EVALUATION CORE RESEARCH BRIEF

Massachusetts Drug Court Participants

Dynamic Risk Factors for Recidivism

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KEY FINDINGS

In addition to significant substance use problems, Massachusetts Drug Court participants possess many other changeable risk factors for recidivism, which are associated with continued offending behavior and can mitigate risk, if addressed with programming. Among Massachusetts Drug Court participants administered a risk-needs assessment instrument at intake:

- **Almost all Drug Court participants lack education and employment, and experience financial instability.** Programming that helps participants build their educational and employment skills and increase their ability to earn higher wages may reduce the likelihood of a continued criminal lifestyle.

- **Over half of Drug Court participants have family and social support systems that are supportive or tolerant of criminal behavior.** Programming that strengthens relationships with pro-social family members and fosters positive social support networks are recommended.

- **The majority of Drug Court participants reside in a high crime area where drugs are readily available and there are ample opportunities for crime.** Programming that provides participants with skills to avoid common situational opportunities for crime and identifies opportunities for pro-social activities are recommended.

- **Almost all Drug Court participants have strong associations with criminally-involved peers and weak ties to pro-social peers.** Programming that teaches participants skills to establish and strengthen healthy relationships with pro-social peers and connects participants with pro-social peers are recommended.

- **The majority of Drug Court participants possess attitudinal and behavioral patterns that reinforce criminal behavior.** Programming that helps individuals identify and correct antisocial beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors are strongly recommended, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, anger management, and curricula that teaches self-regulation.

To ensure that risk-reduction practices are implemented with fidelity, Massachusetts Drug Court participants' criminogenic needs must be measured with a valid risk-needs assessment instrument. Massachusetts Drug Courts would benefit from continued efforts to increase the administration of risk-needs assessment instruments to participants when they begin Drug Court.

Introduction

Drug Courts are an effective intervention for justice-involved persons with substance use-related problems.[1] These specialized courts demonstrate the most significant reductions in recidivism when they target individuals with severe substance use-related problems (i.e., high-need) who are at high-risk for continued offending (i.e., high-risk).[2-4] The recommendation that Drug Courts target high-risk individuals was based upon the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model, the most widely studied

and supported approach for reducing recidivism among individuals under correctional or community supervision.[5-9]

According to the RNR approach, risk for recidivism can be reduced if the highest risk individuals receive the most intensive programming (risk principle), the programming targets changeable risk factors, which may be driving offending behavior (called *dynamic risk factors* or *criminogenic needs*; need principle), and characteristics that may affect treatment response are taken into account (responsivity principle).

In accordance with the RNR model and national Drug Court standards[10], the *Massachusetts Adult Drug Court Manual*[11] identifies high-risk, high-need justice-involved persons as the target population for Drug Court and stipulates that risk for recidivism be established with the use of a validated risk-needs assessment instrument. To mitigate participants' risk for recidivism, Drug Court practitioners should work to match individual dynamic risk factors (e.g., family and social support, employment, criminal thinking, association with criminal peers) with services and interventions. This risk-reduction practice is often referred to as *need-to-service matching*.

To inform practitioners' risk reduction strategies in Drug Court, this brief presents data on Massachusetts Drug Court participants' dynamic risk factors and provides information on the types of programming that address each risk factor.

Massachusetts Probation Service: Drug Court Risk-Needs Assessment Process & Risk-Needs Assessment Data

The Massachusetts Probation Service has adopted a validated risk-needs assessment instrument, the Ohio Risk Assessment System-Community Supervision Tool (ORAS-CST)[12], which is administered by Probation Services to all probationers assigned to risk-need supervision. The ORAS-CST is an actuarial instrument that assesses risk for recidivism. [13]

To administer and score the ORAS-CST, probation officers rely on probationer self-report as well as collateral information (e.g., criminal records). The ORAS-CST is comprised of 35 items, which are scored, summed, and compared to risk level classification cut-off values. ORAS-CST items are organized within seven risk-need domains measuring both static (criminal history) and dynamic risk factors (education/employment difficulties; family and social supports; neighborhood problems; substance abuse; peer associations; criminal attitudes & behavioral patterns). Total scores on the ORAS-CST can range from 0 to 49, which is used to classify individuals into one of five risk levels: low, low/moderate, moderate, high, and very high.[14]

Per probation policy, the ORAS-CST is to be administered within 45 days of the start of probation supervision and reassessments with the ORAS-CST are conducted every six months of supervision or when major case changes occur. In Massachusetts, many participants enter Drug Court following a violation of probation, which may reflect a major change in their case. Thus, for eligibility and case management purposes, Drug Court practitioners may rely on ORAS-CST assessments conducted prior to participants' entrance into Drug Court or Drug Court practitioners may administer the ORAS-CST themselves at Drug Court screening or at another time point during the Drug Court program.

