

Ladies First: Understanding the Risk and Needs of Justice Involved Women



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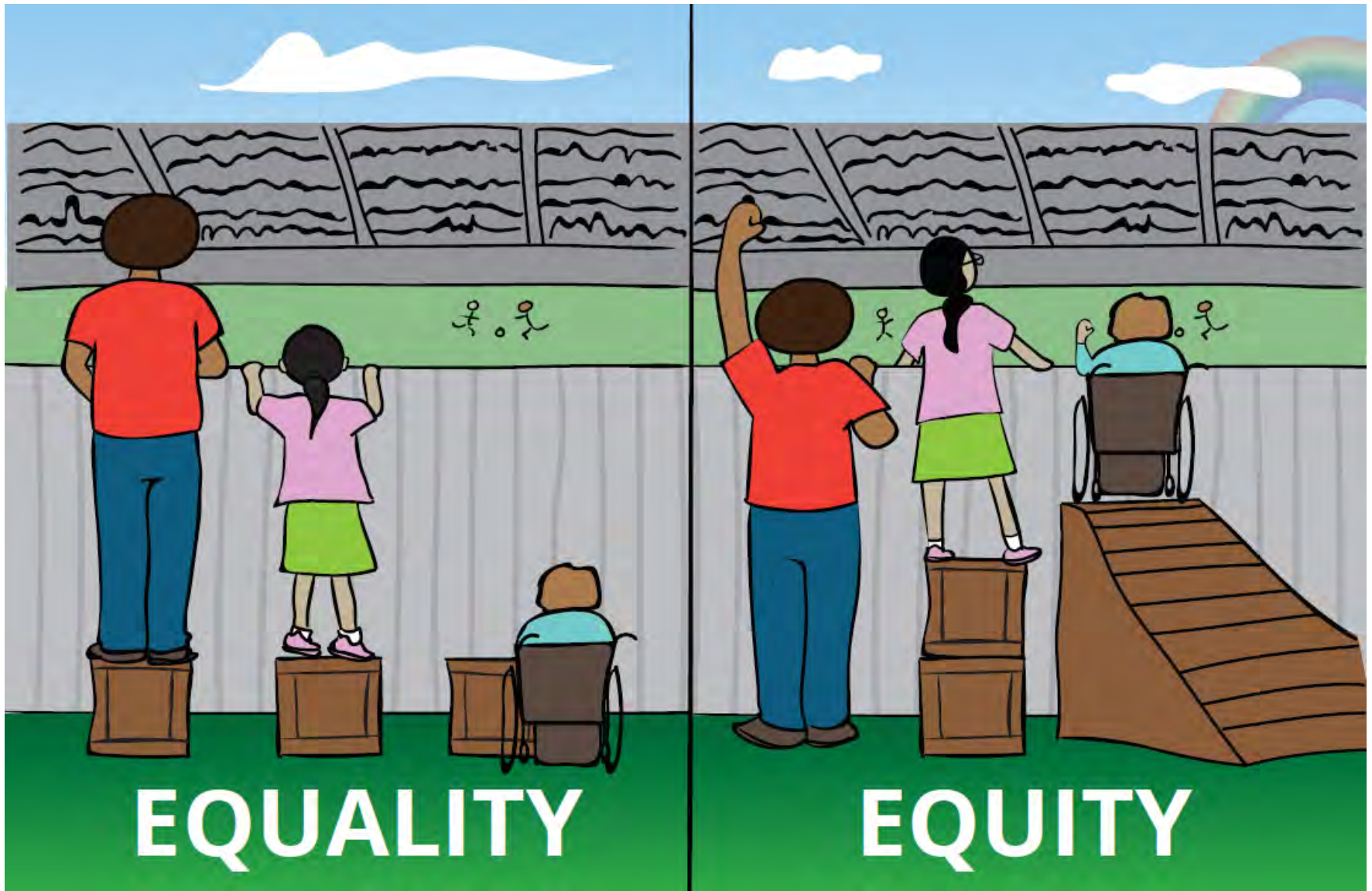
Acknowledgements

