Scared Straight

Program description:

The underlying goal of the Scared Straight program is to deter juvenile offenders, or children at-risk of becoming delinquent, through organized visits to adult prisons. These meta-analytic results were last updated in 2006.

Typical age of primary program participant: 15

Typical age of secondary program participant: N/A

Meta-Analysis of Program Effects

Outcomes Measured	Primary or Second-ary Partici-pant	No. of Effect Sizes	Unadjusted Effect Sizes (Random Effects Model)			Adjusted Effect Sizes and Standard Errors Used in the Benefit-Cost Analysis					
						First time ES is estimated			Second time ES is estimated		
			ES	SE	p-value	ES	SE	Age	ES	SE	Age
Crime	P	10	0.11	0.05	0.05	0.09	0.05	17	0.09	0.05	27

Benefit-Cost Summary

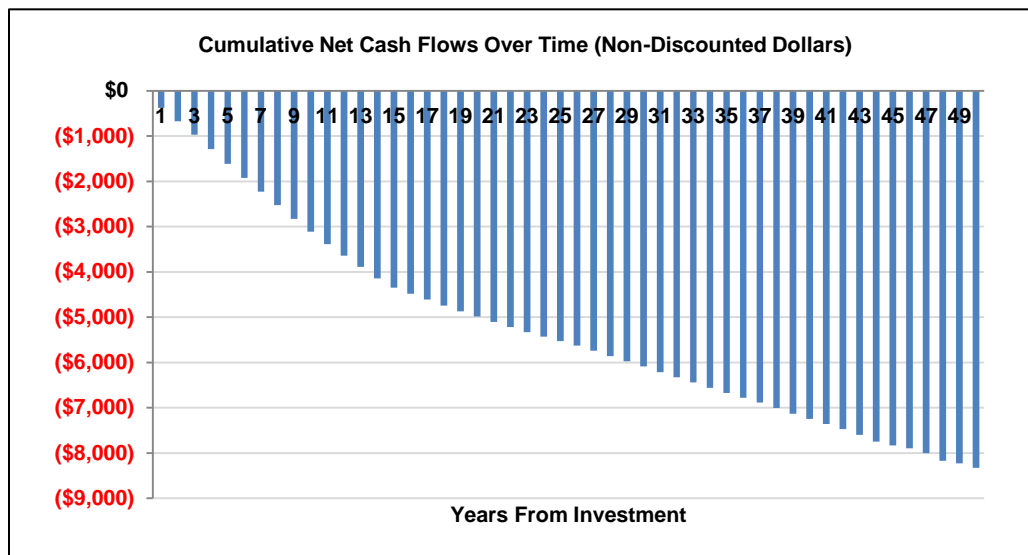|	Program Benefits					Costs	Summary Statistics			
The estimates shown are present value, life cycle benefits and costs. All dollars are expressed in the base year chosen for this analysis (2011). The economic discount rates and other relevant parameters are described in Technical Appendix 2.	Partici-pants	Tax-payers	Other	Other Indirect	Total Benefits		Benefit to Cost Ratio	Return on Invest-ment	Benefits Minus Costs	Probability of a positive net present value
	-$1,103	-$1,271	-$1,930	-$645	-$4,949	-$65	-$76.49	n/e	-$5,014	0%

Detailed Monetary Benefit Estimates

	Benefits to:				
Source of Benefits	Partici-pants	Tax-payers	Other	Other In-direct	Total Benefits
Crime	$0	-$698	-$2,049	-$351	-$3,097
Earnings via high school graduation	-$1,124	-$414	$0	-$214	-$1,751
Health care costs via education	$21	-$160	$119	-$81	-$100

Detailed Cost Estimates

	Program Costs			Comparison Costs			Summary Statistics	
The figures shown are estimates of the costs to implement programs in Washington. The comparison group costs reflect either no treatment or treatment as usual, depending on how effect sizes were calculated in the meta-analysis. The uncertainty range is used in Monte Carlo risk analysis, described in Technical Appendix 2.	Annual Cost	Program Duration	Year Dollars	Annual Cost	Program Duration	Year Dollars	Present Value of Net Program Costs (in 2011 dollars)	Uncertainty (+ or – %)
	$50	1	1999	$0	1	1999	$65	10%

Source: Estimated by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

Cumulative Net Cash Flows Over Time (Non-Discounted Dollars)

Years From Investment

Multiplicative Adjustments Applied to the Meta-Analysis

Type of Adjustment	Multiplier
1- Less well-implemented comparison group or observational study, with some covariates.	1.00
2- Well-implemented comparison group design, often with many statistical controls.	1.00
3- Well-done observational study with many statistical controls (e.g., instrumental variables).	1.00
4- Random assignment, with some implementation issues.	1.00
5- Well-done random assignment study.	1.00
Program developer = researcher	0.36
Unusual (not "real-world") setting	0.50
Weak measurement used	0.80

The adjustment factors for these studies are based on our empirical knowledge of the research in a topic area. We performed a multivariate regression analysis of 96 effect sizes from evaluations of adult and juvenile justice programs. The analysis examined the relative magnitude of effect sizes for studies rated a 1, 2, 3, or 4 for research design quality, in comparison with a 5 (see Technical Appendix B for a description of these ratings). We weighted the model using the random effects inverse variance weights for each effect size. The results indicated that research designs 1, 2, and 3 should have a multiplier greater than 1 and research design 4 should have a multiplier of approximately 1. Using a conservative approach, we set all the multipliers to 1.

In this analysis, we also found that effect sizes were statistically significantly higher when the program developer was involved in the research evaluation. Similar findings, although not statistically significant, indicated that studies using weak outcome measures (such as technical violations) were higher.

Studies Used in the Meta-Analysis

Buckner, J. C., & Chesney-Lind, M. (1983.) Dramatic cures for juvenile crime: An evaluation of a prisoner-run delinquency prevention program. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 10*(2), 227-247.

Cook D. D., & Spirrison, C. L. (1992). Effects of a prisoner-operated delinquency deterrence program: Mississippi's Project Aware. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 17*(3-4), 89-99.

Finchkenauer, J. O., & Gavin, P. W. (with Hovland, A., & Storvoll, E.). (1999). *Scared Straight: the panacea phenomenon revisited*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Lewis, R. V. (1983). Scared straight--California style: Evaluation of the San Quentin Squires program. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 10*(2), 209-226.

Locke, T. P., Johnson, G. M., Kirigin-Ramp, K., Atwater, J. D., & Gerrard, M. (1986). An evaluation of a juvenile education program in a state penitentiary. *Evaluation Review, 10*(3), 281-298.

Michigan Department of Corrections. (1967, May). *A six month follow-up of juvenile delinquents visiting the Ionia Reformatory* (Research Report No. 4). Lansing: Michigan Department of Corrections.

Orchowsky, S., & Taylor, K. (1981). *The Insiders juvenile crime prevention program: An assessment of a juvenile awareness program* (Document No. NCJ 79768). Richmond: Virginia Department of Corrections, Division of Program Development and Evaluation, Research and Reporting Unit.

Vanzandt, J. (1979). *Menard Correctional Center: Juvenile tours impact study* (Document No. NCJ 062932). Marion, IL: Greater Egypt Regional Planning & Development Commission.

Vreeland, A. D. (1982). Evaluation of Face-to-Face: A juvenile aversion program. *Dissertation Abstracts International, 42*(10), 4597A.

Yarborough, J. C. (1979). *Evaluation of JOLT (Juvenile Offenders Learn Truth) as a deterrence program* (Document No. NCJ 060290). Lansing: Michigan Department of Corrections.