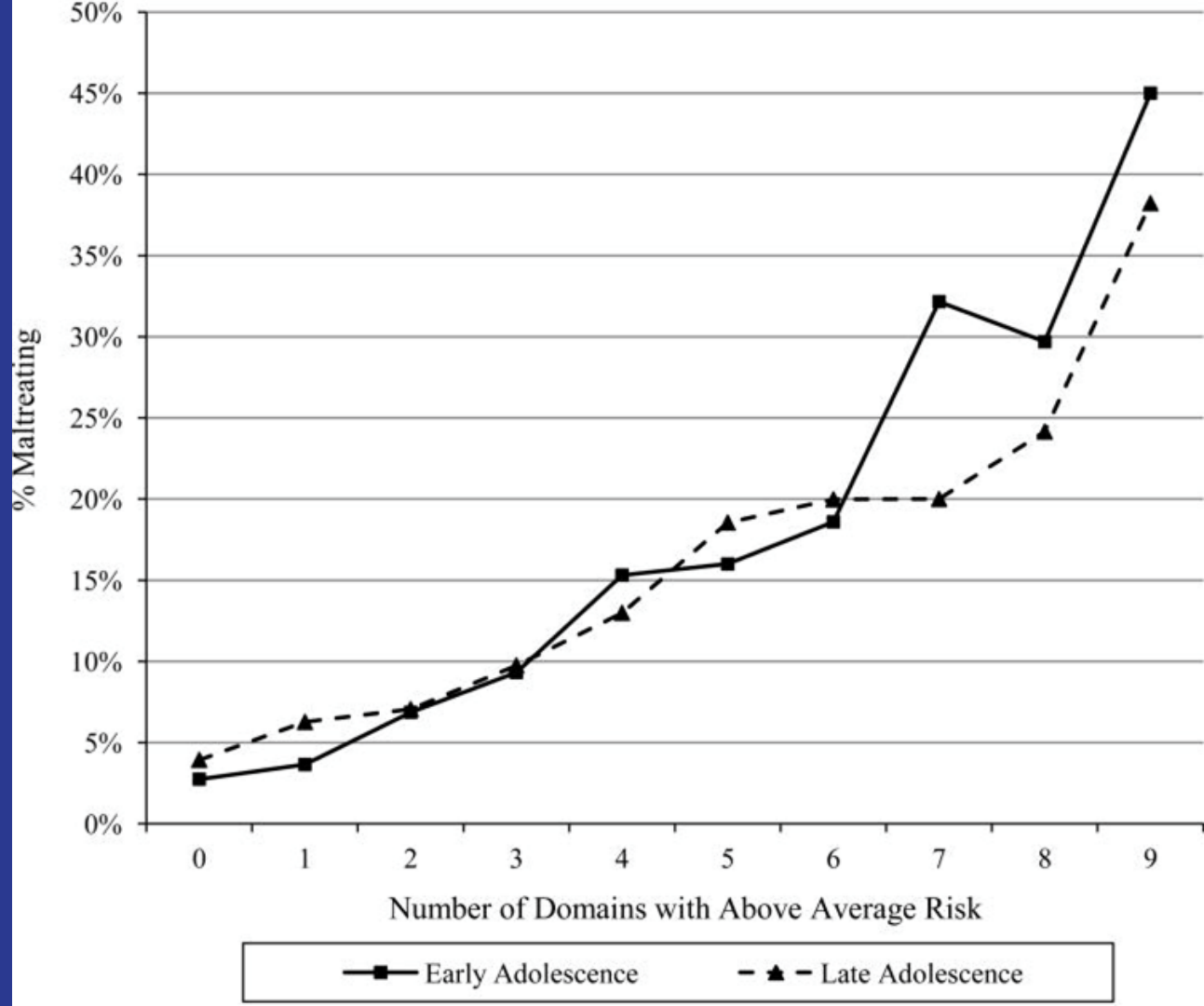
- Neighborhood based (cohesion and trust)
 - Strain (financial or trauma)
 - Learning (associations)
 - Control (attachments, internal controls)
-
- Sanctioning (Deterrence, Rational Choice)
 - Labeling (system based)