- Mindy Spring
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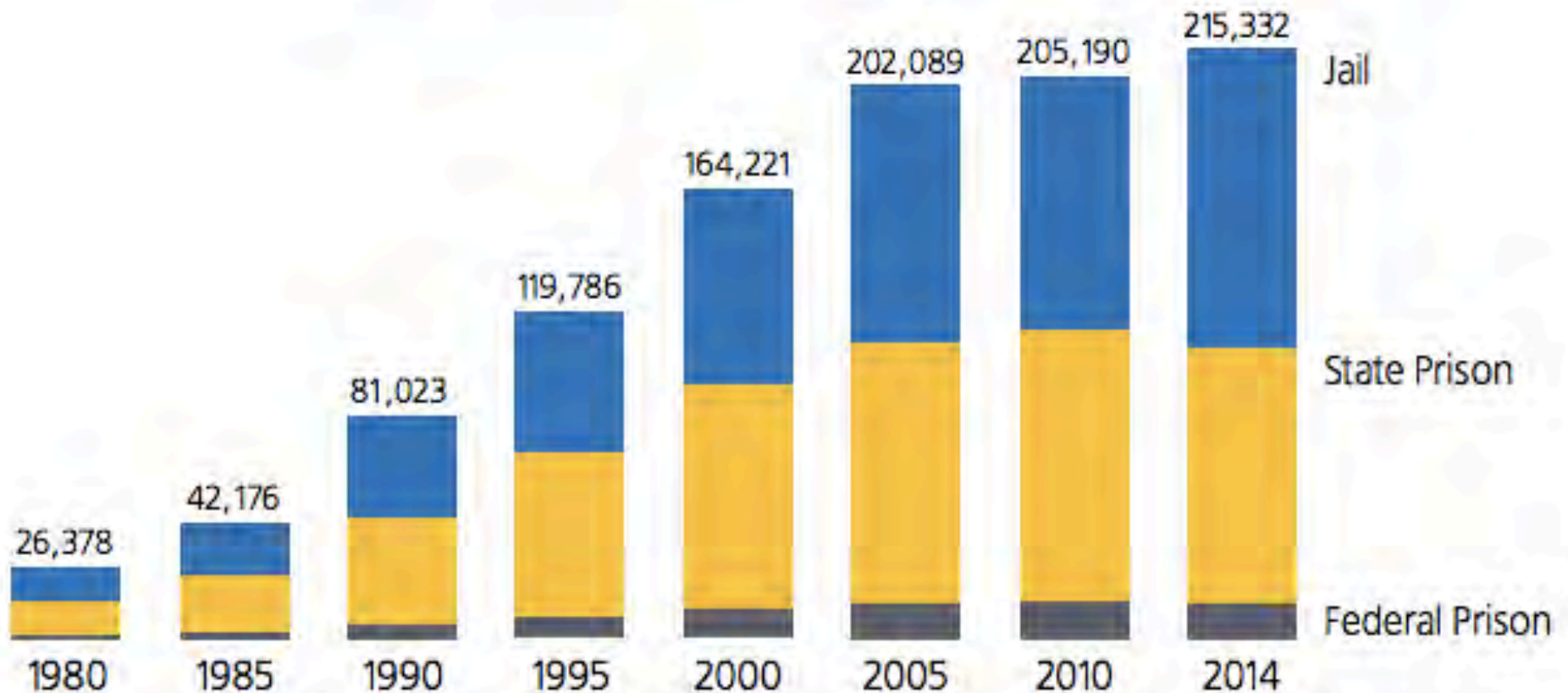
Learning Goals

- Critically analyze how gender affects how we think and behave
- Develop a basic understanding of gender-responsive strategies
- Clarify how strictly gender “neutral” strategies harm women’s chances of success
- Emphasize how gender-responsive assessment can benefit your agencies




700% Increase in Women's Incarceration

Rise in Women's Incarceration, 1980-2014



Sources: *Historical Corrections Statistics in the United States, 1850-1984*. (1985); *Prison and Jail Inmates Series*. (1997-2014) Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics; *Prisoners in 2014*. (2015). Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

The growing number of women in U.S. jails

 = 1,000 women in jail



1970



2014



Vera Institute Report: Growing Number of Women in Jails

 Women of color  White women



Property offenses



32%

Drug offenses



29%

Public order offenses



21%

Solutions



Gender-Responsive Strategies

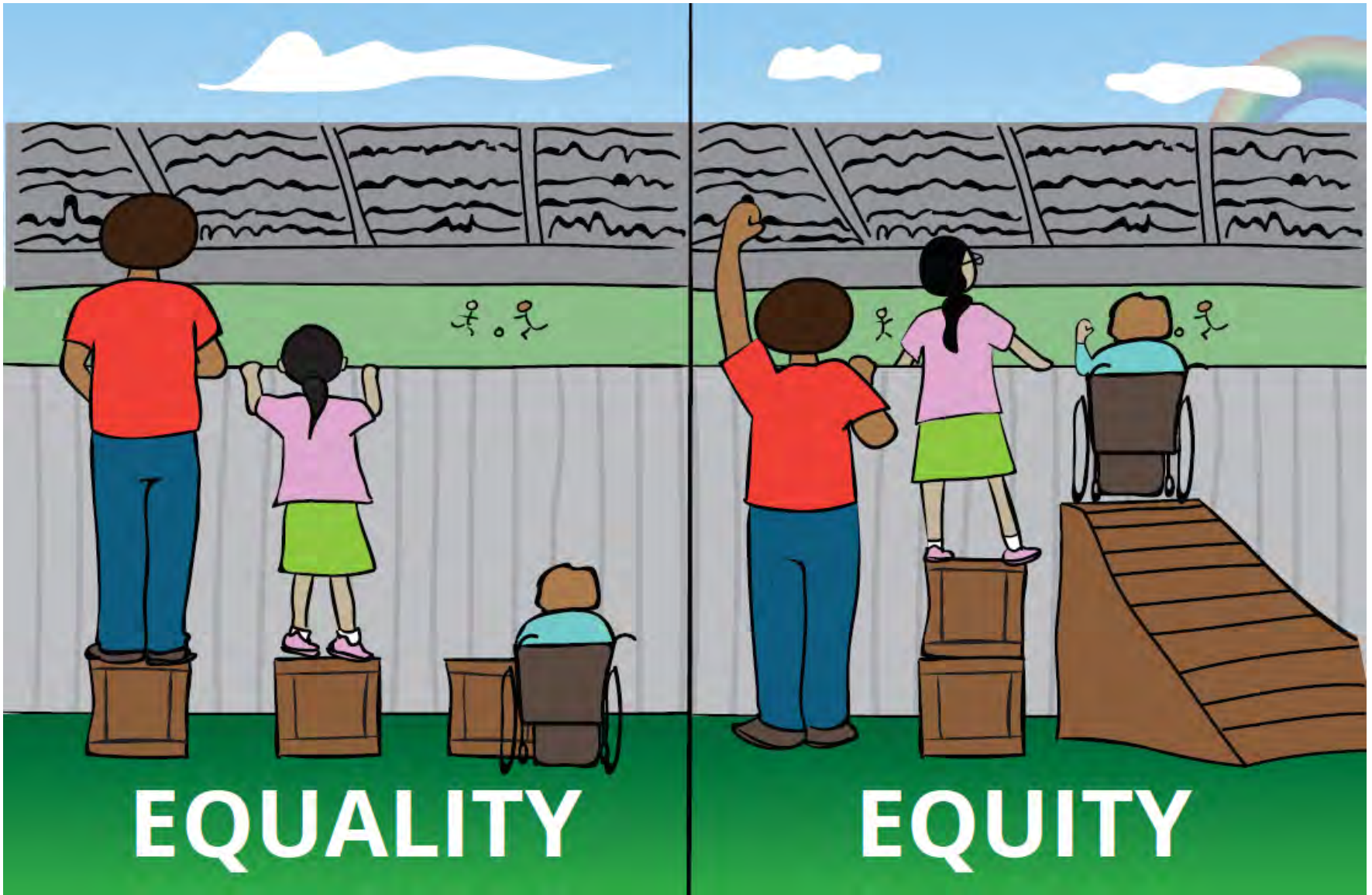
- Intentionally uses research on gendered experiences to direct policies, programs, and procedures for women.
- Goal is to produce favorable outcomes by tailoring supervision and services to women's needs and strengths, by starting from a framework that **gender matters.**



