



Evidence of the importance of probation officers being agents of change: The STICS Project

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Community Supervision Effectiveness

What does the research tell us?

Community Supervision Effectiveness?

Meta-Analytic Findings

Outcome	ϕ	k	N
General Recidivism	.02	26	53,930
Violent Recidivism	.00	8	28,523

k = number of effect sizes

Bonta et al. (2008)

➤ **Minimal impact on recidivism**

What about the RNR principles?

Does adherence make a difference?

Community Supervision policies adherence with Risk-Need-Responsivity

RNR Adherence	ϕ	k	N
RNR = 0	.017	7	47,885
RNR = 1	-.009	12	2,716
RNR = 2	.078	5	2,415
RNR = 3	.092	2	914

➤ **Increase in RNR adherence = Decrease in recidivism**

MB Case Management Study:

***Do policies translate into practice
“behind closed doors”?***

Manitoba Case Management Study

***Jurisdictional policies congruent with RNR
but what about “behind closed doors”?***

***Analysis of 211 audiotapes & file records
From 62 PO on 154 offenders***

Questions:

1. Risk: Is PO-client contact related to level of risk?
2. Need: Do PO target criminogenic needs?
3. Responsivity: Do PO use techniques congruent with effective correctional practices?

(Bonta et al., 2004, 2008)

Adherence to the Risk Principle?

- **More face-to-face sessions?**

- Mean: 1.4 face-to-face/month
- Modestly related to risk ($r = .19$)

- **Longer sessions?**

- Mean: 22 min. 34 sec
- Weakly related to risk ($r = .07$)

➤ **At best, modest adherence to Risk**

Adherence to the Need Principle?

Need Area	% Discussed When Need Present
Family/Marital	90%
Substance Abuse	78%
Employment/Academic	57%
Peer Problems	21%
Attitudes	9%

➤ **Modest adherence for some**

➤ **Minimal for others - especially "Big Four"**

Adherence to Responsivity Principle

Relationship & Structuring skills

Variable	@ Intake	@ 6 months
Relationship Skills		
Prompts/Encourages	97%	96%
Empathy	48%	22%
Warmth	46%	48%
Enthusiastic	27%	40%
Structuring or “Change Agent” Skills		
Prosocial reinforcement	68%	72%
Homework assigned	28%	24%
Practice	22%	24%
Procriminal discouragement	20%	18%
Prosocial modeling	17%	15%

➤ **Officers positive but “change agent” skills weak**

The Strategic Training Initiative in Community Supervision:

***Can we improve the work done
“behind closed doors”?***

Beyond Policy & Case Management

■ Case Management Approach

- Oversee and monitor compliance with sentence
- Rehabilitative Efforts include...
 - *Assess risk/need factors, develop/manage case (correctional) plan*
 - *Enhance motivation, address barriers, brokerage of community services, support treatment providers efforts*

Programs/Services viewed as primary change agents

■ Change Agent Approach

- *Officer takes on the primary responsibility for change*
 - *Enhance collaborative relationship*
 - *Use Cognitive-Behavioural interventions to facilitate change*
 - *Teach new skills and facilitate change in thinking/behaviour*
 - *Active practice and generalization of new skills*

STICS...a change agent approach

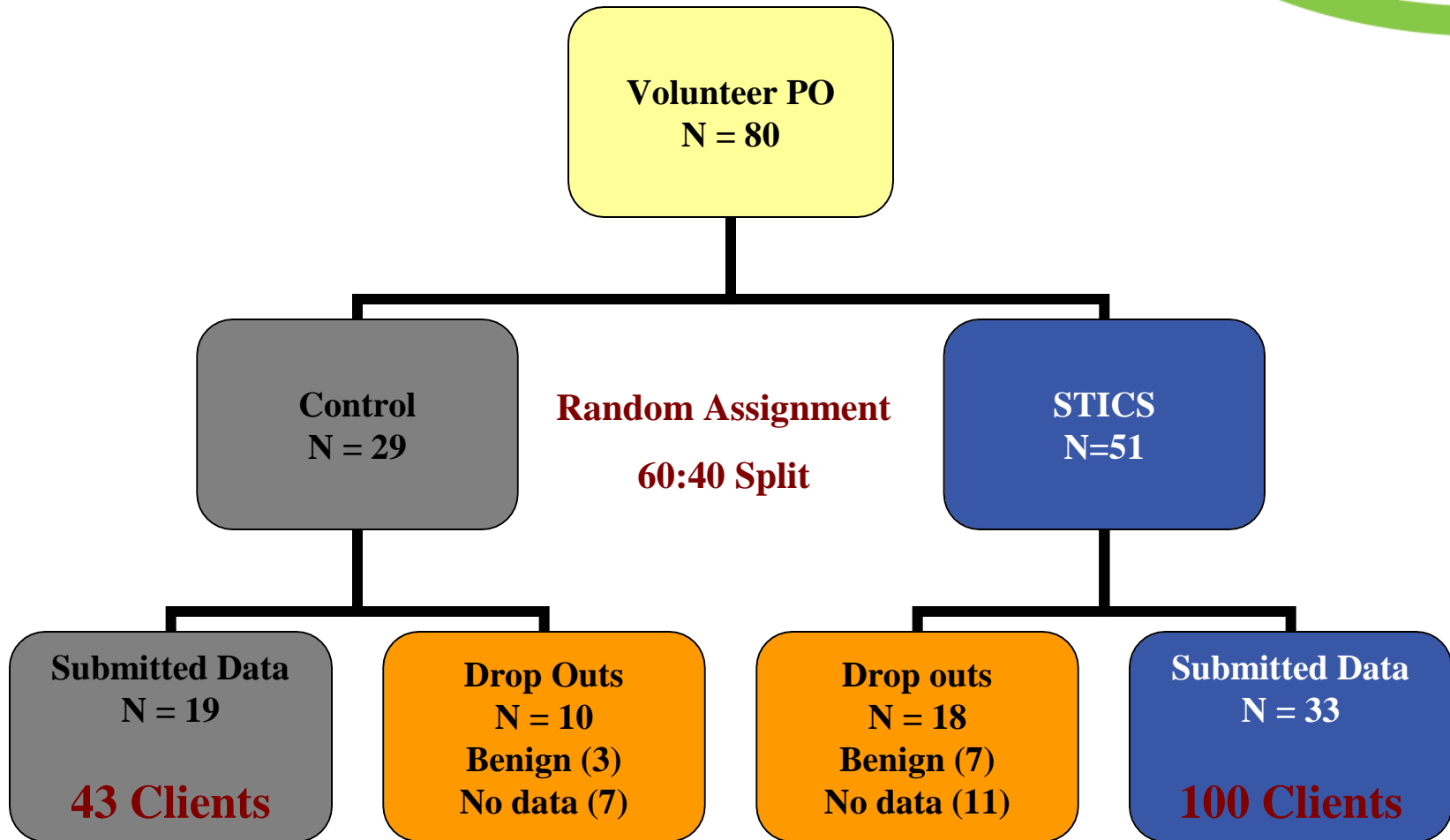
- **Adds “therapeutic” work**
 - *Translate RNR to “behind closed doors” work*
 - *Special attention to responsiveness*
 - *Target procriminal attitudes & cognitions*

- **Recognizes that it requires skill sets (training)**
 - *To enhance collaborative relationship*
 - *To “bring to the table” and work with a CB model*
 - *To teach & model new skills to facilitate change*

- **Integrity & Implementation over the long run**
 - *Initial training & on-going clinical support activities*
 - *Ongoing evaluation*

The Probation Officers In the Project

Random Assignment of PO



Each PO was requested to recruit 4 Hi Risk & 2 Mod Risk Clients

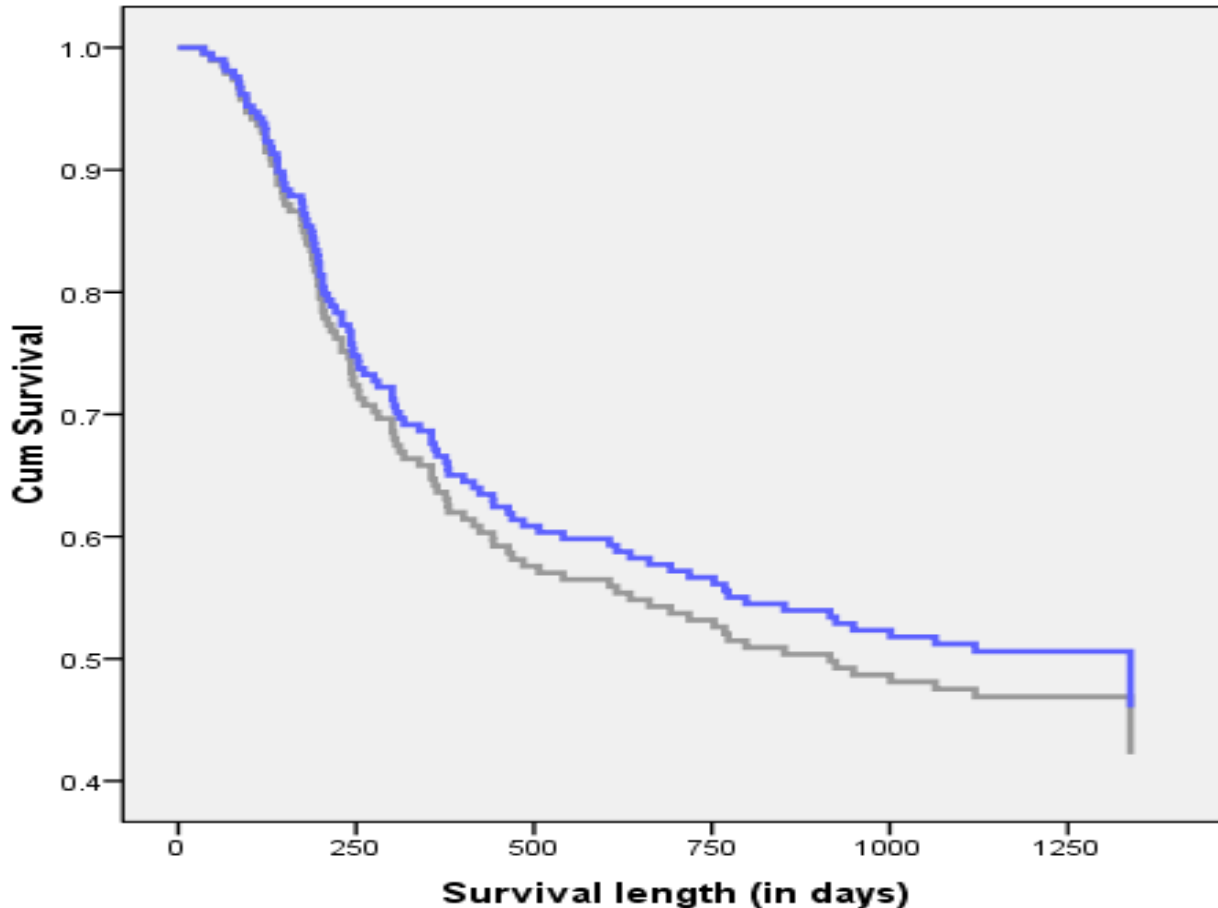
PO Demographics

Variable	STICS (N = 33)	Control (N = 19)
Age (years)	38.2	38.4
Gender (male)	30.3%	31.6%
Years of Experience	9.9	9.1
Race (Caucasian)	79.3%	84.2%
RNR Knowledge Test Score	5.6	6.3

➤ **Groups equivalent but were they equally effective?**

Groups equally effective before STICS?

