

RISK, NEEDS AND STRENGTHS OF ABORIGINAL OFFENDERS IN ALBERTA

TORONTO, CANADA

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International Community Corrections Association

TANYA MYERS AND

DAVID ROBINSON

Alberta Justice and
Solicitor General

orbis
solutions for the helping professions

Workshop Outline

- Description of the Aboriginal Population in Alberta Corrections
- Current Correctional Programming Strategy
- Alberta Aboriginal Programming
- Risk/Need/Strengths Data for Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Clients in Alberta
- Implications of Data for Aboriginal Programming



ASSESSMENT DATA

- Service Planning Instrument (SPIn)
- Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI)
 - Overall Risk – Low/Moderate/High
 - Overall Strength – Low/Moderate/High
 - 9 Need Domains and 7 Strength Domains



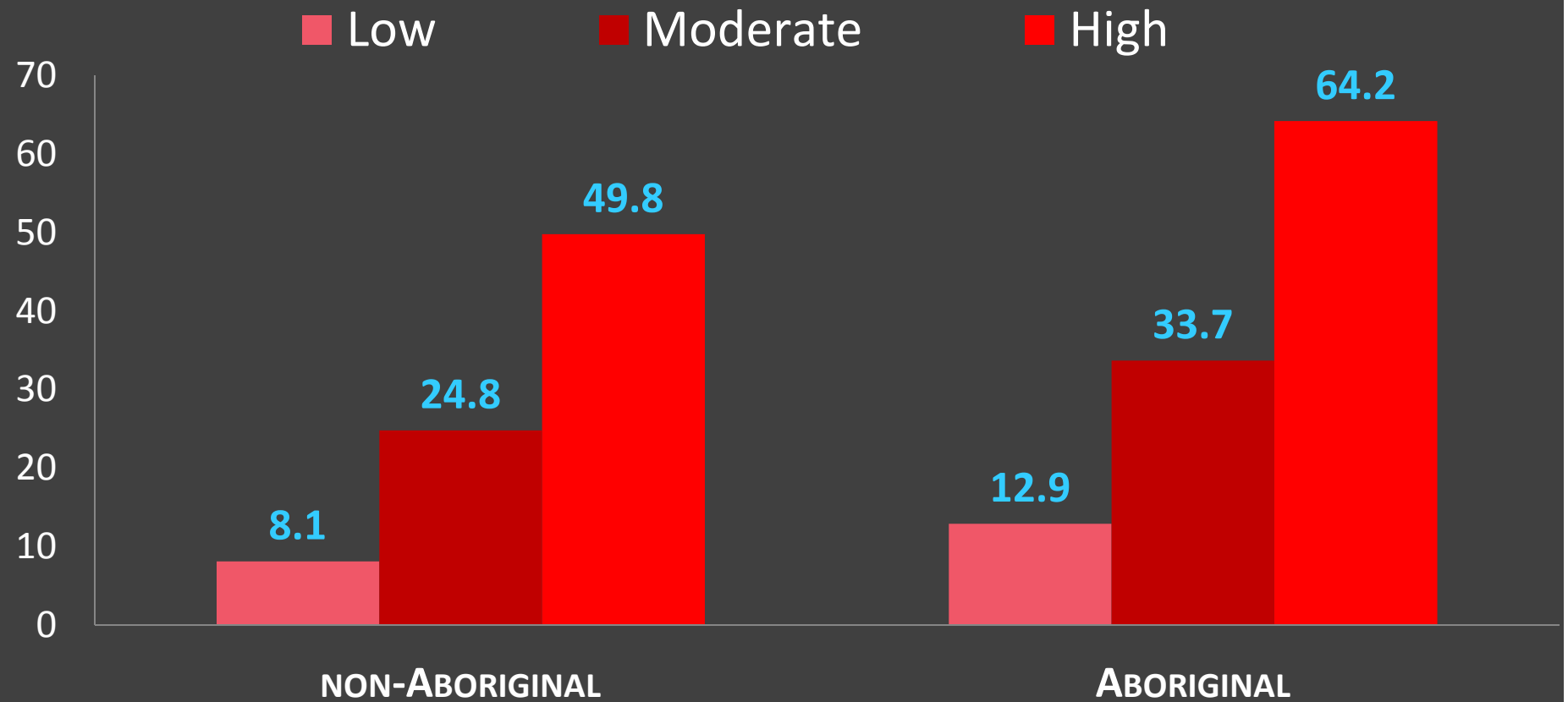
Alberta SPIn Databases*

Populations

- 61,285 – Probation
 - 78.9% non-Aboriginal
 - 21.1 % Aboriginal
- 3,656 – (Outcome Sample)
- 752 - Custody (Outcome Sample)
 - 58.0% non-Aboriginal
 - 41.9% Aboriginal

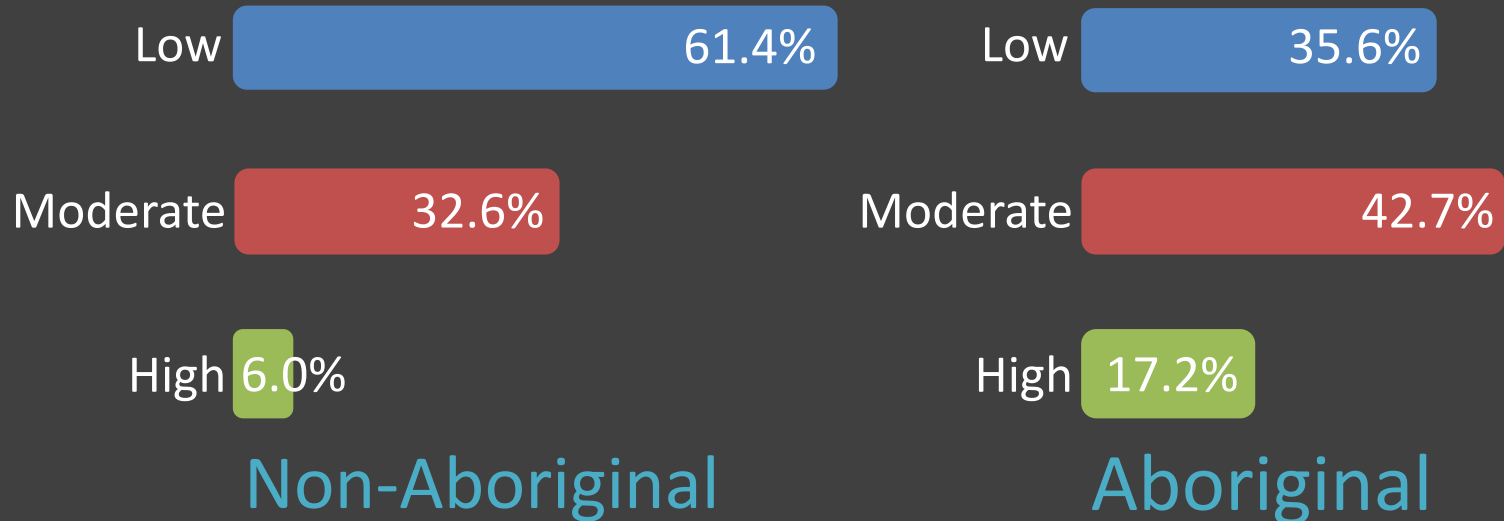
*Acknowledgement: Dr. Natalie Jones conducted the data analysis for this presentation.

% New Offences by SPIn Risk Level and Aboriginal Status in the Alberta Probation Sample (n=3,656)

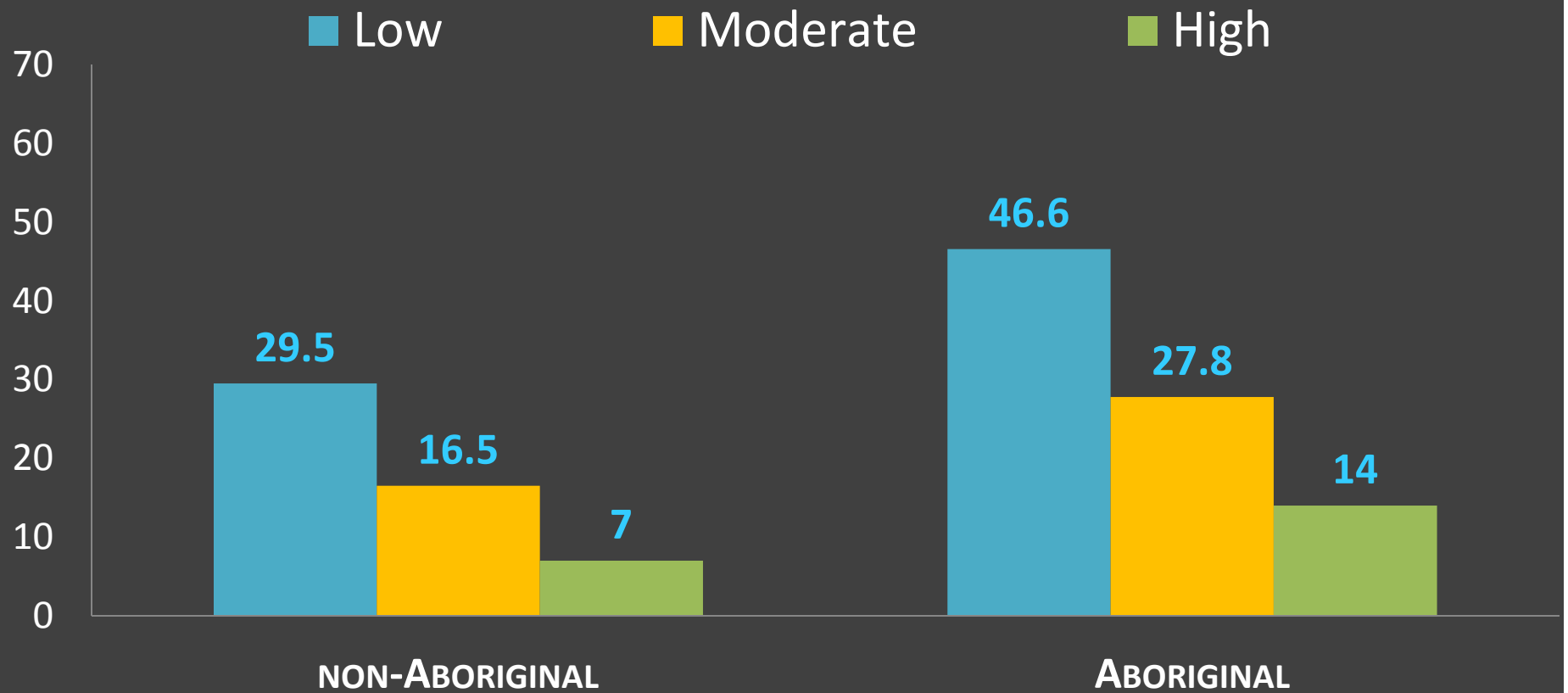


SPI In Risk Levels by Aboriginal Status

(Probation Sample, n=61,285)