Major Concerns Expressed

- **We are working with less and less resources.**
- **There are too few girls and women to justify the effort.**
- **This complicates our work as we have traditionally done it.**
- **Males and females in the system should be supervised and treated in exactly the same way.**

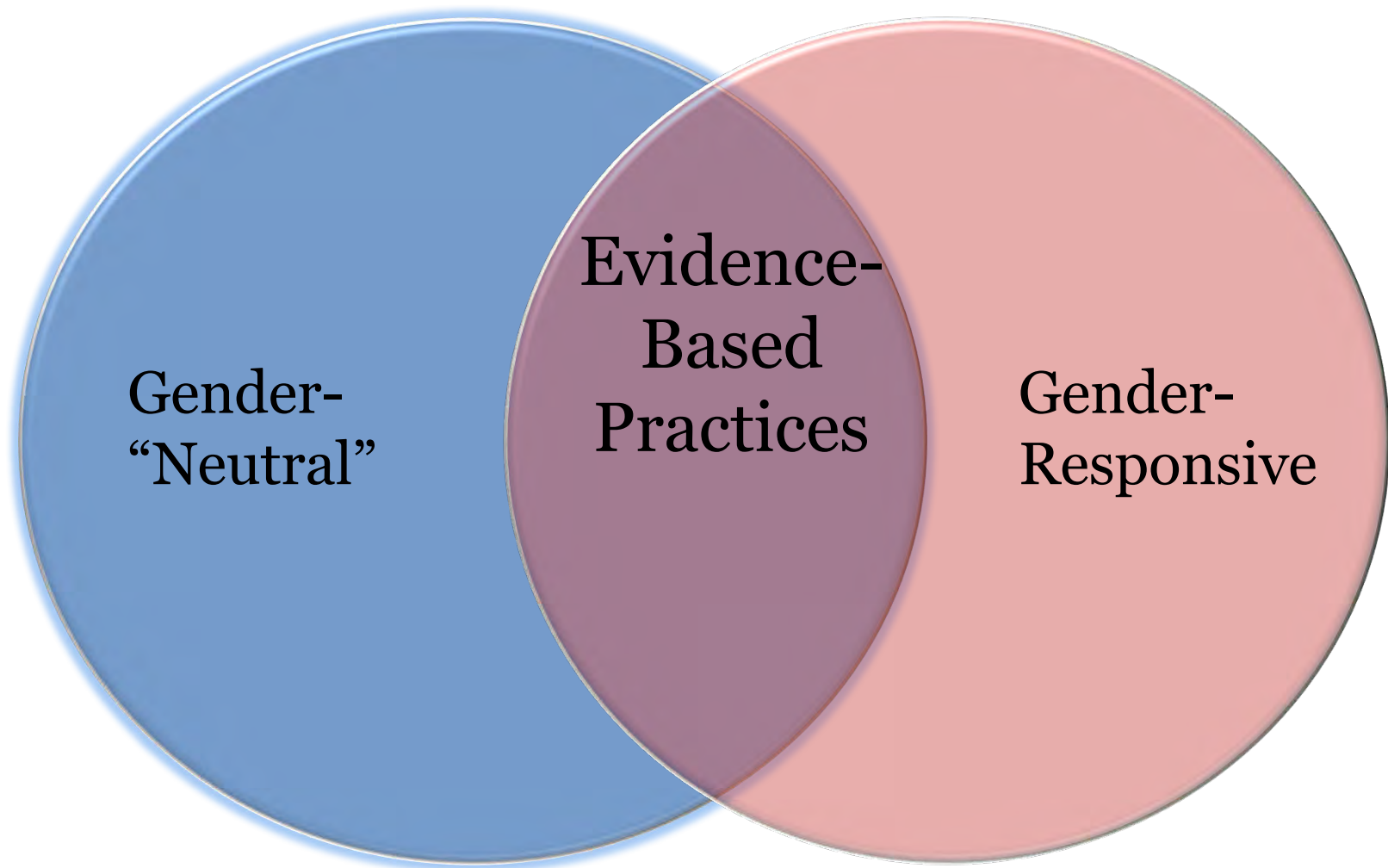




The reality is...