Cox Regression (control age & LSI-R criminal history)



Group: Pre-STICS

Control
Experimental

Pre Effectiveness

STICS vs. Control

Exp(B) = .900

95% CI = .591 - 1.369

Δ -3%

2 Year Unadjusted Recidivism

Pre Control = 41.5%

Pre STICS = 46.7%

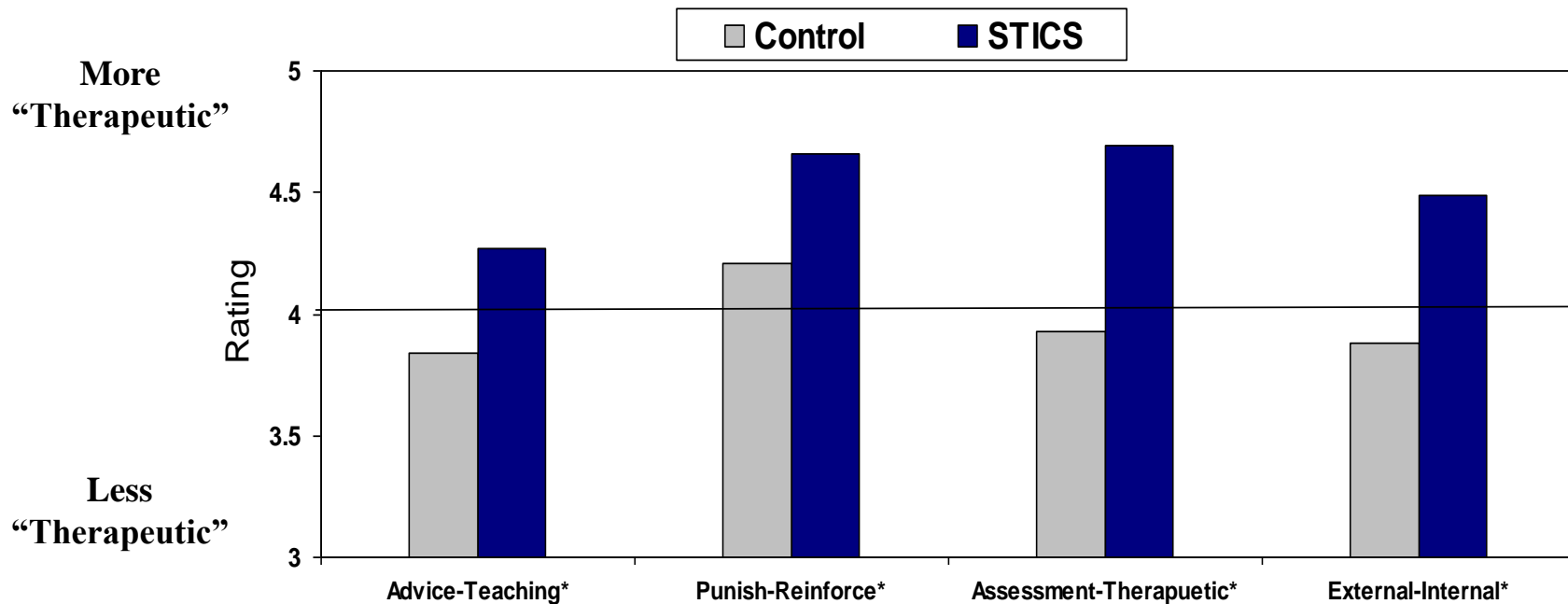
Did STICS Change Officer Behaviour “Behind Closed Doors”?

Assessment of PO Behaviour

- **Direct Observations (audiotape)**
 - *220 tapes for STICS & 75 for Control*
 - *Mean length (min): 26:45 (STICS): 24:36 (Control)*

- **Measures**
 - **General Session Characteristics**
 - *Ratings more or less “therapeutic”*
 - **Topics of Discussion**
 - *Criminogenic Needs vs. other topics of discussion*
 - **“Change Agent” Skills**
 - *Structuring, Relationship Building, Behavioural Techniques and Cognitive Techniques*

General Session Characteristics: *More or less "therapeutic"*

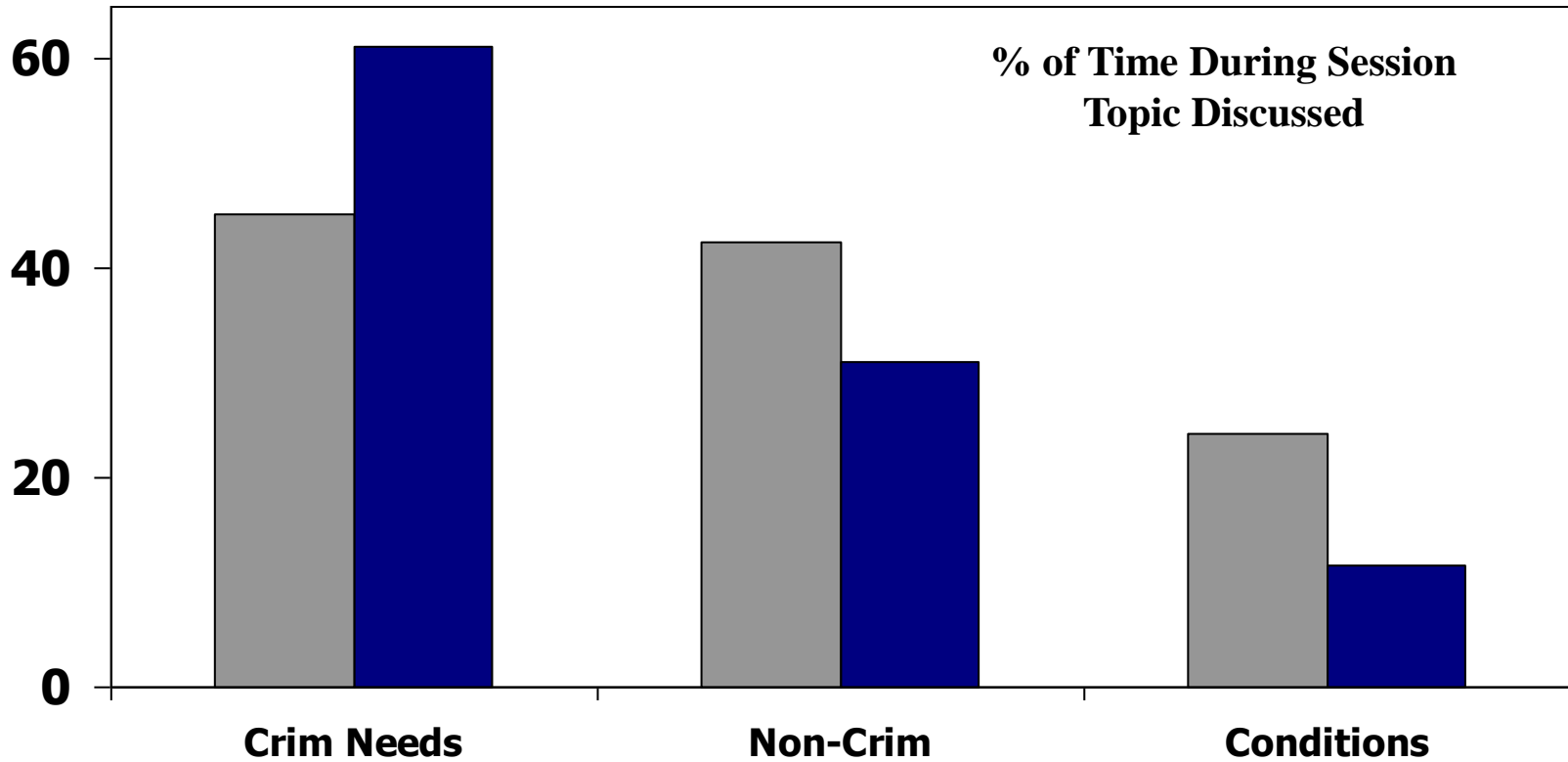


➤ **STICS: More "therapeutic" oriented**

Topics of Discussion:

The focus of what they talk about

■ Control ■ STICS

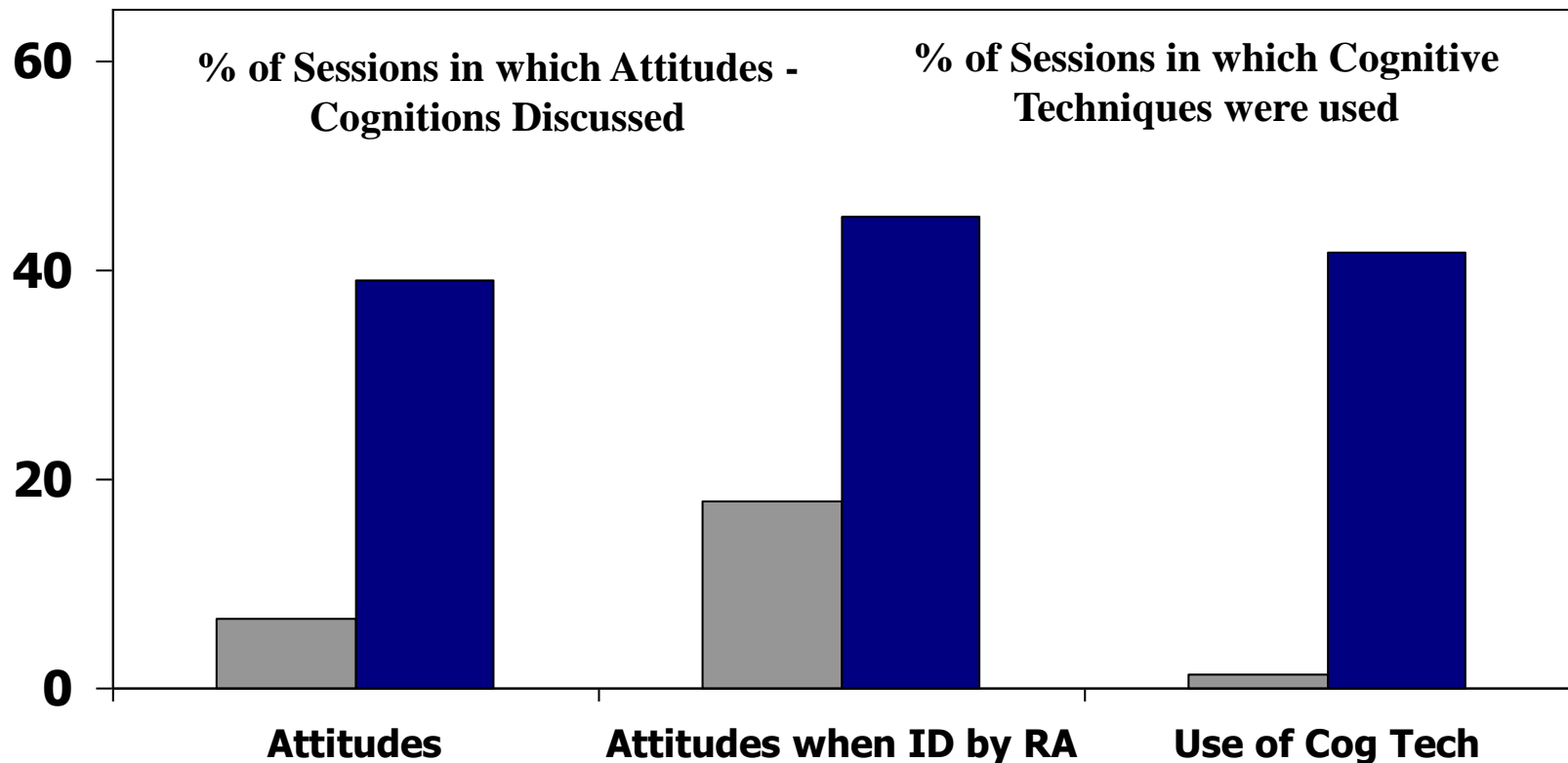


➤ **STICS: Focused on Criminogenic Needs**

Topics of Discussion:

Attitudes/Cognitions & Use of Cognitive Techniques

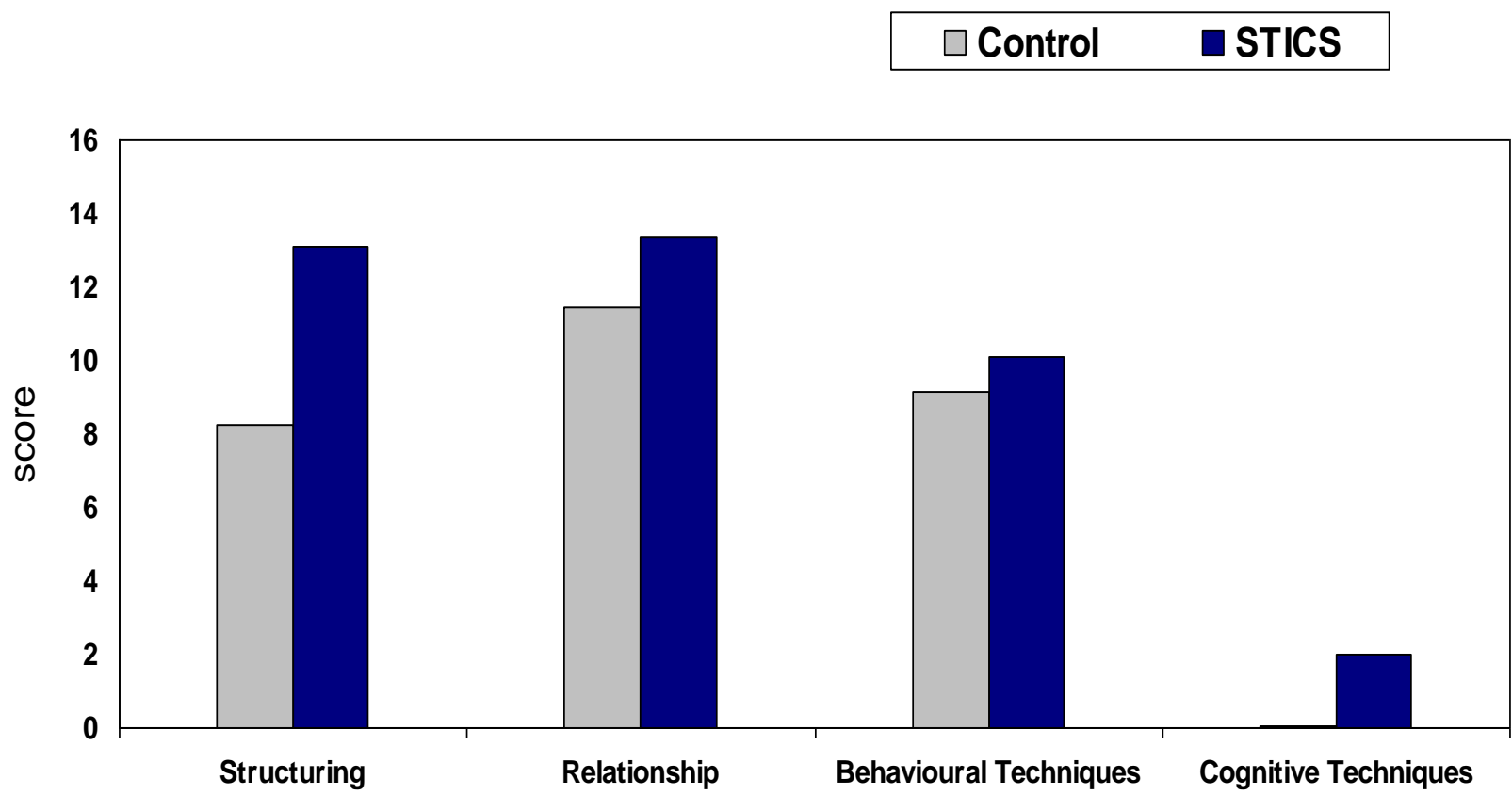
■ Control ■ STICS



➤ **STICS: Focus on Attitudes & Use Cognitive Techniques**

“Change Agent” Skills:

Skills and intervention techniques used by PO



➤ **STICS: Superior “Change Agent” Skills**

What About The Clients Being Supervised?

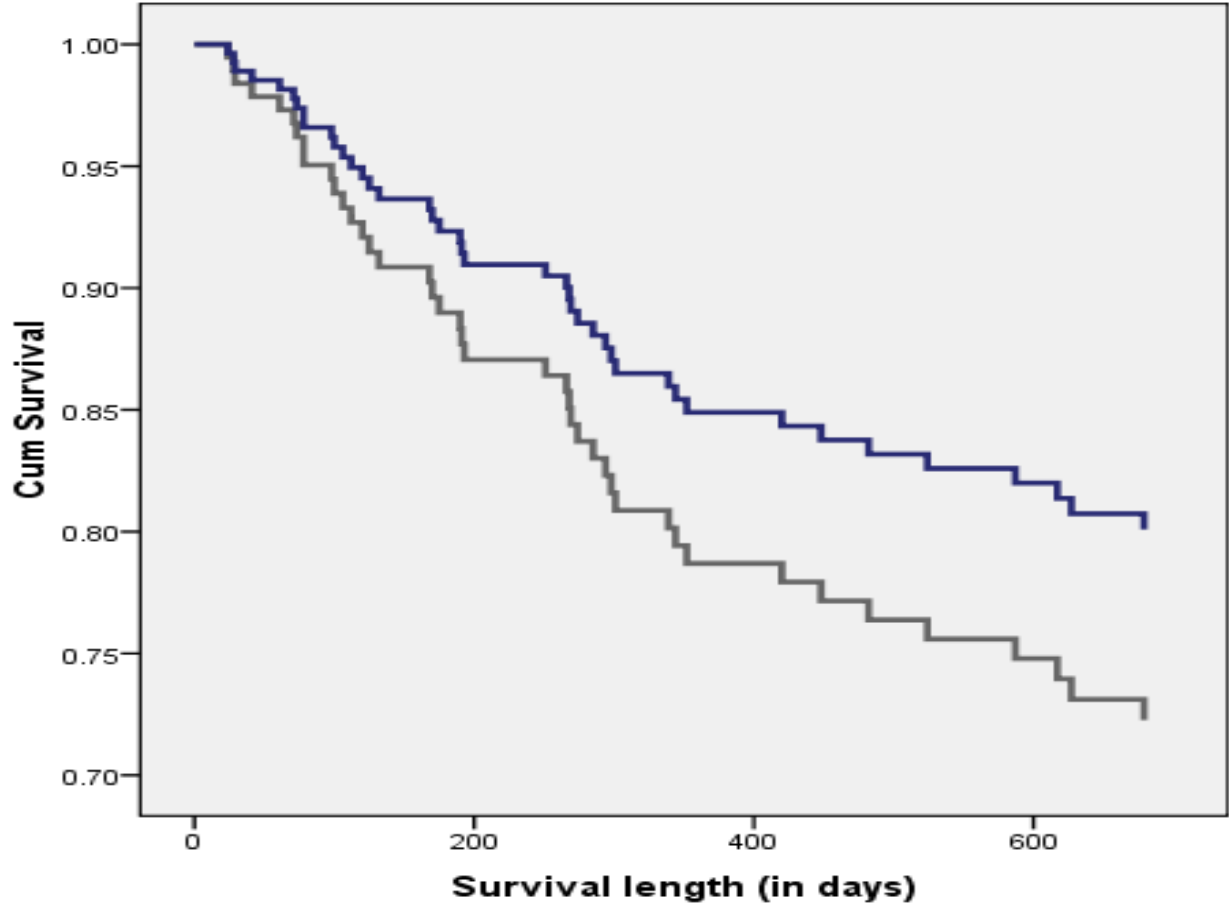
Client Demographics

Variable	STICS (N = 100)	Control (N = 43)
Age (years)	35.3	32.6
Gender (male)	83.0%	93.0%
Race (Caucasian)	71.0%	67.4%
Co-Habitation	35.0%	25.6%
Employed	49.0%	55.8%
Violent Index Offence	56.0%	60.5%
Risk Profile: Low	4.0%	7.0%
Medium	40.0%	39.5%
High	56.0%	53.5%

➤ **Client samples equivalent**

Groups equally effective post STICS?

Cox Regression (control age & LSI-R criminal history)