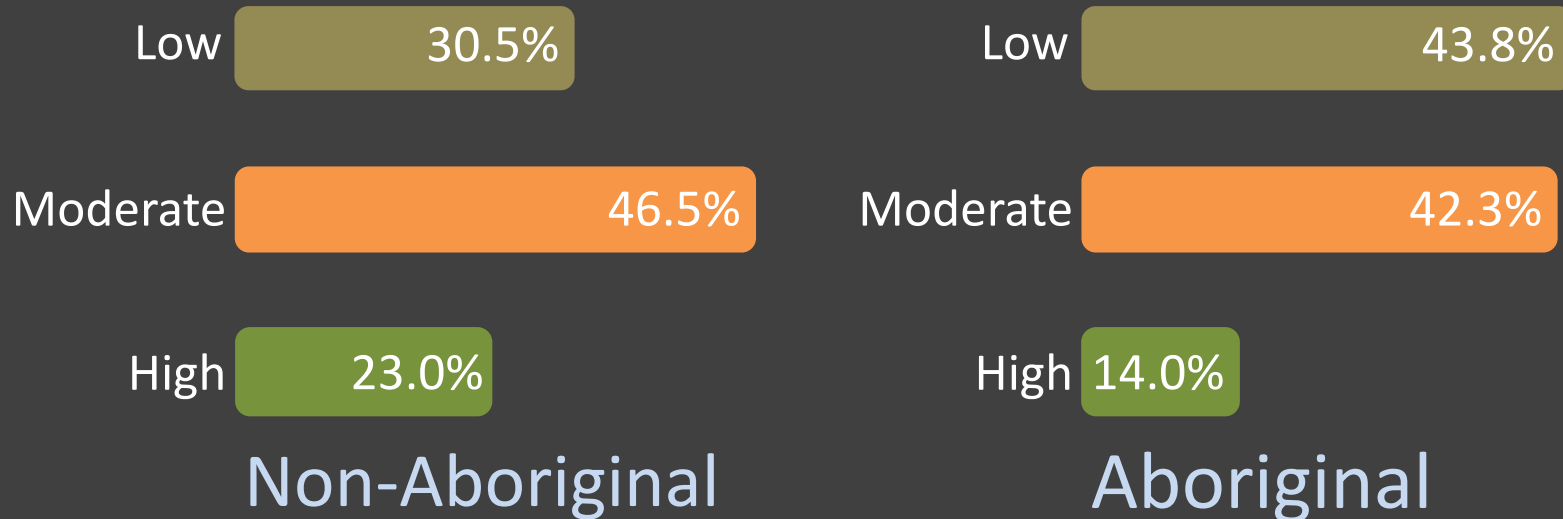


% New Offences by Strength Level and Aboriginal Status (n=3,656)



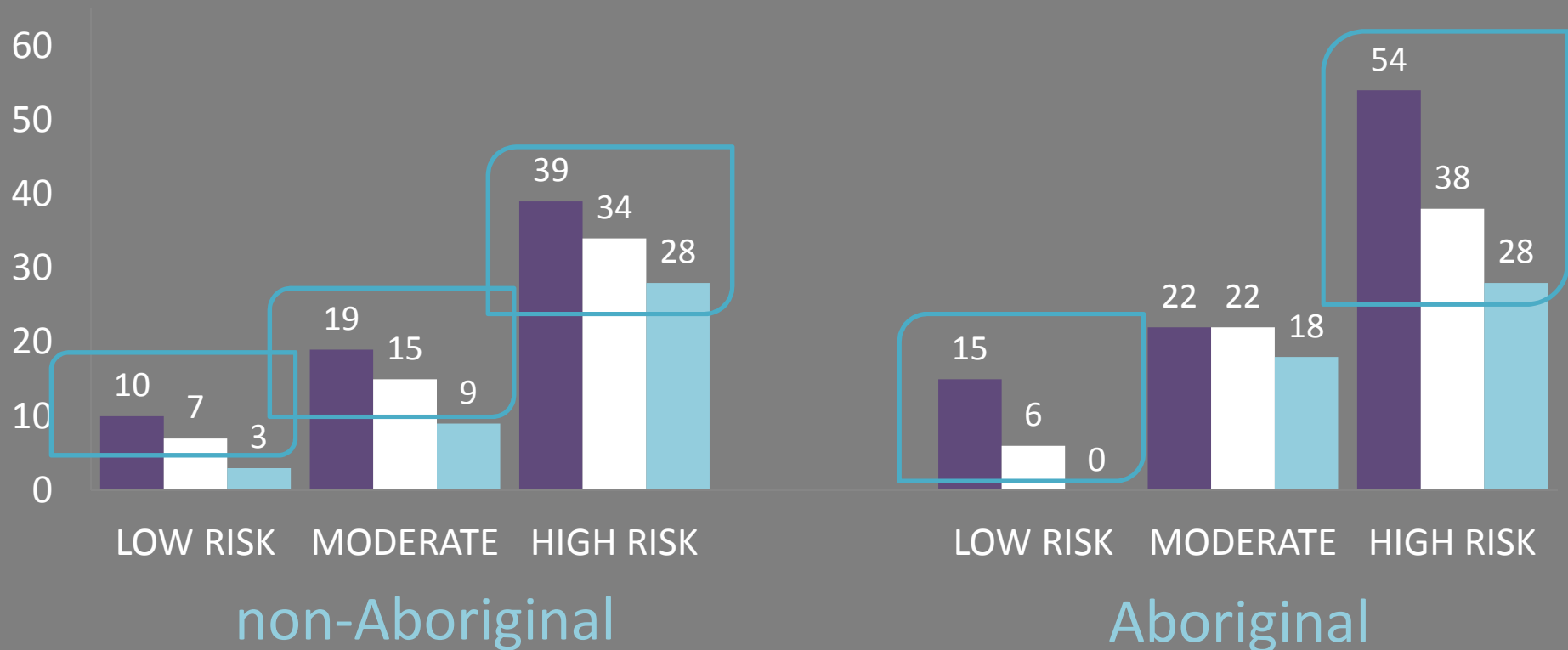
SPIn Strength Levels by Aboriginal Status

(Probation Sample, n=61,285)

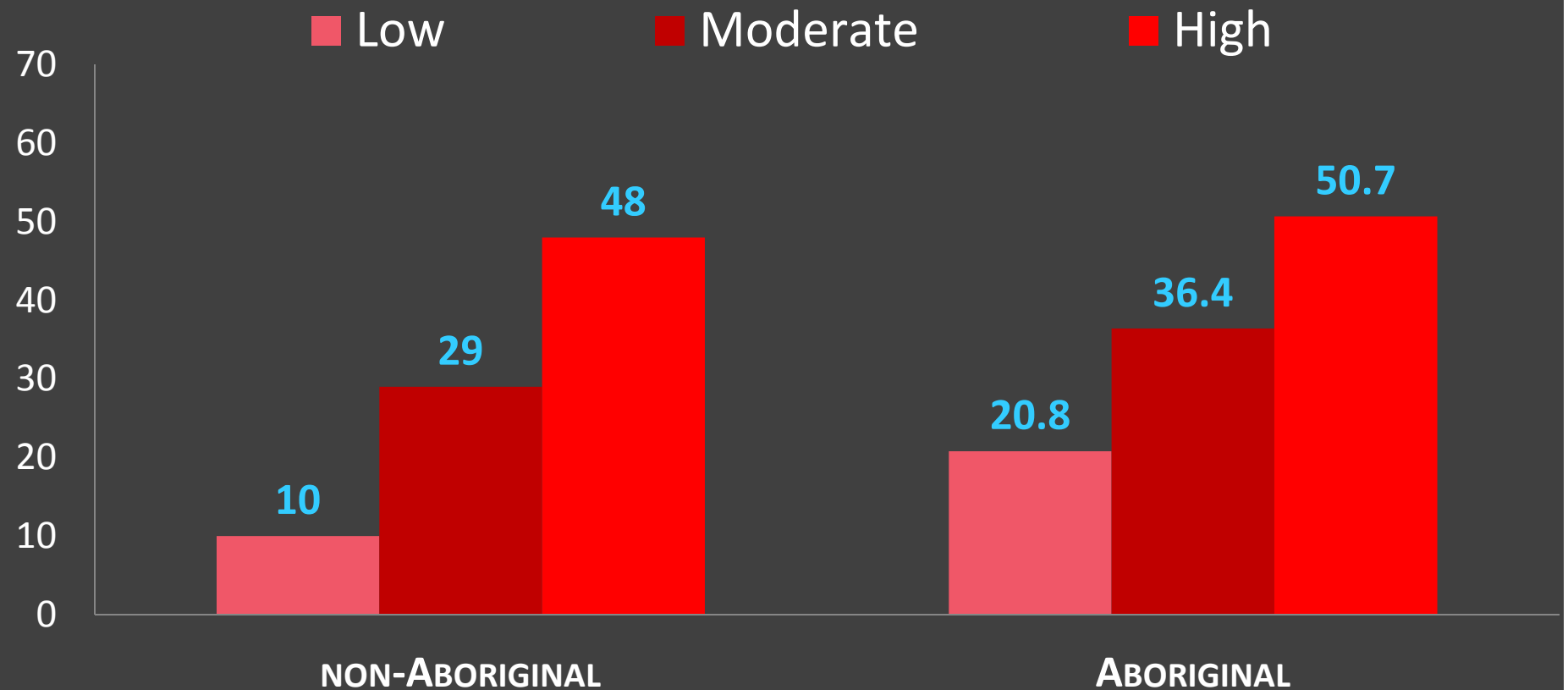


Buffering effect of Strengths (by Risk Level)