- **If we choose to only see part of the evidence, women will continue to be in a losing position, especially women of Color.**
- **Consider what gender inequality is already costing your agency.**
- **Achieving equality of services and successful reductions in recidivism means starting with females in mind.**
- **Long-term effects on the children of justice involved women as primary caregivers**

Gender-Responsive Practices are Evidence-Based Practices



Evidence-Based Practices

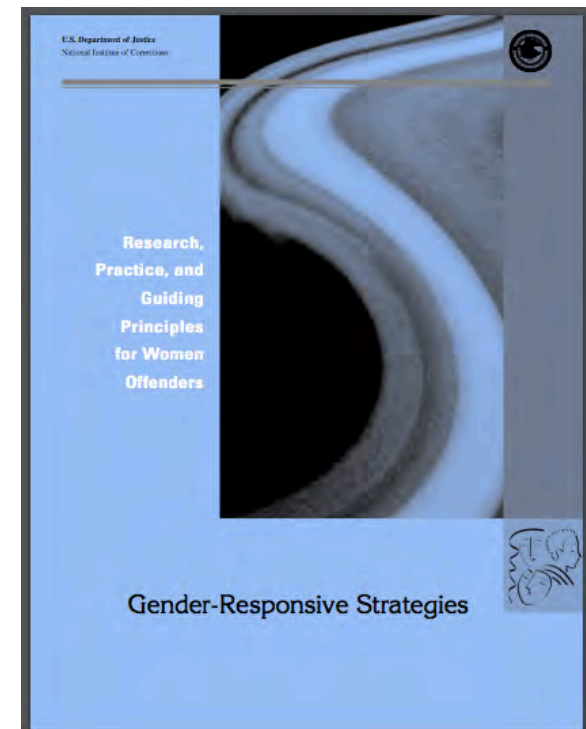
- Tested by methodologically rigorous research
- Found to be effective at reducing recidivism

Gender-Responsive Practices

- Tested by methodologically rigorous research
- Found to be effective at reducing recidivism
- **Account for differences in characteristics and life experiences of girls/women and boys/men in the justice system**

Gender-Responsive Principles

- *Relational*
- *Trauma-Informed*
- *Strengths-Based*
- *Culturally Sensitive*



Bloom, Owen, &
Covington (2003)

Importance of Being Trauma-Informed

Nearly 1 in 5 women (18.3%) in the U.S. general population have experienced rape or attempted rape.

- 77-90% of incarcerated women report histories of emotional, physical, or sexual abuse
- Cumulative effect of trauma especially for poor, marginalized women of Color
- Trauma affects girls and women in fundamentally distinct ways.
- Strategies must promote **safety and trust.**

Women Probationers' Pathways

Childhood Victimization

Women's abuse as children can lead to mental illness and substance abuse

Unhealthy Relationships

Women's dysfunctional intimate relationships can lead to victimization as adults, reducing self-efficacy, and leading to mental illness and substance abuse

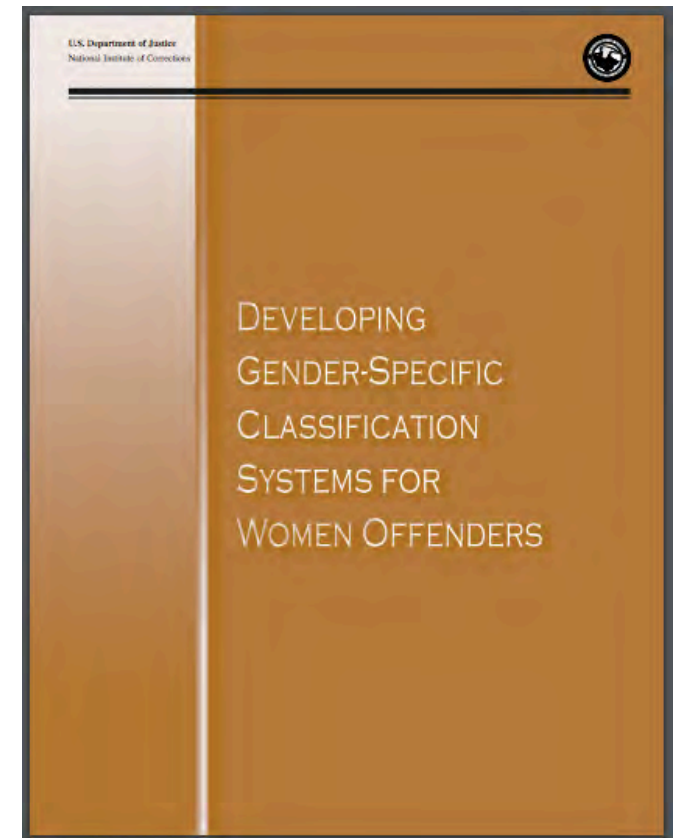
Social & Human Capital

Women's needs in education, family support, self-efficacy, and relationship dysfunction can lead to employment and financial problems