To describe participants' dynamic risk factors when they begin Drug Court, this brief presents ORAS-CST assessment data for participants administered the ORAS within four months (prior to or after) of their Drug Court enrollment. Given the complexity of cases at the time of enrollment (e.g., recent violation of probation, recent warrant status, jail detainment), four months was considered a reasonable amount of time for a recent assessment to have been conducted.

Data used in this brief were extracted by probation research staff from Massachusetts Probation Service administrative databases (APEX and MassCourts) and provided to researchers from the UMMS Center of Excellence for Specialty Courts in June 2018. Drug Court participants included in this sample were active in Drug Court during the period of June to October 2017 across 26 Adult Drug Courts in Massachusetts. Among the 818 Drug Court participants in the sample, 28% (n = 232) were administered the ORAS-CST within four months of their Drug Court enrollment date. This brief presents data from these 232 Drug Court participants.

Total Risk for Recidivism

Among Drug Court participants who were administered the ORAS-CST, 88% scored within the moderate to very high total risk for recidivism range (see *Figure 1*). Thus, risk levels based upon total scores indicate that almost all participants in the sample were in need of the intensive risk reduction supervision and treatment programming provided by the Drug Court model.[15]

Figure 1: Drug Court Participants' ORAS-CST Total Risk for Recidivism
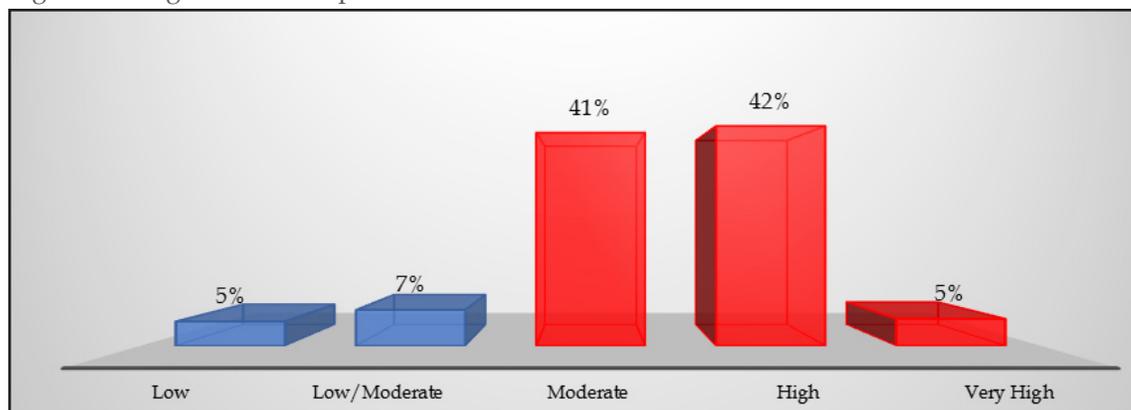

Criminal History

The criminal history ORAS-CST domain is a static risk factor, meaning that negative changes on this domain are possible as individuals can become more extensively involved with the justice system, but individuals cannot improve their scores on this domain. The ORAS-CST criminal history domain contains 6 items, which measure the seriousness of one's juvenile and adult criminal history, one's history of incarceration and prior probation supervision, as well as one's prior failure on community supervision.

As shown in *Figure 2*, 51% of participants in the sample scored within the low risk level on the criminal history ORAS-CST domain and 49% scored within the moderate to high risk levels. Thus, although almost all Drug Court participants were at moderate to very high risk for recidivism, many participants had not accumulated an extensive criminal history at the time they began Drug Court.

Figure 2: Drug Court Participants' ORAS-CST Criminal History
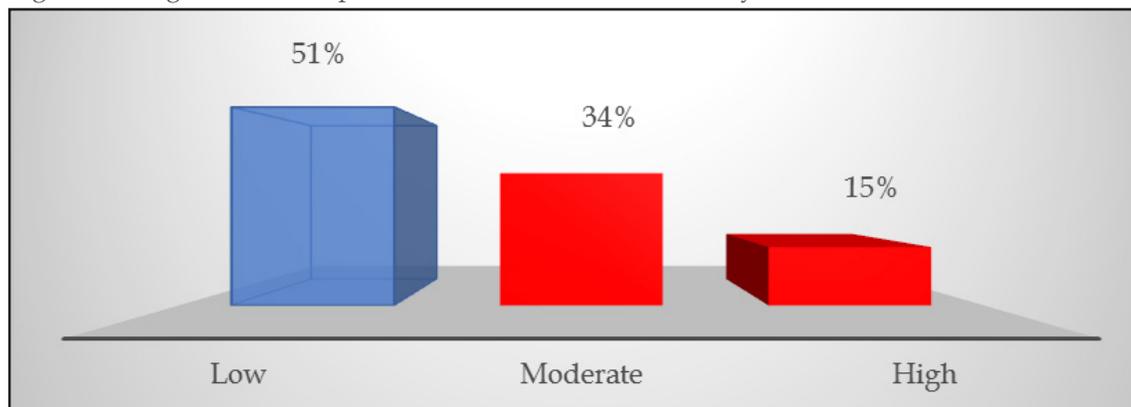
Education, Employment, & Financial Situation

The education, employment, and financial situation ORAS-CST domain measures academic achievement, current employment, time spent in structured activities, and financial stability.