■ Low Strength ■ Moderate Strength ■ High Strength

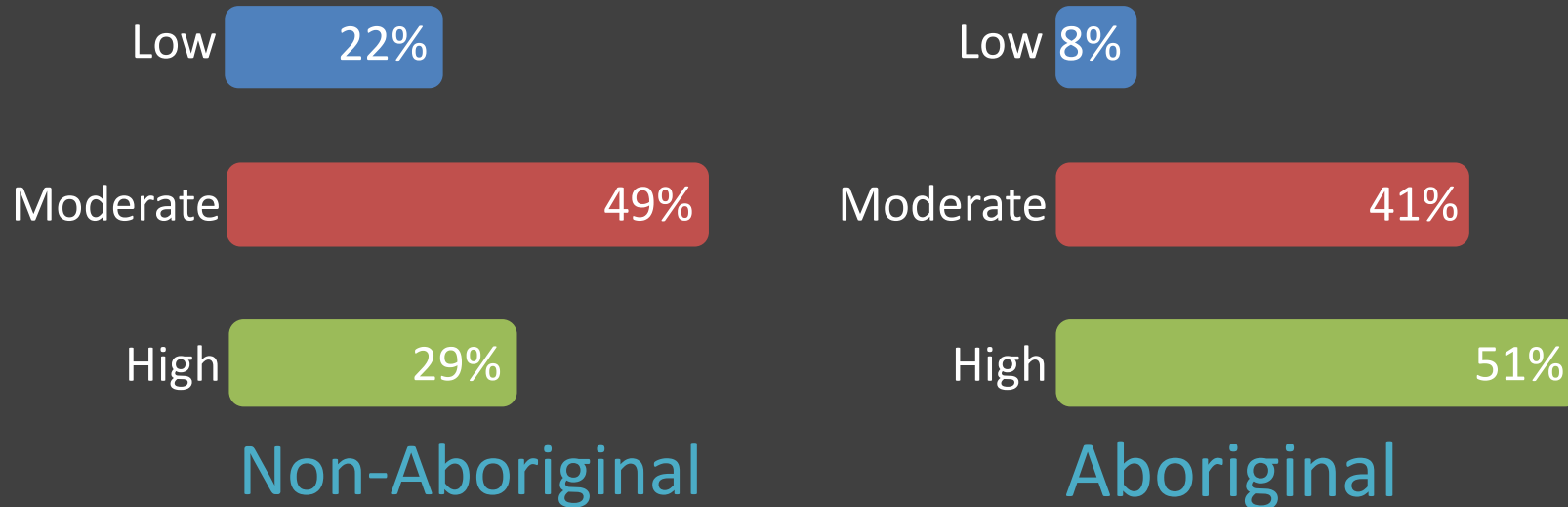


Custody Sample: % Post-Release Arrests by SPIn Risk Level and Aboriginal Status (n=703, 12-month follow-up)

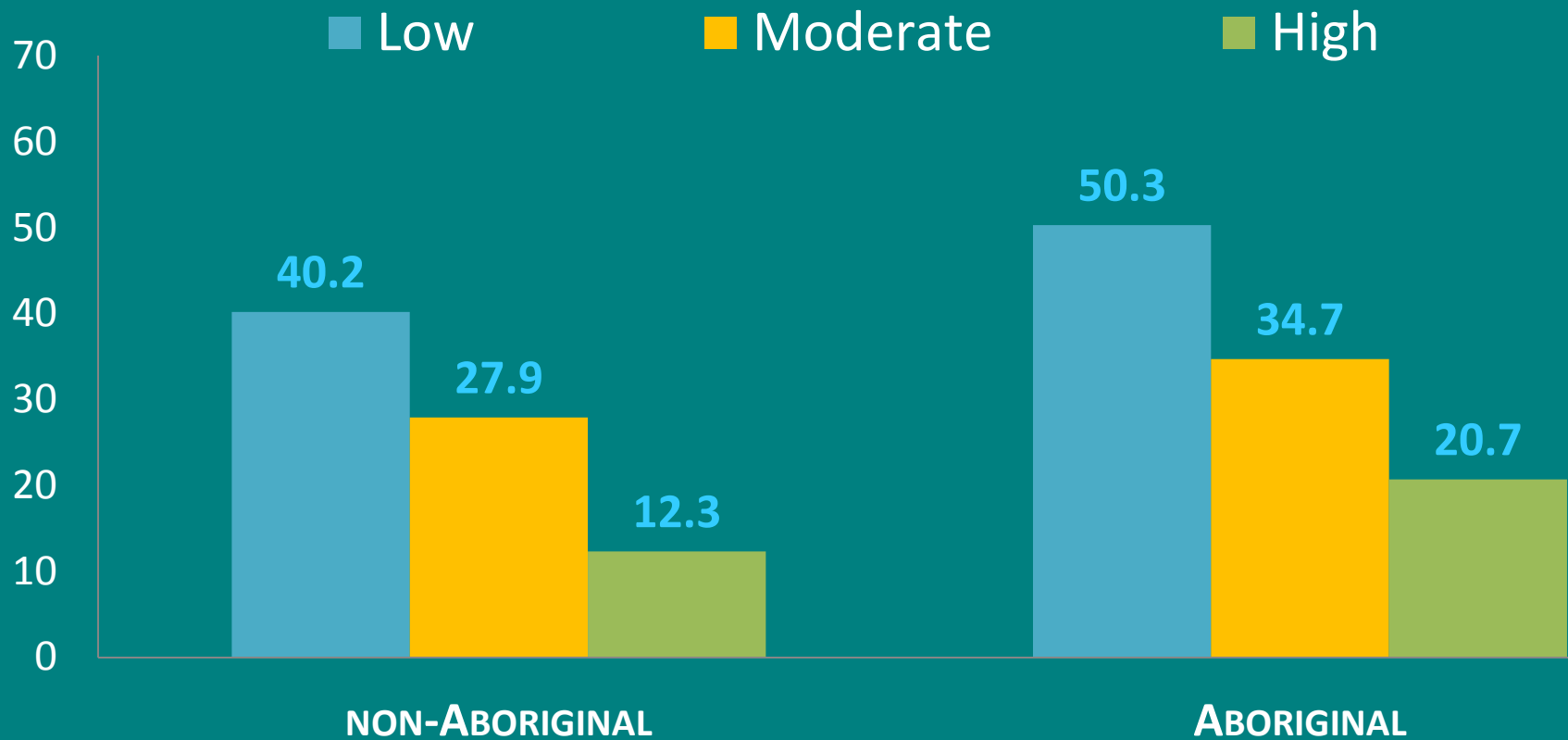


SPIn Risk Levels by Aboriginal Status

(Post-release Sample, n=703)