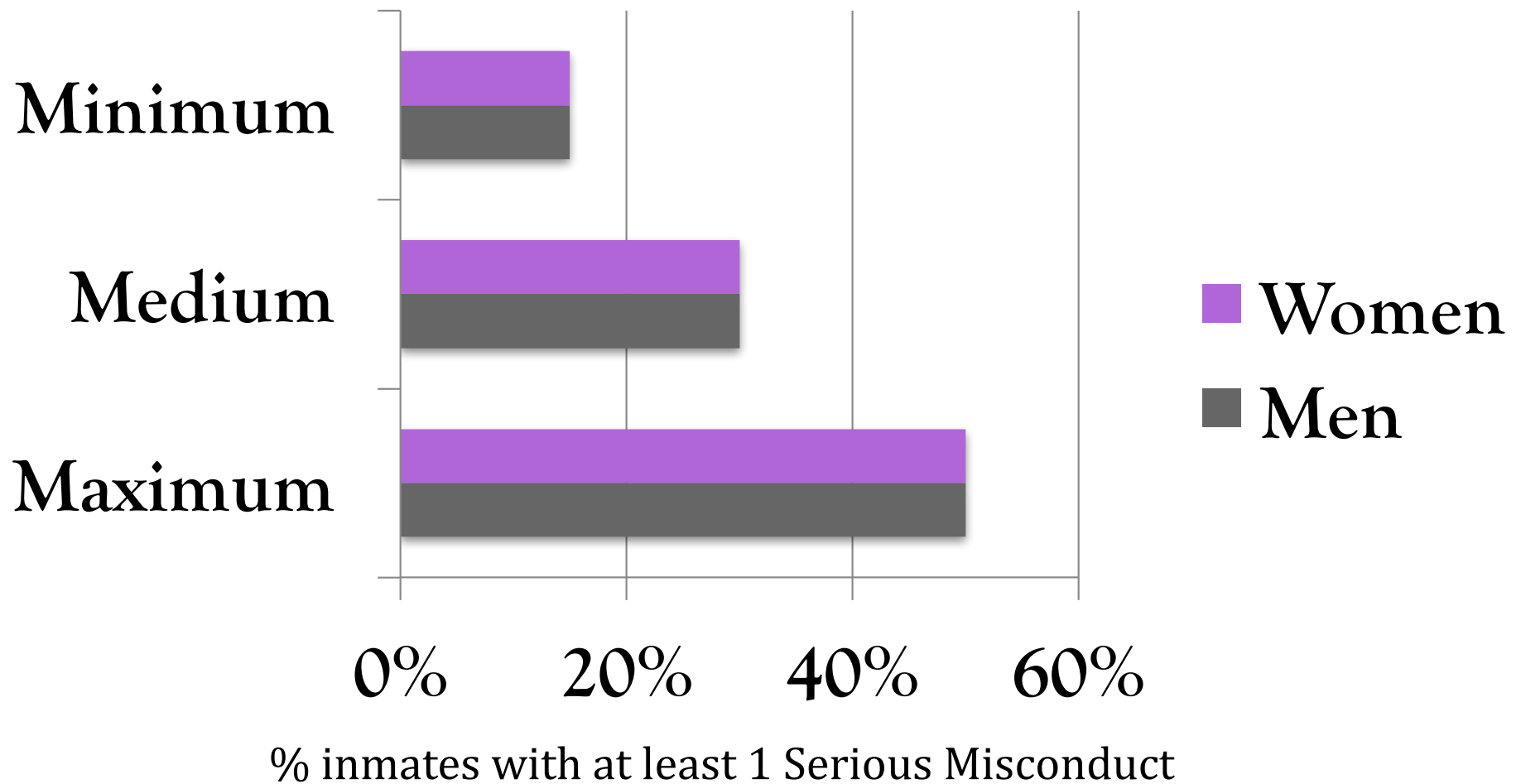
Crime and Imprisonment

- Most states use a variation of the NIC Model Prisons approach for custody classification of both men and women inmate populations.
- Strong evidence of over-classification of women prisoners across the nation.

