

UCCI:E-LEARNING

WHAT WORKS



The “What Works” series is a great option for agencies looking to provide staff with a foundational overview of current research within the field of Corrections. This online learning series provides an overview of what research supports as best practices in corrections, and includes topic specific modules addressing how these practices integrate in various areas of the field. The first module in this series, What Works in Correctional Interventions, provides a detailed introduction to the principles of Risk, Need, Responsivity and Fidelity. It serves as the foundational module of the series, and UCCI encourages using it as a prerequisite for participation in other modules when participants do not have a solid understanding of RNRF principles. Modules can be self-paced if accessed through a Learning Management System (LMS). Screencasts are also available and last approximately 60 – 90 minutes in length. Additionally, comprehension can be evaluated through quiz questions programed within LMS modules, or administered separately by the agency. Below are descriptions for each module of the series, which are available to host locally at the state on a Learning Management System (LMS) or view with access to a screen cast. This latter option, however, cannot automate quiz portions.

What Works in Correctional Interventions

This module provides an overview on which all our work is based, and kicks off the foundational series of our E-learning offerings. This module will introduce the characteristics of effective correctional programs, and discuss what types of correctional practices are most likely to succeed in reducing offending behavior. We will review the latest research methods and research findings on effective correctional interventions, review the correlates of criminal conduct, learn the importance of the risk, need and responsivity principles, learn the components of cognitive-behavioral interventions, develop a clear understanding of what does NOT work with offending behavior, and learn the characteristic of effective correctional programs.

Addressing Responsivity

Research has shown that correctional programs that assess risk, need, and responsivity factors are more effective in reducing participant recidivism than other programs that do not assess these factors. Of these core factors, responsivity is the least understood. It requires corrections professionals to consider characteristics specific to the individual when matching him/her to treatment services. It also considers techniques and practices that work best with all individuals. The process of understanding someone's responsivity factors can be difficult, but when these factors are addressed, outcomes are more positive.

Assessment and Classification

This module introduces a variety of concepts associated with assessments used to identify risk and needs. We address the importance of assessment and classification, identify how assessments developed historically, review the correlates of criminal conduct, learn the importance of risk, need, responsivity and professional discretion associated with assessment, address the importance of re-assessment and how this helps to measure change in offending behavior, and discuss special considerations associated with assessment and classification.

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Behavioral Management Systems

Behavioral Management, as defined by Shea and Bauer (2011), can be explained as “all of the actions and conscious inactions to enhance the probability that people, individually and in groups, choose behaviors which are personally fulfilling, productive, and socially acceptable.” This module further breaks down that definition and looks at effective behavior management systems. Beginning with identifying the goals of utilizing behavior management techniques with individuals, we further discuss the underlying theory/rationale for using these types of systems, major components of effective behavior management systems, and finally how best to implement these systems.

Case Planning

This module introduces various concepts associated with case planning. We discuss the importance of case planning, and examine the principles of effective intervention and how it relates to case planning. Additionally, we explore different methods for incorporating evidence-based practices in case management including case planning that is assessment-driven, proven components of effective case management including special populations, and discharge planning. Finally, we review the learning objectives to recapture an overview of the module.

Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions

Research has shown that when cognitive-behavioral interventions (i.e., techniques used to change behavior by teaching individuals to understand and modify thoughts and behaviors) are utilized correctly, they can be effective in reducing recidivism. This module provides a general introduction to cognitive-behavioral interventions, discusses theories associated with cognitive-behavioral interventions, reviews the components of the cognitive-behavioral treatment model, discusses specific intervention tools that can be deployed to target criminogenic need factors, and introduces behavioral skills corrections professionals should incorporate in various correctional settings. The module ends with a summary of each of these learning objectives.

Core Correctional Practices

Core Correctional Practices (CCP) are an evidence-based set of verbal skills and cognitive-behavioral interventions used to apply the Principles of Effective Intervention – Risk, Need, and Responsivity. This module will provide a brief overview of the top eight correctional practices. Correctional staff can use the CCP verbal skills to shape the behavior of individuals with which they work by incorporating these skills into daily interactions. The CCP cognitive-behavioral tools are useful in planned interventions to help individuals learn how to make positive choices for rehabilitation.

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Family and Social Support

Research continues to reinforce the role of family, as a source of social support for individuals, to promote successful rehabilitation. This module will address why it is important to work with an individual's family and social support network, and explore different opportunities for the inclusion of family and other means of support during incarceration, during treatment, and through reentry for justice-involved youth and adult. Further, we'll address effective strategies and tools for support that will help strengthen these relationships when working to reduce high risk behavior.

Increasing Staff Effectiveness

This module introduces a variety of approaches targeting the delivery of evidence-based practices by staff in order to strengthen the effectiveness of programming goals. We examine the characteristics and skills of effective staff, examine the desired attributes to assess during the hiring process, review the elements of effective staff training, review the components of effective supervision and coaching of staff, review the role of peer evaluation and coaching, and develop a clear understanding of the elements associated with effective performance evaluation.

Program Implementation

Research recognizes the importance of delivering evidence-based programs to individuals, but these interventions can fail when attention to implementation is overlooked. This module addresses why implementation is so important, identifies key implementation measures, reviews obstacles for effective implementation, discusses the need for program assessment tools, and identifies evidence-based assessment tools available in corrections.

CONTACT

For more information on modules within the "What Works" E-learning series, please contact UCCI Program Director Jennifer Scott at Jennifer.Scott@uc.edu or visit our website at www.uc.edu/corrections.