Risk Factor Domains

- Area Characteristics
 - Poverty
 - Neighborhood disorganization
- Family Background/structure
 - Low parent education
 - Teenage mother
 - Family transitions
- Parent Stressors
 - Parent depressive symptoms
 - Parental stress
 - Parent drug or alcohol use
- Exposure to Family Violence
 - Parental partner conflict
 - Maltreatment victimization
- Parent-Child Relationship
 - Low attachment to parent
 - Low attachment to child
 - Inconsistent discipline
- Education
 - Low commitment to school
 - Low college expectations
 - School drop out
- Peer Relationships
 - Delinquent peers
 - Unsupervised time with friends
- Early Intimate Relationships
 - Precocious parenthood
 - Precocious cohabitation
- Adolescent Stressors
 - Negative life events
 - Depressive symptoms
 - Low self-esteem
- Antisocial Behavior
 - General delinquency
 - Problem alcohol or drug use
 - Hostility
 - Aggression

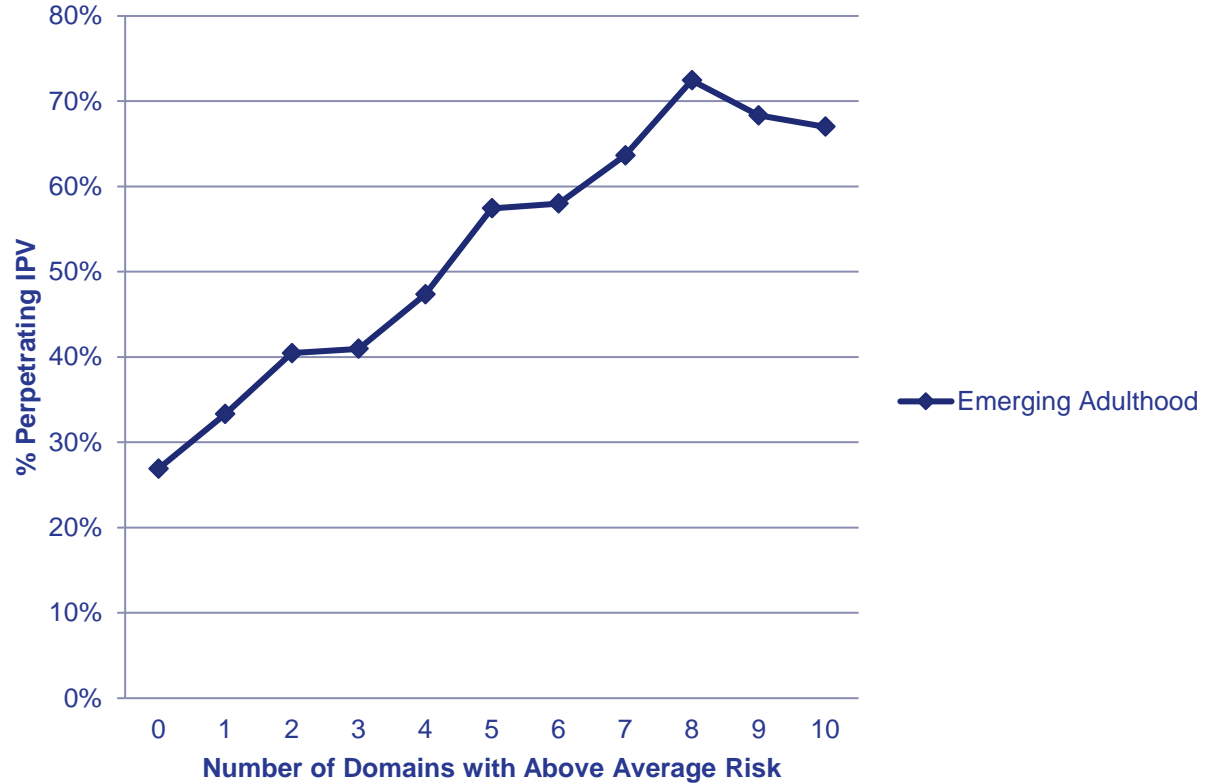
Child Maltreatment

Cumulative Risk



Intimate Partner Violence

Cumulative Risk for IPV Perpetration



Risk Factor Domains


- Area characteristics
- Family Background/structure
- Parent Stressors
- Exposure to Family Violence
- Parent-child relationship
- Education
- Peer relationships
- Early Intimate Relationships
- Adolescent stressors
- Antisocial behavior


Policy: What works?

The screenshot shows the homepage of the CrimeSolutions website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the National Institute of Justice logo and the text "NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE" and "Crime SOLUTIONS". To the right of the logo, there are links for "About", "Contact Us", "Subscribe", "A-Z", and "Topical Index". A search bar is also present. Below the navigation bar, there is a horizontal menu with categories: "Rated Programs", "Rated Practices", "How CrimeSolutions Works", "Topics", and "FAQs". The main content area features a large heading "Reliable Research. Real Results." followed by the tagline "The first step in knowing what to do is knowing what works ... and what hasn't." A prominent yellow button labeled "Learn about CrimeSolutions" is positioned below the tagline. At the bottom of the page, there are two white boxes with orange borders, each containing a search prompt and a plus sign: "I want to..." and "What Is CrimeSolutions?".

crimesolutions.ojp.gov

 NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE | Crime SOLUTIONS

About | Contact Us | Subscribe | A-Z | Topical Index | 

Search 

Rated Programs ▾ Rated Practices ▾ How CrimeSolutions Works ▾ Topics ▾ FAQs

Reliable Research. Real Results.