Ninety-three percent of Drug Court participants scored within a moderate to high level on the education, employment, and financial domain, indicating that these individuals lack resources that are conducive to a non-criminal lifestyle (see *Figure 3*).

Figure 3: Drug Court Participants' ORAS-CST Education, Employment, & Financial Situation
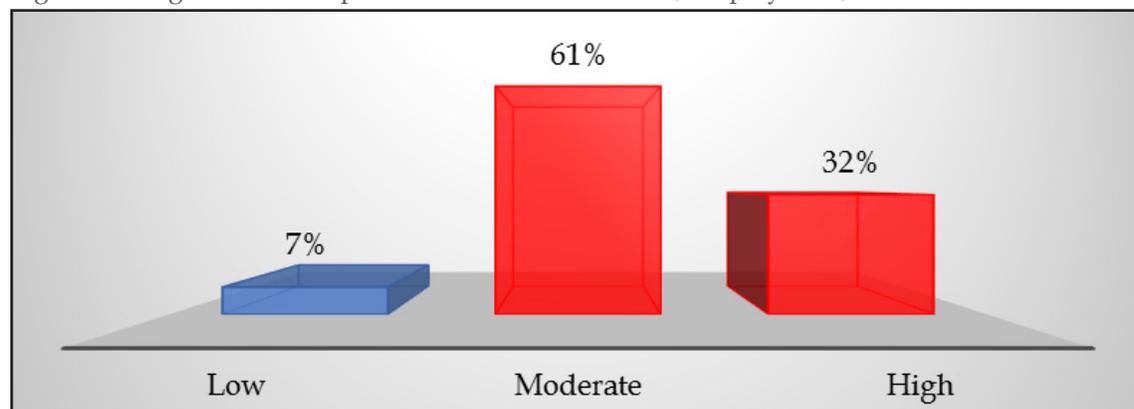

Family & Social Support

The family and social support ORAS-CST domain measures the extent to which an individual's family and social networks are supportive or tolerant of criminal behavior, and the extent to which individuals feel satisfied and supported in their relationships with family and significant others.

As shown in *Figure 4*, 61% of Drug Court participants in the sample had a moderate to high need on the family and social supports domain, indicating that they have family and social support systems that are conducive to criminal behavior and lack strong social supports.

Figure 4: Drug Court Participants' ORAS-CST Family & Social Support
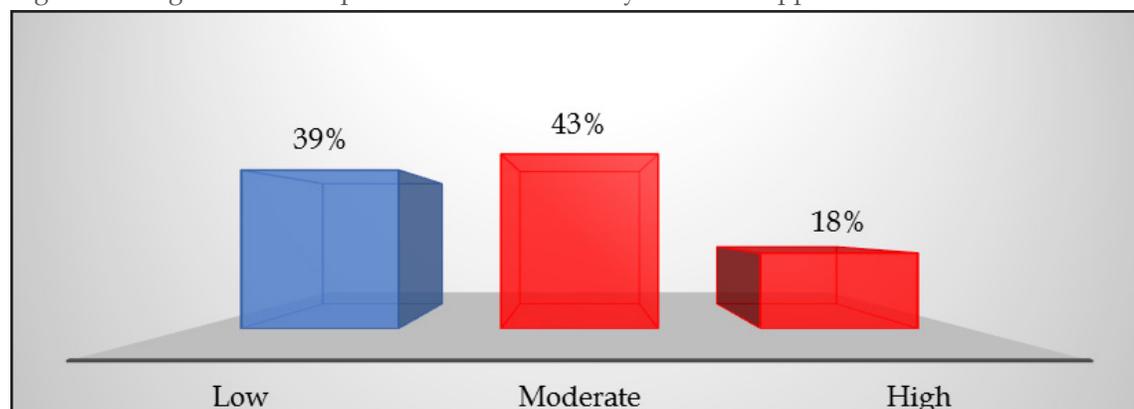
Neighborhood Problems

The neighborhood problems ORAS-CST domain measures the extent to which the neighborhoods where individuals reside offer opportunities to engage in criminal behavior.

As shown in *Figure 5*, 79% of participants in the sample had a moderate to high need on the neighborhood problems ORAS-CST domain, indicating that they reside in a high crime area where drugs are readily available.