Group: Post-STICS

Control
STICS

STICS vs. Control

Exp(B) = .683

95% CI = .367 - 1.274

Δ -11%

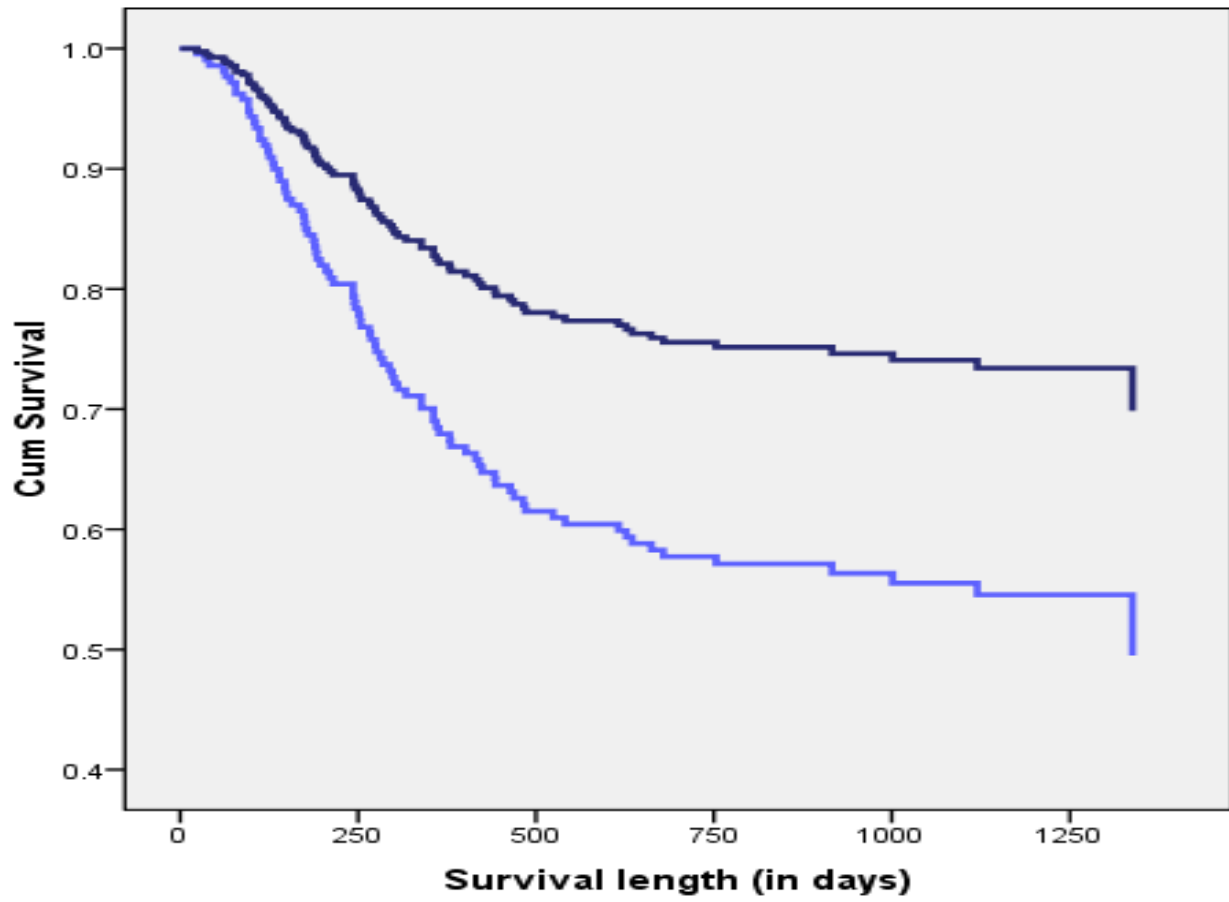
2-yr Unadjusted Recidivism

Control = 40.5%

STICS = 25.3%

Pre vs. Post STICS:

Cox Regression (control age & LSI-R criminal history)



Pre vs Post STICS

Pre-STICS
Post-STICS

Pre vs. Post

Exp(B) = .510

95%CI = .319 - .816

Δ -18%

2 Year Unadjusted Recidivism

Pre-STICS = 46.7%

Post STICS = 25.3%

Evidence indicates...

**STICS resulted in
11% to 18%
difference in recidivism**

In line with “Real World” treatment programs adhering to all 3 RNR principles ~ 15%

Was On-Going Clinical Support Important?

Evaluating On-Going Clinical Support

■ Data:

- Long-term behaviour: recorded sessions 9 months post-training
- Compared to Control Group

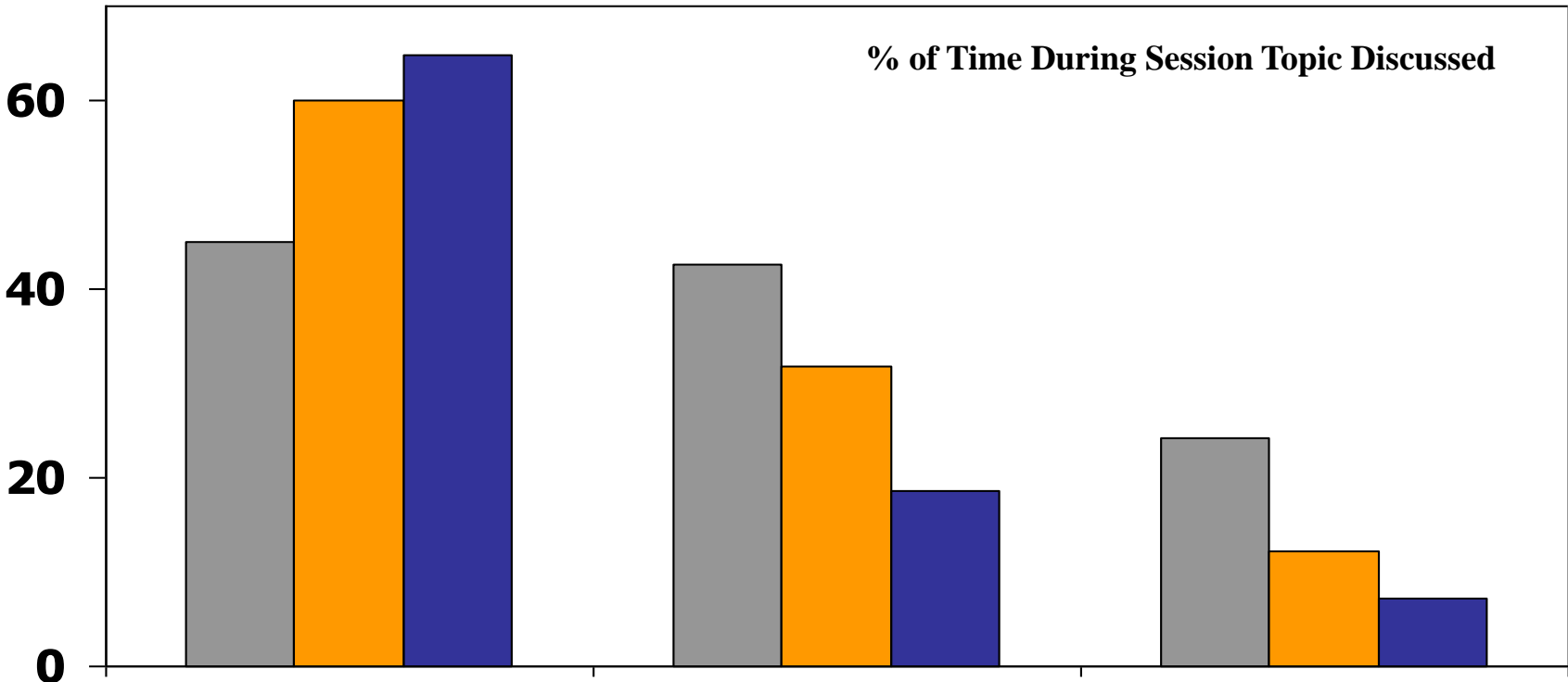
■ Comparisons:

- Control Group: (19 PO; 75 tapes)
 - *All tapes – recorded on average 180 days post*
- Low On-Going Clinical Support (13 PO; 36 tapes)
 - *Minimal use of monthly meeting, refresher, & FB*
- High On-Going Clinical Support (10 PO; 40 tapes)
 - *Frequent use of monthly meeting, refresher, & FB*