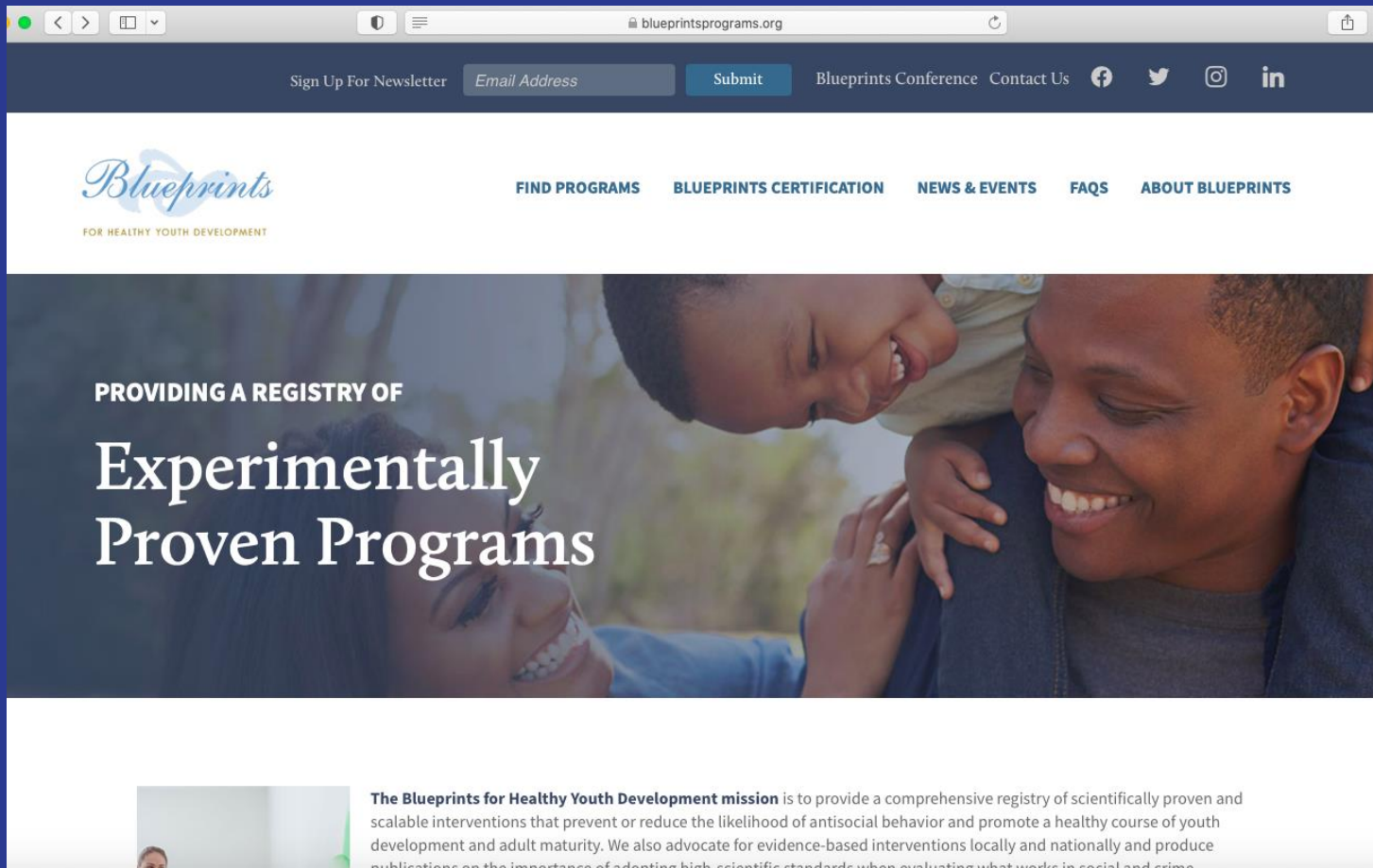
The first step in knowing what to do is knowing what works ... and what hasn't.

[Learn about CrimeSolutions](#)

I want to... 