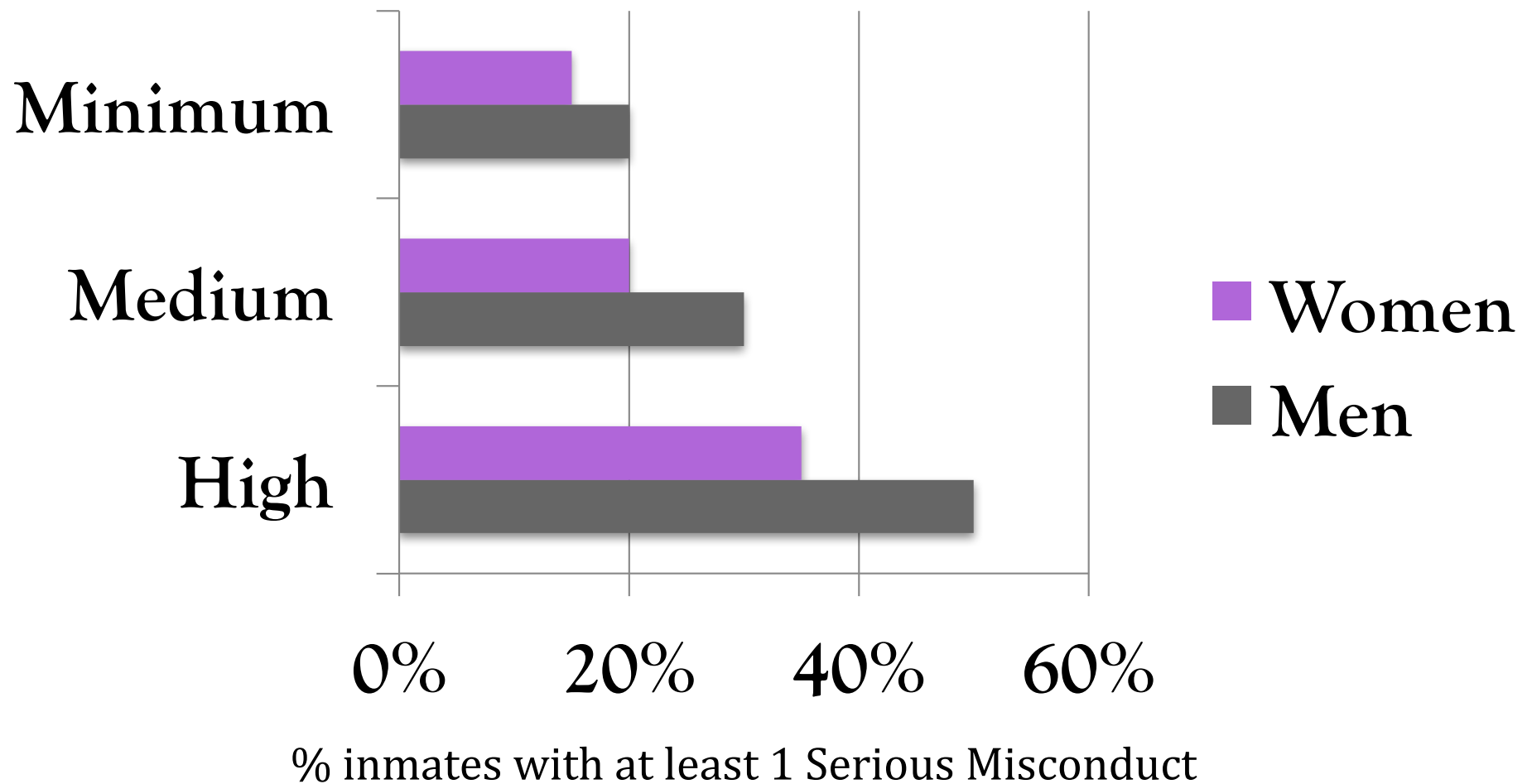


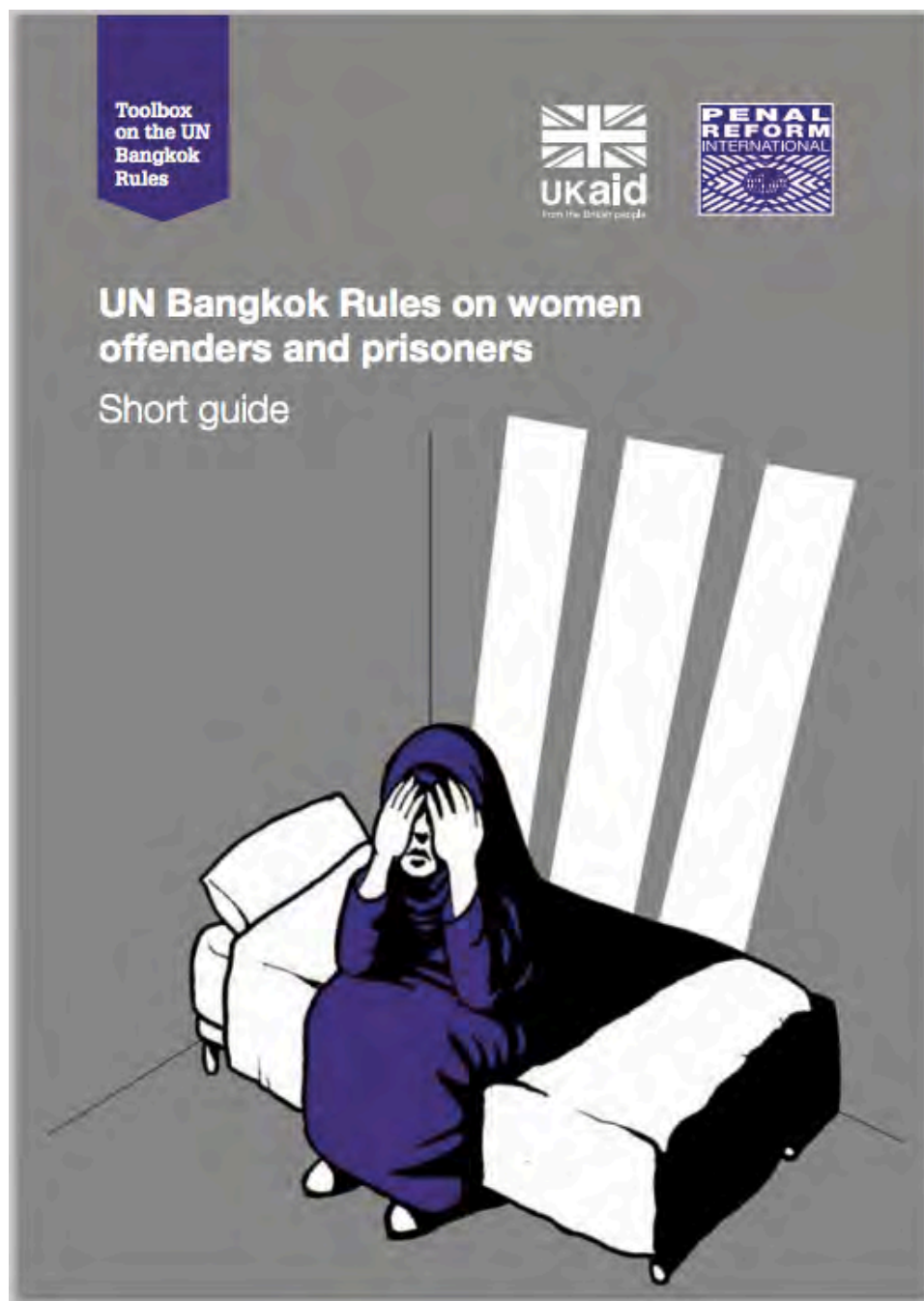
Hardyman &
Van Voorhis (2004)