Control vs. Low Support vs. High Support

Topics discussed in Sessions \geq 9 months post-training

Control
 Low Support
 Hi Support

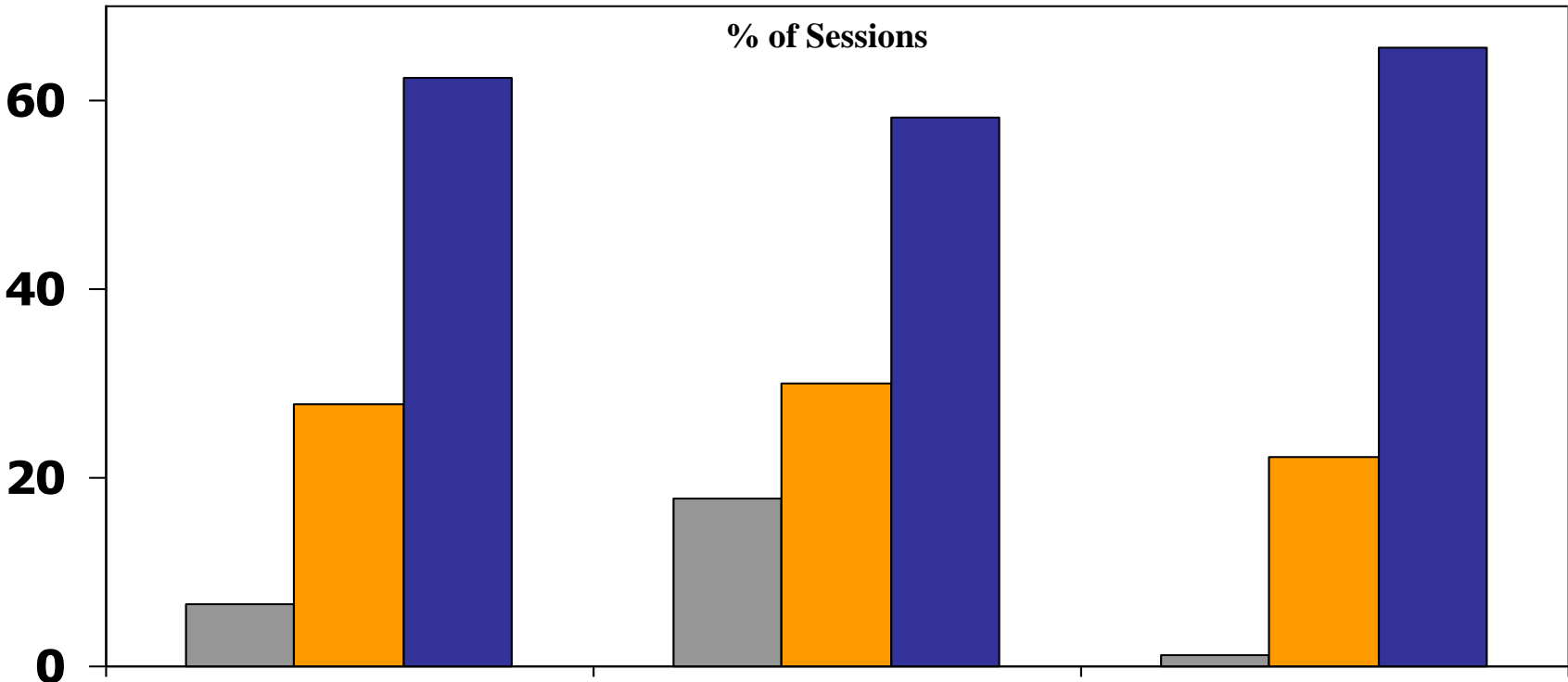


➤ **High Support superior to Low Support (who are similar to Control)**

Control vs. Low Support vs. High Support

Topics discussed in Sessions ≥ 9 months post-training

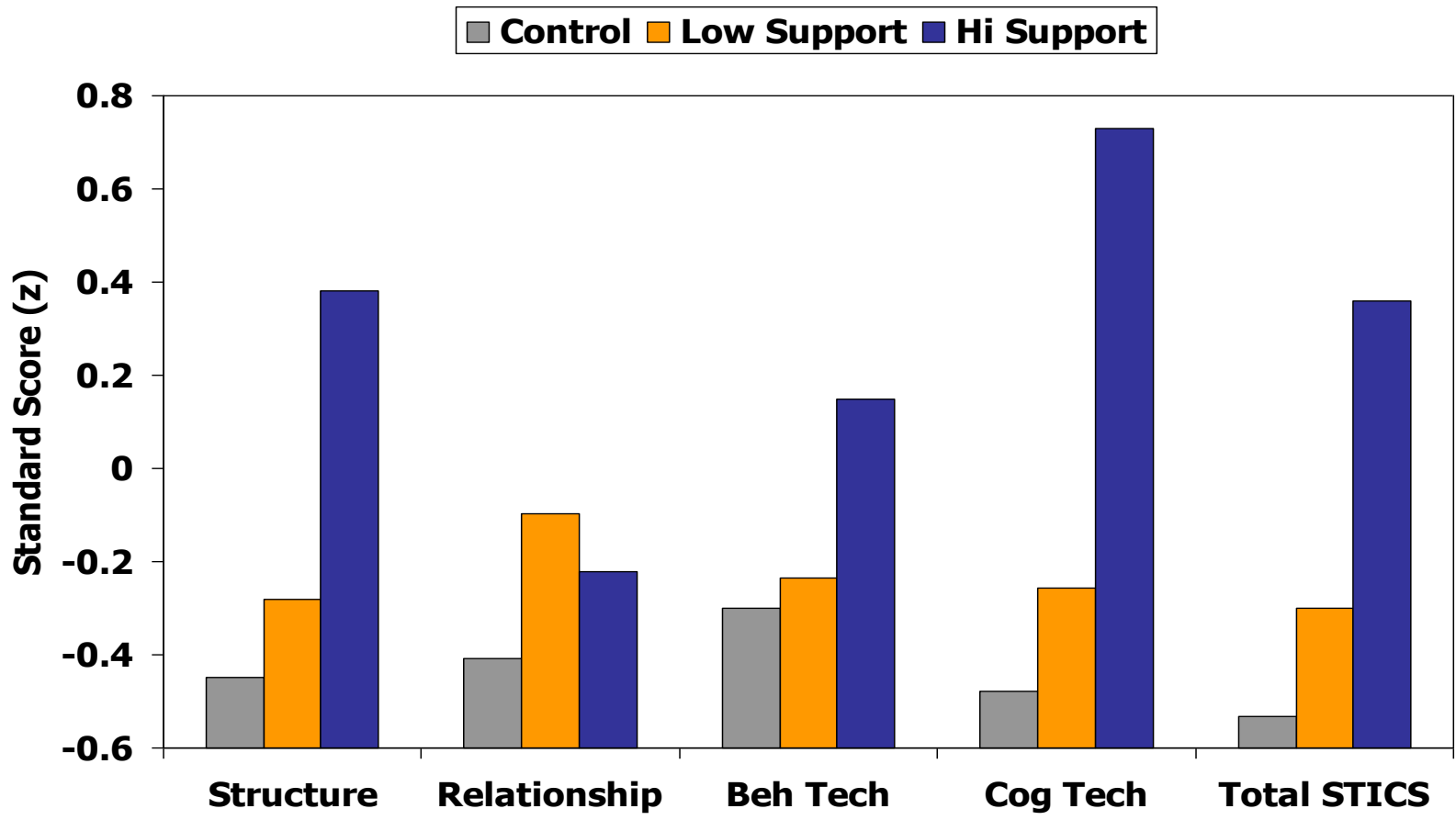
■ Control ■ Low Support ■ Hi Support



➤ **High Support superior to Low Support (who are similar to Control)**

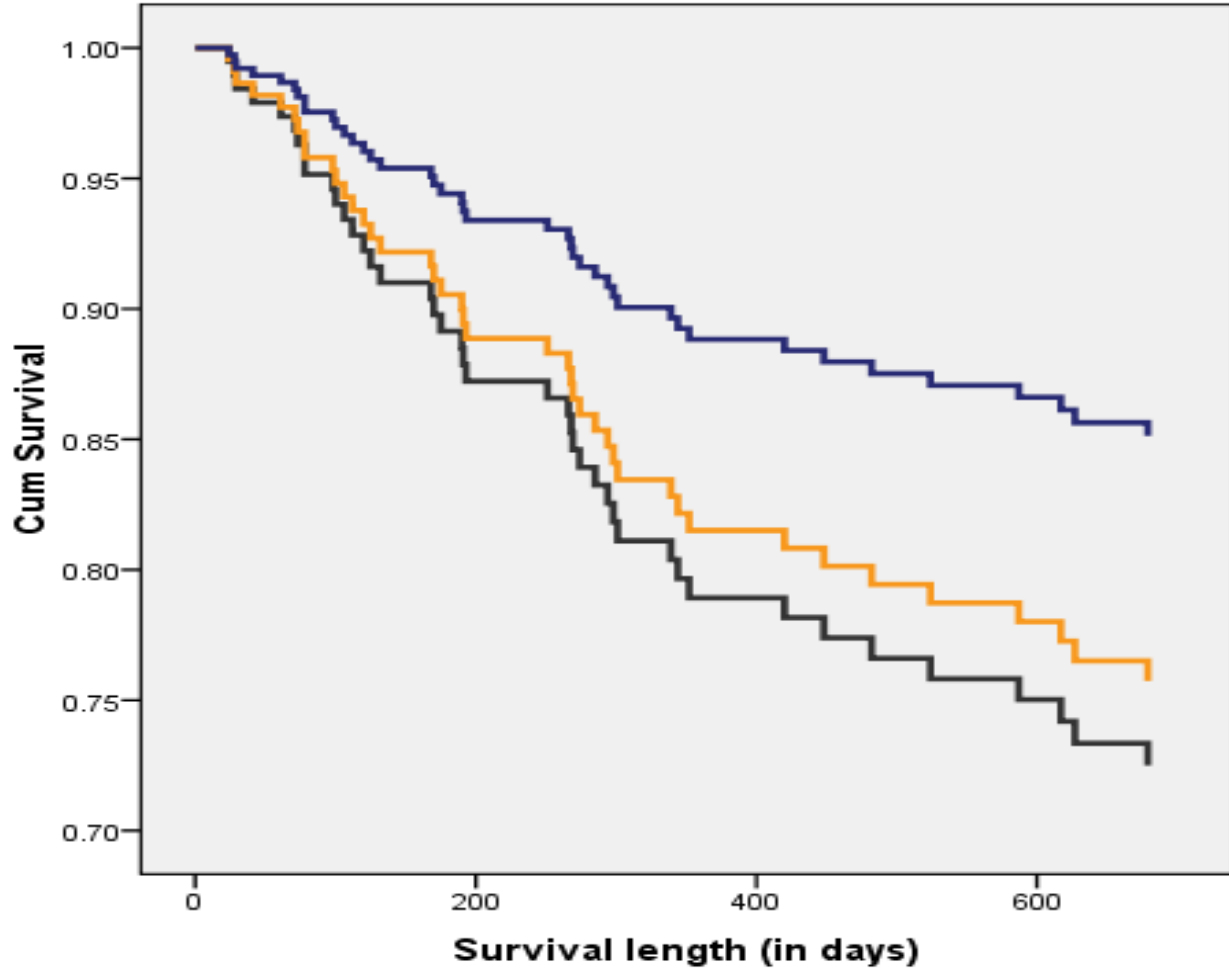
Control vs. Low Support vs. High Support

Skills in Sessions \geq 9 months post-training



Control vs. Low Support vs. High Support

Cox Regression (control age & LSI-R criminal history)



PO Groups
 Control
 Low Support
 Hi Support

Low Support:

Exp(B) = .864

95%CI = .433 - 1.724

Δ -4%

Hi Support:

Exp(B) = .500

95%CI = .222 - 1.127

Δ -19%

2 Year Unadjusted Recidivism

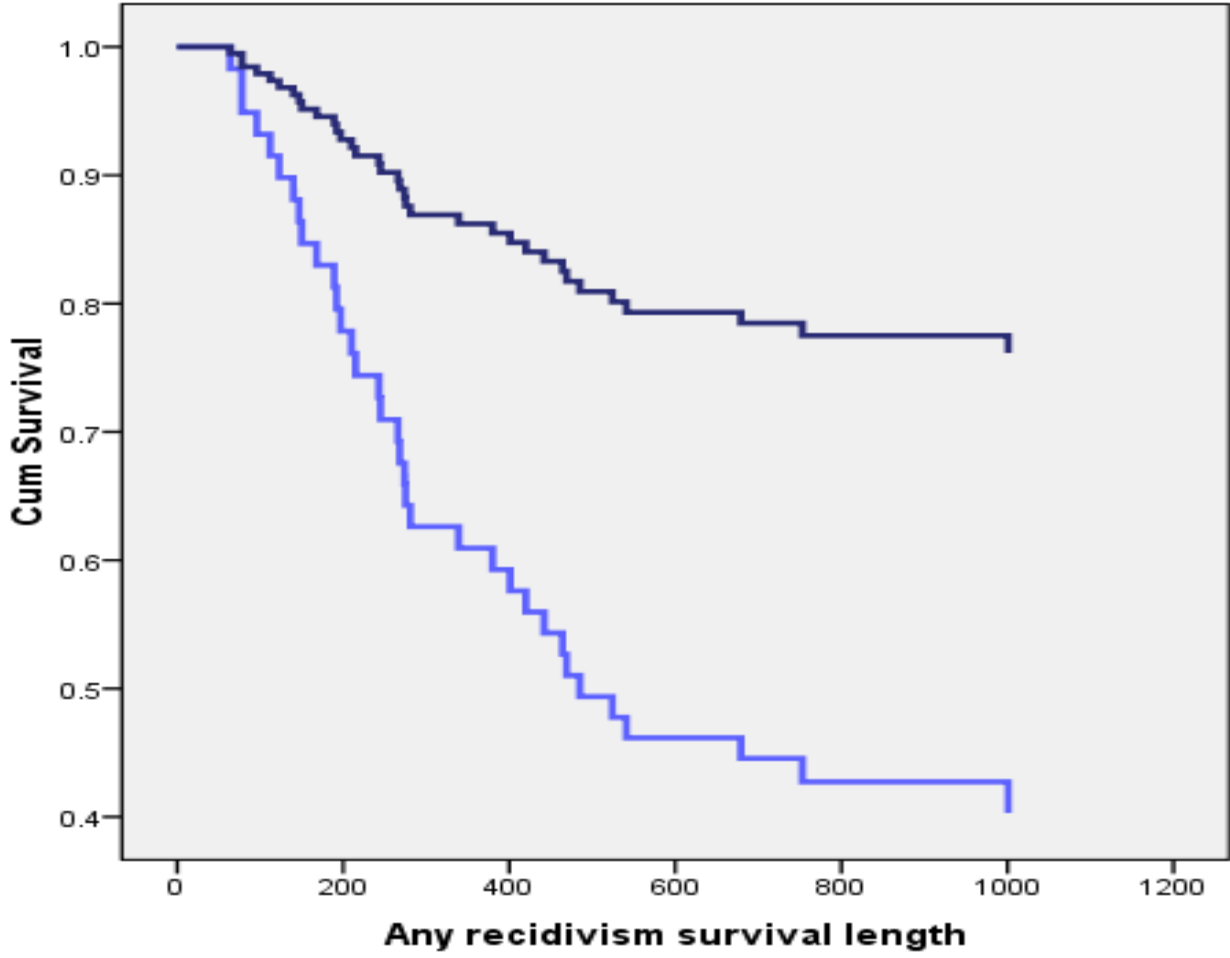
Control = 40.5%

STICS Low Supt = 27.7%

STICS High Supt = 21.4%

STICS Hi Support: Pre vs. Post

Cox Regression (control age & LSI-R criminal history)



Pre vs. Post
 Pre STICS
 Post STICS

High Support PO

Pre vs. Post:

Exp(B) = .300

95%CI = .139 - .645

Δ -32%

2 Year Unadjusted Recidivism

Pre-STICS = 55.0%

Post STICS = 21.4%

Going Beyond Core Correctional Practices:

What is unique about STICS?