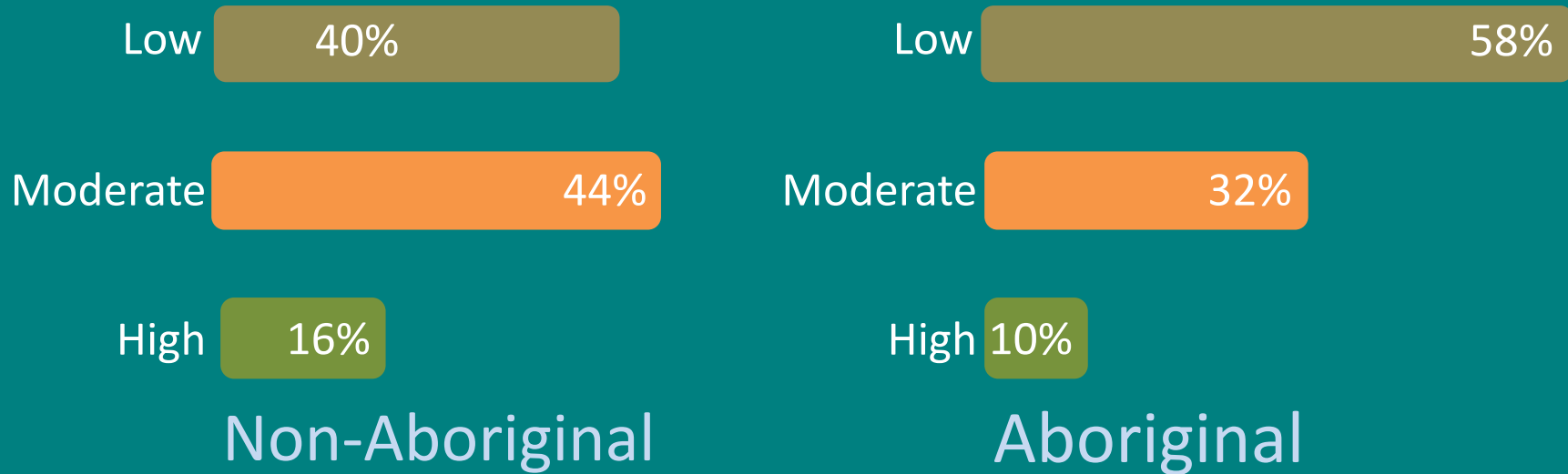


% Post-Release Arrests by Strength Level and Aboriginal Status

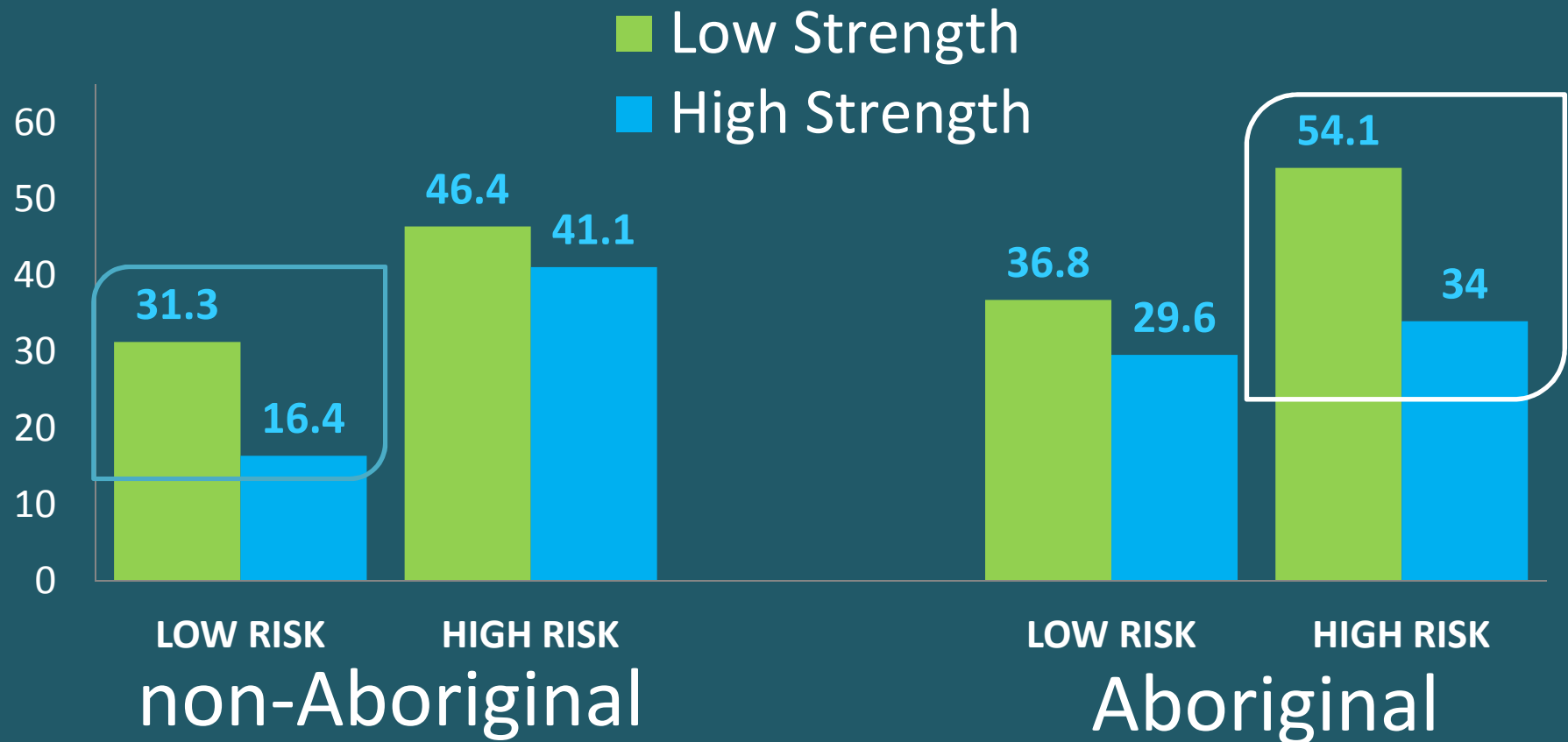


SPIn Strength Levels by Aboriginal Status

(Post-release Sample, n=703)



Buffering effect of Strengths (by Risk Level)



Domain Comparisons

Community Sample = 50,659

- 22.6% Aboriginal
- 77.4% non-Aboriginal

Post-Release Sample = 733

- 41.6% Aboriginal
- 58.4% non-Aboriginal



- 93 Full Assessment Items
- 11 Domains
 - Criminal History
 - Response to Supervision
 - 9 Need Domains
 - 7 Strength Domains*

Aggression*

Substance Abuse

Social Influences*

Family*

Employment*

Attitudes*

Skills*

Stability*

Mental Health*

 Aggression	Poor anger management, beliefs support use of violence
 Substance Abuse	Disruption of functioning and/or high frequency use
 Social Influences	Anti-social peer associations
 Family	Poor quality of intimate relationship, parenting deficits, negative family of origin
 Employment	Poor motivation, lacks skills, poor performance, lacks job search skills, unemployment
 Attitudes	Anti-social attitudes , negative toward legal authorities, rejects responsibility
 Skills (Adaptive)	Poor problem-solving, lacks social skills, poor consequential thinking, poor impulse control.
 Stability	Unstable accommodation, inadequate income, lacks access to services , poor budgeting skills
 Mental Health	One or more mental health flags – diagnosis, suicidal thoughts, history of abuse

Need Domains by Aboriginal Status

N=50,659

All need domains showed higher levels for Aboriginal group.

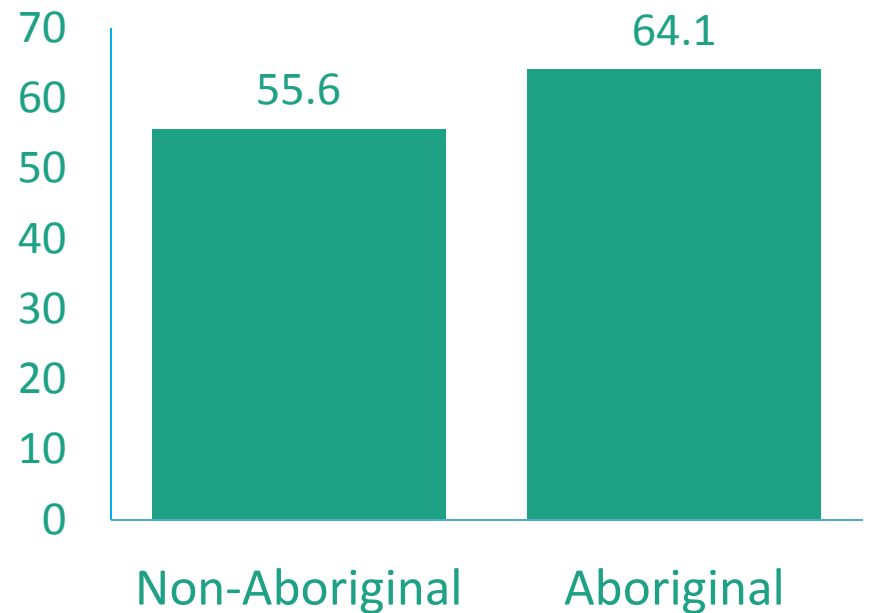


Statistically significant need differences between non-Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal sub-groups with meaningful differences in need levels (e.g., 10% or more)

- Aggression** Poor anger management, beliefs support use of violence
- Substance Abuse** Disruption of functioning and/or high frequency use
- Social Influences** Anti-social peer associations
- Family** Poor quality of intimate relationship, parenting deficits, negative family of origin
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Substance Abuse

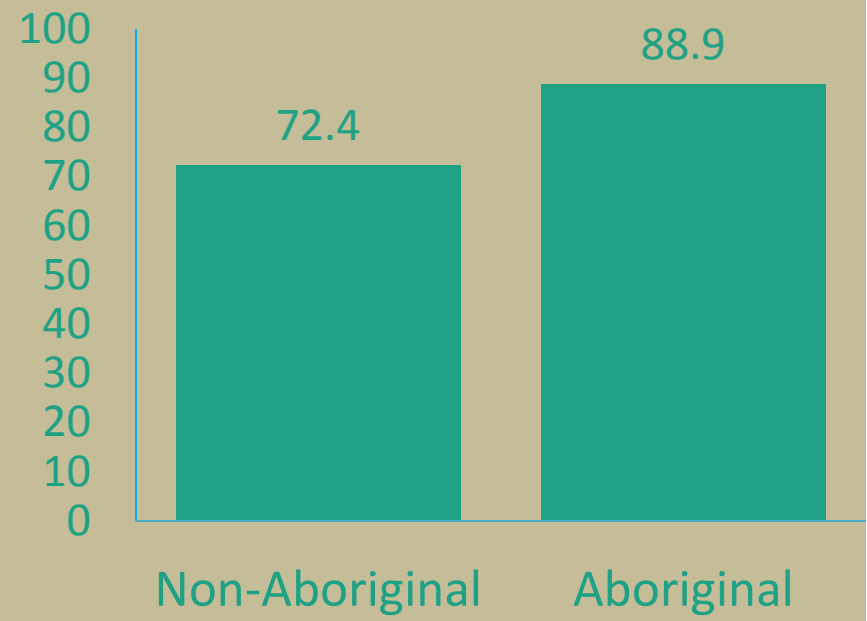
% High Need



- Aggression** Poor anger management, beliefs support use of violence
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Substance Abuse Custody Sample

