

REVEALING RESEARCH & EVALUATION (RREV)

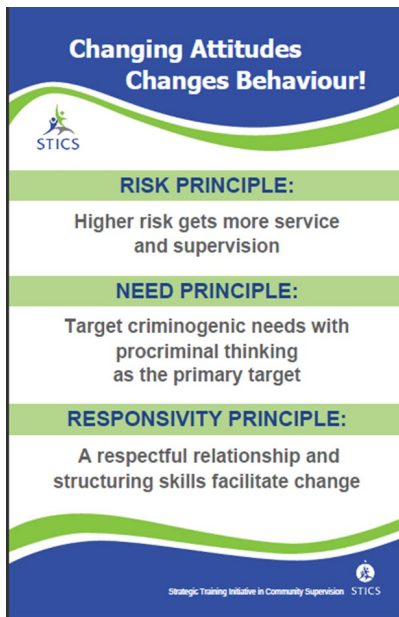
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PERFORMANCE, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION (PREV) UNIT
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This issue highlights preliminary results from the STICS implementation in BC and the rollout of the Thinking Leads to Change program for women offenders

Strategic Training Initiative in Community Supervision (STICS) Implementation

We first described the BC STICS initiative in [Issue #4](#). STICS is a Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) based training program for probation officers (POs).



The program meets the challenge of translating “what works” into effective everyday practice, by assisting in the one-on-one supervision of offenders under a probation order.

STICS provides training for POs to expand their skills and cognitive-behavioural techniques to target clients’ criminogenic needs.

STICS enhances the skills probation officers use when developing a positive rapport with clients and appropriately modelling and rewarding pro-social behaviours.

THE STRATEGIC SUPERVISION SESSION

Check in: Develop Relationship

Ask “How are you?” and “How are things?” to:

- Enhance working relationship
- Assess for needs requiring immediate attention
- Monitor compliance with conditions

Review: Build Trust, Respect, and Work Together

Review last session and homework to:

- Encourage collaboration via mutual goals
- Enhance learning through repetition/feedback
- Link one session to another for ongoing learning

Intervention: Focus on Pro-criminal Thinking

Interventions targeting criminogenic needs to:

- Teach cognitive behavioural techniques to promote that thinking leads to behaviour
- Teach new prosocial attitudes and skills

Round-Up: Summarize, Practice, and Connect

Share “What was interesting today?” and assign homework to:

- Reinforce new learning and skills
- Practice and generalize new learning
- Promote connection to community resources

Following training, POs recorded sessions with six randomly selected medium- and high-risk clients in order to evaluate their own professional development and inform research and evaluation (“post-STICS”).

Over the first four years of STICS in BC, over 500 recordings have been coded to see how training has changed the way POs interact with their clients.



The Results

The data shows that skill development is occurring as probation officers demonstrate:

- improved session structuring,
- increased focus on relationship, and
- more targeting of pro-criminal attitudes.

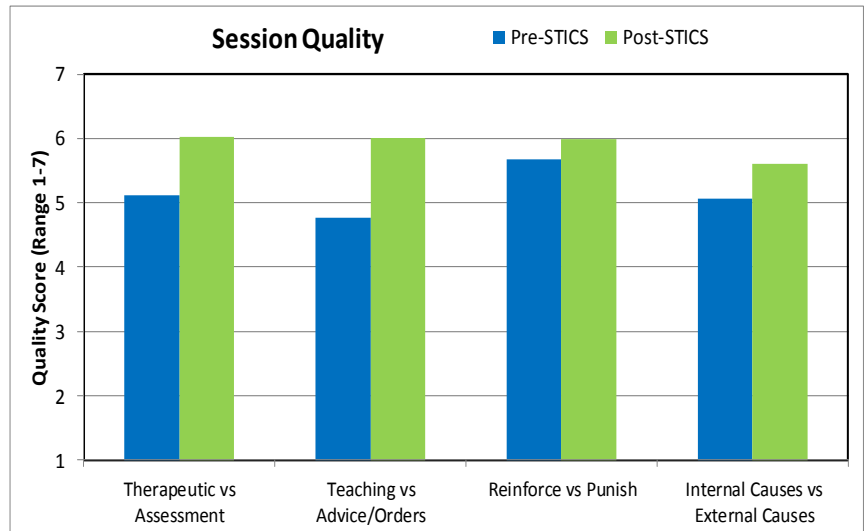
STICS Research

Prior to STICS training, POs recorded interviews with two randomly selected clients to establish a baseline of interview skills (“pre-STICS”).

