

Effective Responses to Behaviors in Community Supervision

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PPCJI Pennsylvania Partnership for Criminal Justice Improvement

Risk Need Responsivity (RNR) Model

Risk: "Who"

Need: "What"

Responsivity: "How"

Reinforcing Prosocial Behavior

4 : 1

Reinforcement for every **Response**
(incentive for prosocial behavior) (sanction for noncompliance)

Behavior Management

Supervision alone is not enough.

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Basic principles for effective behavior management
(Important for both punishment and positive reinforcement)

Swift	Certain	Fair (neutral)	Proportional (parsimonious)	Consistent/informed
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Reinforcing Prosocial Behavior


- Verbal or Written Recognition
- Justice System Modification
- Tangible Rewards

Scenario

John, who has been on probation for two years of his three-year supervision term for a drug-related charge, is assessed as being at moderate risk of recidivism. In the past, he struggled to maintain gainful employment, which led to him selling drugs. John has complied with his conditions and has completed cognitive behavioral programming. One day, another person on probation told John's probation officer that John had just been promoted at the job where he has been working for six months, the longest period of employment he has had in a long time.

Response: The probation officer calls John that day and leaves a message congratulating him on the promotion. At their office visit, three days after learning of the promotion, the PO again congratulates John for his consistent, hard work, which led to the promotion. The PO tells John how proud he is of John for sticking with a job that he was not certain of when he was hired, especially since John was used to turning to ways to earn "fast money" so that he could pay his bills. The probation officer presents John with a cellphone card, which allows John to direct some of the money he would have used to pay his cellphone bill toward other bills.


Reinforcement Dos



- **DO link reinforcements to goals and action steps that help people address their criminogenic needs.**
- DO make sure behaviors that will be reinforced are attainable for the person
- DO ensure the reinforcement is available within the agency.
- DO make reinforcements meaningful by individualizing them.
- **DO reinforce the behavior immediately or as soon as possible after it is known**
- **DO ensure people understand the connection between the reinforcement and their actions.**
- DO provide more positive reinforcements than responses to noncompliance (at least 4:1)

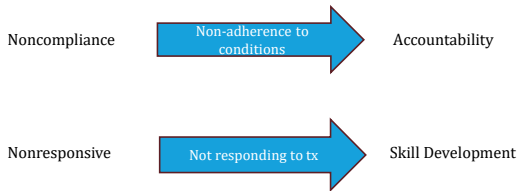
- DO reinforce new and desired behaviors frequently in the early stages and then taper off and replace with less frequent reinforcement.
- DO make sure reinforcements are proportional to behaviors.
- DO recognize incremental progress, particularly when behaviors are more difficult, and take into consideration the person's risk level and stage of change.
- DO help the person articulate the intrinsic value/benefit of continuing the positive behavior.
- DO use a structured method to identify and reinforce positive behavior.
- **DO be genuine, showing that you mean what you say and that you appreciate the behavior that you are trying to affirm.**

Addressing Noncompliant Behavior and Attitudes

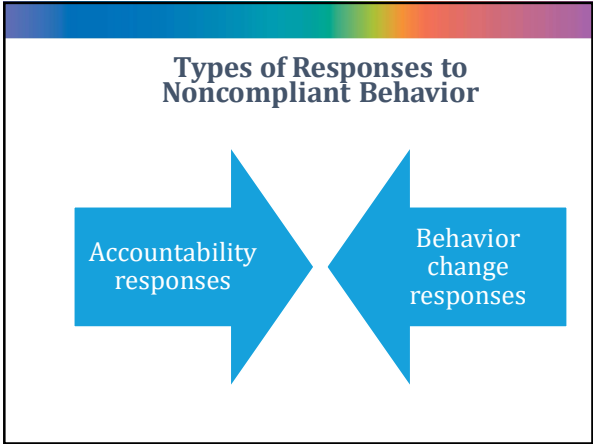


The diagram consists of four colored boxes arranged in a 2x2 grid, with arrows pointing from each box towards the center. The top-left box is blue and contains the text 'Lack of clear communication and understanding of one's conditions of supervision'. The top-right box is orange and contains 'Challenges to meet conditions that are beyond one's control, such as unavailability of stable housing, unaffordable fines, and fees, etc.'. The bottom-left box is green and contains 'Personal issues such as mental illness, addiction'. The bottom-right box is purple and contains 'An unrealistic number of conditions and required programs'.

Addressing Noncompliant Behavior and Attitudes



The diagram shows two horizontal flow paths. The top path starts with the word 'Noncompliance' on the left, followed by a blue arrow pointing right with the text 'Non-adherence to conditions' inside it, and ends with the word 'Accountability' on the right. The bottom path starts with the word 'Nonresponsive' on the left, followed by a blue arrow pointing right with the text 'Not responding to tx' inside it, and ends with the words 'Skill Development' on the right.



Scenario

Erin, who is currently on probation for theft, has been diligent in reporting to her probation officer. During a recent visit, it came to light that she had visited a boyfriend despite a no-contact order from the court. The probation officer previously recommended that the court impose a no-contact condition due to Erin being assessed as being at high need in the area of family and social support and because of past difficulties in her relationship. Erin has been actively participating in her cognitive behavioral group and has been fully compliant with all other conditions of his supervision. This incident marks her first violation of the no-contact condition.



Response

- Addressed the first violation with an accountability response and behavior change response
 - Verbal reprimand
 - Pros and cons list or decisional balance matrix
- 4:1 Reinforcement
- Other considerations:
 - Prior violations
 - Severity of violation
 - Assessed risk of person under supervision

Structured Decision-Making Tools

		Risk Level		
		Low	Moderate	High
Violation Severity	Low	Low Response	Low Response	Moderate Response
	Moderate	Low Response	Moderate Response	Moderate Response
	High	Moderate Response	Moderate Response	High Response

Creation and Implementation of Decision-Making Tools

Step 1

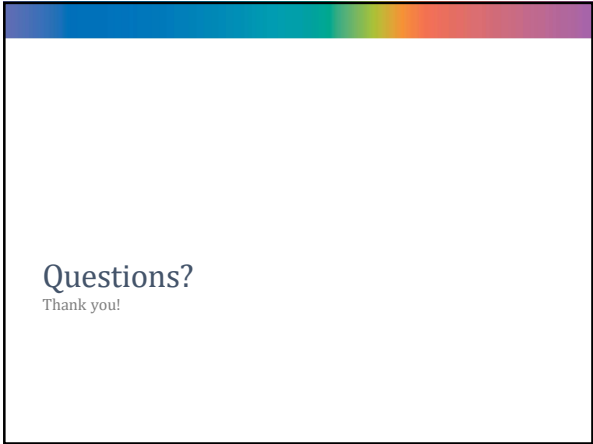
- Create a list of pro-social behaviors with a corresponding list of responses
- Assign impact from low to high
- Create a list of non-compliant behaviors by severity with a corresponding list of responses
- Assign severity from low to high

Step 2

- Share the above list(s) widely. Gain feedback and responses. A core team or smaller decision-makers will consider feedback and adjust as needed.
- Determine which tool is best: a matrix, a chart, a flow chart, or an electronic decision-making tool.

Step 3

- Piloting the decision-making tool will provide valuable insights and allow the agency to address implementation challenges quickly.
- Implementing in a smaller, focused area also allows for early adopters to assist in supporting the implementation plan.



Questions?
Thank you!