Figure 5: Drug Court Participants' ORAS-CST Neighborhood Problems
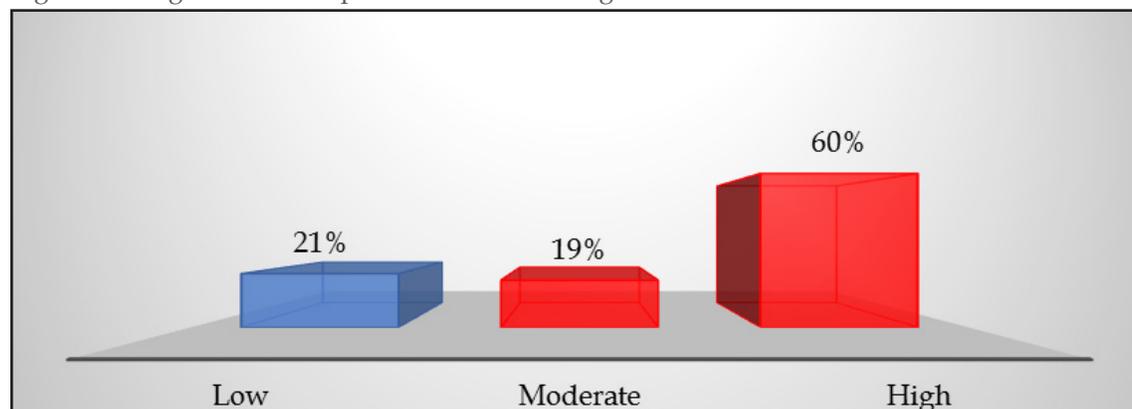
Substance Use

The substance use ORAS-CST domain measures the occurrence of substance use and the extent to which it has caused problems in the person's life, including legal involvement, issues with loved ones and friends, health and social service problems, and its interaction with seeking or maintaining employment.

As shown in *Figure 6*, 94% of participants in the sample had a moderate to high need in the substance use ORAS-CST domain, indicating that substance use-related problems have negatively impacted participants' lives. The data presented in this brief are based upon assessed risk and need levels and do not take into consideration professional discretion or overrides. Thus, it is possible that probation officers believed drug court participants who scored within the low range on the substance use domain minimized their substance use-related problems, but this is not reflected in participants' assessed need level.

Figure 6: Drug Court Participants' ORAS-CST Substance Use
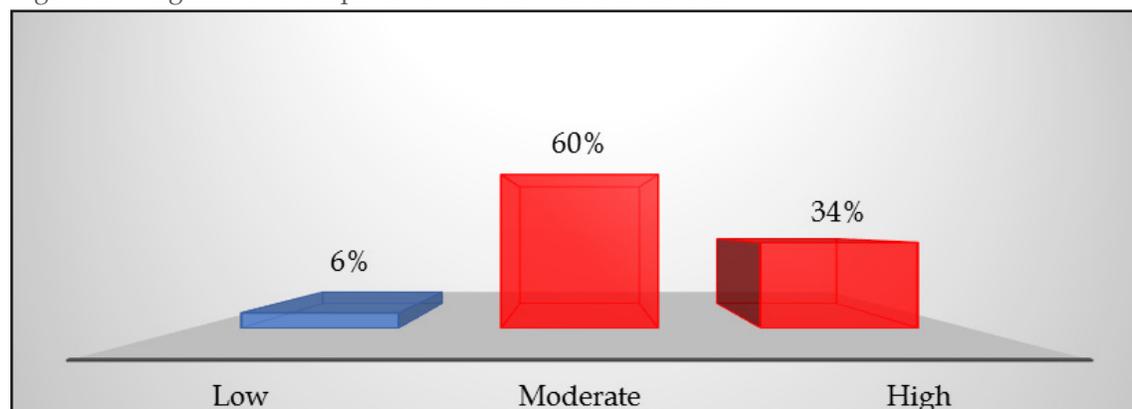
Peer Associates

The peer associates ORAS-CST domain measures the extent to which an individual's friends are involved in criminal behavior, how much contact an individual has with criminal friends, whether an individual is involved with a gang, and how strongly an individual identifies with criminal activities.

As shown in *Figure 7*, 91% of participants in the sample had a moderate to high need in the peer associates ORAS-CST domain, indicating they have strong connections with criminal peers that, in conjunction with weak ties to pro-social peers, increase their likelihood of criminal behavior.

Figure 7: Drug Court Participants' ORAS-CST Peer Associates
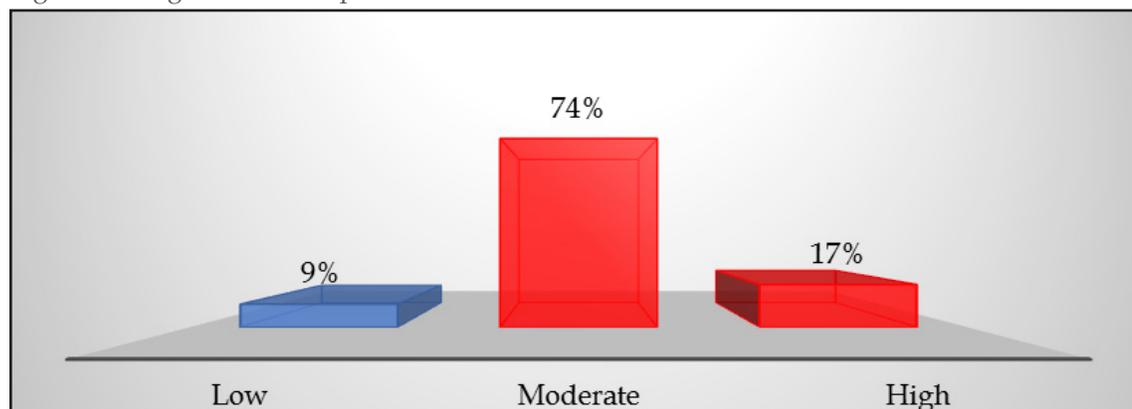
Criminal Attitudes & Behavioral Patterns