STICS:

Holistic approach to supervision

- Roadmap for facilitating change
- Emphasis on Responsivity
- Functional cognitive-behavioural model

Roadmap for facilitating change

- **Relationship**
 - Collaborative relationship required
 - Skills and intervention techniques to build it
- **Foundations needed prior to individual work**
 - Common vocabulary
 - Cognitive-Behavioural model of human behaviour
- **Individual work**
 - Application of concepts to individual client
 - Teaching, practice and generalization of skills
- **Community Resources**
 - Viewed as supports not solutions

Emphasis on Responsivity

- **What we know about Responsivity...**
 - **General Responsivity - Cognitive-Behavioural**
 - **Specific Responsivity – Individual factors**

- **Re-defining Responsivity...**
 - **Creating the “maximal” learning environment**
 - **What we do/how we do it defines Responsivity**
 - **Includes relationship building activities/behaviours**
 - **Includes language and methods used**

Examples of Responsivity...

- **Some vocabulary used for key concepts**
 - **“Triggers” vs. “Outside Cues”**
 - **“Thinking Errors” vs. “Tapes”**
 - **“Reward” vs. “Cookie”**

Cognitive-Behavioural

What does “Cognitive-Behavioural” really mean?

**What characterizes
Cognitive-Behavioural
interventions?**

Behavioural vs Cognitive-Behavioural

Behavioural Interventions	Cognitive-Behavioural Interventions
Focus on the ABCs	1 st change thought then behaviour
Antecedents (e.g., Triggers): Things outside individual are causal	Antecedents (e.g., Outside Cues): Context not causal
	Cognitive: (e.g., Inside cues) Causal for behavior yet self-determined What: Content of thought How: Process of thinking Teach/model new thinking skills
Behaviour: New skills to get external consequences	Behaviour: New thinking aids learning new behaviours
Consequences: External focus are attempts to control outside consequences (others)	Consequences: External consequences not in our control Self control of internal consequences

The 4 key characteristics of CB

1. Demonstrate thought-behaviour link

- Show that thinking directs behaviour

2. Identify procriminal attitudes/thoughts & behaviours

- Show their thinking that leads to their procriminal behaviours

3. Model & teach prosocial cognitive & behavioural skills

- What & how to change must be concrete & simple
- Active (what to do) NOT passive (what not to do)

4. Practice & help generalize these skills

- Rehearsal with feedback here & on street

Not managing reactions to outside stimuli RATHER

Self-creating new thinking and behaviour patterns

Video example...

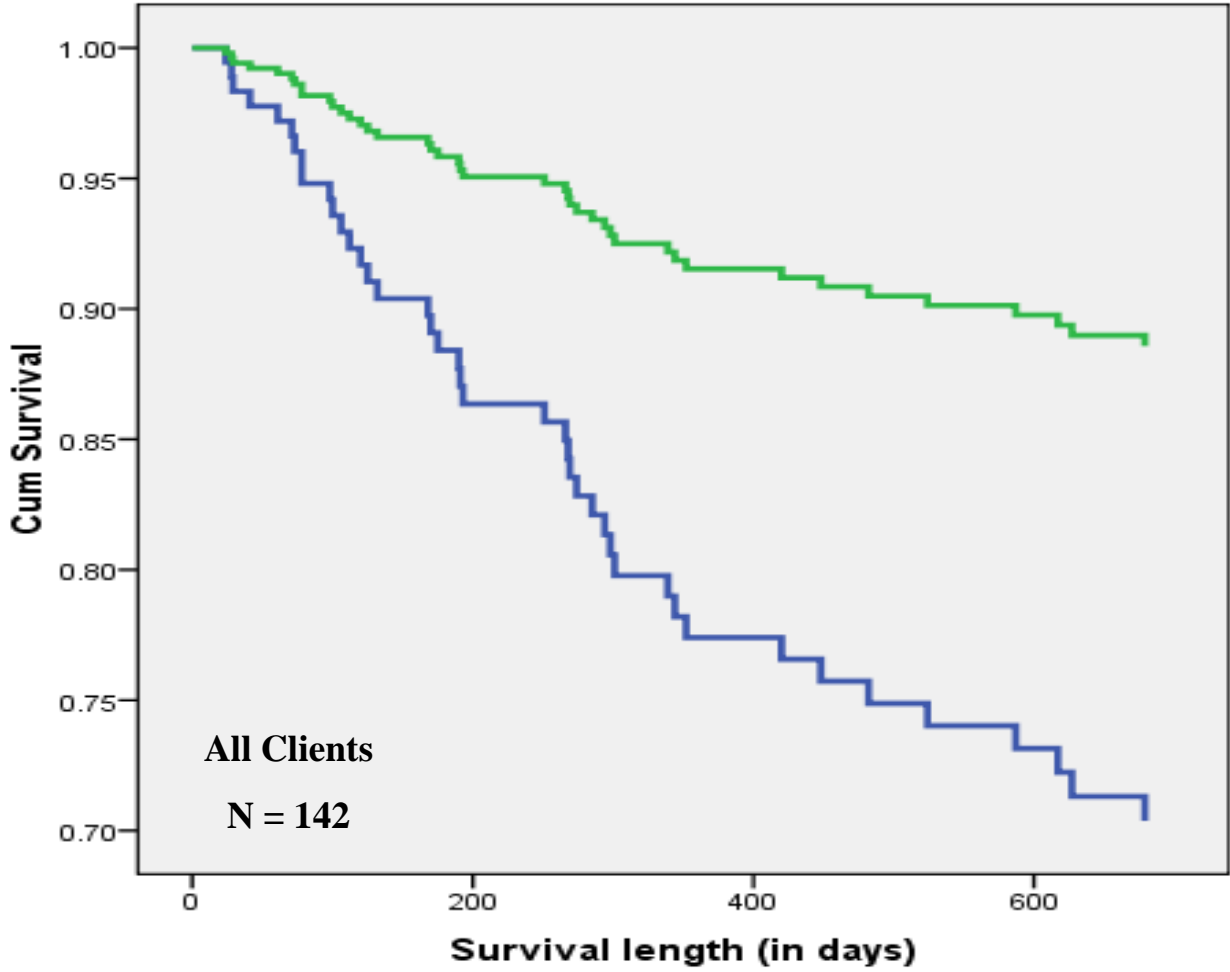
Melissa:

- Brief background
- When in supervision and when in session

Note: start at 2:42 ... end 9:45

Is the Behaviour Sequence important?

(ALL PO): Cox Regression (control age & LSI-R criminal history)



Exposure to Behaviour Sequence?

- No Exposure (N=91)
- Exposure (N=51)

Exposure to Behaviour Sequence

None vs. Exposure

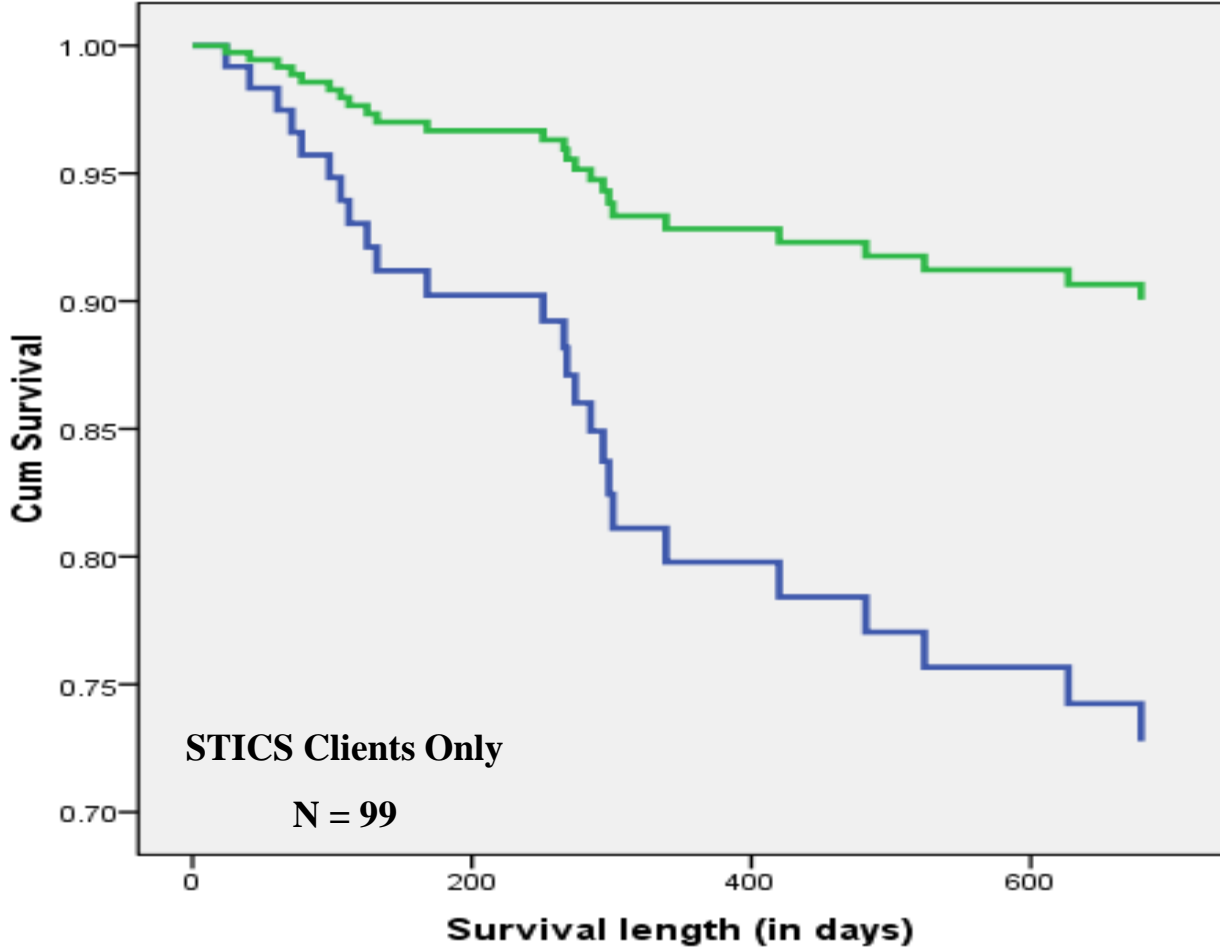
Exp(B) = .345

95%CI = .159 - .749

Δ -28%

Is the Behaviour Sequence important?