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Improved session quality

Assessment of session characteristics showed that session quality improved following STICS training (*see chart to the right*). Following training, sessions had a more **therapeutic focus** (rather than an assessment focus). POs engaged in more **teaching** (rather than giving advice) and **reinforcing positive behaviours** (rather than punishing negative behaviours), and focussed more on internal (vs. external) causes of the client's behaviour.



Increase in use of cognitive intervention techniques

Prior to STICS implementation, cognitive intervention techniques were used in fewer than 5% of sessions. Post-STICS implementation, this rose to almost 40%. This shows that following training, **there is more work being done to address client attitudes and thinking, thereby targeting pro-criminal attitudes.**

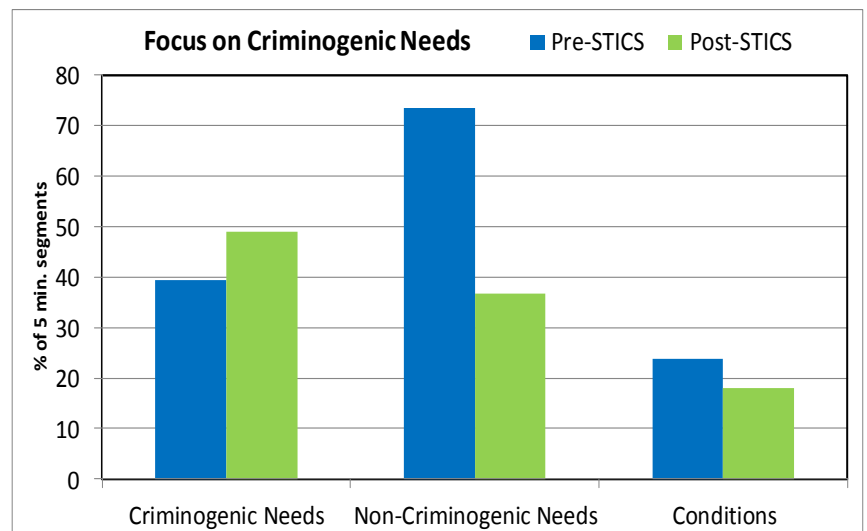
More focus on criminogenic needs

There were significant changes in the focus of PO-client need discussions (*see chart below*). Following STICS training, more time was spent discussing criminogenic needs; and substantially less time was spent discussing non-criminogenic needs.

Criminogenic needs

Dynamic (changeable) risk factors that are directly linked to criminal behaviour.

- Antisocial personality pattern;
- Antisocial attitudes/cognition (thinking);
- Antisocial associates;
- Difficulties in the following areas: Family and/or marital; School and/or work; Leisure and/or recreation; and
- Substance abuse.



STICS Going Forward...

- ♦ *Research and Evaluation* efforts are underway to describe changes in PO-client interactions; identify factors that enhance development; and link skills/techniques to client change and reoffending.
- ♦ *Continued Professional Development* with a new sustainable model to build internal capacity and expertise, and utilize and grow existing resources and structures.

THINKING LEADS 2 CHANGE (TLC) - A PROGRAM FOR WOMEN

TLC is a gender-specific, trauma informed program designed for medium and high risk women involved with the justice system. This program is tailored to meet the specific criminogenic needs of women offenders and is responsive to the educational conditions under which this group is most likely to learn.