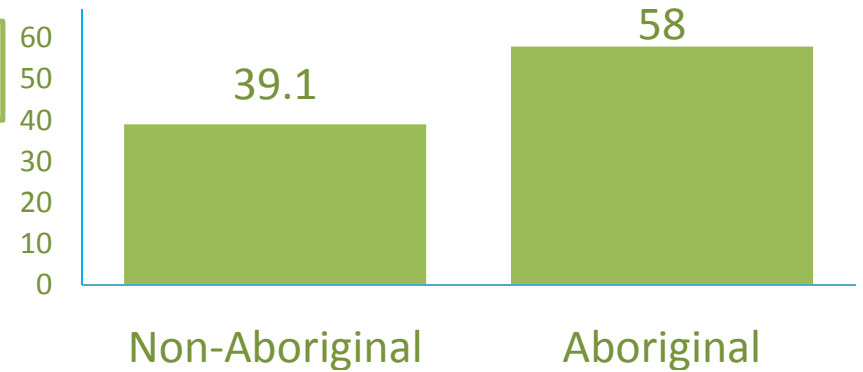
% High Need



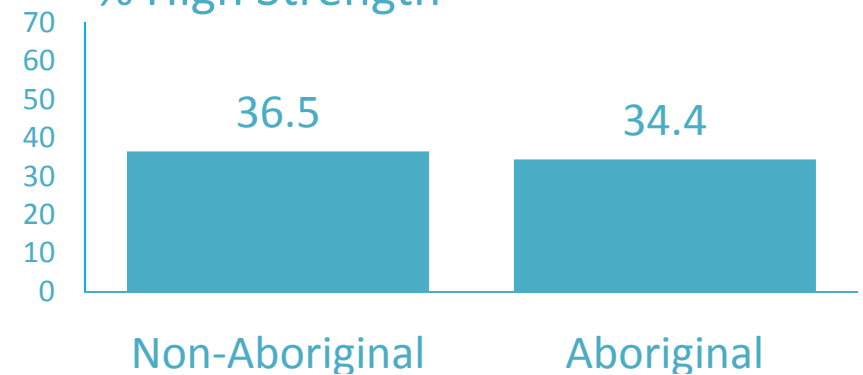
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Social Influences

% High Need

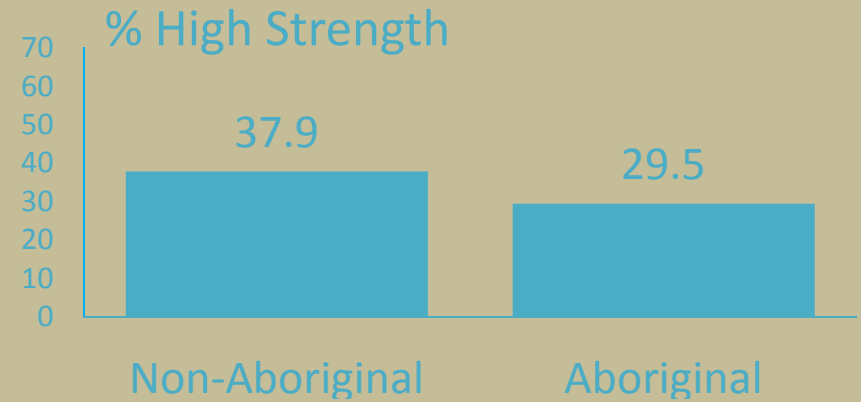
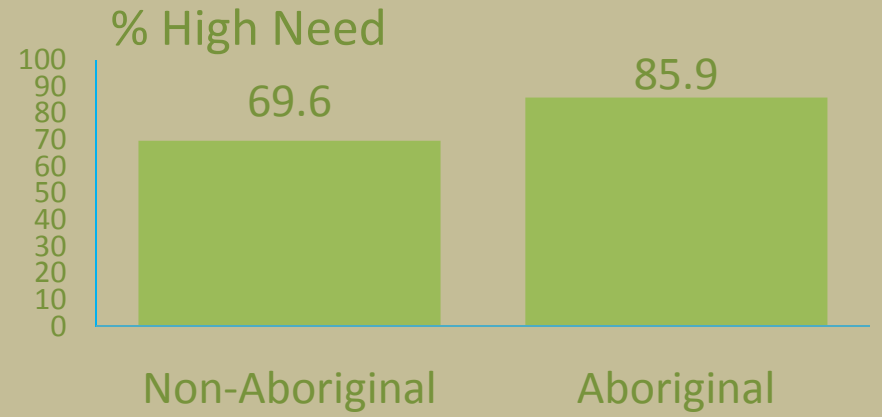


% High Strength



Social Influences Custody Sample

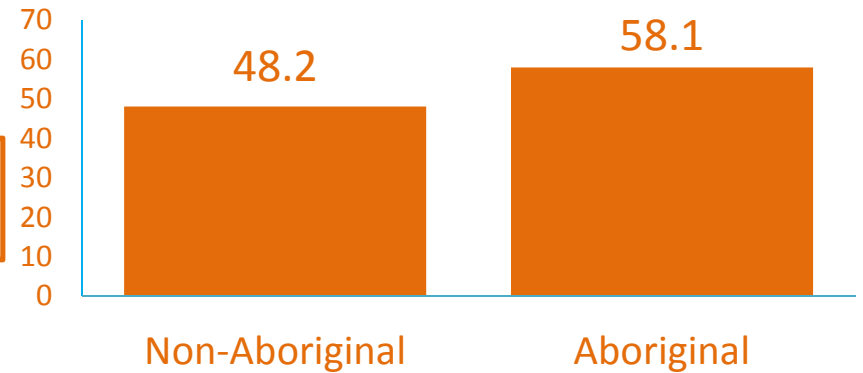
- Aggression** (Red bar): Poor anger management, beliefs support use of violence
- Substance Abuse** (Teal bar with checkmark): Disruption of functioning and/or high frequency use
- Social Influences** (Green bar with checkmark, highlighted): Anti-social peer associations, criminal friends
- Family** (Orange bar with checkmark): Poor quality of intimate relationship, parenting deficits, negative family of origin
- Employment** (Blue bar with checkmark): Poor motivation, lacks skills, poor performance, lacks job search skills, unemployment
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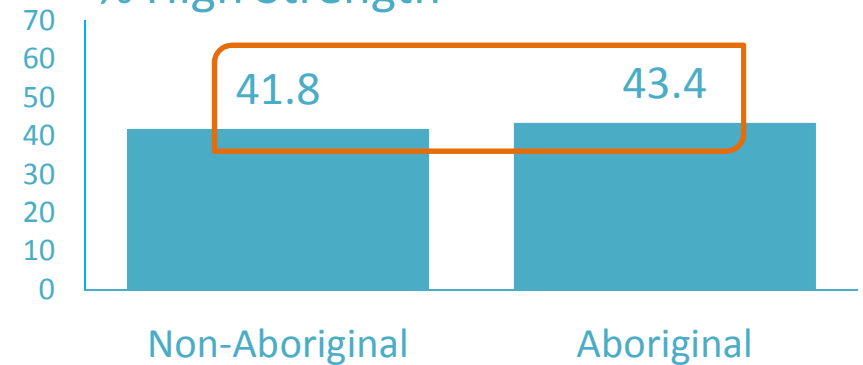
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Family

% High Need



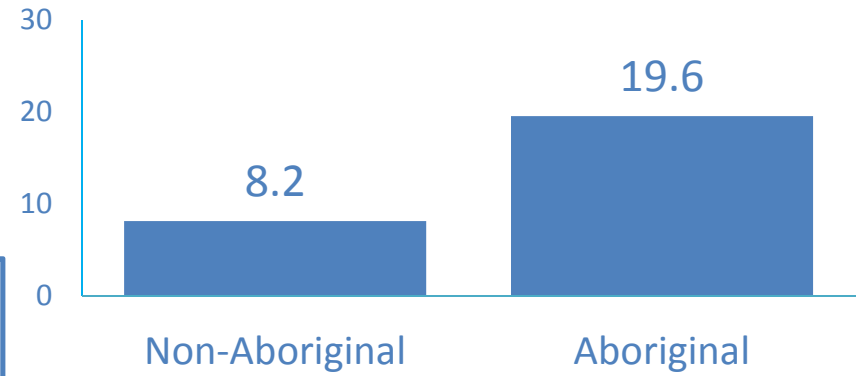
% High Strength



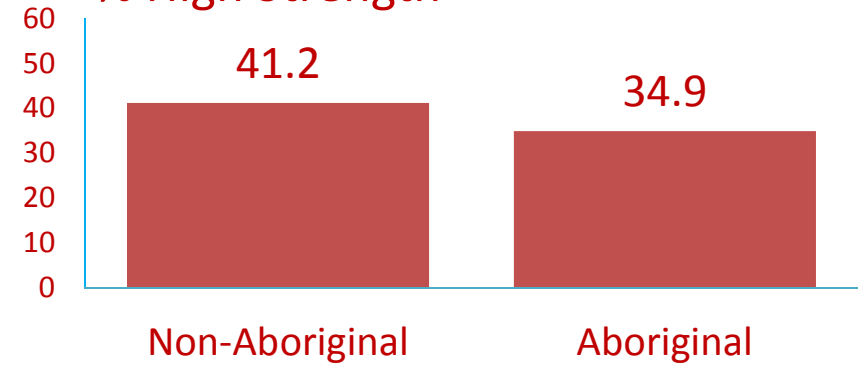
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Employment

% High Need



% High Strength



- Aggression

Poor anger management, beliefs support use of violence
- ✓

Substance Abuse

Disruption of functioning and/or high frequency use
- ✓

Social Influences

Anti-social peer associations, criminal friends
- ⊗

Family

Poor quality of intimate relationship, parenting deficits, negative family of origin
- ✓

Employment

Poor motivation, lacks skills, poor performance, lacks job search skills, unemployment
- Attitudes

Anti-social attitudes , negative toward legal authorities, rejects responsibility
- Skills (Adaptive)

Poor problem-solving, lacks social skills, poor consequential thinking, poor impulse control.
- ✓