What Is CrimeSolutions? 

Policy: What works?



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a search icon, a hamburger menu, the URL "blueprintsprograms.org", and a share icon. Below this is a dark blue header with the text "Sign Up For Newsletter" and an "Email Address" input field with a "Submit" button. To the right of the input field are links for "Blueprints Conference", "Contact Us", and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

The main content area features the "Blueprints" logo in a blue script font, with the tagline "FOR HEALTHY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT" in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font below it. To the right of the logo is a horizontal menu with five items: "FIND PROGRAMS", "BLUEPRINTS CERTIFICATION", "NEWS & EVENTS", "FAQS", and "ABOUT BLUEPRINTS".

The central part of the page is a large banner image of a smiling family (a woman, a man, and a child) with the text "PROVIDING A REGISTRY OF Experimentally Proven Programs" overlaid in white. The word "Experimentally" is in a larger, serif font, while "PROVIDING A REGISTRY OF" and "Proven Programs" are in a smaller, sans-serif font.

At the bottom of the page, there is a white section with a small video thumbnail on the left and a paragraph of text on the right. The text reads: "The Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development mission is to provide a comprehensive registry of scientifically proven and scalable interventions that prevent or reduce the likelihood of antisocial behavior and promote a healthy course of youth development and adult maturity. We also advocate for evidence-based interventions locally and nationally and produce publications on the importance of adopting high scientific standards when evaluating what works in social and crime."


Sample Programs

Title	Evidence Rating (by Outcomes)	Summary
Practice Profile: Dropout Prevention Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Education - Dropout✓ Education - Academic achievement/school performance✓ Education - Graduation✓ Education - Attendance/truancy	<p>School- or community-based programs targeting frequently absent students or students at risk of dropping out of school. These programs are aimed at increasing school engagement, school attachment, and the academic performance of students, with the main objective of increasing graduation rates. The practice is rated Effective for reducing rates of school dropouts, and rated Promising for improving test scores/grades, graduation rates, and attendance.</p> <p>Date Posted: 7/20/2015</p>
Practice Profile: Early Developmental Prevention Programs for At-Risk Youths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Crime & Delinquency - Multiple crime/offense types✓ Crime & Delinquency - Criminal justice involvement	<p>This practice consists of early developmental programs that focus on enhancing child, parent-child, or family well-being to prevent social deviance and criminal justice involvement among at-risk children under age 5. The practice is rated Effective for reducing deviance and criminal justice involvement in youths who participated in early developmental prevention programs, compared with youths in the control group who did not participate.</p> <p>Date Posted: 3/23/2022</p>
Practice Profile: Early Family/Parent Training Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Juvenile Problem & At-Risk Behaviors - Multiple juvenile problem/at-risk behaviors	<p>This practice includes programs that seek to provide families and parents with training and skills to help promote their children's physical, mental, and social skills. The practice is rated Effective for reducing child problem behaviors for children whose families participated in early family/parent training programs, compared with control group children whose families did not participate in programming.</p> <p>Date Posted: 6/1/2020</p>
Practice Profile: Early Self-Control Improvement Programs for Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Juvenile Problem & At-Risk Behaviors - Self-Control✓ Crime & Delinquency	<p>This practice consists of programs designed to increase self-control and reduce child behavior problems (e.g., conduct problems, antisocial behavior, and delinquency) with children up to age 10. Program types include social skills development, cognitive coping strategies, training/role playing, and relaxation training. This practice is rated Effective for improving self-</p>

Sample Program: Early Family/ Parent Training

crimesolutions.ojp.gov

Evidence Ratings for Outcomes






 Juvenile Problem & At-Risk Behaviors - Multiple juvenile problem/at-risk behaviors

Date: This profile was posted on June 1, 2020

Practice Summary	Practice Snapshot
<p>This practice includes programs that seek to provide families and parents with training and skills to help promote their children's physical, mental, and social skills. The practice is rated Effective for reducing child problem behaviors for children whose families participated in early family/parent training programs, compared with control group children whose families did not participate in programming.</p>	<p>Age: 0 - 11</p> <p>Gender: Male, Female</p> <p>Targeted Population: Families</p> <p>Setting (Delivery): Home, Other Community Setting</p> <p>Practice Type: Conflict Resolution/Interpersonal Skills, Family Therapy, Group Therapy, Parent Training</p> <p>Unit of Analysis: Persons</p> <p>Researcher: Alex Piquero Ashbel Smith Professor of Criminology</p>
<p>Practice Description</p>	
<p>Meta-Analysis Outcomes</p>	
<p>Meta-Analysis Methodology</p>	
<p>Cost</p>	
<p>Evidence-Base (Meta-Analyses Reviewed)</p>	
<p>Additional References</p>	
<p>Related Programs</p>	