Valid and Effective Custody Classification: How the Data Should Appear



Over-Classification: Higher Custody Than Necessary





International Reform and Human Rights

- United Nations “Bangkok Rules” on women offenders and prisoners
- Adopted in 2010

Effective Correctional Intervention

- Not all treatment programs are equally effective.
- Not every offender poses the same risk to the community.
- 3 Main Principles:
 - Risk – “who” to target
 - Need – “what” to target
 - Responsivity – “how” to target

Risk, Need, Responsivity

Risk: Who

High

Medium

Low

Need: What

Antisocial
Attitudes

Antisocial
Peers

Antisocial
Personality
Traits

Responsivity: How & Barriers

Cognitive-
Behavioral
Approach

Gender

Motivation

Cognitive
Deficits

There is now enough evidence to
promote the

***Gender-Responsive Principles of
Effective Correctional Intervention***



“Risk” Manifests Differently



- Women pose far less risk
- Must consider the relative risk an individual poses *within her peer group*.
- Gender-neutral assessments appear to be less valid for women who follow gendered pathways to crime.

Psychometric Gymnastics

Cut-points and weights and
equations,
Oh My!

If statistically predictive, gender-responsive items are not included in an instrument in the first place, we will never see true and accurate measures of women's criminogenic risk.



Women Have Needs Not Asked on Gender-Neutral Assessments

- Some traditional (male-based) criminogenic needs are not as predictive with women.
- There is little research to suggest that antisocial attitudes and peers should be primary treatment targets for women.

Need

Attitudes?

Peers?

Personality?

Women's Risk Needs Assessment (WRNA)

2002: NIC & University of Cincinnati (Pat Van Voorhis) enter cooperative agreement to develop a risk and needs assessment instrument specifically designed for women.



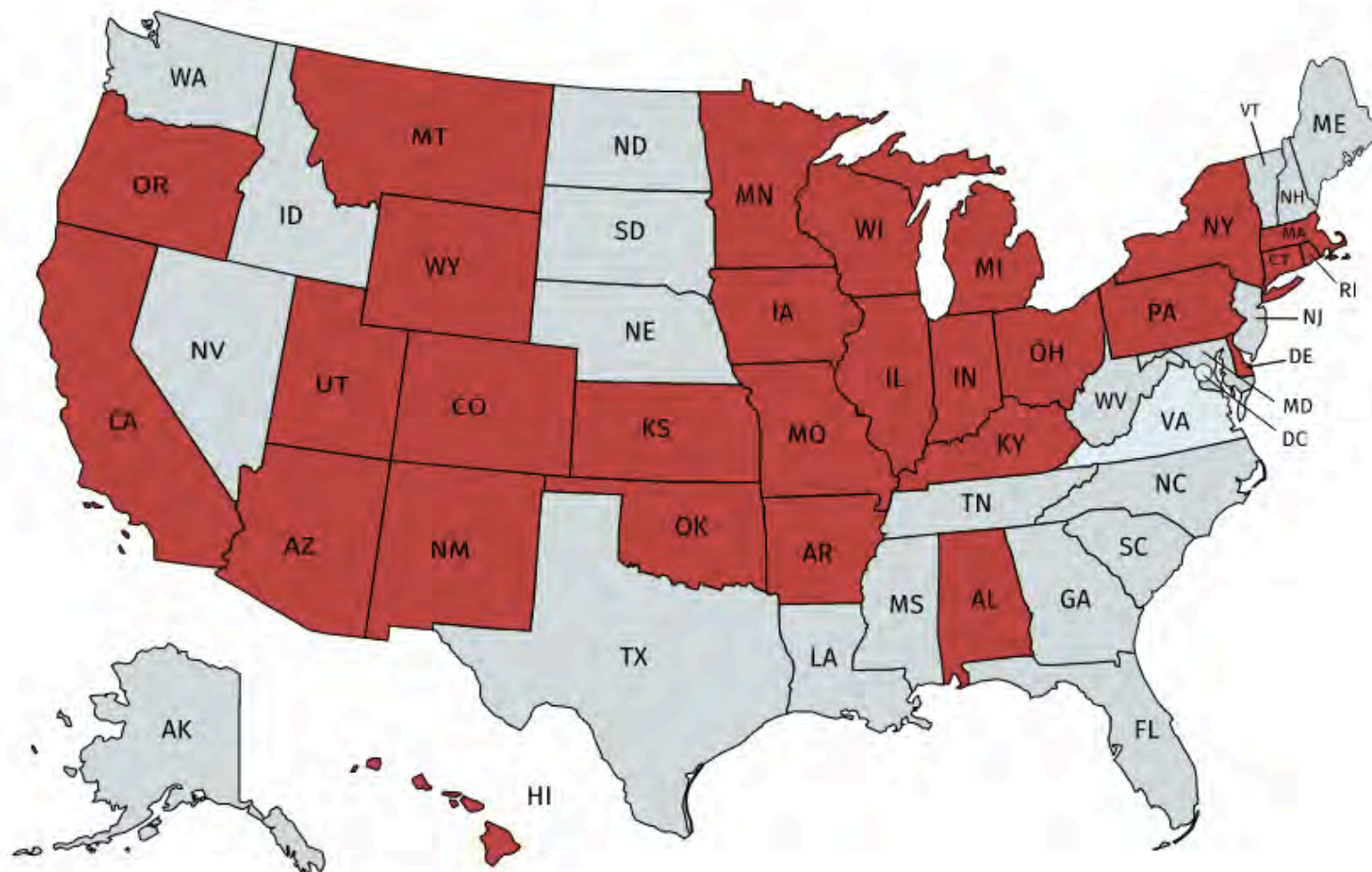
Women's Risk and Needs Assessment (WRNA)