Stability

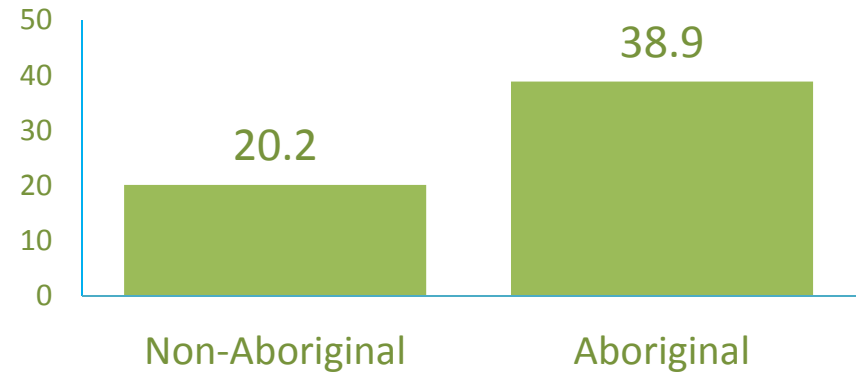
Unstable accommodation, inadequate income, lacks access to services , poor budgeting skills
- ⊗

Mental Health

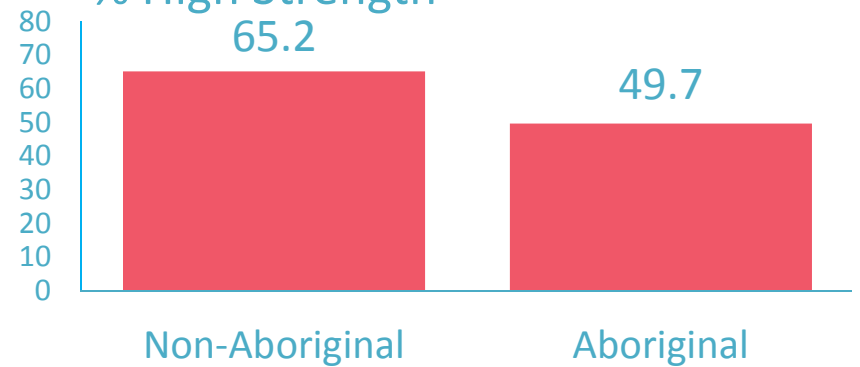
One or more mental health flags – diagnosis, suicidal thoughts, history of abuse

Stability

% High Need

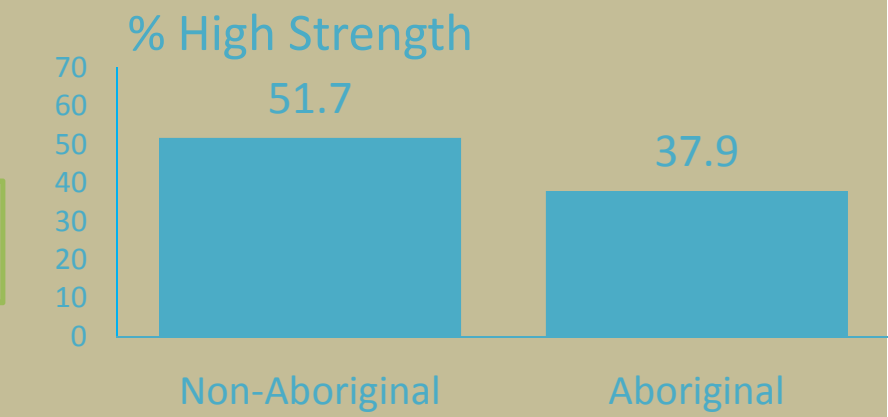


% High Strength



Stability Custody Sample

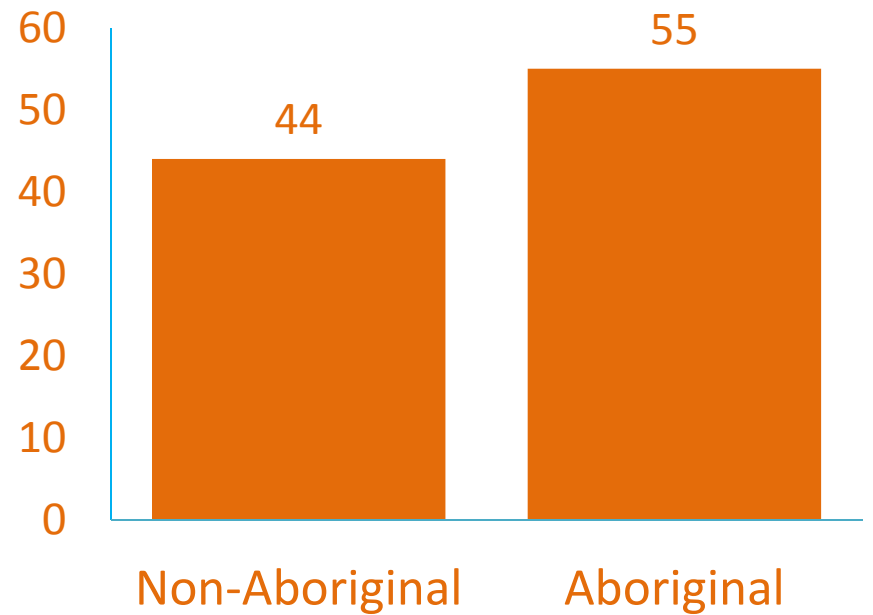
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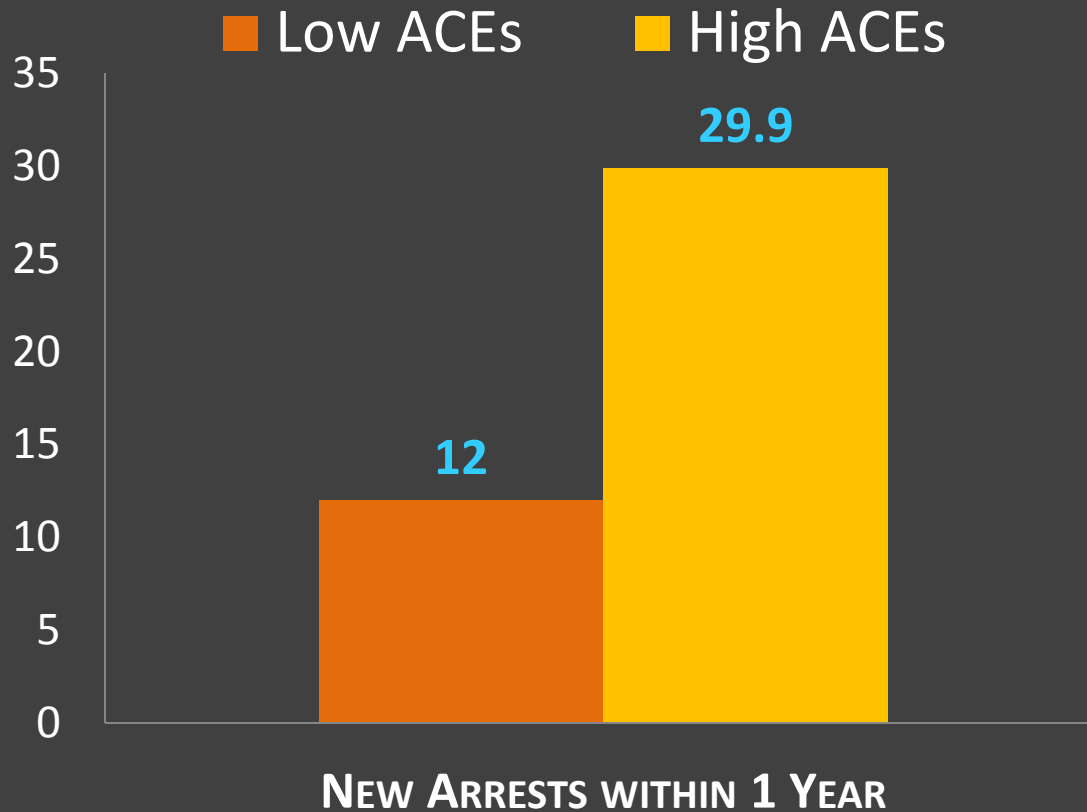
- Aggression
Poor anger management, beliefs support use of violence
- ✔ Substance Abuse
Disruption of functioning and/or high frequency use
- ✔ Social Influences
Anti-social peer associations
- ✔ Family
Poor quality of intimate relationship, parenting deficits, negative family of origin
- ✔ Employment
Poor motivation, lacks skills, poor performance, lacks job search skills, unemployment
- Attitudes
Anti-social attitudes , negative toward legal authorities, rejects responsibility
- Skills (Adaptive)
Poor problem-solving, lacks social skills, poor consequential thinking, poor impulse control.
- ✔ Stability
Unstable accommodation, inadequate income, lacks access to services , poor budgeting skills
- ✔ Mental Health
One or more mental health flags – diagnosis, suicidal thoughts, history of abuse

Mental Health

% High Need (1 or more flags)



% New Offenses by ACE Scores (n=3,656)

