

Systems for Action Research-in-Progress Webinar



Georges Naufal
Texas A&M University

Emily Naiser
Texas A&M University

Terence Davis
Transformative Justice Program of Williamson County

Marc Ruiz
Transformative Justice Program of Williamson County

Visit the *Addressing the Health and Social Needs of Justice-Involved Young Adults* study page [here](#).

Question & Answer:

What are the felony charges specifically?

Non-violent felonies. They range from Possession of Controlled Substance (primary ones we see), like possession, selling, etc.; evading arrest; credit card abuse; some are thefts.

Who developed the Life Skills Course? Name of the life skills course?

It was developed internally. The topics vary and involve things that we feel would be helpful with basic life skills, budgeting, anger management, accountability, buying food, healthy living/eating, interviewing, resumes, etc.

Have any of these individuals been identified with having Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities? Is there any screening or assessment to identify?

Yes, about 15% Intellectual disabilities of varying degree.

Do participants in both arms of the study have their records expunged, or only those in the treatment group?

Only in treatment group. This helps avoid bias.

Are there community, support staff that include clergy or faith leaders?

We use Catalyst Collective (which is faith-based) to help the participants find their purpose in life. It is not in your face "faith" content but subtle only. We also work with Texas Baptist Children's Home for housing and counseling and they are faith-based. A few of the in patient drug rehab facilities have been faith-based on and offered a scholarship for a couple participants. No clergy or faith leaders directly involved.

Can you talk a bit more about the recruitment challenges? Was it fewer arrests than you expected, fewer eligible, fewer agreeing to join the program?

Fewer arrests, COVID, and different climate on marijuana. 98% who get asked if they want to participate say yes, this is too good to be true.

Is the research project use English as it only language? If not, can you share more about how you integrate one or more languages and which languages?

We have a few Spanish-speaking participants and the weekly check-in the consent forms are available in Spanish, we have a Spanish speaking case worker, we encourage them to get involved in ESL classes and we provide interpreters for court.

Have you ever considered passing out bus passes for this program for transportation to the program and/or work to assist in the needs of the customer?

Bus transportation is not that great here in Williamson County. It is better in Austin.

Do you have data on how many of these individuals have children and if so, how is the program supporting those individuals specifically (if at all?). I am thinking through CPS proceedings.

Some have children. We have had about 10 with kids. We usually get them connected with parenting classes, we throw a party for them, diaper drive, we ask them about their child, and some have child support or CPS proceedings connected with their children, especially when drugs are involved. We really try to get the participants to see the value and impact that this program will have on their kids as they get their lives in order.

I wonder if you have data on some of the individuals coming from homes with interpersonal violence/domestic violence (including emotional abuse).

70% come from homes that have domestic violence or in their current dating relationships.

In healthcare, the system is moving forward with recognizing and developing approaches to address the social drivers of health....In your experience what are the social drivers of youth involvement with the criminal justice system. I think those are the same as they are for healthcare....

Poverty, pride, no one really cares.

Our nonprofit provides volunteer-facilitated curricula focused on financial literacy and work readiness for young people up to age 25 - at no cost. We are very interested in supporting justice-involved youth but don't know how best to enter this arena. Suggestions?

We have used Reset Mentoring in Round Rock and they have provided Dave Ramsey Financial Literacy course, CPR classes, and we gave money to those who registered and participated and completed those programs. They have no idea about how money, credit, savings, rainy day fund, or budgeting really works and I think that getting kids into real jobs, having bank accounts with paychecks instead of cash is our focus.

What are the characteristics of youth that do not recidivate?

Not oppositionally defiant, willing to trust us still, to have more self confidence, and support in some significant way so that they realize that they have options.

Once the disability is identified, what are the steps taken to give the proper supports?

Get them assessed, adjust our life skills programs and case plans to get the most of their potential and identify people or circumstances that make them vulnerable in the future.

Best contact person for follow-up questions? George at gnaufal@tamu.edu