Sample Programs

blueprintsprograms.org

TARGET POPULATION +	PROGRAM	RATING	SUMMARY
PROGRAM SPECIFICS - <input type="checkbox"/> Correctional Facility <input type="checkbox"/> Home <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital/Medical Center <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health/Treatment Center <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Residential Facility <input type="checkbox"/> School <input type="checkbox"/> Social Services <input type="checkbox"/> Transitional Between Contexts <input type="checkbox"/> Wilderness + Continuum of Intervention	Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) Target Population Outcomes Fact Sheet		A post-secondary college-based prevention program that aims to address potential barriers to academic success and promote credit accumulation and associate degree completion in college students through comprehensive advisement and career and tutoring services provided by dedicated advisers.
	Early College High School Model Target Population Outcomes Fact Sheet		A high school model designed to increase students' access to a postsecondary credential, particularly for underrepresented students. The goal is to minimize challenges in the transition to postsecondary education for students for whom access has historically been problematic.
	Functional Family Therapy (FFT) Target Population Outcomes Fact Sheet		A short-term family therapy intervention and juvenile diversion program helping at-risk children and delinquent youth to overcome adolescent behavior problems, conduct disorder, substance abuse, and delinquency.
RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS i + Clear Search	GenerationPMTO Target Population Outcomes Fact Sheet		A family training program that aims to teach effective family management skills in order to reduce antisocial and problematic behavior in children through trainings implemented in a variety of formats and settings.
Keyword Search <input type="text"/> 🔍	LifeSkills Training (LST) Target Population Outcomes Fact Sheet		A classroom-based substance abuse prevention program designed to prevent teenage drug and alcohol abuse, tobacco use, violence and other risk behaviors by teaching students self-management skills, social skills, and drug awareness and resistance skills.
Examples of how to search can be found with the following links. Search Across Categories			

Sample Program: LifeSkills Training

LifeSkills Training (LST)

Target Population

Outcomes

Fact Sheet



A classroom-based substance abuse prevention program designed to prevent teenage drug and alcohol abuse, tobacco use, violence and other risk behaviors by teaching students self-management skills, social skills, and drug awareness and resistance skills.

Target Population

Age: Early Adolescence (12-14) - Middle School

Race/Ethnicity: All

Gender: Both

Continuum of Intervention: Universal Prevention

Outcomes

Alcohol, Delinquency and Criminal Behavior, Marijuana/Cannabis, Sexual Risk Behaviors, STIs, Tobacco, Violence

Sample Program: LifeSkills Training

blueprintsprograms.org

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Risk Factors
Individual: Early initiation of drug use, Favorable attitudes towards drug use*, Stress, Substance use
Peer: Interaction with antisocial peers, Peer rewards for antisocial behavior, Peer substance use
Neighborhood/Community: Laws and norms favorable to drug use/crime

Protective Factors
Individual: Clear standards for behavior*, Coping Skills*, Perceived risk of drug use*, Problem solving skills*, Refusal skills*, Skills for social interaction*

** Risk/Protective Factor was significantly impacted by the program*
See also: [LifeSkills Training \(LST\) Logic Model \(PDF\)](#)

RACE/ETHNICITY/GENDER DETAILS

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

BENEFITS AND COSTS

Program Benefits (per individual): \$1,419
Program Costs (per individual): \$105
Net Present Value (Benefits minus Costs, per individual): \$1,314
Measured Risk (odds of a positive Net Present Value): 63%

Source: Washington State Institute for Public Policy
All benefit-cost ratios are the most recent estimates published by The Washington State Institute for Public Policy for Blueprint programs implemented in Washington State. These ratios are based on a) meta-analysis estimates of effect size and b) monetized benefits and calculated costs for programs as delivered in the State of Washington. Caution is recommended in applying these estimates of the benefit-cost ratio to any other state or local area. They are provided as an illustration of the benefit-cost ratio found in one specific state. When feasible, local costs and monetized benefits should be used to calculate expected local benefit-cost ratios. The formula for this calculation can be found on the [WSIPP website](#).

Criminology



Law making, law breaking, and society's response

Conclusion

- Causes of crime are complex and cumulative
- Evidence Based Practices

Thank you

<https://crimesolutions.ojp.gov/>
<https://www.blueprintsprograms.org/>

Sarah Greenman, PhD
Associate Professor Criminology and Criminal Justice
Hamline University
sgreenman01@hamline.edu