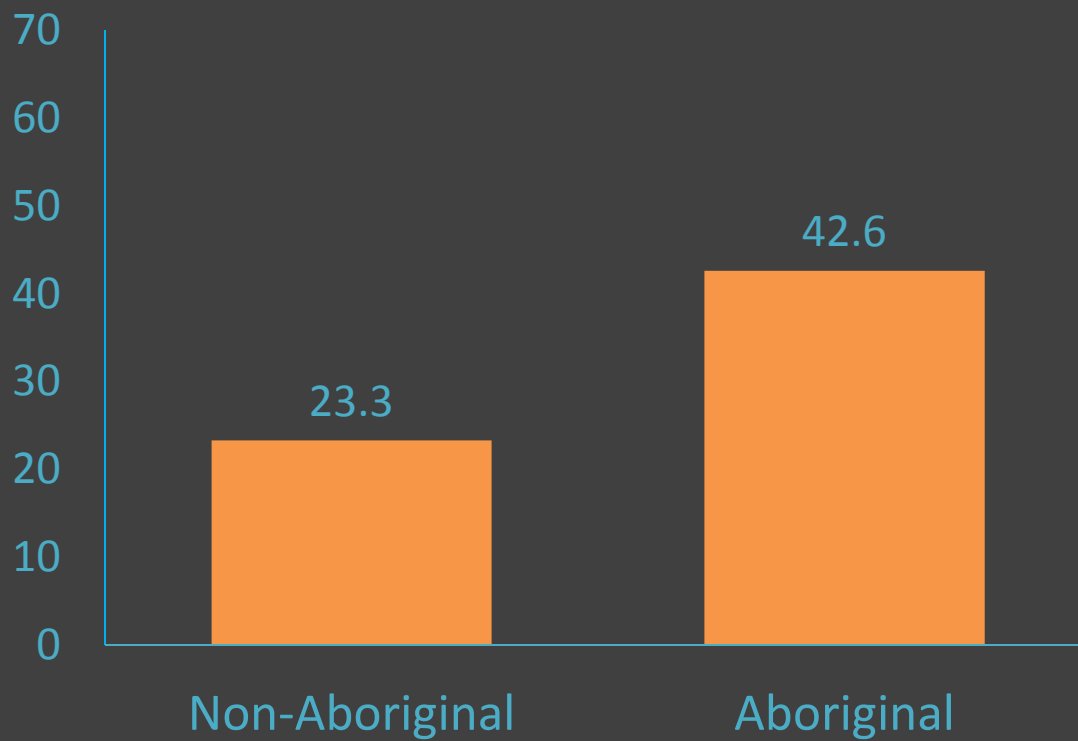


ACE Scale Items

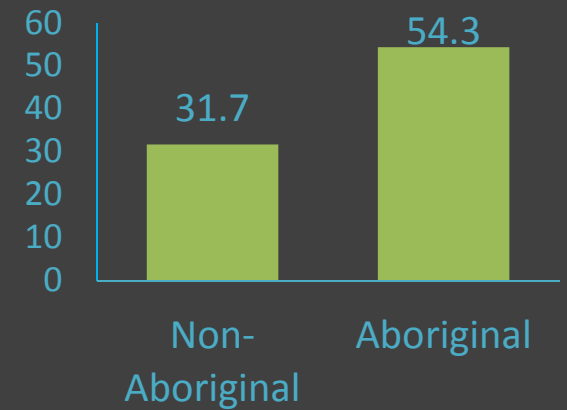
- Domestic violence among caregivers
- Single-parent home
- Parental substance abuse
- Parental mental health disorders
- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Foster or other placements
- Victimization or trauma as an adult

High ACE = 2 or more experiences

% High ACE Scores (2 or more) by Aboriginal Status



Women with 2 or more ACEs



What need domains were most predictive of recidivism for the Aboriginal group?

Aggression

✓ Substance Abuse

✓ Social Influences

✓ Family

✓ Employment

Attitudes

Skills (Adaptive)

✓ Stability

✓ Mental Health

1 58% with high need and more predictive for Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal group

4 Slightly more predictive for Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal group, but only 20% high need

3 More predictive for Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal group, but only 20% high need

2 39% with high need and more predictive for Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal group

What need domains were most predictive of recidivism for the Aboriginal group?

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Attitudes

Skills (Adaptive)

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What need domains were most predictive of recidivism for the Aboriginal group?



Substance Abuse

- less predictive than other domains
- artefactual effect of a high frequency need domain?
- substance abuse remains an area of priority

What need domains were most predictive of recidivism for the Aboriginal group?



Family

- dynamic component of family is less predictive than other domains
- family history (e.g. ACE's) very important
- strengths also predictive

What Strength domains were most important?

- Stability
- Skills
- Social Influences
- Family



Comparisons with the CUSTODY SAMPLE

- The pattern of results for the custody sample were generally consistent with the community sample
- Higher needs and lower strengths were evident across domains for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups
- The Aboriginal group demonstrated considerably higher need in the following domains:
 - Social Influences (86%)
 - Substance Abuse (89%)
 - Stability (59%)
 - Family (58%)

Comparisons by GENDER

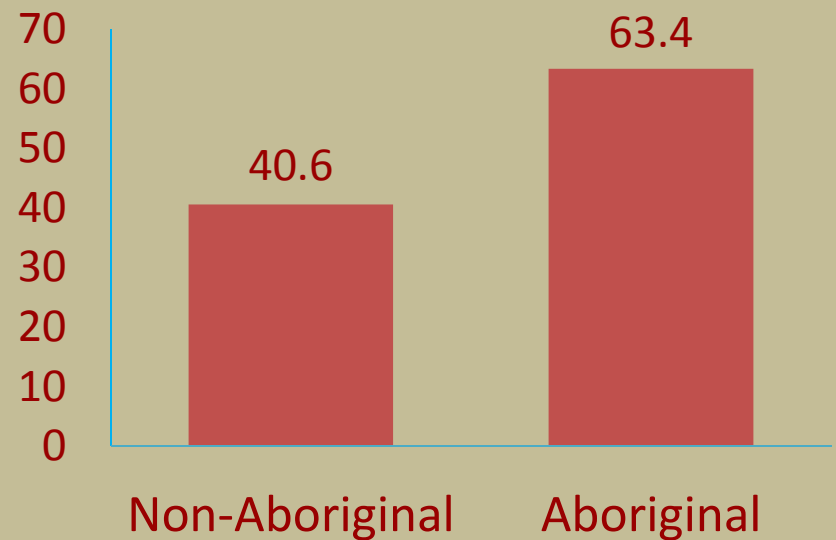
COMMUNITY SAMPLE

- Men and Women in the Aboriginal group showed similar need and strength levels across most domains
- Men and women in the Aboriginal Group exhibited similar high need profiles in the Social Influences domain (59.1%/53.5%)
- Women were less likely to be high risk (11.5%/19.7% for men)
- Stability needs were higher for Aboriginal women (44%/36.7% for men)
- Aboriginal women exhibited higher mental health needs than men (65.7%/50.6%)

RESPONSIVITY: ACES AND TRAUMA

- The ACE proxy measure showed consistently higher levels for Aboriginal members of the population

% High ACE Scores from the Custody Sample



Correlates of higher ACE scores...

- Higher rate of mental health conditions
- Higher rate of depression
- More suicidal ideation
- More problems in the family
- More relationship problems and less ability to trust others
- Higher rate of Substance Use issues
- Greater incident of community living problems
- Overall higher risk levels and lower strengths

IMPLICATIONS FOR SERVICE /CASE PLANNING

- Higher rates of trauma/ACEs among Aboriginal clients suggest a number of special considerations
- Stabilization services may be necessary to help prepare individuals to address criminogenic needs
 - While trauma may not be directly related to criminal behavior or recidivism, experience of trauma may lead to maladaptive behaviors that pose special challenges in supervision:
 - Substance abuse
 - Unhealthy relationships
 - Poor emotional regulation
 - Mental health conditions
 - Economic disadvantage

Youth Samples

Community Sample = 8,878

- 29.7% Aboriginal Youth
- 70.3% non-Aboriginal Youth

Community Outcome Sample = 464

(new arrests/18 months)

- 25.8% Aboriginal Youth
- 74.2% non-Aboriginal Youth

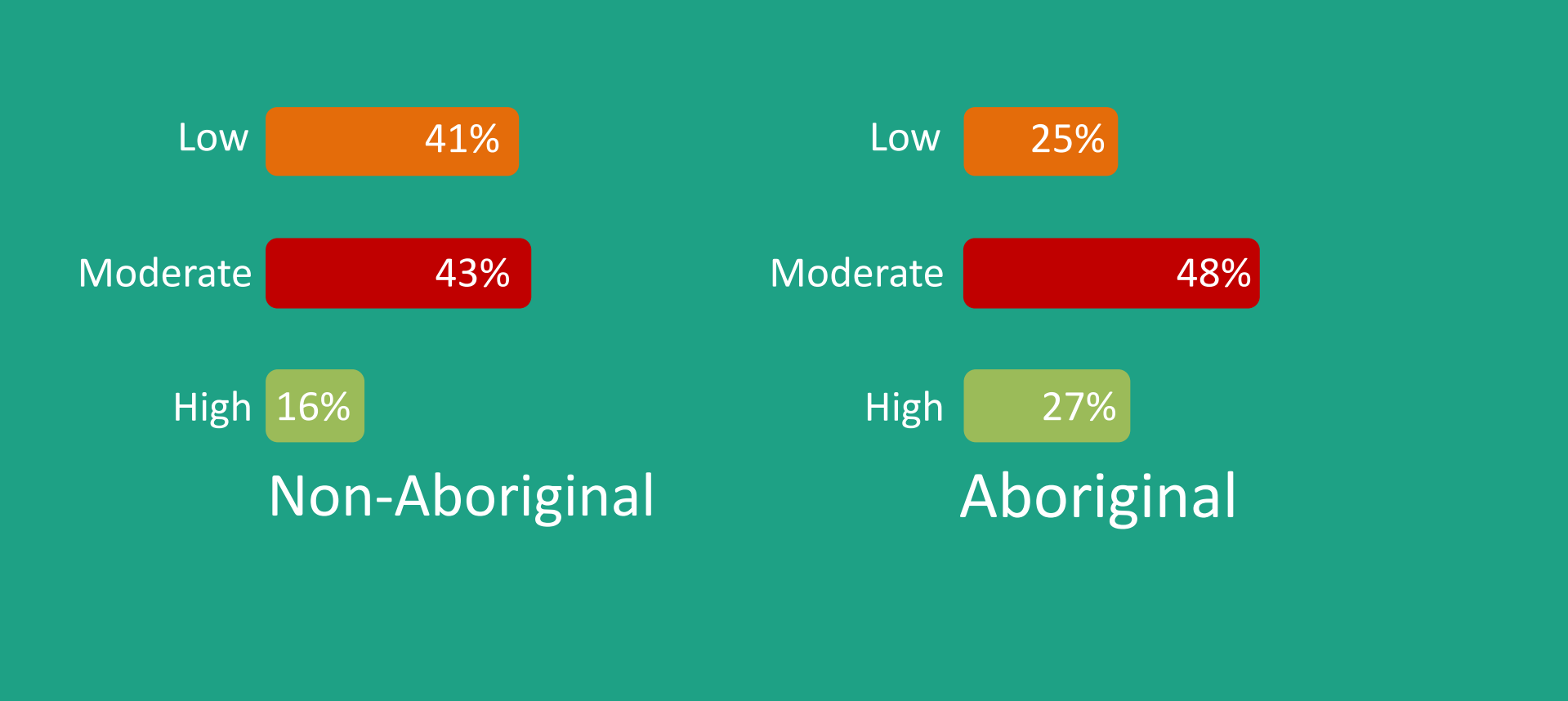


- 33 Pre-Screen items (risk, need, strength components)
- 88 Full Assessment Items
- 10 Domains
 - Legal History
 - 9 Need Domains
 - 7 Strength Domains