The criminal attitudes and behavioral pattern ORAS-CST domain measures the extent to which an individual rationalizes, minimizes, and justifies criminal behavior, lacks empathy or remorse, engages in risk-taking behavior, has difficulty managing anger, and possesses hostile attributions.

As shown in *Figure 8*, 85% of participants in the sample had a moderate to high need in the criminal attitudes and behavioral pattern ORAS-CST domain and possess attitudinal and behavioral patterns that reinforce criminal behavior.

Figure 8: Drug Court Participants' ORAS-CST Criminal Attitudes & Behavioral Patterns
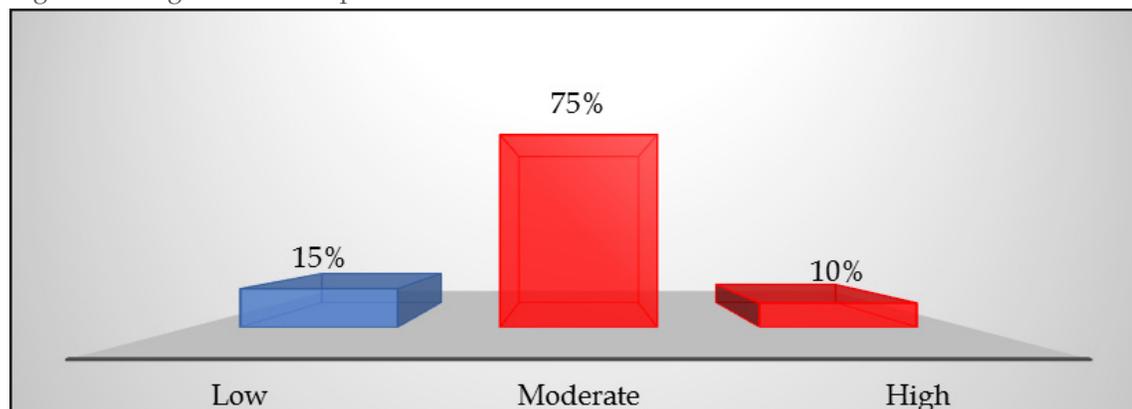
Mitigating Drug Court Participants' Risk for Recidivism: Recommendations for Practice

Massachusetts Drug Court participants possess many dynamic risk factors, which can be identified with the ORAS-CST and reduced through referrals to risk reduction programming, much of which is community-based. To aid Drug Court practitioners' risk reduction strategies, the sections below provide general information on the kind of programs, which address each ORAS-CST dynamic risk factor, followed by a sample of specific programming offered by Massachusetts Community Corrections Centers (CCCs) to address each risk factor.

CCCs offer a wide variety of programs, which target dynamic risk factors and are delivered in a group format. As described below, standardized cognitive behavioral-based interventions, such as those provided by *Hazelden* and *The Change Companies*, are key components of CCC programming. Drug Courts may utilize CCC programming in conjunction with outpatient substance use treatment, for Drug Court participants who do not require residential treatment, or following residential substance use treatment during step-down or maintenance Drug Court phases. Drug Court probation officers may make referrals for CCC programming and/or Drug Court judges may add CCC programming to Drug Court participants' probation conditions. When Drug Courts utilize the CCCs, CCC practitioners work in partnership with Drug Court teams by participating in staffing sessions and providing participant progress reports.

Addressing Education, Employment, & Finances through Programming

Participation in educational and employment programs[16] and increases in one's income[17] have been associated with decreased criminal behavior, particularly for individuals with high needs in education, employment, and finances.

In an effort to mitigate risk, participants scoring moderate to high in the education, employment, and financial need area should be referred to programming that furthers education, provides job training, and assists individuals with managing finances. Programming that helps individuals to establish appropriate workplace relationships, manage work-related stress and issues, and enhance communication skills are also recommended. *Table 1* presents a sample of CCC programming that address education, employment, and financial needs.

Table 1: Education, Employment, & Financial Situation Programming Available at CCCs

Program Name & Curriculum	CCC Program Description
Job Club, National Institute of Corrections Curriculum	Focused on development of job readiness skills including: resume preparation; job search techniques; job applications; background checks; and, interview skills.
HiSet Prep, The Official Guide to the HiSet Exam, McGraw Hill Education	Hi Set Pretest Exam and Practice Tests. Topic-by-topic review and exercise of five test sections subjects: reading; writing; mathematics; science; and, social studies.
Financial Literacy, The Foolproof Foundation	Online video financial literacy program. Lessons and modules designed to teach participants basic money skills including: budgeting and saving; checking accounts; credit cards; marketing and advertising; gambling; taxes; and, bankruptcy.
The Practical Life Skills Workbook, The Whole Person Associates Self-Assessments, Exercises, and Educational Handouts	Activities and worksheets assist participants in developing practical life skills in: problem solving; money management; personal change; and, self-awareness.