(STICS PO): Cox Regression (control age & LSI-R criminal history)



Exposure to Behaviour Sequence?
 No exposure (N=48)
 Exposure (N=51)

Exposure to Behaviour Sequence

None vs. Exposure

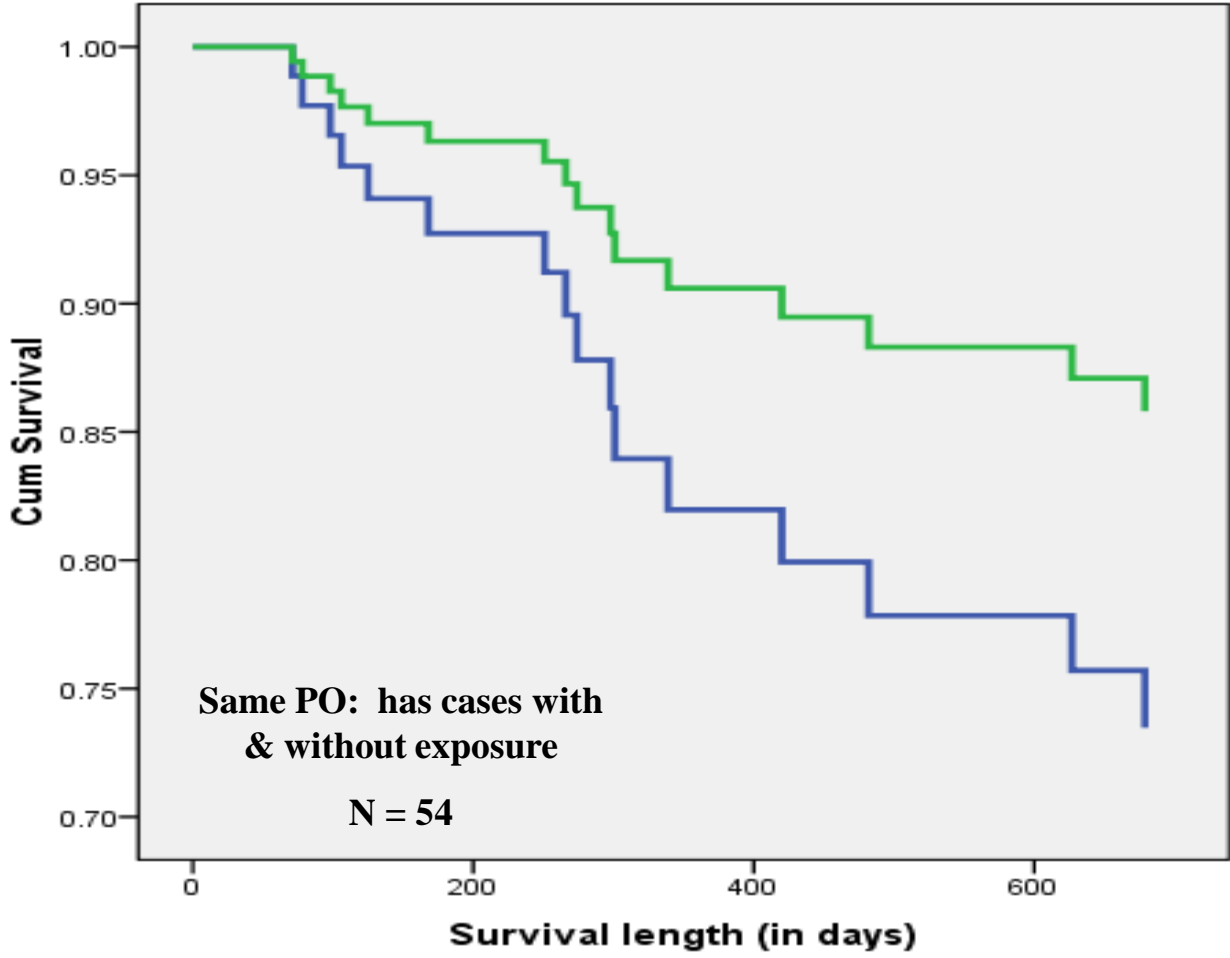
Exp(B) = .330

95%CI = .141 - .770

Δ -29%

Is the Behaviour Sequence important?

(Within PO): Cox Regression (control age & LSI-R criminal history)



Exposure to Behaviour Sequence?
 No Exposure (n=27)
 Exposure (n=27)

Exposure to Behaviour Sequence

None vs. Exposure

Exp(B) = .497
 95% CI = .161 – 1.535

Δ -19%

Recall...

**Overall, STICS showed 11% to 18%
difference in recidivism**

**High Support Use....
19%-29% difference in recidivism**

**Factor in Cognitive Work...
19% to 29% difference in recidivism**

Facing the Nightmare of Full Scale Implementation!

Integrity, Fidelity & Organizational Change

Full Scale STICS Implementation: BC Community Corrections

1. Goal: Train @ 370 PO across 50 offices
2. Build Internal Capacity
3. Implementation Integrity
4. Monitor and Evaluate

1. Training in STICS

Started in September 2011

- December, 2012: 13 offices and 163 officers trained

Monthly meetings (13 per month)

Refreshers (@ 20)

2. Build Capacity

Coaches (office level, 25-30 hours per month)

Roles:

- schedule monthly meetings and assist at refresher courses
- listen to recordings and provide oral feedback (1/2 day/week)

STICS Coordinators (4 Coordinators, all full time)

Roles:

- lead monthly meetings, deliver refresher courses, give *written* feedback
- supervise the coaches

Training of Coaches and Coordinators:

- from STICS research team (special training sessions)

3. Implementation Integrity

1. POs are expected to:
 - a) attend a refresher course
 - b) participate in at least eight monthly meetings
 - c) receive feedback on two recorded sessions

2. Monitor and evaluate
 - a) Pre-post design
 - Pre: 4 clients - 1 recording per
 - Post: 6 clients - 3 recordings per

The Pulse at halfway point

Questions:

1. Why the lower # of projected recordings?
2. Are we on the right track?
3. What is the level of commitment to STICS?

Method:

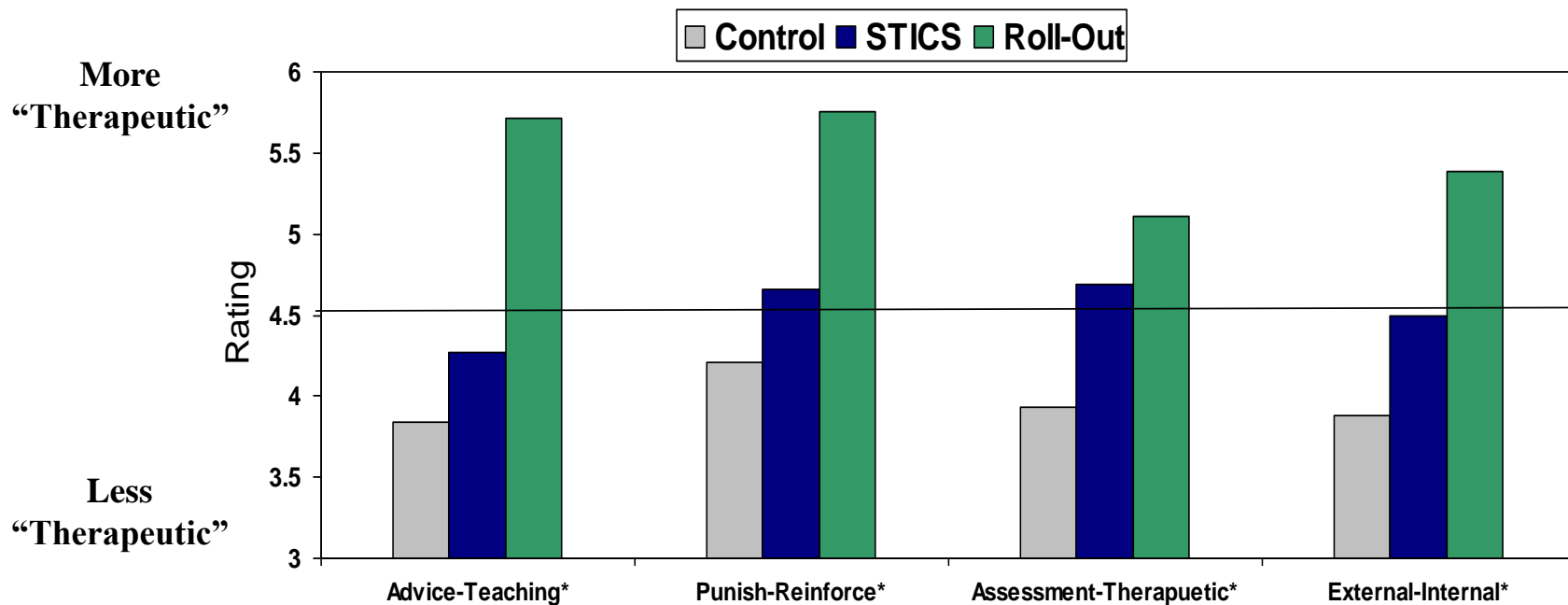
Interviews and questionnaires

Random sample of 92 post-training recordings

Recordings

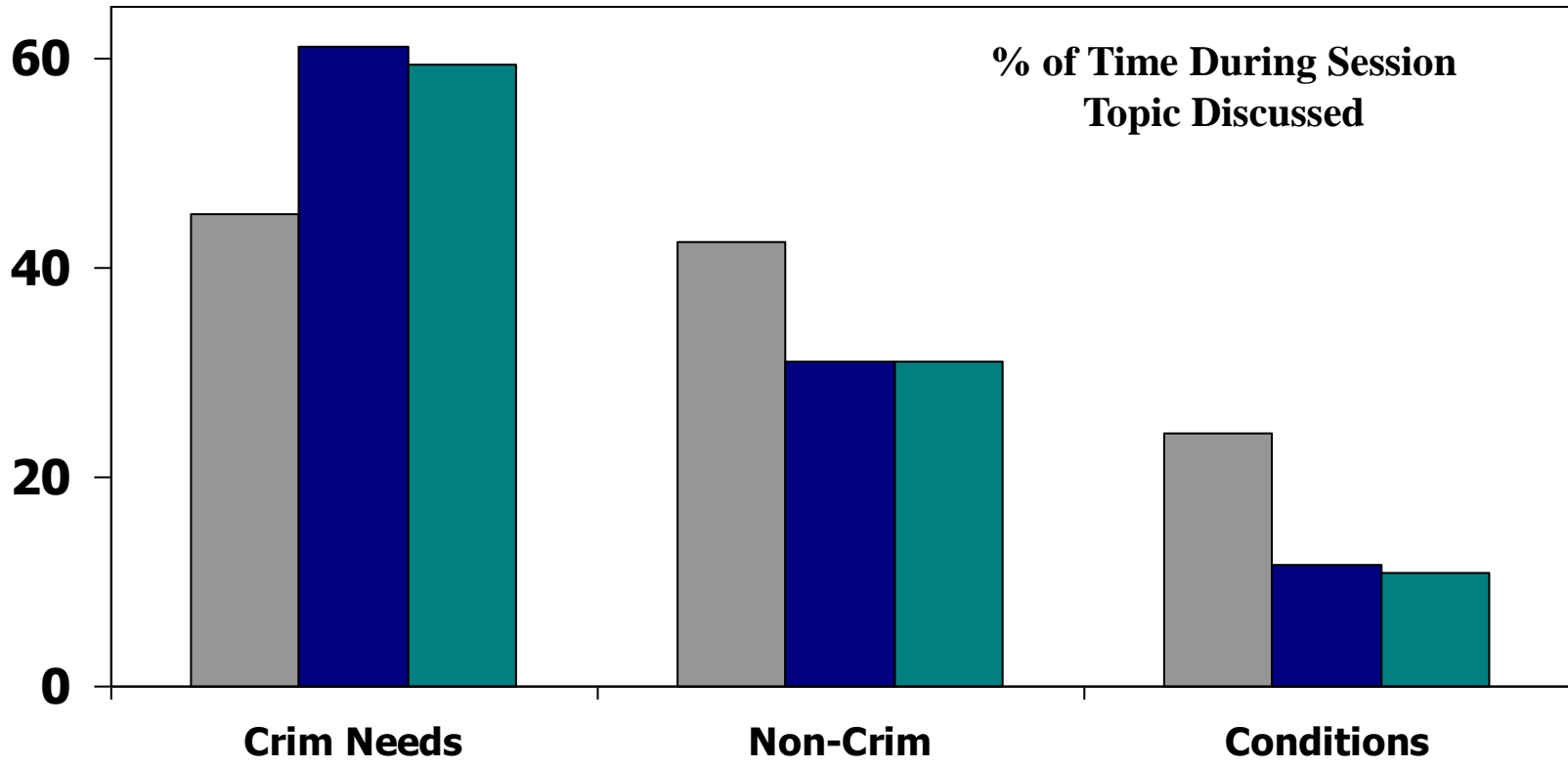
- @ 19% of offices insufficient flow through
- The plague of technology
- Working out the bugs in recruitment protocol
 - post-training tapes from 65% to 85%
 - baseline tapes from 70% to 90%