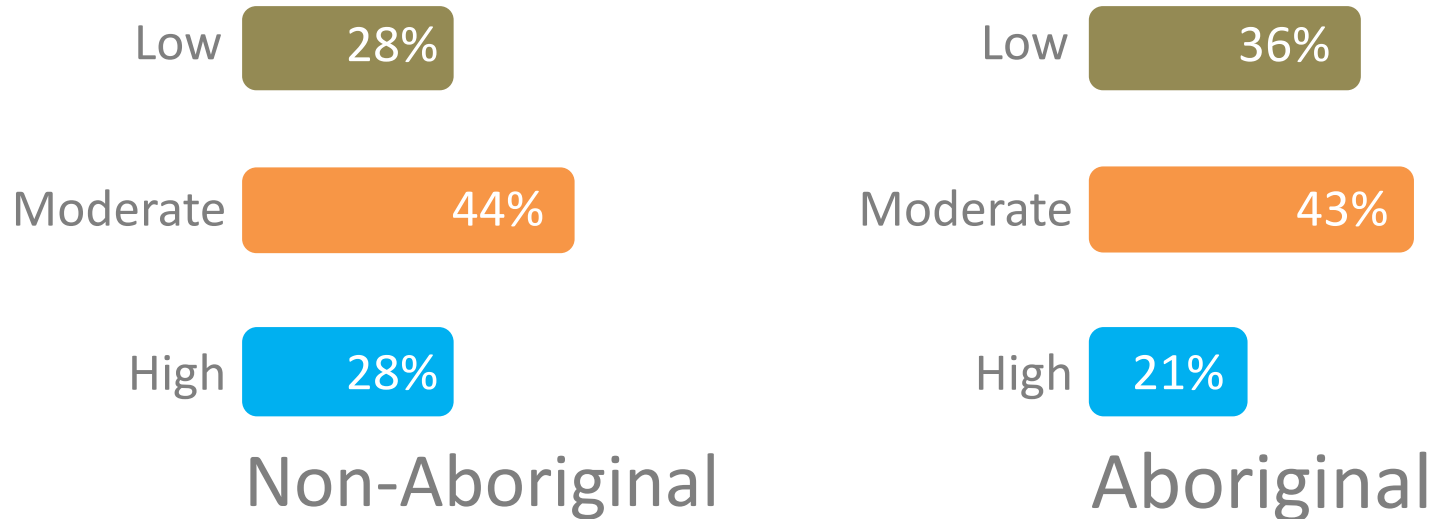
Legal History
Family
School
Community/Peers
Substance Use

Mental Health
Aggression
Attitudes
Skills
Employment/
Free Time

YASI Risk Levels by Aboriginal Status



YASI Strength Levels by Aboriginal Status



	% High Need		Correlation Coefficients	
	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Family 4	41.8%	48.1%	.20	.23
<input type="checkbox"/> School				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peers 1	35.7%	52.1%	.29	.37
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substance Use 1	38.2%	58.2%	.19	.34
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health				
<input type="checkbox"/> Aggression				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attitudes 2	44.0%	60.3%	.25	.30
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Skills (Adaptive) 3	47.1%	65.0%	.24	.27
<input type="checkbox"/> Employ/Free Time				

% New Offenses by ACE Scores (n=464)

■ Low ACEs

■ High ACEs

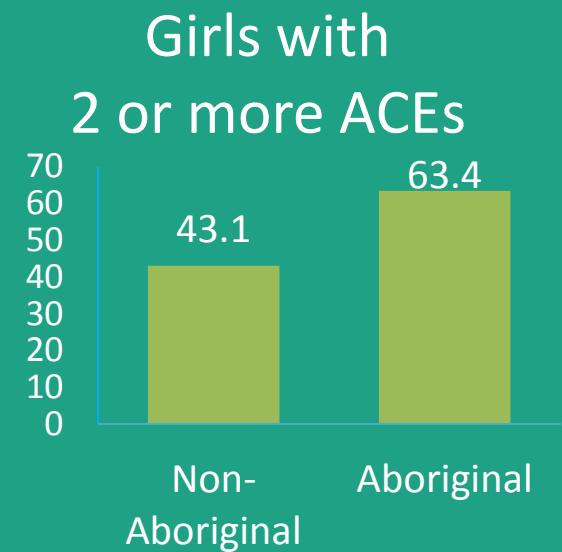
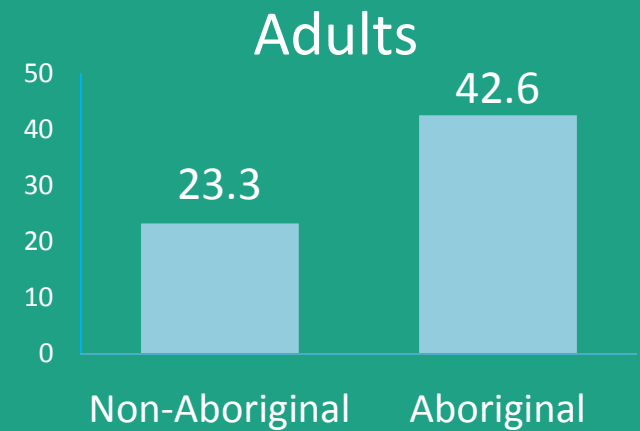
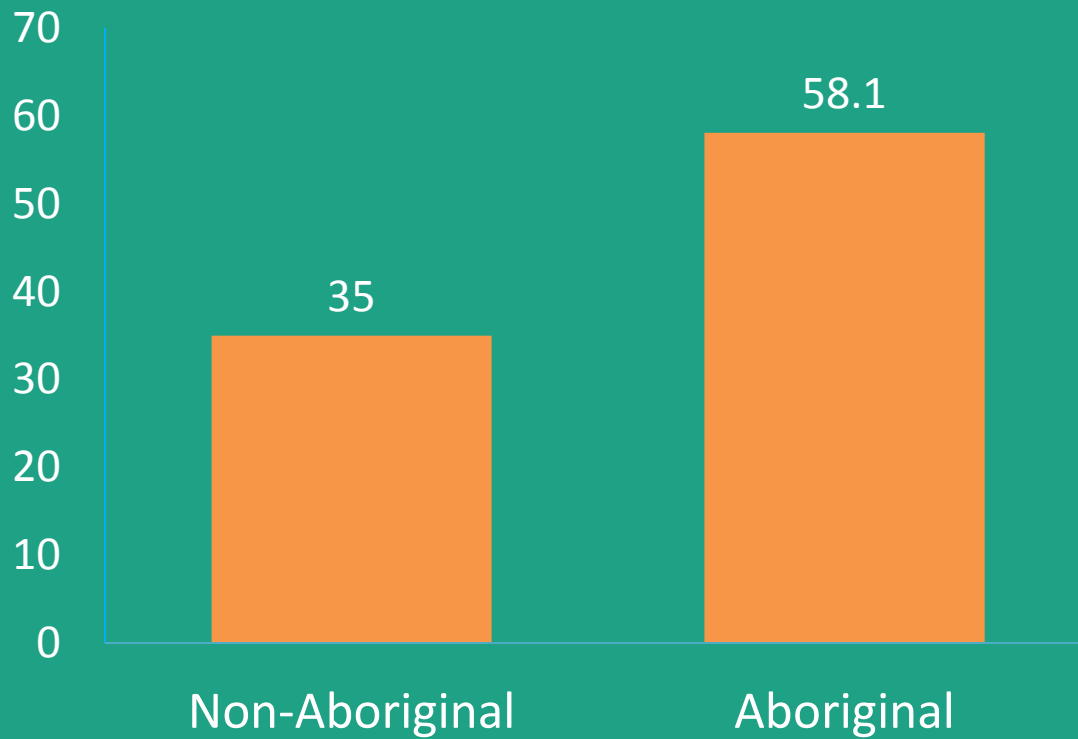
13.5

31

New Offenses within 18 Months



% High ACE Scores (2 or more) by Aboriginal Status



SUMMARY OF YOUTH STRENGTHS

- Aboriginal youth were slightly lower than non-Aboriginal youth on strengths in most domains
- Exceptions:
 - Family – Aboriginal youth showed similar strength levels in family (42.1% and 43.8%)
 - Community/Peers – Aboriginal youth had slightly higher strength levels in community/peers (54.2% and 51.4%)

IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUTH

- Community and Peers are major need areas that drive risk for Aboriginal youth
- Traditional predictors – Attitudes and Adaptive Skills are important
- ACE levels – call for attention to trauma as a responsiveness factor (trauma-informed care)
- Family and peers are important strengths

IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULTS

- Social network issues deserve *special* focus (social relationships, cultural attachment, co-production)
- Stability/employment issues are salient (structural, co-production)
- High ACE's / Trauma – Prevention, Responsivity, Trauma-Informed Care (co-production, cultural attachment)