Addressing Family & Social Supports through Programming

Positive changes in one's family and social support systems have been associated with decreases in both criminal behavior[17-19] and substance use[19]. Thus, in an effort to mitigate risk, individuals with moderate to high family and social support needs should be referred to programming that strengthens and repairs relationships with pro-social family members and fosters positive social support networks. *Table 2* presents a sample of CCC programming that address family and social support needs.

Table 2: Family & Social Support Programming Available at CCCs

Program Name & Curriculum	CCC Program Description
Residential Drug Abuse Program, The Change Companies, **Living with Others**	Explores components of healthy and unhealthy relationships and ways to communicate effectively with others. Sections focus on: anger management; roadblocks to positive attitudes; resentment; self-pity; and, grandiosity.
The Courage to Change Interactive Journaling System, The Change Companies, **Social Values**	Journal helps participants identify values and their impact on self and others. Participants are encouraged to take responsibility for choices and make amends for harm they have caused. Explores values that promote a healthy lifestyle, including: honesty; tolerance; caring; respect; and, responsibility. An action plan for strengthening values will be created.
The Courage to Change Interactive Journaling System, The Change Companies, **Family Ties**	Journal helps participants evaluate family relationships and roles they play in them. Participants explore healthy and unhealthy family qualities and develop strategies to help them reconnect with their families.
The Life Skills Series, The Change Companies, **Healthy Relationships**	Journal reviews qualities that support healthy interactions with others. Focuses on building healthy relationships by reviewing: communication skills; conflict resolution; the ripple effect of behaviors; and, importance of doing no harm to others.
The Communication Skills Workbook, Whole Person Associates	Focuses on the importance of understanding communication skills. Utilizing self-assessments, worksheets, activities, journaling, and educational handouts, participants explore: active listening; nonverbal communication; social radar; and, negotiation skills.

* Change Companies programming incorporates cognitive-behavioral techniques, exercises, and skill development.

Addressing Neighborhood Problems through Programming

Individuals with moderate to high neighborhood problem needs should be referred to programming that strengthens their ability to identify common situational opportunities for crime, evaluate the costs and benefits of their behavioral choices, and identify opportunities for pro-social activities in their neighborhood. *Table 3* presents a sample of CCC programming that address neighborhood problems.

Table 3: Neighborhood Problems Programming Available at CCCs

Program Name & Curriculum	CCC Program Description
Community Service	Provides participants with the opportunity to develop skills that can be used in their community, including: relationship building; development of a positive work ethic; appreciation for a job well done; and, a sense of civic pride in one's community.
Life Skills Series, The Change Companies, **Daily Life**	Provides tips and strategies for making improvements to five key life areas: stress; nutrition; sleep; physical activity; and, financial responsibility.
Residential Drug Abuse Program, The Change Companies, **Lifestyle Balance**	Assists individuals in evaluating whether their lives are in balance and teaches skills for making positive adjustments to important areas of life: physical health; healthy relationships; emotional health; job satisfaction; and, community involvement.

* *Change Companies programming incorporates cognitive-behavioral techniques, exercises, and skill development.*

Addressing Substance Use through Programming

Participation in substance use treatment programs has been shown to decrease substance use and crime[17,20-21] and positive changes in substance use have been associated with decreased criminal behavior.[17] Thus, individuals with moderate to high substance use scores are in need of the substance use-specific programming provided by the Drug Court model, which often involves residential substance use treatment programs. Beyond residential programming, *Table 4* presents a sample of substance use CCC programming that can be delivered in the community at Centers.

Table 4: Substance Use Programming Available at CCCs

Program Name & Curriculum	CCC Program Description
The Complete Relapse Prevention Skills Program, Hazelden, **Coping with Emotional and Physical High Risk Factors**	Participants learn how to avoid or recover from relapse for alcohol or other drugs using positive, concrete exercises and information.
The Complete Relapse Prevention Skills Program, Hazelden, **Coping with Personal & Social High Risk Factors**	Participants will learn skills and techniques to resist relapse in four areas: testing personal control; social pressure to drink or use; having fun with others; and, dealing with interpersonal conflict.
Breaking the Cycle, The Change Companies, **Recovery Maintenance**	Focuses on recovery as an on-going process of rational thinking and behavior. Participants learn exit strategies to return to recovery after experiencing a stage of relapse and develop a personalized Recovery Maintenance Plan.
SAMHSA Opioid Overdose Prevention Toolkit, **Safety Advice For Patients And Family Members**	Provides information for clients to develop a Personal Overdose Prevention Plan.