Uptake: Full scale vs. original pilot



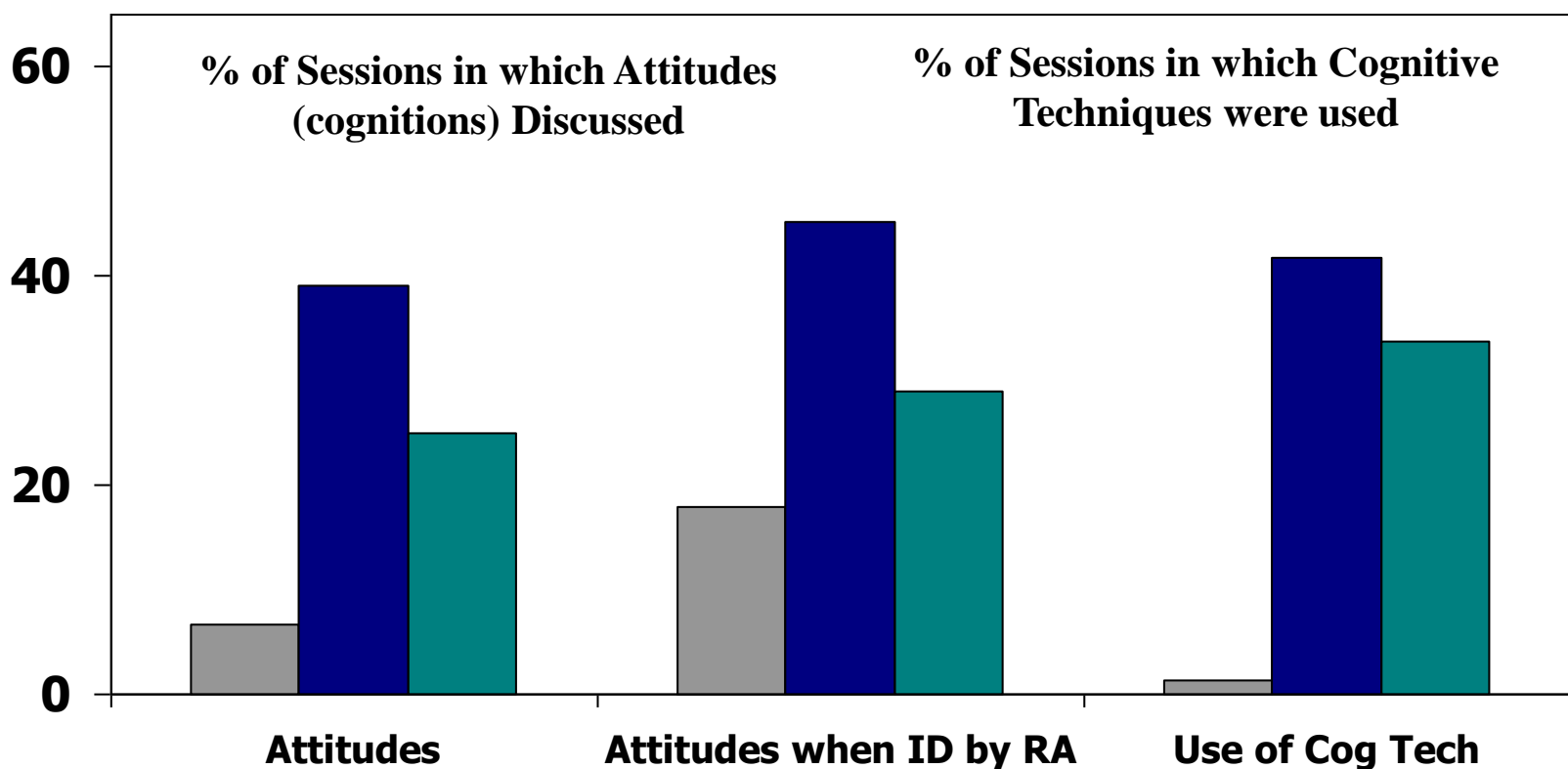
Full scale vs. original pilot

■ Control ■ STICS ■ Roll-Out



Full scale vs. original pilot

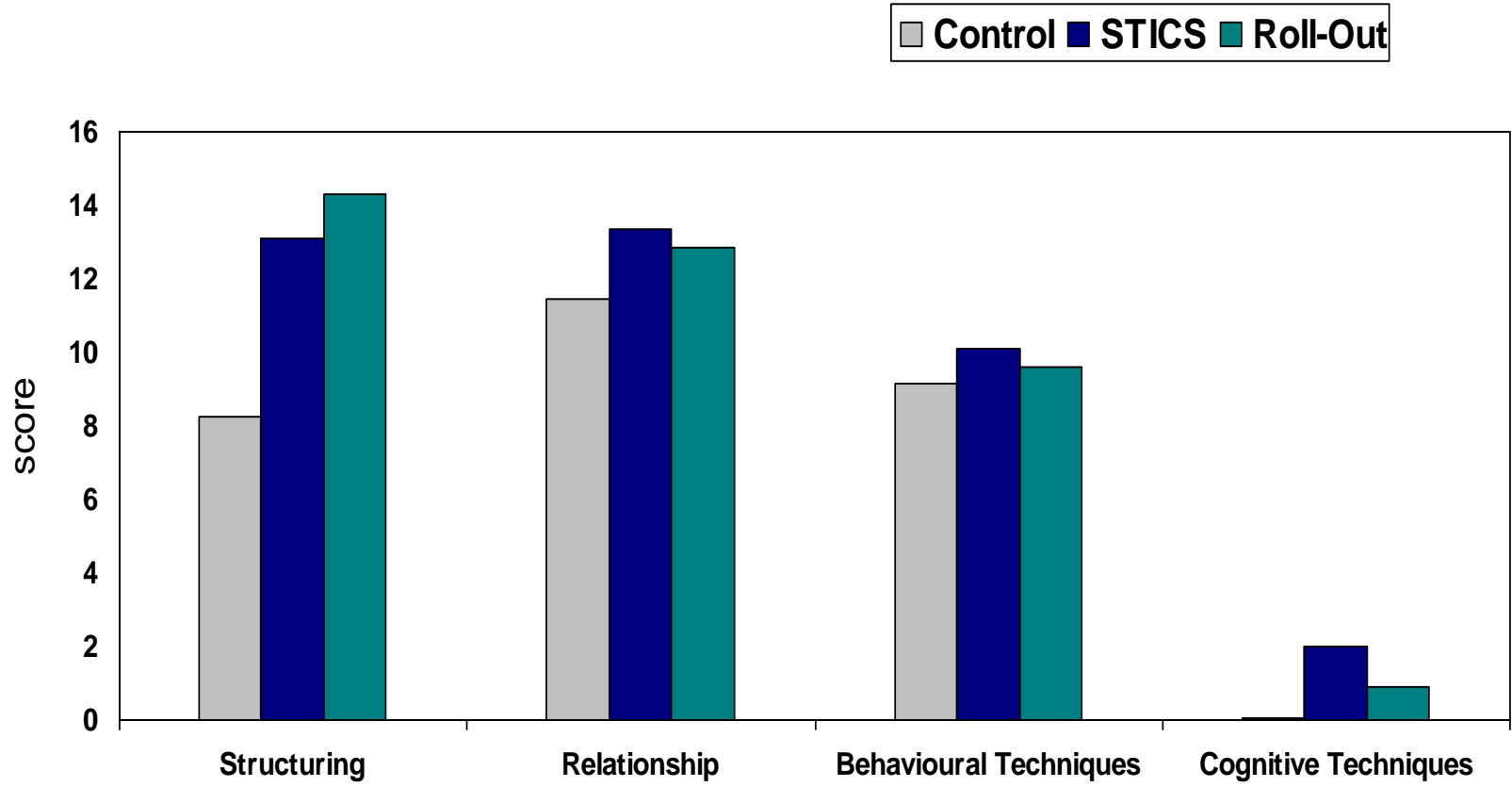
■ Control ■ STICS ■ Roll-Out



➤ **STICS: Focus on Attitudes & Use Cognitive Techniques**

“Change Agent” Skills:

Skills and intervention techniques used by PO



➤ **Uptake looking positive so far...**

On the Right Track? Mean Scores and Percent Use of STICS Skills

Skill	2007 STICS Baseline + Control (N = 105)	2012-13 BC Post-Training (N = 92)	Significance
Structuring	8.65	14.30	p = .000
Relationship	11.65	12.87	p = .009
Behavioural Techniques	9.31	9.60	p = .64
Cognitive Techniques	0.019	0.90	p = .000
Total Skills	29.63	37.67	p = .000
Any Cognitive Technique	1/105 = 0.9%	31/92 = 33.7%	p = .000

PO Views: What they say about usefulness of STICS components

	Mean
Role clarification	4.57
Goal setting	4.54
Active listening	4.52
Prosocial modelling	4.35
STICS Behavior Model	4.18
Session structure	4.18
Effective reinforcement/disapproval	4.03/3.72
Cognitive restructuring	4.00
Problem-solving	3.78
Homework	3.68

(N = 63 – 69)

Summary...1

- **RNR policy ≠ RNR “behind closed doors” practice**
- **Can change “behind closed door” practices**
 - Evolution from Case Manager to Change Agents
- **Professional Development/ Continuing Education**
 - Holistic approach is responsive to officers.
 - More than “one shot” training. On-going efforts necessary
 - Maintenance of “less complex” skills
 - *Relationship and general structuring/focus*
 - Development/Enhancement of “more complex’ skills
 - *Cognitive intervention techniques*

Summary...2

- **Implementation requires enormous efforts**
 - **Organizational implementation structures and supports are critical – it costs not just \$\$\$!**
 - **Constant attention to PO, local and senior management, and overall organizational issues...flexibility and adaptability**
 - **Be prepared: “Dirty Laundry” will be exposed! It is wholesale change to the why, what, and how community supervision operates.**

Beyond the “curriculum”... Understanding important components...

**Overall, STICS showed 11% to 18%
difference in recidivism**

**Consider High Ongoing Support....
19%-29% difference in recidivism**

**Consider “Responsive” Cognitive Work...
19% to 29% difference in recidivism**

STICS Information

Available on the Public Safety Canada Website

www.publicsafety.gc.ca

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Selected References

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