Charged with answering these questions:

If we started with women in mind, what criminogenic needs would risk assessments measure?

Are gender-neutral (male-centric) assessments missing salient criminogenic needs for women?

WRNA Implementation Sites



Risk Factors Similar for Men and Women

Criminal History

Antisocial Attitudes

Antisocial Friends

Substance Abuse

Employment/Financial

Risk Factors Predictive for Women

Depression/Anxiety
Symptoms

Psychosis

Anger

Housing Safety

Unhealthy Intimate
Relationships

Child Abuse

Adult Abuse

Parental Stress

Strengths Predictive for Women

Self-efficacy

Family Support

Educational Assets

Parental Involvement



From “Big Four” to “Female Five”

Criminal History

Antisocial Attitudes

Antisocial Peers

Antisocial
Personality Traits

Substance Abuse

Economic Marginality

Unhealthy Intimate
Relationships

Depressive/Anxious
Symptoms

Anger/Hostility

Rethinking Responsivity for Women

Responsivity:
How & Barriers

Cognitive-
Behavioral
Approach?

Gender?

Motivation

Cognitive Deficits

CBT programs still most effective but gender-responsive CBT curricula are even better

Gender is no longer limited to being a specific responsivity factor

Rather, gender should be at the forefront in all of R-N-R

Meta-Analysis: 37 Studies & 22,000 Justice Involved Women

- Gender-responsive programs were as effective as gender-neutral programs in reducing women's recidivism.
- When limited to the 18 most methodologically rigorous studies, **G-R programs were significantly more likely to reduce women's recidivism compared to G-N programs.**

Gobeil et al. (2016)

Implementation Drivers



Fixsen et al. (2015)



If our goal is to reduce offending and extend positive outcomes to families, children, and communities, we have to know and address women and girls' criminogenic needs and build upon their strengths.



Thank You

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Training Opportunity



Hot Topic #13: Staff supervision and interaction with justice-involved women.

[Answer »](#)

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Home > Training Catalog > Classroom > Justice Involved Women: Developing an Agency-Wide Approach

Date(s)

Apr. 18, 2017 - Apr. 20, 2017

Apply By

Feb. 21, 2017

Location

11900 E. Cornell Ave,
Unit C, Aurora, CO
80014

Format

Classroom

Audience

Jails

Justice Involved Women: Developing an Agency-Wide Approach

Apr. 18, 2017 - Apr. 20, 2017--The curriculum is research based, gender-informed (women) and designed for making systemic changes to improve management of justice involved women. Identified outcomes for enhanced policy and practice may include working toward reductions in recidivism and intermediate outcomes as in harm reduction, improved program participation rates, the decreased use of disciplinary sanctions, successful reintegration/reentry and improvements in community stabilization.

Overview

The program is delivered in three sequential phases - on line learning, face-to-face training and follow up coaching. Through blended learning delivery this 36-hour program leads participant teams through strategic planning to develop an agency plan that provides coordination and direction to manage women offenders effectively. The plan will guide development of agency policies and procedures to ensure that responsive

How to Apply

[Apply](#)

Training Opportunity: Assn for Justice Involved Females and Organizations



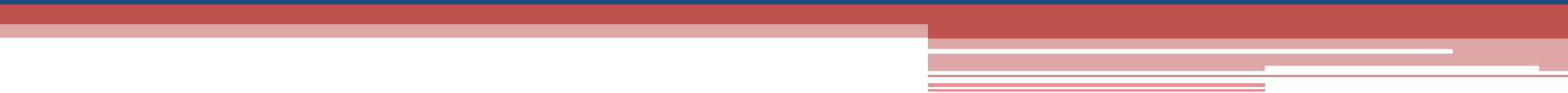
Additional Resources

National Resource Center for Justice Involved Women
www.cjinvolvedwomen.org

National Institute of Corrections
Women Offender Initiative
www.nicic.gov/womenoffenders

Women's Risk Need Assessment (WRNA) Research
www.uc.edu/womenoffenders

For WRNA implementation, Ashley Bauman
www.baumanconsultinggroup.com



The thoughts and opinions expressed in this presentation are the presenter's own, and do not reflect those of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.