Program Name & Curriculum	CCC Program Description
Relapse Prevention Therapy	Relapse prevention therapy is a form of cognitive behavioral therapy designed to help individuals successfully maintain their sobriety after they've completed their addiction treatment. Helps participants understand, anticipate, and manage their potential for relapse.
Criminal Conduct & Substance Abuse Treatment Strategies for Self-Improvement & Change	Workbook is designed to engage clients and encourage participation in treatment and responsible living. Phases focus on: building knowledge and skills for responsible living; strengthening skills for self-improvement, change and responsible living; and, lifestyle balance and healthy living.

* Change Companies and Hazelden programming incorporate cognitive-behavioral techniques, exercises, and skill development.

Addressing Peer Associates through Programming

Individuals with moderate to high peer associates needs should be referred to programming that strengthens social, interpersonal, and life skills and increases ties to pro-social peers. Programming that helps individuals understand the differences between healthy and unhealthy peer relationships and manage peer pressure are also recommended. *Table 5* presents a sample of CCC programming that address peer associates.

Table 5: Peer Associates Programming Available at CCCs

Program Name & Curriculum	CCC Program Description
Residential Drug Abuse Program, The Change Companies, **Living with Others**	Explores components of healthy and unhealthy relationships and ways to communicate effectively with others. Sections focus on: anger management; roadblocks to positive attitudes; resentment; self-pity; and, grandiosity.
The Courage to Change Interactive Journaling System, The Change Companies, **Social Values**	Journal helps participants identify values and their impact on self and others. Participants are encouraged to take responsibility for choices and make amends for harm they have caused. Explores values that promote a healthy lifestyle, such as honesty, tolerance, caring, respect and responsibility. An action plan for strengthening values is created.
The Courage to Change Interactive Journaling System, The Change Companies, **Peer Relationships**	Journal focuses on building and maintaining positive connections with others. Participants reflect on past and present peer relationships, learn the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships, practice handling peer pressure, and learn how to build a positive support network.
The Life Skills Series, The Change Companies, **Healthy Relationships**	Journal reviews qualities that support healthy interactions with others. Focuses on building healthy relationships by reviewing: communication skills; conflict resolution; the ripple effect of behaviors; and, importance of doing no harm to others.

Program Name & Curriculum	CCC Program Description
The Communication Skills Workbook, **Whole Person Associates**	Utilizing self-assessments, worksheets, activities, journaling and educational handouts participants explore: active listening; nonverbal communication; social radar; and, negotiation skills. The programmatic goal is for participants to develop new ways for enhancing interpersonal communications.

* Change Companies programming incorporates cognitive-behavioral techniques, exercises, and skill development.

Addressing Criminal Attitudes & Behavioral Patterns through Programming

Individuals with moderate to high criminal attitudes and behavioral pattern needs should be referred to programming that identifies and corrects beliefs and attitudes that are commonly used to deflect blame and justify criminal behavior. Programming that improves self-control, anger management skills, and problem-solving skills are also recommended. *Table 6* presents a sample of CCC programming that address criminal attitudes and behavioral patterns.

Table 6: Criminal Attitudes & Behavioral Patterns Programming Available at CCCs

Program Name & Curriculum	CCC Program Description
SAFE-Stopping Abuse For Everyone, The Change Companies	Focuses on self-recognition and skill-development exercises that explore how past influences, high-risk beliefs, and maladaptive thinking lead to abusive behavior. Information is used to develop positive and pro-social skills, and a personalized plan to stop abusive behaviors and create healthier relationships.
The Impact of Crime on Victims Interactive Journaling, The Change Companies	Journal designed to increase participants' knowledge of the effects of crime, violence and victimization. Focuses on five categories of crime and their impact on victims: property; violent; family; financial; and, institutional.
Moral Reconation Therapy, How to Escape Your Prison	Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT) is a systematic treatment strategy that seeks to decrease recidivism among adult criminal offenders by increasing moral reasoning.
Corrective Actions Journal System, The Change Companies, **Thinking Errors**	Participants are encouraged to examine eight basic thinking errors which lead to criminal behavior. Focuses on changing the way participants think, feel, and behave to promote a non-criminal lifestyle.
Anger Strategies, Practical Tools For Professionals Treating Anger, **Mac Publishing**	Activities designed to help participants to reflect and develop insight into the difficulties anger has created within their lives. Addresses the following areas: parenting; relationships; job performance; legal issues; and, health.
Corrective Actions Journal System, The Change Companies, **The Con Game**	Explores how the "con game" may be at the core of one's faulty beliefs and behaviors. Focuses on helping participants identify how they learned to play the con game, the myths that support it, and move toward self-responsibility and positive life change.