TLC provides participants with the opportunity to explore the roots of their thoughts, beliefs, and emotions that have led to anti-social or criminal behaviours. Using a strength-based approach, participants will add to their existing skills base while learning new or advanced strategies to increase their competence in areas such as conflict resolution, problem-solving, self-regulation, effective communication and boundary setting.

The program is based on the Pathways, Trauma and Relational-Cultural Theories, which are used to identify and address dynamic risk factors through interventions that emphasize mindfulness and self-efficacy.

TLC is based on *trauma-informed practice* (TIP). TIP involves building awareness of: the commonness of trauma experiences; how the impact of trauma can be central to one's de-



Being gender-responsive means ...
creating an environment through site selection, staff selection, program development, content, and material that reflects an understanding of the realities of the lives of women.

Being gender-responsive means ...
addressing and responding to women's strengths and challenges.

velopment; the wide range of adaptations people make to cope and survive; and the relationship of trauma with substance use, physical health and mental health concerns.

Gender Responsive Principles

It is important to identify the critical differences between women and men in the criminal justice system in order to define the implications for improving programs and services for women.

The building blocks for a gender-responsive approach to working with women include:

- ◇ Acknowledging that gender makes a difference



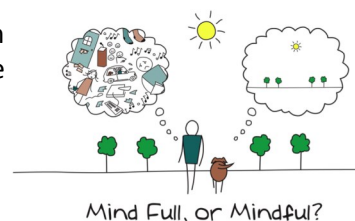
- ◇ Addressing social and cultural factors specific to women (poverty, race, class)
- ◇ Acknowledging the different pathways through which women enter the system
- ◇ Promoting and providing interventions that use a strength-based approach with an emphasis on self-efficacy.

Concepts covered in TLC

- ◇ The self-awareness wheel
- ◇ The colour of my thoughts



- ◇ Four emotion smart skills
- ◇ Communication and boundary setting
- ◇ Living with intention
- ◇ The thought triangle
- ◇ Five thinking styles
- ◇ The conflict ladder
- ◇ Red flag warnings
- ◇ The anger volcano



Skill development and information is woven throughout the program in an order that allows participants to slowly increase their knowledge and skills by building on previous learning.

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What Training do TLC Facilitators Receive?

To deliver the TLC program, staff must first complete the following training: Facilitation Skills Theory and Practice; Working Effectively With Women Offenders (community staff)/Managing Women Offenders (custody staff); and formal training in the delivery of the TLC program, which consists of five training days at the Justice Institute of BC. Aboriginal Awareness and Aboriginal Justice Training is also recommended and can be further enhanced by the Learning Centre Course, "Building Capacity in Aboriginal Relations: We are all here to stay".

Research Based and Evidence Driven Supporting Best Practices to Protect BC Communities and Reduce Crime

The TLC Program ... is Evidence-Based

The TLC program was developed by drawing on the strengths of former programming and incorporating the latest research and theory about "what works" for women offenders.



... will be Evaluated



The evaluation framework for TLC will examine **if** the program "works", in addition to **why** the program works or does not work. This will take place in two stages:

A **formative evaluation** will be carried out approximately one year after the program begins to ensure the program is on track for success. The purpose of the formative evaluation is to identify areas for improvement by examining:

- ◇ program integrity (consistent delivery, ensure the right clients/inmates are getting referred to the program),
- ◇ change in program targets (mindfulness, conflict resolution skills, antisocial attitudes, etc.),
- ◇ short term determinants of program success (e.g., is the program seen as valuable by participants, what are the rates of completion), and
- ◇ ensuring the data needed to carry out the summative evaluation is being collected.

A **summative evaluation** will examine program outcomes approximately 3 years later. The purpose of the summative evaluation is to ensure the program is having its intended outcomes including :

- ◇ reduced rates of re-offending,
- ◇ reduced criminogenic and non-criminogenic needs, and
- ◇ change in other outcomes of interest (e.g., seriousness of offences, breaches).

The Performance, Research and Evaluation (PREv) Unit

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