Program Name & Curriculum	CCC Program Description
Breaking The Cycle Nonresidential Drug Abuse Treatment, The Change Companies, **Basic Cognitive Skills**	Explores five rules of rational thinking. Participants conduct a rational self-analysis to check and challenge their thinking and beliefs.
The Courage to Change Interactive Journaling System, The Change Companies, **Rational Thinking**	Examines how inaccurate perception and thought can lead to poor decisions and self-defeating behavior. Participants identify common thinking errors, self-talk, and learn to challenge their thinking by performing a rational self-analysis.
The Courage to Change Interactive Journaling System, The Change Companies, **Self Control**	Journal focuses on exploring feelings of anger, boredom, sadness, fear, and resentment, and addresses risks related to low self-control. Participants practice strategies for managing difficult feelings and impulses.
Residential Drug Abuse Program, The Change Companies, **Criminal Lifestyles**	Participants evaluate costs and payoffs of behavioral choices. Journal identifies specific criminal thinking errors and how they contribute to criminal behavior. Participants apply rational self-analysis to criminal thinking and create a plan of action to change their thinking, attitudes, and behavior.
Changing Offender Behavior: A Complete Evidence-based System, The Change Companies, **Cognitive-behavioral Curriculum Recognizing Responsible Behavior: Volume 1 & 2**	Introduces key skills of recognizing, avoiding, and managing situations, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, which may place participants at high risk for criminal activity.
SAMSHA: Anger Management For Substance Abuse And Mental Health Clients	Helps individuals participating in the 12-week anger management group develop skills to: identify problems causing conflict; identify feelings associated with conflict; identify the impact of problems causing conflict; decide whether to resolve the conflict; and, work for conflict resolution.

* Change Companies programming incorporates cognitive-behavioral techniques, exercises, and skill development.

Footnotes

1. Mitchell, O., Wilson, D. B., Eggers, A. & MacKenzie, D. L. (2012) Assessing the effectiveness of drug courts on recidivism: A meta-analytic review of traditional and non-traditional drug courts. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 40*, 60-71.

2. Lowenkamp, C. T., Holsinger, A. M., & Latessa, E. J. (2005). Are Drug Courts effective? A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Community Corrections, Fall*, 5-28.

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4. Marlowe, D.B., Festinger, D.S., Dugosh, K.L., Lee, P.A. & Benasutti, K.M. (2007). Adapting judicial supervision to the risk level of drug offenders: Discharge and six-month outcomes from a prospective matching study. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence, 88* (Supplement 2), 4–13.

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6. Hanson, R. K., Bourgon, G., Helmus, L., & Hodgson, S. (2009). The principles of effective correctional treatment also apply to sexual offenders: A meta-analysis. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 36*(9), 865-891. doi:10.1177/0093854809338545

7. Prendergast, M. L., Pearson, F. S., Podus, D., Hamilton, Z. K., & Greenwell, L. (2013). The Andrews' principles of risk, needs, and responsivity as applied in drug treatment programs: Meta-analysis of crime and drug use outcomes. *Journal of Experimental Criminology, 9*(3), 275-300. doi:10.1007/s11292-013-9178-z

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10. National Association of Drug Court Professionals. (2013). Adult drug court best practice standards. NADCP best practice standards

11. Massachusetts Executive Office of the Trial Court. (2015). MA adult DC manual

12. Latessa, E.J., Lemke, R., Makarios, M., Smith, P., & Lowenkamp, C.T. (2010). The creation and validation of the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS). *Federal Probation, 74*(1), 16 – 22.

13. With actuarial instruments the final decision about an individual's level of risk is based on a score that the instrument generates and whether that score meets a designated cutoff for low, moderate, or high risk. Frontline criminal justice staff administering the ORAS however may use professional discretion in their determination of risk level. ORAS risk level classification cutoff values differ for males and females.

14. ORAS-CST cutoff values for males: Low risk score 0-14; Moderate risk score 15-23; High risk score 24-33; Very High risk score 34+. ORAS-CST cutoff values for females: Low risk score 0-14; Low/Moderate risk score 15-21; Moderate risk score 22-28; High risk score 29+.

15. Risk levels reported in this brief reflect assessed risk levels and do not account for probation officers' professional discretion and administrative overrides. It is possible that some participants who scored within the low risk range were administered a professional override to higher risk level.

16. Wilson, D. B., Gallagher, C., & MacKenzie, D. (2000). A meta-analysis of correctional-based education, vocation, and work programs for adult offenders. *Journal of Research in Crime & Delinquency, 37*, 347-368.

17. Wooditch, A., Tang, L. L., & Taxman, F. S. (2014). Which criminogenic need changes are most important in promoting desistance from crime and substance use?. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 41*(3), 276-299.

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About the CoE

The Massachusetts Center of Excellence for Specialty Courts (CoE) provides assistance to the Executive Office of the Trial Court (EOTC) in promulgating best practices in juvenile and adult court specialty sessions, and in implementing best practices to address issues of mental health, substance use disorders and trauma. The Evaluation Core takes lead responsibility for assisting the EOTC and state agencies via consultation on data analytic and cost-effectiveness projects to guide policy change throughout the Commonwealth as it relates to the Trial Court Specialty Court Strategic Plan.